

1,800-METRE DUAL ZIPLINE PROJECT OPENS

The Oman Tourism Development Company (Oman Group) has announced the soft opening of the 1,800-metre dual zipline project in the Wilayat of Khasab, Governorate of Musandam. **>A8**



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معرض مسقط الدولي للكتاب - ٢٠٢٣
Muscat International BOOK FAIR - 2023
محافظة جنوب الباطنة (ضيق الشرف)
22nd February - 4th March مارس ٢٢ فبراير - ٤ مارس

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WILAYAT OF NIZWA

HH the Honourable Lady to patronise passing out of female police



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Her Highness the Honourable Lady Assayida Ahd Abdullah Hamed Al Busaidi, Spouse of the Sultan of Oman will preside over a celebration of Royal Oman Police (ROP) on Sunday, marking the passing out of a new batch of female police.

The ceremony will be held at Sultan Qaboos Academy for Police Sciences in the Wilayat of Nizwa, the Governorate of Al Dakhiliyah.

Alongside with the Honourable Lady, female attendees will be present at the ceremony, including some members of the Royal family and the State Council, as well as undersecretaries, senior ROP officers and officials of various gov-

ernment units in Al Dakhiliyah.

Regarding the honourable care accorded by the Honourable Lady for the ROP graduation, Nadia bint Abdul Wahhab Al-Zadjaliya, Director of the Criminal Laboratory, said: "This generous gesture by the Honourable Lady is an embodiment and confirmation of the generous support received by Omani women in general and the women police in particular by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik.

"This generous patronage is a source of pride for all female members of the Royal Oman Police and will have a prominent impact in sharpening their determination to serve this benevolent country with all seriousness and diligence."

Speaking about the empowerment of women in police, Lieutenant Colonel Mona bint Saeed Al Saadiya, Director General of Inquiries and Criminal Investigations at Al Dhahirah Governorate Police Command, said: "Since the Blessed Renaissance and during the era of the Renewed Renaissance, Omani women have got opportunities to play their pioneering roles to build their homeland and this has been proven in various fields."

"Omani women have been praised by everyone for their achievements in various fields, including policing, in which they gained the attention of the General Police Command while performing their duties in a highly

efficient and professional system alongside policemen, by working in senior administrative positions in all formations of the police and their participation locally as well as in international forums," she added.

Regarding the challenges that women face in their duties, Major Sheikha bint Rashid Al-Esa'eiya, Head of the Driving Licenses Department at the Traffic Department North Al Batinah Governorate Police, confirmed that with determination and persistence, all difficulties and challenges can be overcome.

"The women police believe in the importance of duties entrusted to them, however difficult they may be," she added. **>A8**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Kids make a beeline for Children's Corner

1 A variety of programmes and events continue to attract children at the Children's Corner of the 27th Muscat International Book Fair at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre. Dr. Wafa bint Salem Al Shamsiyah, from the Organising Committee for the Children's Corner, said: "The Children's Corner at the Muscat International Book Fair attracted a number of institutions." **>A6**



OMAN

Oman, US aim to boost trade

2 The Sultanate of Oman and the United States underscored the importance of boosting trade and investments in strategic fields. This came during the start of the inaugural session of the Strategic Dialogue between the Sultanate of Oman and the United States of America. **>A7**

WORLD

Joe Biden intends to seek a second term

3 US President Joe Biden may have yet to announce his reelection campaign formally, but he made it clear that he intends to seek a second term. "My intention is... has been from the beginning, to run," he told ABC news in a sit-down interview. At 80, Biden is the oldest sitting president. **>B5**

ONE-STOP SHOP TO ATTRACT FOREIGN INVESTORS IN OMAN

The 'Invest in Oman' hall will be inaugurated by Minister of Finance



Ibtisam bint Ahmed Al Farooji, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The 'Invest in Oman' hall, which is set to be inaugurated on Monday, is expected to serve as the one-stop shop for foreign investors who are looking for opportunities in the Sultanate of Oman.

The hall is expected to provide a boost to the business environment as it will introduce the prospective investors to the investment environment, incentives, industrial, free and economic zones.

Set up by the Ministry of Com-

merce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) the 'Invest in Oman' hall is aimed at attracting foreign investments to Oman.

The 'Invest in Oman' hall will be inaugurated by Sultan bin Salim Al Habsi, Minister of Finance, in the presence of dignitaries and a large number of investors from inside and outside Oman.

The establishment of the 'Invest in Oman' hall aims to stimulate climate for local and foreign investors. It will be the first reference for the investor through which he

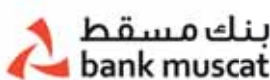
can complete all procedures and requirements for establishing, operating and finalising investment procedures in Oman.

The hall will contribute in serving as a bridge between the government and private sectors. It will provide a national database for investors with an integrated and researched investment map, to help Oman emerge as one of the best investment destinations.

Ibtisam bint Ahmed Al Farooji, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and In-

vestment Promotion, said: "The ministry is working to facilitate and develop the business environment to enhance the position of the Sultanate of Oman as a fertile environment for business and investment growth.

"We aim to make Oman a leading destination by attracting investors and entrepreneurs and also enhance the integration of efforts between the concerned authorities." **>A7**



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LATE ESSA REGARDED AS ONE OF THE PIONEERS OF JOURNALISM

After receiving the necessary approval from the Ministry of Information, *Times of Oman* was born on February 23, 1975

Times News Service

MUSCAT: On 21 February, Muscat Media Group marked the tenth death anniversary of its founder, Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali. Considered as one of the pioneers of Oman journalism since the dawn of the blessed Renaissance, late Essa launched the first English newspaper *Times of Oman* in the Sultanate of Oman with in 1975 and followed it with the start of an Arabic newspaper, *Al Shabiba*.

Late Essa's contribution to Oman journalism is unparalleled and his firm belief in upholding truth has left a strong legacy with the institution, Muscat Media Group, which has expanded its operations from print journalism to becoming market leaders in digital and electronic journalism.

Known for his visionary actions and respected for his humane values, the late founder chairman is still fondly remembered by senior journalists who worked closely with him.

Recollecting his association with late Essa

Speaking to *Al Shabiba* radio, *Al Shabiba's* Managing Editor Mohammed bin Ali Al Balushi said: "Our founder was a distinguished icon in the Oman media fraternity. He left an indelible mark in Oman's journalism with his vision that played a big role in the development march of the Sultanate of Oman."

"It was not an easy journey in the early days when *Times of Oman* was launched in early seventies. But his strong conviction and passion led to the success of the English daily and was followed several years later by the start of *Al Shabiba*."

Al Balushi, who regarded late Essa as his mentor, said the founder chairman was the owner of a 'bold pen'. "He took upon himself to reflect the development march of Oman's progress during the blessed renaissance, which began under late Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimour in 1970," said Al Balushi.

Issa Ahmed Al Masoudi, a former journalist with *Al Shabiba*, recalled his association with the late founder. Al Masoudi said: "Late Essa Al Zedjali's contributed a lot to the media industry of Oman. He was a diplomat who led a simple life. His leadership skills were par excellence and didn't fear from taking decisions. He had a unique personality and it was always great to interact with him. Personalities like him laid the foundation of a strong Omani media, in particular, with the launch of English newspaper *Times of Oman* in 1975."

Mohammed Al-Mahjoub, a former photojournalist with *Al Shabiba*, said: "I had a close association with the late Essa during my days in *Al Shabiba* newspaper from 1992 to 2007. I will always remember him for his humility and caring approach."

Al Mahjoub said "One incident I can never forget was when I travelled with late Essa Al Zedjali to China in April 2005 on a business trip. At the hotel, I was uncomfortable with the food that was offered. I went without a proper meal for a day and half. When late Essa got to know about it, he personally accompanied me to a nearby restaurant. In fact, he went into the kitchen and suggested the chef



THE FOUNDER: Late Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali



Dr Mohammed bin Saad Al Muqadam



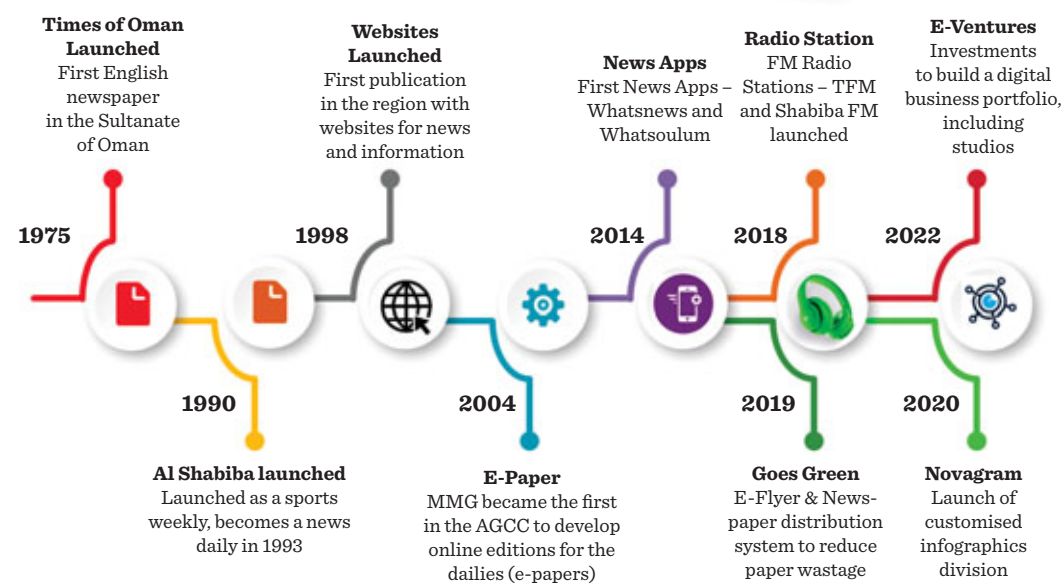
Mohammed bin Ali Al Balushi



Issa Ahmed al Masoudi



Mohammed Al-Mahjoub



Late Essa's contribution to Oman journalism is unparalleled and his firm belief in upholding truth has left a strong legacy with Muscat Media Group

his views on many subjects and the popularity of the column underlined how he got to know the pulse of the people and how well he understood world matters."

