

CONTEST TO DESIGN BEACH HUTS, UMBRELLAS LAUNCHED

South Al Sharqiyah Governorate launched a competition on Sunday to design beach huts and umbrellas. The contest is for young Omanis specialised in the fields of civil engineering, architecture and design. **>A6**



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HM SENDS GREETINGS TO SINGAPORE

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to President Tharman Shanmugaratnam on the occasion of electing him as a new President of the Republic of Singapore. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes of success to President Tharman to lead the friendly people of Singapore towards further progress and welfare, wishing the friendship relations between the two countries further development and growth. — **ONA**



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Ministerial decision issued to ensure smooth transaction

Times News Service

MUSCAT: For a smooth transaction between the creditor and the debtor, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP), issued a ministerial decision No.473/2023 specifying the return on obtaining a commercial loan or debt.

The decision is based on the text of Article (80) of the Commercial Law issued by Royal Decree No. (55/90).

The law stipulates that a creditor shall have the right to exact interest in exchange for the procurement by the debtor of a loan or commercial debt.

Such interest shall be determined by the agreement of both parties within the limits specified by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment promotion in agreement with the Oman Chamber of Commerce



and Industry every year, taking into consideration the "term of the loan and the purposes and risks thereof, where the debtor fails to make the repayment on the due date the creditor shall be entitled to exact the agreed interest for the period of delay.

Article No.1 of the decision stipulates that the return for obtaining a commercial loan or debt shall be set at 6 percent unless less than that is agreed upon. **>A5**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Oman participates in Embassy Festival

1 Oman, represented by its Embassy in the Netherlands, participated in the Embassy Festival, in The Hague. At the pavilion, the visitors learned about Oman's heritage attractions. **>A2**



WORLD

US president visits storm-ravaged Florida

2 American President Joe Biden visited storm-ravaged Florida on Saturday in the wake of Hurricane Idalia, reviewed the situation in affected areas and met residents. **>A7**

MARKET

CMA launches Strix System for risk matrix

3 The Capital Market Authority (CMA), represented by Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Financing Terrorism Department, launched Strix System. **>B1**

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING



Cases of human trafficking can be reported in 14 languages, including Arabic, English, Urdu, Bengali and Filipino

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman launched an awareness campaign 'Insan' to combat human trafficking.

Launched on Sunday, the campaign will continue till 30 October 2023, and target people from all segments of society by publishing public awareness messages in 14



languages, including Arabic, English, Urdu, Bengali and Filipino.

In addition to social events, activities, lectures, workshops, features, press releases, TV and radio interviews, messages will be published through different channels like street billboards, digital screens at Muscat International Airport and Salalah Airport, websites, platforms and social networks.

Sheikh Khalifa Ali Al Harthy, Foreign Ministry's Undersecretary for Political Affairs

and Chairman of the NCCHT, said, "The Sultanate of Oman accorded a great attention to combating the crime of human trafficking and all its practices, which contravene lofty human principles and values, impede human rights and insult human dignity."

Al Harthy added that, given the importance of society's role in addressing this crime, Oman focused on community awareness about the crime. As a first step, Oman established the NCCHT

website, which provides a comprehensive account of laws and measures on identifying trafficking victims, the method of reporting cases of human trafficking to the authorities and ways to seek assistance through 14 international languages, said Al Harthy, noting that the two-month campaign begins on Sunday and lasts till 30 October 2023.

The National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking (NCCHT) launched the campaign titled "Insan" (Human) to outline the concept of human trafficking and its related international agreements, besides highlighting the Sultanate of Oman's efforts on tackling the phenomenon

In its second edition, the campaign will contribute to the consolidation of the mechanism of detecting and reporting human trafficking by highlighting its indicators, negative impacts and legal consequences.

The campaign's launch ceremony was held at the Diplomatic Club.

SHURA ELECTIONS

All-round welcome to 'Intikhab' application for Shura polls

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Shura Council elections are one of the important pillars of Oman's governance and the forthcoming polls in October have already created a lot of buzz among the voters and the candidates.

To ensure fair and swift declaration of results, the Ministry of Interior has allowed the use of 'Intikhab' mobile application.

Voters will need to validate their registration for the use of the app on the day of elections and the ministry recently extended the period for submitting applications for registering fresh voters or transferring the electoral files of existing voters who wish to elect members for the Majlis Al Shura's tenth term.

The deadline has been extended to Thursday, September 14, 2023.

Applications can be filed via 'Intikhab' app or through the elections' website (elections.om), depending on the permanent or current address noted on an applicant's ID card.

The ministry emphasised the citizens about the importance of



Abdullah Humaid Al Hadhrami

verifying the status of their registration in the electoral register to be allowed to be eligible for voting.

Franchise

Welcoming the use of 'Intikhab' app, Abdullah Humaid Al Hadhrami, a candidate from the Wilayat of Samail told *Times of Oman*: "The application has made it easy for voters to exercise their franchise on the voting day from their homes and without interruption.

"I strongly believe the app will help an increase in percentage of voting, which is a very positive



Mutasem Al Mamari

sign for polls."

Al Hadhrami added: "The facilities in the application also provides the candidates the option of updating his or her views, which is a big relief as it reduces the financial burden on the campaign and we can reach out to our voters through the application."

Preparations are underway for the elections, with more than 800 candidates in fray, including 35 women, for the council seats for the next four years. The application will help citizens to discuss all aspects related to elections and



Younis Al Abri

watch the candidates' vision and their profiles.

Mutasem Al Mamari, a doctor in a government hospital, said: "The application will be a relief to many as it will spur women and youth to use it and exercise their franchise. Voting is an important part of our system."

On being asked whether voting through phone would impact the Omanis' approach, he replied: "It needs years of data to answer this question, although this process [voting through app] has been used earlier in the Municipal



Khalfan Al Nadabi

Council elections."

Al Mamari added: "It is hard to speculate whether the number of voters will increase this year. However, what is certain is that the forthcoming elections will witness an increase of a new group of participants, particularly the youth and women. Women and physically challenged people previously faced difficulties to reach the voting centre on election day. Youth are the maximum users of the phone and this application will also give Omanis living abroad the right to vote." **>A2**





OMAN

PRAYER TIMINGS



Dhuhr.....	12:11pm
Asr.....	3:39pm
Maghrib.....	6:28pm
Isha.....	7:40pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:33am



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SHURA ELECTIONS

< FROM A1 Application for voting in polls

Another young citizen, speaking on condition of anonymity, said: “I will be voting for the first time as I feel it will be much easier this time with a mobile app. In the past, I didn’t vote as I was not keen to go to the polling booth due to large crowds. At times, the weather also played a role in my decision not to vote. This application has made it easy to participate and vote from any place. This would save money and effort for so many community groups and will be welcomed by old people, youths and women.”

Khalfan Al Nadabi, a retired Royal Omani Air Force (RAFO) warranty officer said, “The application will facilitate a wide range of participation and give strength to the democratic process of Oman. I am looking forward to using the application for voting. I believe the votes will be safe with adequate security measures taken in the application.”

Younis Al Abri, a master’s student at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), said, “I will participate in the Shura elections but I have some concerns. I fear that voting through an app risks being hacked. Voting at a polling booth with ballot papers is always the safest method. I also fear there could be technical glitches during voting while using the application with such a large number voting around the same time.”

‘Intikhab’ provides a package of electoral services, including primary and final lists of candidates, primary and final lists of voters, verification of registered voters, and follow-up of automated counting indicators on the voting day.

TOURISM AND HERITAGE ATTRACTIONS

Oman participates in Embassy Festival in the Netherlands



THE HAGUE: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by its Embassy in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, participated in the Embassy Festival, held annually in The Hague.

At the Omani embassy’s pavilion, Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Salim Al Harthy, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, received the Mayor of The Hague, ambassadors of participating countries, the Chairman of the Netherlands Business Council for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and senior visitors who expressed their admiration for Oman’s notable presence.

At the pavilion, the visitors learned about Oman’s key tourism and heritage attractions, as well as the country’s unique historic accomplishments.

The pavilion was established by the Tourism Office of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism and representatives of the Omani Vil-lage in the city of Nijmegen.

Oman is keen to participate in the annual Embassy Festival, the largest forum in Europe. -ONA



TENDER NOTICE

Oman Water & Wastewater Services Company (NAMA WATER SERVICES) hereby announces the following Tenders: -

Tender No.	Description	Eligibility	Tender Fee (RO)	Last Date of Sale Tender Documents	Bid Submission Date
T/ 2473917/ 2023	Provision Pipe Rehabilitation Software	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and International Companies specialized in the works mentioned specialized in the works mentioned	R.O. 50/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	19/9/2023	9/10/2023
T/2465914/ 2023	Consultancy Services for Secondment of Master Planning Expert	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and International Companies specialized in the works mentioned specialized in the works mentioned	R.O. 50/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	19/9/2023	16/10/2023
T/2467916/ 2023	Call Off maintenance contract of Security Systems	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned	R.O. 50/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	19/9/2023	9/10/2023
T/2473916/ 2023	Supply of Mechanical Items _ SANITAIRES for A'Seeb STP	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned.	R.O. 50/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	19/9/2023	9/10/2023
T/2460891/ 2023	Construction of Water Distribution Network and House Connections in Al Dayer at Wilayat Madha in Musandam Governorate	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned	RO 100/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	19/9/2023	23/10/2023
T/2457830/ 2023	Construction of Water Distribution Network for Sana'a, Al Saleil (4) and Industrial Area in Wilayat Adam.	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned	RO 500/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	19/9/2023	23/10/2023
T/2480933/ 2023	Cleaning and Hospitality Services for OWWSC instead of Muscat Governance	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned	R.O. 1500/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	19/9/2023	23/10/2023

The tender document can be purchased from Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) e-tendering page (Supplier Login) from the date of publication of this announcement until 19/09/2023.

The applicants shall pay the tender fee through electronic payment gateway through Supplier Login. Applicants who are not registered with Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) shall register from <https://owwsc.nama.om/Business-with-Us/Vendor-Registration> to have the login credentials of Supplier portal. All applicants who have paid the tender fee shall have access to the Tender Documents through Nama Water Services e-tendering page (Supplier Login).

All participating Companies shall submit a Bid Bond of 1% of the bid value in a sealed envelope to Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) Chairman of Tender Committee not later than 3:00 pm on the bid submission date.

Bid Bond must be obtained from a Bank registered in the Sultanate of Oman and it should be addressed in favour of Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services). The bid along with all required documents shall be uploaded through Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) e-tendering page not later than 3:00 pm on the date specified above.

For more details refer to Tender Page of our website www.owwsc.nama.om or Email to: tender@owwsc.nama.om





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COMMENTARY

The family’s extra luggage



Saleh Al-Shaibany

In a busy mall, I was looking at a child pulling her mother’s abaya towards a coffee shop where a saleswoman was promoting donuts sold at a bargain price. The mother took a quick look at the direction of where her daughter was pointing then slapped her hand. The little girl buried her face on the side of her mother as both mum and daughter kept on walking. Scenes like that go unnoticed all the time but they may make a significant effect much later as years roll by. Children can be demanding and parents feel the burden. But with life’s stress hitting the roof, parents find themselves struggling with expenses of raising their young ones. The art of raising a child is never taught at school. They never prepare you for that. They teach you science and math, apart from other subjects, but not to look after the emotions and turmoil of being a parent years later. We find that there are two ways to cope with the role of a parent. Learn from your parents in the days when you were a child or learn as you go when you are a parent of your own children. Both ways, it leaves your head reeling when children scream for attention. It seems their demands are endless. Some young parents now prefer to shower their