Well-known researcher in history, Dr Mohammed bin Saad Al Muqadam, said: "When we remember late Essa Al Zedjali, we are talking about the era of renaissance itself. He was an exceptional figure in Oman and is one of the pioneers in the media industry of the nation. I had met him many times. His decision to launch an English newspaper, *Times of Oman*, in 1975 was born out of his eagerness to enlighten the readers in the country with the latest news."

Al Muqadam recommended that there should be a special media award instituted in late Essa Zedjali's name. "This award will be an ideal way to introduce new generations to late Essa's unique personality and his prominent role in Omani media. His contribution should be highlighted by ways of teaching his biography in media departments at various universities and colleges."

to prepare fresh fish in halal way. This was his kindness and greatness for his staff that I can never forget."

Al Mahjoub added that "during the same trip, there was a malfunction with my digital camera". "We couldn't fix the problem and when the founder got to know

about it, he assured me that he would get a new camera in Muscat. Such was his magnanimity," said Al Mahjoub.

Al Balushi, who joined *Al Shabiba* in September 1999, said: "Late Essa was a man who was particular about small things. At one time, I went to his office

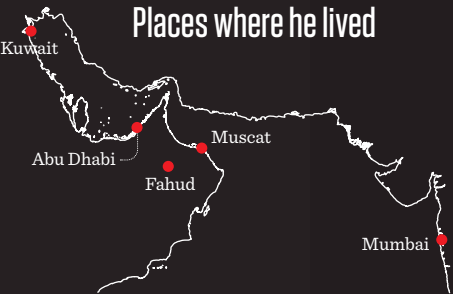
without the headgear as I was in a hurry. When I reached, he advised me to go and wear the headgear and return for the meeting."

Al Balushi added: "The founder laid a lot of emphasis on the quality of journalistic work, and one of the most important points he fo-

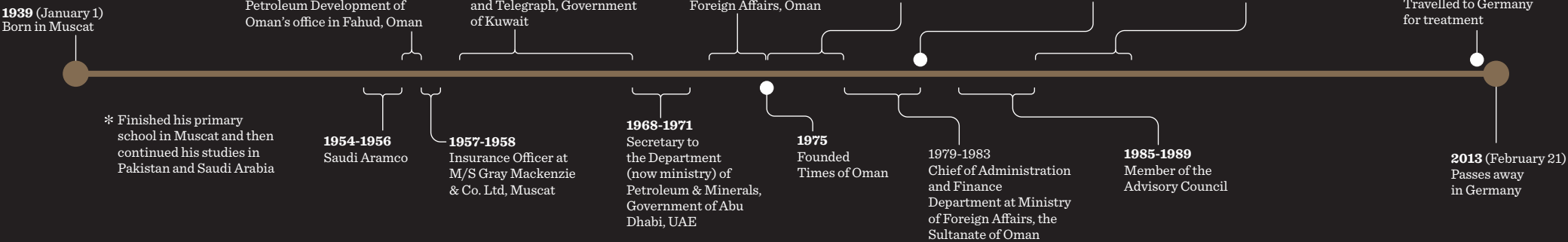
cused on was the accuracy of the news. He was like a teacher, father and mentor, to me and he used to treat the staff like his children. He wanted the team to be distinguished and strong. He introduced us to prominent personalities to get better access to stories. His column 'Viewpoint' reflected

A LIFE DEVOTED TO SERVICE

The Timeline of Essa Al Zedjali



Milestones



Source: Viewpoint, Essa Al Zedjali



ominvest: A 40-Year Legacy of Success

“ominvest has come a long way in 40 years by investing in high-quality, sustainable businesses that generate healthy cash flows. We transform businesses in a way that contributes to their growth and impact on communities, bringing innovative transactions to the market. Our ambition has no limits as we look to outgrow our current areas of interest to become a bigger regional player with global reach, with leading ambitions on Environment, Social, and Governance standards. With a clear vision and determination to succeed, we are building platforms, diversifying our revenue sources, and preparing for the ominvest of tomorrow.”



Khalid Muhammad Al Zubair,
Chairman of ominvest



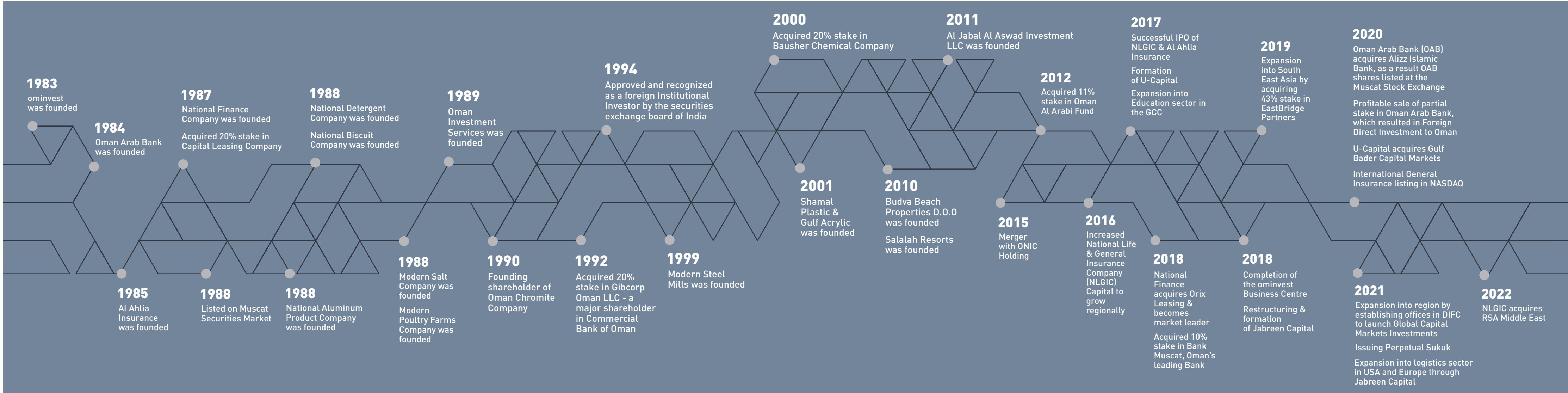
Introducing The New Identity

As part of its 40th Anniversary celebrations, ominvest proudly unveiled its new identity, reflecting its ambition, strength, and the trust of its stakeholders. The new identity retains the name to build on its four decades-long legacy. The logo features a simple arrow pointing upwards, symbolising the organisation’s constant drive for growth and forward-thinking. The elegant, modern and bold design incorporates hues of blue, where dark blue signifies leadership, and light blue symbolises trust and loyalty. The name’s lowercase lettering exudes confidence gained over decades of hard work and achievements. ominvest’s success and relentless vision will continue to drive it towards its corporate living purpose of “Transforming Businesses to Enrich Societies.”



Abdulaziz Al Balushi,
Group CEO of ominvest

“Over the last four decades, our purpose-driven organisation has embedded social impact and good corporate citizenship at the heart of our vision, mission, culture, and values. By Transforming Businesses to Enrich Societies, we have made a real impact on the lives of everyone we have had the privilege of working with. This record of stability and success is a testament to the vision of our Board, past and present, and our ability to read and adapt to local, regional, and global trends. We owe our success equally to our close relationships, support, and mutual trust with regulators, partners, shareholders, and employees in all countries where we do business.”



Oman International Development and Investment Company SAOG (ominvest) celebrated its 40th Anniversary on Thursday, 23 February 2023. The celebration was held at Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah under the patronage of Mohammad Al Zubair, one of the founders and first chairman of ominvest. The event was attended by Government and International Dignitaries, prominent business leaders, and VIPs from Oman and overseas. The event not only commemorates 40 years of ominvest but also recognises the collective efforts of the Board and the entire ominvest team that have contributed to the Group's success. This would not have been possible without ominvest's elementary guiding principles and unique investment philosophy, which the organisation has tenaciously followed since day one. To understand the true scope of its growth and the inspiring scale with which ominvest has multiplied success over the last four decades, we must look back at the Group's fulfilling and humbling journey.



The First Chapter of a 40-Year Legacy

ominvest's story began in 1983 when Mohammad Al Zubair and his visionary friends laid the foundation for ominvest. Their vision and values have been the guiding principles for the Group ever since and continue to drive its success to this day. Over the past four decades, the company has been led by progressive boards and capable management teams dedicated to enhancing value for all stakeholders and positively impacting local communities. The past forty years have been not only full of challenges and risks but also tremendous opportunities for growth. By closely monitoring upcoming trends, advanced planning, adapting quickly to change, and implementing sound business strategies, ominvest made significant progress. As a matter of fact, in the four decades since its inception, ominvest has maintained an outstanding record of uninterrupted dividend payments to its shareholders. Its investment philosophy involved investing in high-quality, sustainable businesses with a robust governance framework that can withstand economic downturns. It maintains a high level of valuation discipline and has successfully diversified its investments across companies, sectors, and geographies, focusing on the financial services sector. It also has a clear and focused business model – build and manage a balanced investment portfolio with the right mix of strategic investments, private equity, and global capital markets. The Group exclusively invests in companies with exceptional management teams that demonstrate high levels of competence and integrity. ominvest provides strategic direction to its portfolio companies, along with full autonomy and flexibility to their management teams and supports them in achieving their full potential. ominvest has always supported its strategic investments to enable its growth and success. Its strong financial position and discipline have allowed it to take advantage of opportunities during market downturns and exit at the right time with attractive valuations.

Four Decades of Creating Value

The company's core competencies are its ability to invest prudently in a well-balanced portfolio and innovation-led value creation. Its positive and inclusive culture fosters high levels of performance, integrity, and fairness and encourages challenging the status quo. It approaches unique and unprecedented transactions with a positive mindset and strives to find ways to execute them reasonably and efficiently. It proactively engages with regulators and seeks their guidance, always striving for transparency in its plans. In fact, the company's diverse, multitasked, and hands-on team of fewer than 50 members

have successfully managed consolidated assets of USD 3.4 billion, generating superior returns. An excellent example of how ominvest creates value for its affiliated companies is the landmark merger with ONIC Holding. One of the additions to the Group resulting from this merger was National Life & General Insurance Company (NLG), which had great potential and a strong management team but limited scale. In 2016, ominvest strengthened NLG's financial position by injecting capital and providing strategic direction. NLG quickly achieved a market-leading status in Oman and became a significant player in the UAE. Alongside its growth journey, ominvest also successfully floated the IPO of NLG in 2017. With ominvest's support and strategic direction, during 2022 NLG completed a strategic transaction, which resulted in RSA Middle East becoming a wholly-owned subsidiary of NLG. This transaction aided in transforming the combined entity into a larger, stronger, and more competitive regional multiline insurance player emerging from the Sultanate.