kids with gifts to keep them amused while the rest find a quick slap is better. But do we connect the past and the present? Did a slap or constant toys worked for us when we were growing up in our parents’ homes? It is frightening to think how little ones may grow up to be when they leave home to seek independent lives. I think most parents prefer to blank it out and not think about it. With long hours at work, bills to pay and personal trauma, raising children in this day and age is never easy. The ‘manual’ of raising children is re-written all the time as new challenges come up in different modes. Many parents just cope in different ways hoping their children will eventually be ‘alright.’ No wonder now not many young couples want to have more than a couple of children. But real life examples tell you that parents still ‘walk’ through the same path, whether they have two or five children. I was not shocked when a couple in their thirties said they have extra luggage when they were planning for their holiday. They did not mean the ‘baggage’ but the ‘children’. I still laugh when I remember his words. They probably realize now that the ‘extra’ luggage is something they never thought before they got married. Only now they know it will be a long-term baggage to carry for their entire length of their young lives. However, we all went into that path but if anyone out there who is not willing to be a parent then they should stay single. They are always strings attached in parenthood and being a bachelor is probably a solution to those who prefer freedom.

MEETINGS

SAF Chief of Staff meets top Chinese Navy official

MUSCAT: Lt General Abdulah bin Khamis Al Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan’s Armed Forces (SAF) received Lieutenant General Xu Jingming, Chief of Staff of the Chinese Navy, and the military delegation accompanying him, at Al Mu’tada camp on Sunday morning. During the meeting, a number of topics including matters of com-

mon interest were discussed. The meeting was attended by a number of senior officers headed by the Chief of Staff of the Sultan’s Armed Forces. The Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman, also met Lieutenant General Xu Jingming, Chief of Staff of the Chinese Navy, and the military delegation accompanying him. -ONA



Advertisement for Oman United Insurance Company SAOG. The ad features a central graphic with a handshake and various insurance icons (car, house, factory, people, etc.) surrounding the text 'CORPORATE INSURANCE'. Below this, it lists services: 'WE OFFER PROPERTY, MARINE, PROJECT, PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY, WORKMEN COMPENSATION, FLEET, GROUP PA & EMPLOYEE BENEFIT INSURANCES ALL UNDER ONE ROOF!'. It also states 'PROVIDING FLEXIBLE INSURANCE SOLUTIONS SINCE 1985 FOR ALL YOUR INSURANCE NEEDS, CHOOSE US'. The company name 'OMAN UNITED INSURANCE COMPANY SAOG' and contact information are provided at the bottom.



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C 300	2022-2024	4

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Recall Action: As a precautionary measure Zawawi Trading Company team will check the bolting of the ground connections and perform according repairs, if necessary. Zawawi Trading Company team will contact the customers affected by the recall to arrange a convenient time from: 04.09.2023 on all working days between 08:30AM-5:30 PM to will check the bolting of the ground connections and perform according repairs, if necessary.

To check the serial numbers of the affected commodities, please visit the website from Recalls & Warning: http://recall.pacp.gov.om

Advertisement for the sale of used Rent-a-car vehicles. The ad features the logo of Khimji Ramdas (KR) and the text 'Sale of used Rent-a-car vehicles Kia Rio and Mitsubishi Outlander'. It invites offers for the purchase of the above vehicles and states that the highest bidder for an individual will be given preference. It also mentions that anyone can bid, even for a single car. The tender form can be collected from the Khimji Ramdas Head office, Muttrah Street. Contact information is provided: Gopi Nair, Tel: 247 65 557.

OMAN VISION 2040

Workshop held to draft national plan for biotechnology



MUSCAT: The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation today held a preparatory workshop for a project to draft the national strategy for biotechnology within the context of Oman Vision 2040.

Specialists, experts and researchers from vital sectors took part in the workshop, held at Muscat Innovation Complex.

Dr. Kawthar Ibrahim Al Balushi, expert in research and innovation programs at the innovation complex and Chair of the National Committee for Biotechnology, underscored the significance of efforts undertaken to prepare the National Biotechnology Strategy's draft version.

The workshop reviewed the strategic objectives of the sectors

related to biotechnology and priorities of biotechnology applications in Oman.

The participants were briefed about the latest developments in national strategies around the world, in countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States of America, South Korea, China, and India, with a view to establishing basics and capabilities for the strategy in Oman.

The workshop offered an opportunity to analyse the current nature of biotechnology procedures in the participants' sectors, the needs, the challenges involved and proposals for drafting a preliminary draft of the biotechnology sector's objectives.

-ONA

PREPARATORY MEETING

GCC higher education ministers discuss projects



REVIEW PROJECTS: The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Dr. Bukhait Ahmed Al Mahri, Undersecretary for Higher Education. -ONA

MUSCAT: The GCC undersecretaries of higher education and research held their preparatory meeting in Muscat on Sunday for the 23rd meeting of the committee of GCC ministers of higher education and research.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Dr. Bukhait Ahmed Al Mahri, Undersecretary for Higher Education.

The undersecretaries discussed implementation of decisions made at the 43rd session of the GCC Supreme Council pertaining to the general framework of stud-

ies and joint research of priority to sustainable development in the GCC states.

During the meeting, the undersecretaries reviewed the projects of the Committee of GCC Ministers of Higher Education and Research in relation to strengthening joint Gulf action and following up the implementation of the committee's strategic plan (2022-2026) and the most prominent initiatives. They also touched on several common topics that serve joint research cooperation among GCC states. -ONA

GCC

Education undersecretaries review Supreme Council directives

MUSCAT: GCC Undersecretaries of Education held in Muscat on Sunday their preparatory meeting for the 7th meeting of the Committee of GCC Ministers of Education.

The meeting was held under chairmanship of Dr. Abdullah Khamis Ambusaidi, Undersecretary for Education.

The undersecretaries discussed the directives of the GCC Supreme Council and the Ministerial Council, such as digital transformation, rejecting terrorism and extremism, promoting international cooperation, status of all GCC institutions, organisations, and offices under the umbrella of the Secretariat, in addition to protecting moral, religious, and family values

in the Gulf societies.

The undersecretaries also reviewed the action plan of the Committee of Ministers of Education for the years (2021-2026), and cooperation in achieving the fourth goal of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (quality education).

On-the-job training

They also discussed a proposal of the Sultanate of Oman, and the Secretariat's General proposal for on-the-job training.

The meeting was concluded with a discussion focusing on the effects of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on education.

The meeting came out with a

set of recommendations that include assigning a technical work team from the ministries of education in the GCC countries to find a unified vision about the areas of international cooperation and mechanisms in the field of education, holding periodic workshops in the member states for specialists in all sectors concerned with continuing learning during crises, and benefiting from evidence and training portfolios previously completed by the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) on education highlighting Islamic values and citizenship (intellectual fortification, community participation, family education, and media culture). -ONA



Second International Forum on Frankincense opens in Salalah

45 researchers and academics in botany from the Sultanate of Oman and abroad took part in the forum

SALALAH: Activities of the 2nd International Forum on Frankincense "Luban" was opened in Salalah on Sunday under the slogan "In order to advance the development of phytotherapy".

As many as 45 researchers and academics in botany from the Sultanate of Oman and abroad took part in the forum.

Hosted by Dhofar University, the forum was opened under the patronage of Dr. Saud Hamoud Al Habsi, Minister of Agricultural, Fisheries and Water Resources.

The forum aims to underline the importance of research and development in the field of frankincense and medicinal plants by transferring knowledge to industry.

Dr. Amer Ali Al Rowas, Vice Chancellor of Dhofar University, gave a speech during which he pointed out that the forum in which researchers from 13 countries participate, in addition to participation from governmental and research institutions from the Sultanate of Oman, is a scientific phenomenon that explores a set of research and scientific studies on local plants in general and the frankincense tree in particular.

The first day of the forum witnessed the discussion of two main topics, the first of which dealt with the ongoing research activities at the Research Center in Dhofar University.

The second theme focused on frankincense research trends around the world. A set of working papers were presented dealing with research and development in technological and scientific enhancement of extraction and separation processes. The forum also shed light on vital activities of endemic plant components, including the Omani frankincense tree, and its contribution to regional



The exhibition also included photos showing how frankincense is extracted, collected and transported in Dhofar Governorate.

economic and industrial development, as well as the medical benefits of Omani frankincense.

On the sidelines of the forum, a cooperation agreement was signed between the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources and Dhofar University. The agreement aims to promote and sponsor research and scientific initiatives in the field of agricultural and fishery sciences.

An exhibition was also opened that included several corners highlighting student research in the field of agriculture, medical preparations, oils and perfumes produced from Omani frankincense derivatives. The exhibition also included photos showing how frankincense is extracted, collected and transported in Dhofar Governorate. -ONA



KHOR AL MILH - A NATURAL SOURCE OF SALT IN OMAN



Khor Al Milh, in the wilayat of Quriyat, is a natural source of salt and showcases a wonderful palette of colours. It is one of the most famous sites in the Sultanate of Oman for extracting 'natural salt' using traditional methods. Spread over an area of 2,000 sqm, the extraction of salt becomes begins with the rise in temperatures and continues until November. -ONA



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CR No. 1/28349/4

EA explores Al Rimani turtle nests in Masirah

The project aims to determine the number of young turtles and the extent to which their nests provide a suitable habitat



MUSCAT: For the second year in a row, specialists from the Environment Authority have been joining hands with experts from

the NOAA (the US-based National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and an Omani seas future team in implementing a project to study the success rate of Al Rimani turtle nests in the Wilayat

of Masirah, Governorate of South Al Sharqiyah.

The project aims to determine the number of young Al Rimani turtles and the extent to which their nests provide a suitable hab-

itat, identify the difficulties that the turtles face and forge practical solutions for the challenges.

The project also includes ways of enhancing the capabilities of ecosystem supervisors in Masirah Island, Al Halaniyat Islands, Daymaniyat Islands and the Ras Al Hadd reserve.

The project, a five-year a wild-life conservation venture that started in 2022, is the outcome of a memorandum of understanding signed by the government of the Sultanate of Oman and the government of the United States.

As part of the project, field surveys are conducted annually between the months of May and October, the period during which the turtle nests are enumerated, the eggs are examined and safety measures are cross-checked. -ONA

MINISTERIAL DECISION

Decision to be effective for one year

< FROM A1 It added that the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion may - in each case separately - agree with the Oman Chamber of Commerce and In-

dustry to override this percentage if the loan period is long or its purpose is related to projects that will contribute to achieving economic development or the degree of risk is high.

Article No.2 of the decision said that the provision of Article No.1 does not apply to loans provided by banks and financing companies and the leasing assets licensed by the Central

Bank of Oman.

Article No.3 stressed the decision shall be effective for a period of one year from the date of its publishing in the Official Gazette.

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Tender Number	Tender Description	Last date to collect the tender	Tender return date	Grade
PRE/23/153 87/2023/MM/QS-55 Re-Call-01	Maintenance Works at different locations at Muscat Governorate (Re-Tender)	11/09/2023	19/09/2023	Specialist
PRE/23/184 2023/MM/HQ-51	Consultancy & Branding Services For Muscat Municipality	24/09/2023	15/10/2023	Specialist
PRE/23/178 2023/MM/HQ-52	Supply and fixing of Shades Near Kalbhu Park	24/09/2023	15/10/2023	Specialist
PRE/23/157 2023/MM/HQ-53	Supply and fixing of Solar Lights at Umq-Ribakh	24/09/2023	15/10/2023	Specialist
PRE/23/158 2023/MM/HQ-54	Supply and replacement of lights to Solar Lights at Al Aalam	24/09/2023	15/10/2023	Specialist
PRE/23/151 2023/MM/HQ-55	Consultancy Services for Master Planning For Al Amerat Park	24/09/2023	15/10/2023	First
PRE-23-168 2023/MM/HQ-56	Design and Construction of Internal Roads in Al Seeb and Boshier 2023 - 2024	24/09/2023	15/10/2023	Excellent
PRE/23/141 2023/MM/QS-63	Beautification Works in Al Qasabi Area at Al Wadi kabir	24/09/2023	15/10/2023	Second
PRE/23/142 2023/MM/QS-64	Beautification Works in Alnoor Area at Rowi	24/09/2023	15/10/2023	Second
PRE-23-179 2023/MM/QS-65	Maintenance of Arches Fountain at Sultan Qaboos Street	24/09/2023	15/10/2023	Specialist

- Bidders shall submit their offers electronically.
- Clarification and Support:
 - For any inquiries regarding tenders, please visit e-tendering website: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) .
 - For technical support of e-tendering system please send an email to (etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om) or call (+96824402200).