Four Decades of Opportunistic Investments and Growth

Through its offices in Singapore and DIFC, its Private Equity and Investment Banking team is also building assets under management, focusing on generating



fee income and creating a valuable platform. Currently, ominvest has assets under management of public and private investments of around USD 2.1 billion, which is a testament to the trust placed in its platform by third-party investors. Moreover, ominvest has an ambitious growth plan and made a sizeable allocation to global capital markets, intending to build high-quality, multi-asset, multi-strategy portfolios as part of its ongoing diversification and liquidity management strategy. 2022 was another successful year for ominvest, with the organisation reporting its highest profit ever, with a return on shareholders' equity of 22%. With assets in excess of USD 3.4 billion and a strong financial position, ominvest is ready for its next growth phase.

The Way of the Future – Sustainability, Scalability & Diversification

The creation of jobs, nurturing of talent, the building of expertise, fostering of innovation, and regular knowledge transfer are just a few of the tools and methods ominvest uses, not only to support local communities but also to embrace best practices in Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG). ominvest believes integrating ESG best practices will drive long-term value across all operational and investment levels. To date, the organisation's efforts have included a comprehensive ESG capacity-building programme across its group companies and the development of a defined strategy for sustainable operations and responsible investing.



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Invitation to Attend the Annual General Meeting

The Board of Directors of the Omani Qatari Telecommunications Company SAOG (the “Company”) invites all shareholders to attend the Annual General Meeting, which will be held on Monday, 13 March 2023 at 3 pm via the electronic platform to conduct general meetings, which you can access through Muscat Clearing and Depository Company website (www.mcd.gov.om). In case the required quorum is not met for this meeting, a second Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday, 14 March 2023 at 3 pm via the abovementioned electronic platform. The meetings shall discuss the following agenda items:

- Agenda of the Annual General Meeting:
1. Consideration and approval of the Board of Directors’ Report regarding the Company’s activities and financial position during the financial year ended on 31st December 2022.
 2. Consideration and approval of the Corporate Governance Report for the financial year ended on 31st December 2022.
 3. Consideration and approval of the Board Evaluation Report of the Board Members’ performance for the financial year ended on 31st December 2022.
 4. Consideration and approval of the Auditor’s Report regarding the audited financial statements for the financial year ended on 31st December 2022.
 5. Consideration and approval of a proposal to distribute cash dividends at the value of 20 Baiza per share.
 6. Approval of sitting fees paid to the Directors of the Board and Committees for the financial year ended on 31st December 2022 and determination of the fees payable for the next financial year ending on 31st December 2023.
 7. Consideration and approval of remuneration of RO 139,100 payable to the Directors in respect of the financial year ended on 31st December 2022.
 8. Informing the shareholders about Related-Party Transactions entered into by the Company during 2022.
 9. Consideration and approval of the Related-Party Transactions that the Company proposes to enter into during the financial year ending on 31st of December 2023.
 10. Informing the shareholders of the amount spent on Corporate Social Responsibility for the year ended on 31st December 2022 in the amount of RO 182,133.
 11. Consideration and approval of a donation budget of RO 200,000 to be spent on Corporate Social Responsibility for the next financial year ending on 31st December 2023.
 12. Appointment of external auditors for the Company for the financial year ending on 31st December 2023 and approval of their proposed fees.
 13. Election of new Board of Directors.

Anyone who wishes to nominate himself to membership of the Board of Directors of the Company must complete the nomination form and submit it to the Company at the following email address (Majid.Al-Marzooqi@ooredoo.om) at least five days prior to the date set for the Annual General Meeting and no later than Tuesday 7 March 2023 (close of business). The candidate must comply with the requirements of the membership of the Board of Directors.

In accordance with the Articles of Association of the Company and the guidelines of conducting general meetings using new electronic means issued by the Capital Market Authority, please note the following:

(a) Only a juristic person shall authorize a natural person to attend the general meetings and vote on the resolutions virtually on its behalf, provided that this natural person has an investor number at Muscat Clearing and Depository Company.

(b) Voting on agenda items starts no more than 3 days prior to the meeting date until the end of the voting process on the day of the meeting. In case of a change in the number of shares of a shareholder, the shareholder’s vote will be cancelled, and he/she will have to vote again on the day of the meeting.

For further information, please contact Ahmed Al Khuzairi on +968 95108731.

WILAYAT OF KHASAB

One arrested for stealing

MUSCAT: The Royal Oman Police (ROP), has arrested an expat for stealing money from a house in the Wilayat of Khasab.

“The Inquiries and Criminal Investigations Department, led by the Musandam Governorate Police, arrested an Asian on charges of stealing sums of money from a house in Khasab,” ROP said.



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OMAN CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE

Children’s Corner at Muscat book fair instant hit for kids

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A variety of programmes and events continue to attract kids at the Children’s Corner at the 27th Muscat International Book Fair at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Dr. Wafa bint Salem Al Shamsiyah, from the Organising Committee for the Children’s Corner, said: “The Children’s Corner at the Muscat International Book Fair attracted a number of institutions. With the aim of creating diversity in the activities and programmes that the child longs to know, focus has been placed on some activities inspired by the Omani heritage in order to enhance the identity and consolidate the connection with the Omani environment and its various characteristics for the child.”

She explained: “The work of the Children’s Corner is accompanied by the signing of a number of children-related publications, especially with regard to stories and the promotion of their multiple concepts and messages, presented by official bodies and initiatives addressing the child.”

She added: “This year, we saw a very large attendance by visitors and families going to the Children’s Corner. With the aim of identifying its pillars and the work it includes, in addition to the participation in it by the different ages of children, we focused on the skills that simulate their imagination to keep pace with their aspirations in the cognitive, technical and creative fields. We saw there is a great awareness among the present family about their children, and they chose what suits their age and imagination.”



The number of activities reached 166, with the participation of 51 writers and artists from the Sultanate of Oman, and 7 writers and artists from the Arab world.

The events and programmes come with the involvement of a number of government and private institutions and civil society initiatives in cooperation with the exhibition management, including the International Children’s Centre, the Children First Association, the Governorate of South Al Batinah, the guest of honour of the exhibition, the National Institute for Childhood, the Omani Commission for Human Rights, the children’s public library, and the learning centre in the National Museum, Child Culture Department of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, and the Children’s Museum.

The event will continue 4 March.

Among the activities and programmes offered by the institutions are practical workshops for the young inventor, presentations of the green schools project, a mental arithmetic circle, another artistic workshop inspired by the Omani heritage, readings of stories

in the Omani dialects, and a presentation of the first experience in the Sultanate of Oman and the Gulf represented in the interactive stories programme in the Omani dialect.

It also included reading the collection of stories about the investment and insurance culture, and practical applications of the exhibits of the Children’s Museum, with synthetic workshops for traditional handicrafts, pottery and colouring, programming, innovation, sign language for children, and the art of speaking (toastmasters), in addition to educational entertainment competitions, with a qualitative paragraph entitled/the storyteller presenting a dialogue paragraph on the rights of the child.

Many of the participating institutions also presented workshops on scientific innovations, and a workshop on 3D printing for young people using Toy Box printers, with presentations of reading initiatives from school experiences, and a session related to creative writing development strategies, in addition to discovering musical talents and the psychological rights of the child. With ONA inputs



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STRATEGIC DIALOGUE

Oman and US stress the importance of boosting trade

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman and the United States underscored the importance of boosting trade and investments in strategic fields.

This came during the start of the inaugural session of the Strategic Dialogue between the Sultanate of Oman and the United States of America.

In a joint statement, the two sides pointed out that the first Strategic Dialogue coincides with the 190-year anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, which established commercial relations between the two countries. It was the first trade agreement the United States signed with an Arab country.

Additionally, the two sides

signed a memorandum of understanding to the tune of OMR192 million (\$500 million) to explore options for utilising the Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM)'s financing and to promote trade and investment in strategic sectors of Oman's economy, ranging from renewable energy to manufacturing.

Bilateral trade between the United States and the Sultanate of Oman totaled \$4.22 billion in 2022, the highest ever and up 30 percent from \$3.25 billion in 2021. The United States is Oman's largest market for non-oil exports, providing the long-term partnership to create jobs and mutual prosperity in both countries.

Both sides discussed and outlined areas of cooperation within three working groups: trade and investment; clean energy; and education, culture, and science.

In trade and investment, participants from both countries discussed activating a working mechanism to maximize the benefits of the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement (FTA), the issue of tariffs, promoting trade and investment in strategic areas such as mining, logistics, energy, fisheries, agribusiness, and telecommunications, and exploring possibilities for collaboration in the digital economy.

The two countries explored opportunities to collaborate on clean energy solutions such as carbon removal, clean hydrogen, industrial decarbonisation, as well as clean energy policy, including Oman's net-zero 2050 roadmap, methane emissions reduction and other short-lived climate pollutants, and Oman's plans for COP28.

They also discussed enhancing cooperation on catalyzing finance for clean energy as well as in research programmes and knowledge sharing for the decarbonization of energy.

Both sides welcomed cooperation on education, culture, and

science, and discussed a mechanism for resuming the Fulbright programme for Omani students and scholars and developing programmes in key areas discussed by both countries.

The two sides highlighted their close cooperation on issues that are central to the bilateral relationship, such as investment in innovation, higher education, and scientific research programmes, including initiative programmes in various fields. Oman and the United States of America further expressed their mutual intent to collaborate on teachers' professional development. They also decided to cooperate in the fields of literature and culture. -ONA

UNIQUE MODEL

Invest in Oman' hall

She added that the 'Invest in Oman' hall is the first platform to provide all services to investors and display investment opportunities that exceed one million Omani rials, in cooperation with relevant government and private agencies, according to international best practices. She noted that the hall embodies the concept of complementary roles of government agencies and private sector. It aims to provide a unique model in serving investors, starting from the stage of discovering investment opportunities to the execution of the project.