A SERIES OF DISCUSSIONS

Georgetown University in Qatar unveils Hiwaraat Conference Series

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) is preparing to lead a series of discussions on shared global challenges and the geopolitical events shaping today's world.

Dubbed the Hiwaraat Conference Series, after the Arabic word for dialogues, the inclusive platform brings together scholars, policymakers, diplomats, and government officials from around the world to contribute innovative solutions to a wide range of global and regional issues.

Variety of themes

The series will cover a variety of themes ranging from the 2003 Iraq war, the history of Islamophobia and its current iterations, and the ongoing challenges surrounding Afghanistan, to the future of water security in the Gulf region and the social and cultural dynamics shaping the global energy landscape.

Dr. Safwan Masri, Dean of Georgetown University in Qatar,



Dr Barham Salih. - Supplied picture

said Hiwaraat will serve as a discussion platform that leverages the university's position as a beacon of intellectual exchange and collaboration to address past and current challenges from a fresh perspective.

"As GU-Q Dean, I am thrilled to announce the launch of 'Hiwaraat,' a thought-provoking series of signature Georgetown events that introduces a fresh, practice-focused format, distinct from traditional academic assemblies. Our mission



is to bring together distinguished experts and accomplished practitioners for action-oriented discussions that yield real outcomes. At the upcoming inaugural conference, delving into the ongoing impact of the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, a notable former Iraqi statesman is set to take the stage as the keynote speaker, joined by diplomats, scholars, and international media figures," he said.

The first conference in the series, titled "The Invasion of Iraq: Regional Reflections," assesses the conflict's profound geopolitical and socioeconomic repercussions that continue to reverberate across the globe twenty years later.

Convened by Dr. Masri, in collaboration with the Center for In-

ternational and Regional Studies (CIRS), the three-day conference will kick off on September 14 at the Four Seasons hotel in Doha.

Foregrounding diverse Iraqi voices, the conference will feature high-profile speakers from the US and MENA region for a comprehensive exploration of two decades of political, economic, and social upheaval in the region, and the obstacles that continue to confront future generations in Iraq. Live Arabic and English translation will be available throughout the conferences.

To register and learn more details about the conference, including the full list of participants and the schedule of panels, please visit: <https://hiwaraat.qatar.georgetown.edu>.

CONTEST

Competition to design umbrellas, beach huts launched in South Al Sharqiyah

Times News Service

MUSCAT: South Al Sharqiyah Governorate launched a competition on Sunday to design beach huts and umbrellas.

The Governorate of South Al Sharqiyah, in cooperation with the General Directorate of Housing and Urban Planning, launched a competition for designing beach huts and umbrellas, targeting young Omanis specialised in the fields of civil engineering, architecture and design.

Engineer Ahmed bin Khalfan Al Shuaibi, Director of the Urban Planning Department at the General Directorate of Housing and Urban Planning in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate, and Chairman of the Beach Huts and Umbrellas Design Competition Committee, said: "The idea of the competition came from the interest in Omani youth, listening to them and benefiting from their ideas to achieve the aspirations of Oman Vision 2040, and the priority of developing the governorates."

Al Shuaibi explained that the competition aims to provide the tourism sector in the governorate with modern and innovative projects.



The South Al Sharqiyah Governorate is characterised by a coastal strip that attracts many tourists throughout the year, especially in the summer, which is characterised by moderate temperatures.

"The competition will encompass the fields of urban planning, civil and urban engineering, and design. Participants can apply individually or within a team consisting of two to five members. The

participant can present modern designs with a contemporary artistic vision for beach huts and umbrellas, that suit the nature of the governorate's beaches, and are compatible with the terms and conditions of the competition," Al Shuaibi added.

Al Shuaibi explained that the competition's supervisory committee has prepared a technical guide that contains the conditions

and standards that must be adhered to.

He pointed out that contestants can register via a link designated to receive entries.

After that, in the first stage, ten qualifying participants will be announced for the second stage of the competition, and will present their project idea to the jury. In the end, three contestants will qualify for the first three places.

CONFLICT-RIDDEN REGION

Congo and Uganda: Will new roads serve as war compensation?

KAMPALA: When Ugandan troops marched on the border of the Democratic Republic of Congo at the end of November 2021 for a joint military operation, the Congolese were astonished to see shovel excavators, bulldozers and asphalt machines delivered along with the expected war equipment. People cheered and clapped. The sight of such machines is a rarity in Congo's conflict-ridden eastern region, which is covered in muddy, potholed roads.

These machines were set to work just a few kilometers across the border, where the only wooden bridge over the Semliki River was found to be full of holes, making it impassable for heavy vehicles. So, under the protection of the soldiers, the road construction machines set about repairing it.

Ugandan troops last crossed this border almost 25 years ago. Back then — in the midst of the 1998 to 2003 Second Congo War — they illegally invaded Congo to plunder valuable raw materials such as gold and diamonds. When the Ugandans finally withdrew after five years, there was not much left of the roads and bridges.

'Repairing roads an essential part of the military operation'

But now, the soldiers have come at Congo's invitation. Their goal is to defeat the Ugandan Islamist Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group, which has been entrenched in the impassable border area since 2007. This time, the Ugandans don't want to destroy Congo's



infrastructure — they want to rebuild it.

"Repairing the roads is an essential part of the military operation," a Ugandan army colonel told DW.