Ibtisam said that the hall, with its defined roles, will be the first-stop for the investor wishing to invest in the Sultanate of Oman.



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TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Indian school Al Seeb is seeking bids from Specialized firms, who are having experience in the execution of the following services

Tender No	Description Tender	Tender Fee (Non Refundable)	Tender documents available from	Last date of Tender Submission
ISAS/Tend/17/2022-23	New computer lab-Carpentry work with Networking	10/-	26.02.2023	05.03.2023
ISAS/Tend/18/2022-23	Annual stationary supply	10/-	26.02.2023	05.03.2023
ISAS/Tend/19/2022-23	Staff room partition-Carpentry work	10/-	26.02.2023	05.03.2023
ISAS/Tend/20/2022-23	School Canteen service	10/-	26.02.2023	05.03.2023

All the above tenders are to be addressed to **The Chairperson, Purchase Sub Committee, Indian School Al Seeb**, must be submitted in a plain envelope sealed with red wax, indicating the tender reference on the envelope and without showing any identity of the company on the envelope. Quotations drop into the school Tender box at the office time.

The school reserves the right to reject any Tender without providing any reason and does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender.



Ministry of Defence

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Defense invites MOD registered suppliers to participate in the following tender:

Subject	Tender Number	Last Date for Inquiries	Last Date to Obtain Tender	Tender Documnet Price per copy (RO)
SUPPLY OF FROZEN FISH FOR THE PERIOD OF THREE YEARS	03/2023	06/03/2023	13/03/2023	1500 RO
SUPPLY FO TOMOGRAPHY SCANNER (ST SCAN) AFH AL KHOUDH RADIOLOGY	04/2023	13/03/2023	20/03/2023	250 RO

1. Tenders documents and terms may be obtained on payment from the office of the Secretary of the Tender Committee, gate No. 14 of MAM Camp between 0900 to 1300 hrs on the working days.
2. Payment of Tender documents to be made by using of any Visa Electron Cards or "Visa credit" Cards or through Smart Card issued from all the banks are operated in oman

Ahli Global Equity Fund

On behalf of the Fund Management Board, I am pleased to present the audited financial results of ahli Global Equity Fund for the year ended 31st December 2022

	31-Dec-2022	31-Dec-2021
Number of units	3,377,311	3,264,000
Net asset value (RO)	2,379,581	2,283,912
Net asset value per unit (RO)	0.705	0.700
Net profit/(loss)	14,170	(59,132)

The ahli Global Equity Fund closed the year 1.1% higher for the year 2022. The Fund continued to outperform peers and benchmarks in a year characterized by high volatility. Overall, the first half of the year was stronger driven by our relative overweight in GCC. However, the decline in oil prices due to rising fears of a recession impacted Fund performance in the second half of the year.

Markets Performance

Sticky inflation and aggressive rate hikes from the Federal Reserve battered growth and technology stocks and weighed on investor sentiment throughout the year. Stocks slipped towards the year end to end a brutal 2022 with a whimper, as Wall Street wrapped up its worst year since 2008. The Dow fared the best of the US indices in 2022, down about -8.8%. The S&P 500 sank -19.4% while the tech-heavy Nasdaq tumbled -33.1%. All the three indexes declined for the month.

Regional markets have ended the year with a mixed picture. Oil stability should've supported sentiment but global macro concerns and lower liquidity keep markets range-bound. In terms of market performance, Abu Dhabi and Oman remained resilient ending the year with double digit gains of +20.3% and +17.6%. However, regional performance was dragged by Qatar and Saudi which ended the year with a decline of -8.1% and -7.1% respectively.

*As of December 31st 2022

Market Outlook

Over the course of 2022, global markets experienced heightened levels of volatility as global central banks embarked on an aggressive tightening policy to ease inflationary pressures. As of December 2022, the Federal Funds rate stood between 4.25%-4.50% and it's expected that the Fed will increase it to 5-5.25% by March 2023. The majority of the hikes have been factored in, resulting in a correction in valuations across risk assets. In turn with a higher risk premium fronted by a higher risk-free rate, expected returns across asset classes have gone up. In terms of positioning, with much of the bad news being factored in including a probable recession, current bond yields and equity valuations present a favorable and sustainable opportunity to take advantage of undervalued securities.

In terms of allocation, we remain Market Weight in the USA given the recessionary fears, however valuations have started to turn more reasonable and will allocate capital opportunistically. Within the region we are more selective and prefer banks, utilities and telecoms. We continue to hold quality companies

ahliGlobal equityfund

in the GCC and will gradually increase exposure to secular growth markets once there is more clarity on earnings and inflation.

Overall, the Investment Management team remains tactically cautious in the near-term but believe the current environment provides significant opportunities for long-term investors. The team is guided by our proven investment process and risk framework to continue to provide superior risk adjusted return for our clients. Overall, the Ahli Global Equity fund remains well positioned to continue to take advantage of any opportunities that arise from the ongoing volatility.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION as at 31 December 2022		
	31 December 2022 RO	31 December 2021 RO
ASSETS		
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	1,977,375	2,246,713
Dividend receivable	209	-
Cash and cash equivalents	409,711	52,679
Total assets	2,387,295	2,299,392
LIABILITIES		
Accruals and other payables	7,569	15,424
Due to Unit holders	145	56
Total liabilities	7,714	15,480
Net assets attributable to the Unit holders	2,379,581	2,283,912
Net assets per unit	0.705	0.700

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME for the year ended 31 December 2022		
	Year ended 31 December 2022 RO	Year ended 31 December 2021 RO
Income:		
Dividend income	77,437	58,191
Other income	-	236
Realised gain on disposal of financial assets at fair value through profit or loss - net	102,972	148,780
Unrealised loss on re-measurement of financial assets at fair value through profit or loss - net	(95,271)	(198,046)
Total income	85,138	9,161
Expenses:		
General and administrative expenses	(34,234)	(34,731)
Management fee	(30,734)	(28,544)
Custodian fee	(6,000)	(5,018)
Total expenses	(70,968)	(68,293)
Income / (loss) for the year	14,170	(59,132)
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-
Total comprehensive income / (loss) for the year	14,170	(59,132)
Earnings / (loss) per unit	0.004	(0.025)



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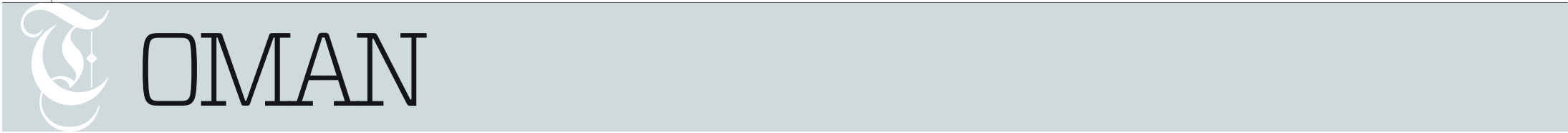
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SCAN & WIN



1,800-metre dual zipline project opens in Musandam Governorate

The exciting zipline project is the first activity offered by the Oman Adventure Centre in Khasab

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran Group) has announced the soft opening of the 1,800-metre dual zipline project in the Wilayat of Khasab, Governorate of Musandam.

This project is part of an integrated adventure centre designed to offer tourists unique experiences that combine adventure and exploration.

An exciting zipline project is the first activity offered by the Oman Adventure Centre, which is being developed as part of a comprehensive development plan for the region.

Through this plan, the Musandam Governorate will be able to diversify its tourism market by providing a wide variety of quality products and experiences. This will enable it to draw out its potential and highlight its position as a prominent tourist destination in the region.

The Oman Adventure Centre was designed to accommodate a broad range of facilities, providing visitors with an integrated tourism experience. It has a waiting area and more facilities. Additionally, the zipline project will be managed and operated by LEOS, a specialist operator that runs adventure and entertainment projects on a regional and international scale.

On this occasion, Mubarak bin



Ali Al Rahbi, Head of the Musandam Governor's Office said, "The Musandam Governorate has a wealth of tourism offerings that can be utilised to develop a wide range of tourism projects. This project illustrates our ongoing efforts to utilise these elements for tourism development." He added, "We are confident that the zipline project will encourage businesses within and outside the Governorate to develop more tourism-related services. In doing so, they will contribute to the sector's growth, aligning with our vision to place Musandam on the local and regional map of the most prominent tourist destinations, especially in the areas of exploration and adventure."

Said Hareb Al Obaidani, Director General of Tourism Development at the Ministry of Heritage

and Tourism, said: "The Ministry is working to stimulate development and investment in the various key tourist destinations in the Sultanate of Oman, especially the Governorate of Musandam. Our goal is to enhance the tourism services ecosystem with a variety of specialised multi-use projects that satisfy the desires and tastes of various tourist segments. Currently in its soft opening phase, the zipline project serves as a quality benchmark for developing tourism products and enhanced tourism experiences that we aspire to achieve."

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism has allocated the necessary land and budget for the zipline project, which has been and implemented by the Omran Group in partnership with the Musandam Governor's Office. In addition to

the zipline project, we are also developing several hiking and mountain biking trails in the Musandam Governorate, installing informational and guiding signboards that meet all required safety and security standards.

The Ministry is seeking, in cooperation with all partners, to explore investment opportunities in the Musandam Governorate's tourism sector, aiming to make it an investment of choice destination within the tourism sector. Given the uniqueness of the geographical, natural and cultural elements within the Governorate of Musandam, it serves as an ideal destination to accomplish our goal of enriching the adventure tourism sector in the Sultanate of Oman"

Eng. Maysar Al Kamzari, Development Manager at Omran Group, said, "The zipline project



falls within the framework of the Group's efforts to achieve tourism diversification in the Musandam Governorate. It will constitute a qualitative addition to the Group's projects in the region, which currently includes the Atana Hospital-ity branded assets. In addition, we are presently studying plans and programmes to enhance tourism experiences in the country further."

He added, "Our project was completed in accordance with the highest standards and specifications, and all aspects of security and safety have been verified, along with conducting more than 2000 experiments prior to the opening. It has undergone extensive testing by specialised teams per the controls and requirements set by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism to regulate the adventure tourism sector, and we are extremely

pleased with its completion."

He concluded, "I would like to extend my thanks to all the concerned parties that contributed to the completion of this unique project, which we look forward to officially opening in the near future."

The project has also generated great social benefits and added value to the local communities that surround it. A prominent example is the development of 3.5 kilometres of Jebel Fitt Street, which leads up to the Adventure Centre and the villages beyond. The development of this road has contributed significantly to the ease of movement to and from the villages.

Guests wanting to experience the zipline are welcome to visit the Oman Adventure Centre from 09:00 am to 04:00 pm, during the weekdays including the weekends and official holidays.



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ROYAL OMAN POLICE

Omani policewomen have contributed a lot in national growth

< FROM A1 "With great determination and support from everyone they have achieved their tasks with full determination," she said.

Regarding the qualities that police women must possess, Major Sheikha said honesty, sincerity, sacrifice and calmness. As the job of women differs from men, there must be a work-life balance.

Dr. Huwaida bint Hussam Al Kindiya, Senior Doctor at the Police Hospital, said: "The royal honour that comes from the Honourable Lady for sponsoring the graduation ceremony of a batch of female police on this day is a matter of pride for the Omani policewomen for the development and progress they have achieved in the national development process and in ensuring security, peace and stability throughout the Sultanate of Oman."

"The General Command of the ROP has paid great attention to women's police, which reflects the leadership's belief in the effective role that the women police can play in various departments, especially in medical services. There are many trained and qualified women cadres as doctors, nurses, laboratory technicians, and other assisting medical personnel," she added.



Based on the vision of the General Police Command on the role of the female police women, young officers have been trained professionally and they continue to build their capabilities in an environment that stimulates creativity.

The victorious march of the Omani police women continues, achieving many laurels and meeting aspirations of the people. They have become a symbol of success and struggle in various internal and external forums.

CHINA'S LOGISTICS SECTOR

China's logistics sector reported steady growth in 2022, according to an industry report. Social logistics rose 3.4 percent year on year to 347.6 trillion yuan (about \$50.4 trillion) last year, the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing said. - Xinhua

MARKET
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INDIAN PM AT G20 PRESIDENCY

Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, addressed the first meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors under India's G20 Presidency via video message. Modi urged the leading economies and monetary systems of the world to bring back stability, confidence and growth to the global economy. - ANI

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India and Germany have strong ties based on shared democratic values

The increasing cooperation between India and Germany is not only beneficial for both nations but also sends a positive message to the world

NEW DELHI: Indian prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said that India and Germany have strong ties based on shared democratic values and a deep understanding of each other's interests. Speaking at a joint press meet along with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, PM Modi noted that both nations have a long history of cultural and economic exchange. "India and Germany have strong ties, based on shared democratic values, and a deep understanding of each other's interests. There is also a long history of cultural and economic exchange between the two countries," PM Modi said. "We have a history of trade exchange. Germany is our biggest trading partner in Europe," he added. PM Modi said that he and German Scholz discussed bilateral, regional, and international issues. He stressed that the increasing cooperation between India and Germany is not only beneficial for



both nations but also sends a positive message to the world.

New opportunities

"People-to-people relations have greatly improved between the two countries, in the last few years. Today, new opportunities are opening up in all sectors due to the 'Make in India' and Aatmanirbhar Bharat campaigns. We're encouraged by Germany's interest in these opportunities," PM Modi said. PM Modi said that Germany is an important source of investment in India. "Apart from being our largest

trading partner in Europe, Germany is also an important source of investment in India. The strong ties between India and Germany are based on shared democratic values of each other's interests," he said. He further said, "Security and defence cooperation can become an important pillar of our strategic partnership. Together we will continue to strive to fully realise our untapped potential in this sector." Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi held delegation-level talks with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. External Affairs

Minister S Jaishankar, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, and other dignitaries also attended the meeting. Notably, Scholz arrived on Saturday in New Delhi for a two-day visit to India. PM Narendra Modi welcomed Olaf Scholz at Hyderabad House for the bilateral talks. Both leaders shook hands as they posed for the cameras. Taking to his official Twitter handle, Olaf Scholz said that India and Germany share "very good relations" and added that he wants to strengthen them. — **ANI**

German Chancellor Scholz receives ceremonial reception

NEW DELHI: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz received a ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Saturday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was present at the ceremonial reception. Both leaders shook hands as they met at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh was also present at the occasion. He arrived in New Delhi on Wednesday for a visit to India from February 25-26. Scholz's visit to India is the first standalone one by any German Chancellor since the commencement of the Inter-Governmental Consultation (IGC) mechanism between the two nations in 2011, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a press release. He is accompanied by senior officials and a high-powered business delegation. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz will hold a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the two leaders will discuss bilateral, regional, and global issues. PM Modi and Scholz will also interact with CEOs and business leaders of both sides.

He will also meet President Droupadi Murmu. He will proceed to Bengaluru on February 26, according to the MEA press release. Scholz's visit to India will enable both nations to take stock and progress on the key outcomes of the 6th Inter-Governmental Consultation (IGC), strengthen security and defence cooperation, work towards closer economic ties, enhance the opportunity for the mobility of talent and give strategic guidance to ongoing collaboration in Science and Technology. The MEA in the press release noted, "The India-Germany Strategic Partnership is underpinned by shared values, trust and mutual understanding. Robust investment and trade linkages, cooperation in the areas of green and sustainable development and growing people-to-people ties have strengthened bilateral relations." The MEA further stated that both nations also work closely at multilateral and international platforms, notably as part of the G4 for United Nations Security Council reforms." — **ANI**

MEDIA INTERVIEW



Joe Biden intends to seek a second term as US president

WASHINGTON: Joe Biden may have yet to announce his reelection campaign formally, but he made it clear on Friday that he intends to seek a second term as US President. "My intention is... has been from the beginning, to run," he told ABC news in a sit-down interview. He was asked about his plans after his wife, Jill Biden, said in a separate interview that her husband would run again and that there's "pretty much" nothing left to do but figure out the time and place for the announcement. "How many times does he have to say it for you to believe it?" the first lady told The Associated Press during a visit to Kenya. However, Biden said he was in no hurry to formalise his candidacy. "There's too many other things we have to finish in the near term before I start a campaign," he said. "I've got other things to finish before I get into a full-blown campaign." At 80, Biden is the oldest sitting president, and he would be 86 at the end of a second term, should he gain reelection. Although he was declared fit for his role earlier this week, there have been questions about whether he is too old to run for another term. "It's legitimate for people to raise issues about my age. It's totally legitimate to do that."

"The only thing I can say is 'watch me,'" he added, referring to his record in office. Poll results published by NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll shows half of Democrats or Democratic-leaning independents think their party has a better chance of winning the White House in 2024 with Biden as its nominee. That is in contrast to a poll released by the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research earlier this month which found just 37% of Democrats wanted him to seek a second term. Thursday's poll results, however, put Biden in a better place than former President Donald Trump, who announced his candidacy in November last year. It found 54% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents say the GOP has a better chance of winning the presidency in 2024 with someone other than Trump as the party's nominee. Nikki Haley, a former governor of South Carolina turned US ambassador to the UN under Trump, announced last week that she was running to secure the Republican nomination for president in 2024. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and former Vice President Mike Pence have also been touted as potential nominees for the Republican party.

TUNISIA

Is democratic transition at a dead end?

TUNIS: The worst fears of Tunisia's President Kais Saied's political opponents turned into bleak reality this month, when at least a dozen politicians, activists, and critics were detained and labelled as traitors or criminals by Saied. Among those arrested by the Tunisian police were Issam Chebbi, head of the opposition Republican Party, prominent Saied-critic Ezzedine Hazgui, and Chaima Issa and Jaouhar Ben M'barek, both leading members of the National Salvation Front, Tunisia's coalition of oppositional parties. Also this week, Saied targeted the country's minority migrants from sub-Saharan Africa, alleging that undocumented immigration from African countries was changing Tunisia's demographic composition. Dozens of migrants were detained, in a move harshly criticised by human rights organisations and activists. The president even went so far as to expel Esther Lynch, the Irish general secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation, or ETUC, after she called on Tunisia's government to release Anis Kaabi, the detained head of the Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT). "I am here in Tunisia to say to President Saied: The world sees what you're doing — Stop your attacks on trade unions now," Lynch had told a UGTT rally in the port city of Sfax. In response, Saied accused her of "blatantly interfering in Tunisian affairs," and gave her 24 hours to leave the country. "The expulsion of the union official reflects the shrinking space for democracy in Tunisia," Sami Tahri, UGTT deputy secretary general, told DW. "Tunisia's interests and its foreign relations will be certainly affected, as countries



require a minimum level of democracy in their relations." However, Ibrahim Bouderbala, a member of parliament and supporter of President Saied, doesn't expect international repercussions. "Ties with other countries are based on respect for the principle of sovereignty, and Tunisia does not interfere in other countries' judicial matters either," he told DW. The country's current political crackdown on dissent is a 180-degree turnaround from what developed after the Arab Spring uprisings in 2011. For years, Tunisia was seen as beacon of democratic transition in the Middle East. In 2019, when the former law professor Kais Saied won the country's presidential election, he enjoyed wide support among a population pinning its hopes on economic improvement and an end to corruption. However, on July 25 2021, Saied

suspended the elected parliament, dismissed the then-Prime Minister Hichem Mechichi and dissolved or suspended democratic institutions like the Supreme Judicial Court. According to what he called his democratic roadmap, he held a referendum on a new constitution which consolidated the president's powers. The new constitution was approved in July 2022, despite a low turnout and a boycott by several political parties. Meanwhile, recent parliamentary elections in December and January ended with a record-low voter turnout of around 11%. "Europe should say farewell to its own projections and wishful thinking of Tunisia as the poster child of the Arab Spring," Heike Löschmann, director of the Tunis office of the German Heinrich Böll Foundation, told DW. However, Anthony Dworkin, senior policy fellow at the Euro-

pean Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), pointed out that Kais Saied is a "comparatively isolated figure within Tunisia, as he doesn't have an institutional base or a party behind him, only the backing of the security forces." In turn, he doesn't see "this as a kind of stable, long-lasting new political settlement." Yet a lack of public support for Saied's political opponents has played a crucial role in the recent crackdown, and Tunisia's opposition remains deeply fractured. "The entire political class in Tunisia has been somewhat delegitimised by their failure to deal with the country's economic problems," Dworkin told DW. Tunisia has been grappling with a string of economic crises for years, a situation that was further exacerbated by the pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. — **DW**

Full story @ [timesofoman.com/world](https://www.timesofoman.com/world)

EARTHQUAKE MONITORING CENTRE

Magnitude 5.5 earthquake strikes Central Türkiye

ANKARA: A magnitude 5.5 earthquake struck Central Türkiye on Saturday, the European-Mediterranean Seismological Centre (EMSC) said. The quake was at a depth of 10 kilometres (6.21 miles), EMSC said, while the local AFAD disaster agency said it occurred at 1.27 p.m. local time (1027 GMT). The Kandilli earthquake monitoring centre said the epicentre was located in the district of Bor,

in the province of Nigde. Nigde is some 350 kilometres (217 miles) west of the Turkish-Syrian border region that was struck by two major quakes on February 6. Mayor Emrah Ozdemir told state broadcaster TRT that no damage was reported yet. Teams are on site to assess the aftermath, Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay wrote on Twitter.