Security in eastern Congo's conflict zones can only be achieved through the construction of better roads, explained Kristof Titeca, a professor in development studies at the University of Antwerp.

"Roadblocks are an important source of income for these armed groups," he told DW.

These roadblocks are usually erected on dilapidated bridges or deep potholes, where trucks can only progress slowly. On the one hand, better roads could be used to cut off the flow of money to the militias. At the same time, it will make it easier for the armed forces to intervene in difficult-to-

reach areas.

"Many call [eastern Congo] a safe haven for armed groups, because there's very little state presence and there's very bad infrastructure. All of these makes it very difficult for state armed forces to intervene and take action. So, the building of roads indeed would facilitate that," said Titeca.

Better roads in Congo are also beneficial for Uganda's economy, said Susan Kataike, spokesperson for Uganda's Transport Ministry. Most of the trucks on Congo's bumpy roads are from Uganda's logistics companies, which often carry perishable goods such as plantains to Uganda.

"It takes them a long time to reach [Uganda], so they make a lot of losses," Kataike told DW. "The stretch between Kasindi and Beni

has been greatly improved and I am told that a journey that used to take people three hours is now only 40 minutes. That's how beautiful this project is."

From old enemies to new friends?

A lot is changing quickly, especially since Congo joined the East African Community in April 2022, which effectively doubled the territory of the bloc overnight.

Congo is an economic heavyweight in the region. On the one hand it's a huge sales market, as it produces very little itself. But on the other hand, it is rich in raw materials such as rare earth elements, which have to pass through neighboring countries to reach the global market.

There are also a number of oil

reserves lying dormant along the border with Uganda, which — if all goes to plan — will be pumped to the world market via the East African Crude Oil Pipeline, currently under construction. With all of this combined, the East African Community states expect economic advancement.

One obstacle

But there is one obstacle: The sheer size of Congo — a country roughly the size of Western Europe. It has an asphalt road network of just 3,000 kilometers (1,860 miles) — a major factor as to why trade is not gaining momentum in the region.

Enter Uganda, which has pledged to help Congo with road construction. The government in Kampala also hopes that its "strategic" project will help double its own exports to the country.

But the road construction project is actually part of a larger effort. DW has been able to see a partnership agreement from November 2020 in which the Ugandan road company Dott Services and the Congolese state-owned mining company SAKIMA have committed to a joint venture dubbed "Punia Kasese Mining" (PKM), in which Dott Services will hold 70% of the shares.

This gives the Ugandan company access to lucrative mining concessions in Congo's Maniema Province and also in Ituri Province — right on the border with Uganda and on the exact location where Ugandan troops raged during the Second Congo War, drawn by rare earth elements such as tin

and tantalum.

According to the document, Dott Services will not only supply new mining equipment for this area, but will also tar the local airfields. Not only that, high-voltage lines are to be built parallel to the new roads in order to boost industrial mining in eastern Congo. Many Ugandans say they don't have sufficient energy to power for their homes.

Uganda ordered to pay Congo \$325 million in compensation

The fact that Ugandan taxpayers' money is now being used to expand infrastructure in Congo has raised questions on both sides of the border.

In August, the Ugandan government once again asked the World Bank for a loan of over €500 million (\$542 million) to repair the dilapidated roads in the capital, Kampala. Uganda's parliament has been debating the Congo issue for a long time. After all, many argue, since the national debt is already too high, why would Uganda invest its tax money in roads in neighboring Congo, and not its own?

The background: Uganda owes Congo a substantial amount of money. In 2005, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, which regulates disputes between states, ordered Uganda to pay compensation to Kinshasa for the gold, diamonds and timber stolen during the Second Congo War.

— DW

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ADITYA-L1 SUN MISSION

First earth-bound manoeuvre successful, satellite healthy: ISRO

NEW DELHI: Aditya-L1 spacecraft which was lifted successfully to study the Sun made its first earth-bound manoeuvre on Sunday.

ISRO in its latest update said the satellite is "healthy and operating nominally" and the next manoeuvre is scheduled for Tuesday 0300 hrs IST.

Shifting the focus to its next space odyssey after successfully placing a lander on the moon's uncharted South Pole region, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched from Sriharikota on Saturday the country's maiden solar mission -- Aditya-L1.

It carried seven different payloads to have a detailed study of the sun, four of which will observe the light from the sun and the other three will measure in-situ parameters of the plasma and magnetic fields.

Aditya-L1 will be placed in a halo orbit around Lagrangian Point 1 (or L1), which is 1.5 million km away from the Earth in the direction of the sun. It is expected to cover the distance in four months' time.

Aditya-L1 will stay approximately 1.5 million km away from Earth, directed towards the Sun, which is about 1 per cent of the Earth-Sun distance. The Sun is a giant sphere of gas and Aditya-L1 would study the outer atmosphere of the Sun.

ISRO said Aditya-L1 will neither land on the sun nor approach the sun any closer.

This strategic location will enable Aditya-L1 to continuously observe the sun without being hindered by eclipses or occultation, allowing scientists to study solar activities and their impact on space weather in real-time. Also, the spacecraft's data will help identify the sequence of processes that lead to solar eruptive events and contribute to a deeper

understanding of space weather drivers.

Major objectives of India's solar mission include the study of the physics of solar corona and its heating mechanism, the solar wind acceleration, coupling and dynamics of the solar atmosphere, solar wind distribution and temperature anisotropy, and origin of Coronal Mass Ejections (CME) and flares and near-earth space weather.

On August 23, India took a giant leap as the Chandrayaan-3 lander module successfully landed on the moon's South Pole, making it the first country to have achieved the historic feat and bringing to an end the disappointment over the crash landing of the Chandrayaan-2, four years ago. Overall, India became the fourth country — after the US, China, and Russia — to have successfully landed on the moon's surface.

After having landed, the Vikram lander and the Pragyan rover performed different set tasks on the lunar surface, including finding the presence of sulphur and recording relative temperature.

Upon landing, the lander and the rover were to operate for one lunar day. One day on the Moon is equal to 14 days on Earth. — ANI

Full story @ timesofoman.com/world

Full story @ timesofoman.com/world

US president visits Florida, reviews situation in storm-ravaged areas

During his visit, the US President sympathised with the people and said, “Your nation has your back and we’ll be with you until the job is done”

FLORIDA: American President Joe Biden visited storm-ravaged Florida on Saturday in the wake of Hurricane Idalia, reviewed the present situation in affected areas, met residents and thanked emergency responders, CNN reported on Saturday.



During his visit, the US President sympathised with the people and said, “Your nation has your back and we’ll be with you until the job is done”. The post-disaster trip, though otherwise by the book, was partly overshadowed by a lead-up featuring contradictory statements from the White House’s team and representatives for Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, a Republican presi-

Biden’s previous visits after major emergencies in the Sunshine State, and represents one of the first times the two have shown signs of their political rivalry while responding to a disaster. As per CNN, upon reaching Florida, the president and first lady Dr. Jill Biden met with GOP Sen. Rick Scott, federal personnel, local officials and first responders in Florida’s Live Oak for a response and recovery briefing. The US President and the first lady also took an aerial tour of impacted areas before delivering their statements. When the reporter asked President Biden if he was disappointed that DeSantis didn’t join Saturday’s tour, Biden said he was not and said, “The governor may have had other reasons.” Biden formally approved a major disaster declaration for Florida on Thursday, making federal funding available to those in affected counties. Approximately 1,500 federal responders are on the ground in Florida, including search and rescue personnel and members of the Army Corps of Engineers. In the wake of Hurricane Idalia and other recent disasters, the Biden administration on Friday asked Congress for USD4 billion for FEMA’s Disaster Relief Fund in addition to a request for USD12 billion last month. US-based publication reported, as the White House pushes Congress to pass a short-term spending bill to avoid a shutdown and ensure the continuity of government services, the president has signalled that he’s ready to blame Republicans if there isn’t enough funding to respond to disasters. For his part, DeSantis has lobbied unapologetically for the kind of disaster aid that as a congressman he voted against as wasteful spending. -ANI

RESTRICTIONS

Taliban stop woman from studying in Dubai

DUBAI: Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor is a successful Dubai businessman who has granted scholarships to some 100 Afghan women to continue their studies in the United Arab Emirates. However, the Taliban have barred women in Afghanistan from attending university. Some scholarship recipients planned to fly from Kabul to Dubai last week to study abroad, where Al Habtoor would have welcomed them. But the Taliban refused to allow the young women to leave shortly before their scheduled departure. “The fact that the Taliban prevented their departure caught us completely off guard,” Al Habtoor told DW. “We were shocked because we diligently arranged all the necessary approvals with the help of Dubai’s local authorities, including the foreign affairs office, immigration, and police, who assisted us. Everyone collaborated to facilitate the entire process, and everything was ready.” The Dubai billionaire, who founded the successful conglomerate Al Habtoor Group, took to X, formerly known as Twitter, to share a voice message sent by one of the women barred



CURBS: Afghanistan’s hard-line Taliban rulers have prevented women scholarship recipients from flying to the United Arab Emirates to continue their studies. -DW

from flying to Dubai. In her message, the woman says she was escorted by a male, a requirement since December 2021 when the Taliban adopted a law whereby Afghan women need a male guardian, like a husband or close relative, to travel further than 46 miles or leave the country. **Amnesty International decries crackdown on women’s rights** After two decades, the Taliban

returned to power in August 2021. Despite initial promises to respect women’s rights under Sharia, or Islamic law, the Taliban have enacted a series of laws that drastically restrict the rights of women and girls. Women have been pushed out of public life, excluded from educational institutions and the labor market, and their freedom of movement is severely restricted. The Taliban are systematically disenfranchising Afghan women,

said human rights organization Amnesty International, which can be considered a crime against humanity. Reports seen by Amnesty International show the Taliban are also explicitly targeting female human rights defenders, activists, former local helpers, former government employees and members of ethnic and religious minorities. Amnesty International’s latest report on the country says arbitrary arrests, disappearances, torture and extrajudicial executions have been commonplace in many places of Afghanistan for the past two years. **Women call for international pressure on Taliban** “The world is just looking on,” Zahra Rajabi, a young Afghan woman banned from continuing her studies, told DW. “We are tired of people saying they regret seeing these circumstances. Surely, the international community can take a stand and make sure these circumstances change.” Rajabi hopes pressure from the international community will force the Taliban to revise their decision and reopen secondary schools and universities for women. -DW

EXERCISE BRIGHT STAR-23

Egyptian plane gets refuelled by IAF jets



CAIRO : Indian Air Force (IAF) IL-78 air-to-air refuelling aircraft refuelled aircraft from the Egyptian Air Force during Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23, informed Indian Air Force on Sunday. The IAF said, “Showcasing the bonds of friendship in the skies over Egypt during Exercise Bright Star, where the Indian Air Force IL-78 air-to-air refuelling aircraft refuelled aircraft from the Egyptian Air Force”. Earlier, in a significant move towards fostering global defence cooperation, an Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent reached the Egyptian Air Force Base to participate in Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23 on Monday. “Touchdown at the Egyptian Air Force base in Cairo. Our home for the next three weeks”, informed the Indian Air Force on X, formerly Twitter. The IAF contingent will take part in the biennial multilateral tri-service exercise at Cairo (West) Air Base, which started on Sunday and will culminate on September 16, the Ministry of Defence informed through a press release. This will mark the first participation of the IAF in Ex BRIGHT STAR-23, which will also see the participation of air force contingents from the US, Saudi Arabia, Greece and Qatar. -ANI

SHIFTING GLOBAL DYNAMICS

ASEAN-India alliance emerges as a formidable force

NEW DELHI : Amidst shifting global dynamics and India’s transformative transitions, the ASEAN-India alliance emerges as a formidable force. From being Regional Dialogue Partners in 1992, it matured into a 2022 Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and was propelled by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Act East Policy with commerce, culture, security, connectivity, and cooperation intertwined. PM Modi’s forthcoming Jakarta visit amidst the G20 Summit signifies commitment to ASEAN, the Indo-Pacific outlook, according to Maheep, a leading analyst of India’s Foreign Policy. He has been teaching and researching international relations and global politics over a decade. As ties deepen across trade, defence, cultural exchanges, and geopolitical strategy, the ASEAN-India partnership stands strong. A shared vision propels mutual growth amid evolving global dynamics. Amidst the shifting tides of the global order and India’s own transformative politico-economic transitions, the ASEAN-India relationship emerged as a force to reckon with. This evolving context set the stage for a new chapter in international affairs by laying the foundation for the blossoming relationship between ASEAN and India. As the world redefined itself and India reshaped its identity, the convergence of these changes paved the way for a partnership that would form the course of regional dynamics and global cooperation.