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Sri Lanka announce Test squad for NZ tour

COLOMBO: Dimuth Karunaratne will lead Sri Lanka in a two-Test series in New Zealand which is all set to begin on March 9.

The series carries all important World Test Championship (WTC) points.

Apart from Australia and India, Sri Lanka are the only other team with a chance of reaching the World Test Championship (WTC) final.

They presently have 53.33% of the potential points, and to go to the final, Sri Lanka would need to

beat New Zealand 2-0 while also praying for other results to go their way.

Squad: Dimuth Karunaratne (captain), Oshada Fernando, Kusal Mendis, Angelo Mathews, Dhananjaya de Silva, Dinesh Chandimal, Kamindu Mendis, Niroshan Dickwella, Nishan Madushka, Ramesh Mendis, Prabath Jayasuriya, Chamika Karunaratne, Kasun Rajitha, Lahiru Kumara, Asitha Fernando, Vishwa Fernando and Milan Rathnayake. -ANI

Oman take on South Korea in AFC U20 Asian Cup opener

Continental championship to be held in Uzbekistan from March 1-18

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A confident-looking Oman squad will take on South Korea in their opening clash of the AFC U20 Asian Cup in Uzbekistan on March 2.

The AFC U20 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2023 will be held from March 1-18 and will witness Asia's rising stars from 16 countries raring to shine on the continental stage.

Oman, coached by Spain's David Gordo, are placed in Group C along with South Korea, Jordan and Tajikistan. The erstwhile U19 champion, returns under its new U20 brand, will also serve as the qualifiers for the FIFA U20 World Cup Indonesia 2023, which is scheduled to be held from May 20 to June 11.

Oman have participated earlier on two occasions in this prestigious youth competition – 2000 and 2014 – and never advanced beyond the group stage.

They face stiff competition in the Group C with experienced South Korea, a 12-time champion in the group. Jordan have participated seven times in the Asian championship while Tajikistan have qualified on four occasions.

Following the match against South Korea on March 2, Oman meet Tajikistan on March 5 and conclude their league engagement with a match against Jordan on March 8. Oman have made it to the



David Gordo, Oman coach

AFC Asian Cup after missing out on earlier two editions.

Ahead of the kickoff, Oman have played few friendly games but have not got the desired results, having lost to Qatar and Uzbekistan in the warm-up matches over the past few weeks. Oman are already

in Uzbekistan ahead of the championship to get acclimated to the weather conditions and have also played warm-up matches.

The competition has previously witnessed the emergence of some of the biggest names in Asian football, such as two-time Bundesliga champion Shinji Kagawa from Japan, Iranian star Mehdi Taremi, and Qatar's AFC Asian Cup champion Hassan Al-Haydos, to name a few.

Spread over 19 days, the cities of Tashkent and Fergana will host 16 of the best youth teams in Asia across four venues, as they battle to lift the coveted trophy on March 18, 2023.

The much-anticipated tournament kicks off on March 1 with an enticing Group B clash between 2010 finalists Australia and 2016 semifinalists Vietnam at the Istiqlol Stadium in Fergana whereas in Group A, two former champions, Indonesia and Iraq are set to square off at the Lokomotiv Stadium in the capital

city of Tashkent on the same day.

Oman made it to the AFC Asian Cup after finishing as Group G topers in the qualifying competition.

Making a comeback after a five-year hiatus, the biennial tournament will see as many as eight former champions lock horns with each other in a bid to reclaim the throne whereas the remaining teams will be determined to better their best finishes from the earlier editions.

With the highly sought after title and one of the four coveted spots at the upcoming FIFA U20 World Cup up for grabs, the AFC U20 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2023 promises to be a memorable and thrilling experience for the passionate fans of Asian football.

Participating teams: Group A: Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Iraq, Syria. Group B: Qatar, Australia, Iran, Vietnam. Group C: Oman, South Korea, Tajikistan, Jordan. Group D: Saudi Arabia, China, Japan, Kyrgyzstan.



REF: OFM -01-2023
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Start date for tender	26.02.2023
Date for Visit location	27.02.2023 + 28.02.2023
Closing date of the tender	06.03.2023
Mode of payment of tender fee	By cash – Finance dept.
For communication	Mr. Shabib Al-Balushi # 98047984

Therefore, please contact the person to inquire, and submit the offer in a sealed envelope with the tender Ref no. mentioned, and drop its at the tender box in Oman Flour Mills company at Atiyab Investment Building- Reception.



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Only person who genuinely reached out to me has been Dhoni, says Kohli

BENGALURU: The strong bond that Virat Kohli shares with Mahendra Singh Dhoni is well-known among Indian cricket fans.

Kohli recently shared some insights into the strong bond he shares with Dhoni. "I have experienced a different kind of phase in my career recently. It's been a while since I felt (this) free in the sense how I felt all these years of playing at any level of cricket," said Kohli on RCB Season 2 Podcast.

Kohli has played 106 Tests, 271 ODIs and 115 T20Is for India in a career spanning 15 years scoring over 25000 international runs.

"What is interesting is that throughout this phase apart from Anushka, who has been the biggest source of strength for me because she has been with me throughout this whole time and she has seen me very closely as how have I felt, things that I have gone through, the kind of things that have happened...the only person who, apart from my childhood coach and family...genuinely reached out to me has been MS Dhoni."

Kohli shared the dressing room with Dhoni for 11 years during their stint with Team India between 2008 and 2019.

"He reached out to me and you can rarely get in touch with him. If I call him on any random day, 99 percent he will not pick up (the phone), because he just does not look at the phone."

"So, for him to reach out to me...twice it has happened now and one of the things that he'd mentioned in the message while reaching out to me was that: 'when you are expected to be strong and looked at as a strong individual people forget to



ask how are you doing?"

Virat Kohli's association with the Royal Challengers Bangalore started in 2008 and he became the team's captain in 2011 until he stepped away from the role in 2021.

He further added, "So, it (Dhoni's words) hit home for me because I have always been looked at as someone who is very confident, mentally very strong, who can endure any circumstances and find a way and show us the way. Sometimes, what you realise is that at any given point of time in life as a human being you need to take a couple of steps backwards, understand how you are doing, how your wellbeing is placed."

"So, there are not many places, for the people who have played the game for a long period, as

strong individuals, they can go and explain in a way that the other person can understand. That's why I mentioned this particular incident because MS Dhoni knows exactly what is going on, he understands it because he has been there himself."

Kohli offered the reason for Dhoni reaching out to him while stressing on the point of them going through similar phases in life and career.

"He has experienced what I have experienced right now. So, it is only out of the experience, and feeling those feelings in that moment is the only way you can be truly compassionate and understanding towards another individual who is going through the same thing." -ANI

Changan SUV UNI-K: Elegant design and outstanding performance

Changan Auto's UNI Series range (UNI-K, UNI-T and UNI-V) is positioned as a futuristic and fashionable segment, the entire UNI series range offers progressive design and smart technologies features which are only in luxury brands

MUSCAT: With the perfect combination of stunning design, technology and driving dynamics, Changan's ultra-luxurious crossover UNI-K 4WD comes equipped with exceptional features that have proven its versatility in all forms. It delivers a plush blend of the posh and spacious interior, rewarding ride and handling, and powerful engine performance. Its stunning appearance, smart technology, and definite safety underline the cores that define a good crossover SUV.

UNI Series: (Luxury models of Changan Auto) Changan Auto's UNI Series range (UNI-K, UNI-T and UNI-V) is positioned as a futuristic and fashionable segment, the entire UNI series range offers progressive design and smart technologies features which are only in luxury



brands. Changan UNI's range of automobiles is devoted to creating a new experience with highly technological and sporty exterior design coupled with avant-garde interiors. For a luxury model to be 'sporty at a glance', the UNI range adopts a short overhang and long axle design, adding a sporty feeling to a luxury range. This improves the overall handling of the UNI range having high agility and high-speed stability when driving. The UNI range has adopted pure, precise and agile exterior design elements. The hidden door handle design blends in with the body, making it simple and sophisticated. The UNI family's classic borderless grille design is combined with the narrow, sharp headlamps on both sides for an intense look. The aerodynamic airship-shape spoiler improves driving stability and is fashionable in aesthetics. The space battleship gear shift knob has a sporty design, giving the user a sense of exploration on every trip. Equipped with the IACC system, the UNI range can achieve L2 autonomous driving having features of FCW+AEB+LDW+LAS+TJA+AEB+LCDA. UNI range is equipped with four high-definition

wide angle cameras giving 360-degree view around the vehicle in real-time to park your vehicle safely. The UNI range adopts a simplistic yet avant-garde interior design. It uses an asymmetrical design in the instrumentation and centre console as well as bright colours that create technically dynamic interiors. It adopts the Intelligent Cockpit Interaction System which appears to be two screens staggered on the surface, but internally they are connected as one has a high-resolution display and adaptive backlight control to protect the eyes from fatigue to the max while reading and driving. The UNI range features newly designed seats with fuller side wings which also provide more reliable support and confidence when cornering. The wireless charging provides ultra-fast charging with wide-range compatibility.

A spokesperson for AGAE said, "A premium, spacious cabin and a blissful ride puts the UNI-K right among the top of the luxury compact SUV class. It is a great choice for anyone interested in an impressively styled luxury crossover. Changan SUV UNI-K offers more space, a more premium interior, and more technology. It is

also loaded with technology with multiple displays, voice control, and advanced driver assistance systems." We request everyone to visit the Changan showroom to experience the future auto design and advanced features available in UNI-K.

UNI-K 4WD: (UNI-K 4wd comes in 2 Variants Royal and Platinum)

Under the hood, the premium UNI-K Royal carries a 233 horsepower 2.0-litre turbocharged engine, paired with 8-speed Auto Transmission which makes the UNI-K as thrilling to drive as it is to look at. It has exterior features that distinguish it to be a futuristic SUV including 21-inch alloy wheels, panoramic sunroof, split and auto LED headlamps, Trident DRLs, ORVM – Electrically Folding.

The Changan UNI-K Royal is equipped with innovative features not previously available in this segment of cars like the 8-way Electrically Adjustable Driver Seat with Electric Lumbar Support, 4-way Electrically Adjustable Co-driver Seat and a premium quality audio system with 12 speakers. It has unique features like streaming inside rear view mirror, remote Engine Start/ Stop, driver seat



headrest with speakers and triple HD screen with 12.3" Infotainment system. The rear seats can be almost fully flattened creating a superior large space. The trunk volume is 518 litres and can be extended to 1,412 litres when rear seats are folded down.

It has a comprehensive set of safety features such as Front Airbags, Side Airbags, Curtain Airbags, ABS +EBD+BA+TCS+HHC+HDC+DBF, Auto Hold Function, Front & Rear Parking Sensors, 360 ° Panoramic View, Adaptive Cruise Control and Automatic Emergency Brake. When making a turn or approaching an intersection, the system is designed to detect forward or laterally approaching oncoming vehicles and provides audio/visual alerts and automatic braking in certain conditions. Lane Change Assist is designed to notify the driver via audible and visual alerts and slight steering force if it senses the vehicle is leaving the lane without engaging a turn signal. Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA) for added peace of mind by helping to detect vehicles approaching from either side while backing out

and alerting you with a visual and audible warning.

The 4WD drive type Changan luxury UNI-K has several exterior specifications, most notably the body's exterior dimensions with a length of 4865 mm, width of 1948 mm, height of 1695mm and wheel-base length of 2,890 mm. The trunk volume is 518 litres and can be extended to 1,412 litres when rear seats are folded down.

Now in 2023, UNI K 4WD also available in Platinum variant which is equipped with 20" Alloy wheels, Panoramic Sunroof, Hidden Door Handles, LED Head lamps and Taillamps, Leather seats with 6-way electrically adjustable driver seat and 4-way electrically adjustable co-driver seat, Electric Lumbar support, front, side and curtain airbags are standard Plus has 360° Panoramic view camera, adaptive cruise control, forward collision warning, Automatic emergency brake, front and rear parking sensor, Bluetooth, wireless charger and voice control function, Sony audio system with 7 speakers, Push start button and independent AC for rear with separate control panel.

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ROUND-UP

AL WATHBAH ACADEMY PROGRAMME

Bank Muscat partners with SMEs Development Authority



MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate, has partnered with the SMEs Development Authority to launch the Al Wathbah Academy entrepreneurial training for Omani SMEs in Al Wusta.

The Al Wathbah Academy programme, which is part of the bank's CSR commitment to deliver long-term benefits to the nation, is being held in Duqm this year and will benefit 25 Omani entrepreneurs. In this context, the Authority recently signed an agreement with the bank to provide the programme for Omani entrepreneurs, who will get training certificates on successful completion of the programme as well as special consultancy sessions for SMEs. It was signed by Abdulaziz Said Al Raisi, Vice

President of the SME Development Authority and Ibrahim Khamis Al Balushi, Senior Assistant General Manager - SME, Bank Muscat.

Ibrahim Khamis Al Balushi, Senior Assistant General Manager - SME, Bank Muscat, said: "We are pleased to partner with SMEs Development Authority to conduct this year's Al Wathbah Academy programme in Duqm to take the fruits of world-class entrepreneurial training to Omani SMEs in Al Wusta. The Al Wathbah Academy, which was launched by the bank in 2014, reflects the bank's commitment to sustainable development in Oman by strengthening the role of SMEs. The bank continues to implement plans to develop Omani entrepreneurship as part of its commitment to the development of the country."



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ahlibank celebrates opening of its new iconic headquarters building in Wattayah

MUSCAT: In line with its continuous endeavour to provide a unique banking experience to its customers, and a conducive work environment for its employees, ahlibank celebrated the official inauguration of its new iconic headquarters building in Al Wattayah.

The milestone event was held under the auspices of Abdul-salam Mohammed Al Murshidi, President of Oman Investment Authority, along with top delegates, customers and stakeholders. A significant milestone in the bank's journey, the opening of the bank's new building, comes in line with its commitment to supporting the country's socio-economic growth and to Oman Vision 2040. The bank also dedicated the evening to its 15th anniversary, as a testament to ahlibank's commitment and progress as a critical player in the Sultanate's banking sector.

Expressing his delight at the success of the celebration, Said Abdullah Al Hatmi, Chief Executive Officer of ahlibank, commented, "The inauguration of the new building not only evidences our business growth but also signals a further deepening of our longstanding commitment to our customers and the Sultanate as we continue to strive for new levels of excellence in the banking industry. We firmly believe that business success goes beyond profit and numbers, it also includes the lessons learned along the way. Expansion has always been a key part of our growth strategy, and this spectacular celebration attests to the same. This is not only a huge step for ahlibank, but also for the country as a whole."

"At ahlibank, we consistently strive to provide a stimulating work environment for employees. We encourage them to think creatively and critically, incorporating smart technologies to keep pace with a dynamic market and charting sustainable ways of doing business. This has helped the bank create an efficient internal ecosystem that ultimately benefits its clients," Al Hatmi added.

Emphasising the modern building layout and facilities, Al Hatmi stated, "Embracing operational innovation, the latest digital advancements, and people-centric values, the new building focuses on creating a comfortable place to work and thrive. Bringing together the best of information technology and infrastructure, the new building has enhanced security levels and ensures an uncompromised, streamlined, and seamless flow of processes."

An exciting agenda surrounded the celebration, which began with an in-depth tour of the new building and its facilities, which dedicated a corner for the bank's milestones and achievements, followed by an extensive overview of "ahliExpress", the bank's multifunctional device, and its growing suite of digital banking services.

The bank's new building has innovation at its core and has several facilities tuned to match a modern lifestyle. It follows an open-plan layout accommodating 1,000 employees, and other outstanding facilities. Focusing on enhancing accessibility, the three HQ buildings which are stretched over 34,000 square meters are linked through a network of corridors with a contemporary design which also connects the multi-level parking building to each of the floors of the building. The 7-storey new building has more than 600 parking spaces for the bank's employees and customers.

The new state-of-the-art building is built keeping the highest international innovative standards of architecture in mind. With ahlibank's proven digital competence in providing a futuristic operating environment, the new building also incorporates enhanced digital services to reduce turnaround time and increase the accuracy of transactions. Treating customer convenience and satisfaction as critical pillars for success, the bank's holistic efforts have been thoughtfully geared towards ensuring a premium banking experience for its elite clients.

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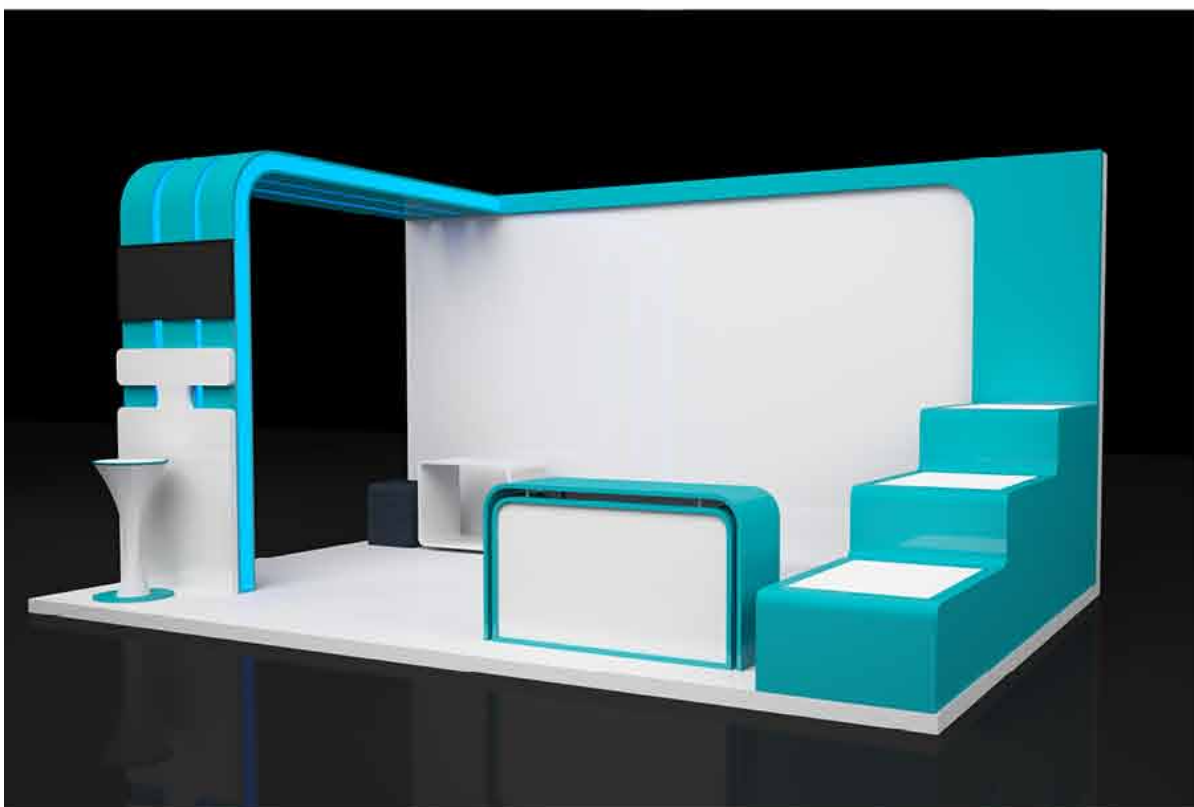
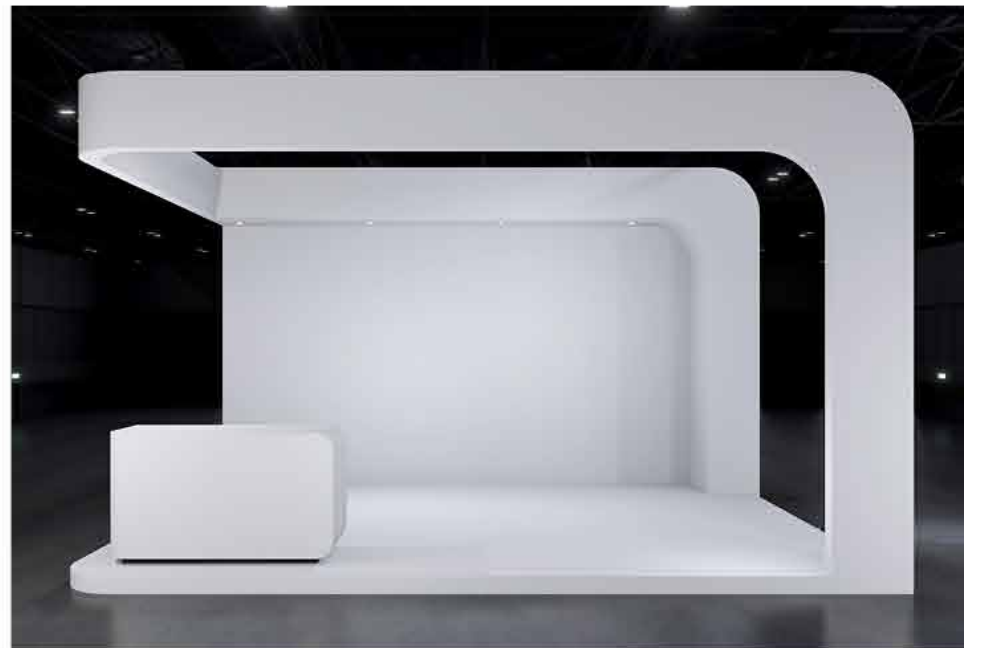
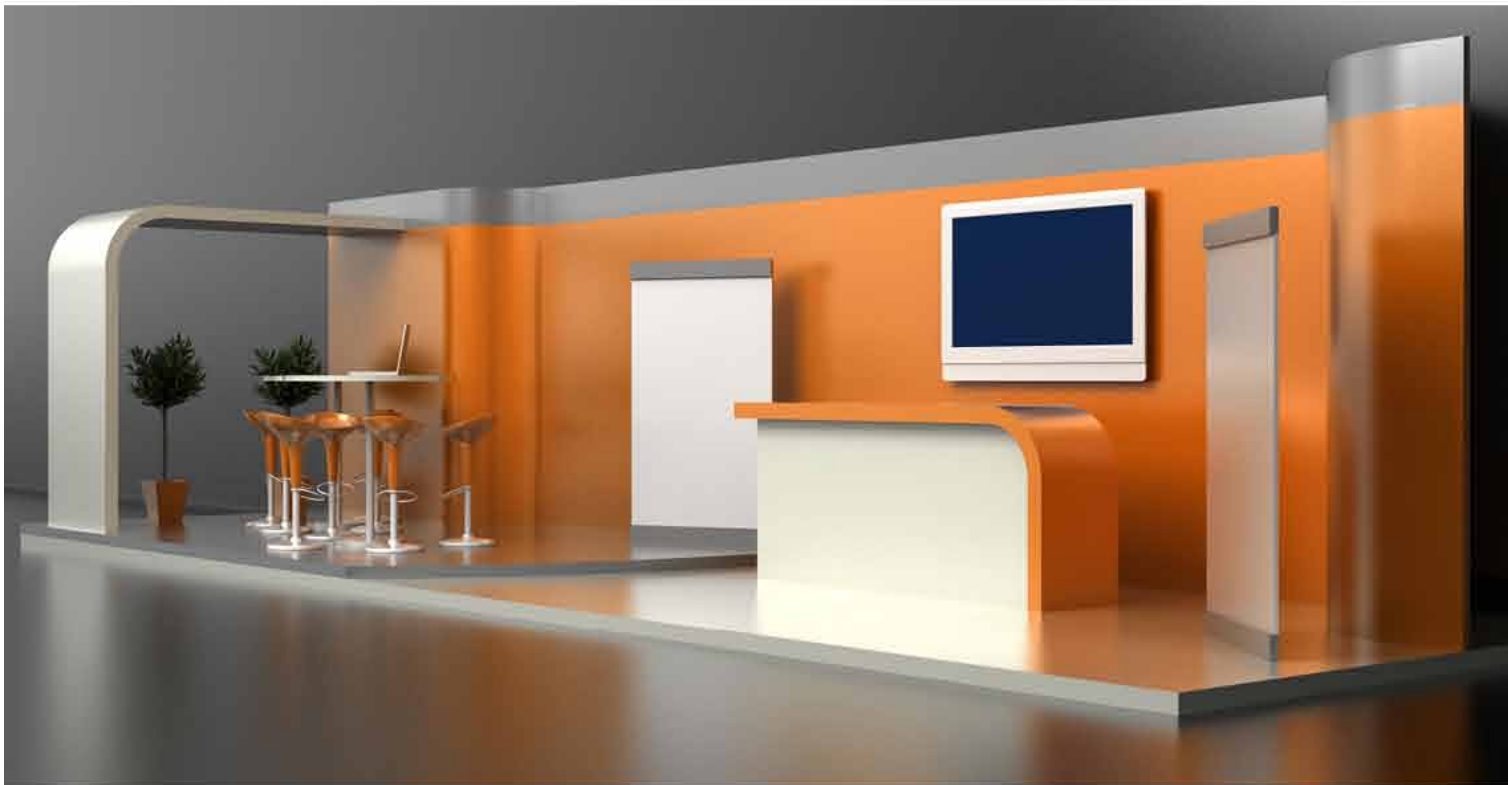
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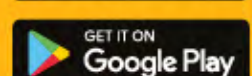
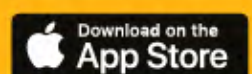
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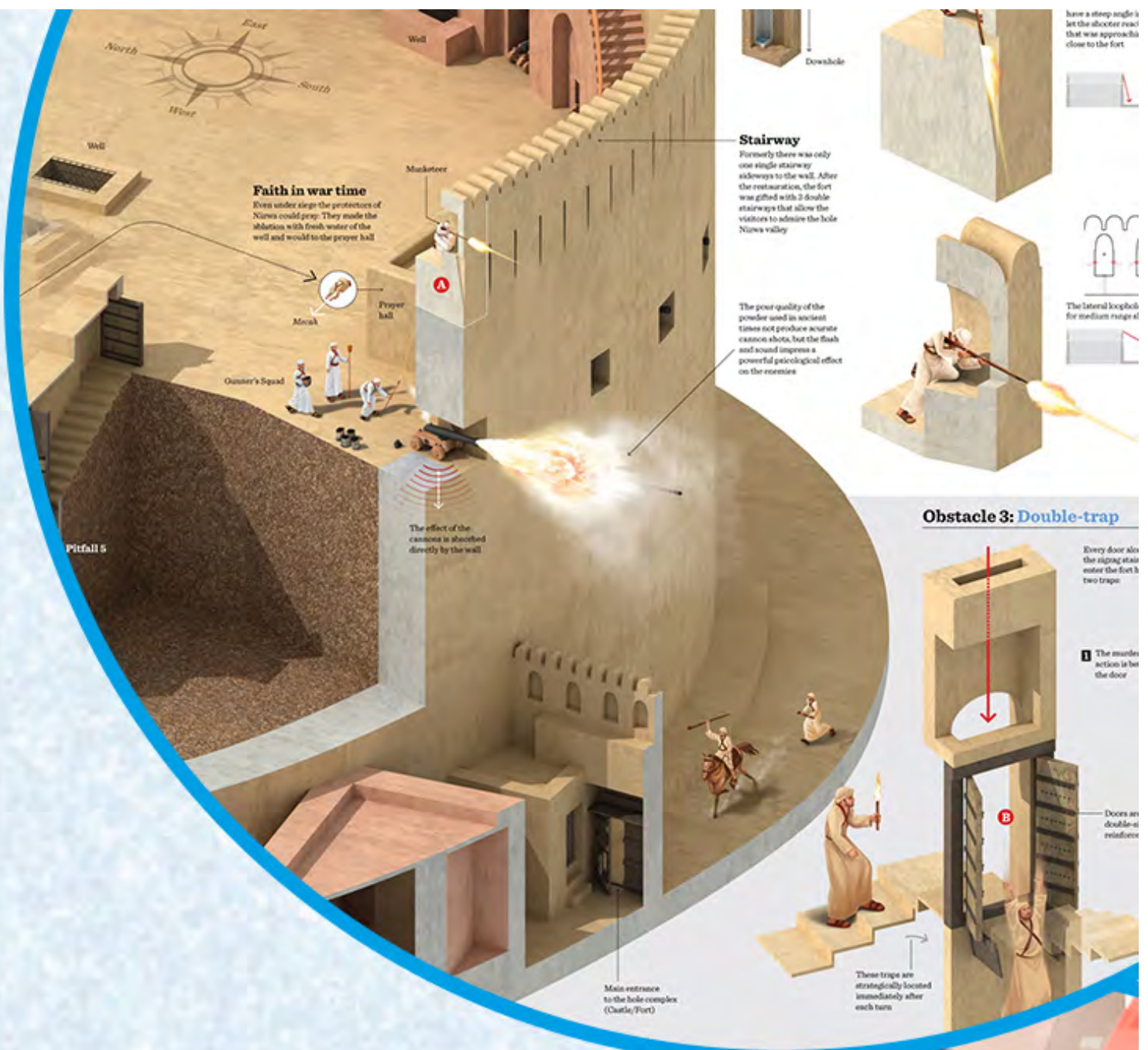


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