India’s formal engagement with the Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) began in 1992 as a Regional Dialogue Partner, and this relationship kept on becoming stronger with time eventually culminated into a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and ASEAN in 2022. Scheduled from September 5 to 7, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s forthcoming visit to Jakarta for the India-ASEAN and East Asia Summits, even amidst his commitments at the G20 Summit on September 9-10, symbolizes not only a remarkable gesture but also underscores India’s robust ASEAN ties. This visit reaffirms ASEAN’s central role in India’s foreign policy vision, particularly concerning the Indo-Pacific, Southeast, and East Asia. India and ASEAN have a multifaceted and long-standing

relationship that spans many domains, including cultural, economic, political, and security. India’s engagement with ASEAN got a major fillip with the formulation of India’s Act East Policy which evolved out of the Look East Policy (LEP) formulated in the ‘90s, by PM Narendra Modi in 2014. LEP was basically an economic strategy whereas Act East Policy (AEP) added geostrategic dimensions to it. AEP also brought India’s Northeast region to the centre of India’s developmental as well as geopolitical strategy. AEP is geared towards developing markets and connectivity links with Southeast Asia, and this Act East (through Northeast India) is now becoming Act Indo-Pacific policy. Under AEP, the regional connectivity between India and ASEAN countries is emerging with India’s Northeast region as a focal point

for multimodal and intermodal infrastructure development between the two regions. A renewed focus on the 3Cs – Commerce, Culture and Connectivity along with maritime security, climate change, disaster management, traditional and non-traditional security aspects now encompass the India-ASEAN relationship. Initially, the inter-regional linkage between India and Southeast Asia was limited to that of sea and air. Of late, realisation dawned upon the leaders that for an effective economic relationship between the two regions, road connectivity is of paramount importance. In this regard, several modes of connectivity projects were initiated by India in partnership with the Japanese government, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank. The objective was to bind the

two regions in closer connectivity to maximally realise the hitherto unexploited economic potential of both regions in the areas of trade, commerce, and investments. Some significant regional connectivity projects include the India Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral (IMT) Highway and the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project. The IMT Trilateral Highway aims to connect Moreh in Manipur, India to Mae Sot in Tak province, Thailand via Bagan and Mandalay in Myanmar with an approximate stretch of 1,360 kilometres. The Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project is a multimodal connectivity project to enable the shipping of freight from India’s north-eastern region to Myanmar, providing an alternate mode for transit and transportation of goods. The connectivity projects no longer remain limited to physical connectivity but an overlying emphasis is also being put on digital connectivity. In this regard, digital connectivity projects have been scaled up with Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam and Myanmar. India and ASEAN have a robust trade and investment relationship as well. They have a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in goods since 2010, and in services and investment since 2015. The long pending review of the existing FTA seems now a work in progress and is expected to be concluded by 2025. The bilateral trade between India and ASEAN reached USD 86.9 billion in FY 2020-21, making ASEAN India’s fourth-largest trading partner.

The trade basket itself is transforming from trade in agricultural raw materials and food to trade in manufactured products, according to Maheep. The development cooperation between the two parties has also been gaining traction. India has established three funds to support cooperation projects with ASEAN member countries which include the ASEAN-India Cooperation Fund, the ASEAN-India Green Fund, and the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund. These aim to provide the ASEAN nations with technical assistance and capacity-building through initiatives like the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme, the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), and the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation. Sharing a rich cultural heritage and civilizational links dating back to the ancient period, India and ASEAN are also witnessing growing people-to-people and cultural ties. Various platforms such as the Delhi Dialogue, the ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks, and the ASEAN-India Business Council, among others, have been promoting cultural exchanges, tourism, and people-to-people ties between the two parties. Security and defence cooperation have also become a major pillar of the India-ASEAN relationship. India is a member of various ASEAN-led mechanisms that deal with regional security aspects including the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting Plus (ADMM+), and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum. -ANI

SPORTS

MUSCAT TO HOST IN JANUARY 2024

Oman clubbed with Malaysia, US, Fiji in men’s Hockey5s World Cup

SALALAH: Oman have been clubbed with Malaysia, United States and Fiji in Group D of the inaugural edition of the FIH Hockey5s World Cup Oman 2024, which will be held in Muscat from January 24-31.

The draw of the prestigious event was held at a glittering ceremony in Salalah in the presence of FIH President Tayyab Ikram, chief guest H.H. Sayyid Firas bin Fatik Al Said and Undersecretary of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth Basil bin Ahmed Al Rawas.

In the women's event, hosts Oman were drawn in Pool A along with Malaysia, Fiji and



Netherlands. Australia, South Africa, Ukraine and Zambia are placed in Pool B. India, United States, Poland and Namibia are in Pool C, while New Zealand, Uruguay, Thailand and Paraguay complete Pool D.

In the men's competition Netherlands were drawn with Pakistan, Poland and Nigeria in Pool A. India, Egypt, Switzerland and Jamaica will compete in Pool B. Australia, New Zealand, Trinidad & Tobago and Kenya are

placed in Pool C. The 16 men's and women's teams from around the world will all be vying to become the first ever Hockey5s World Champions when the World Cup gets underway on January 24.

FIH President Ikram, in his message congratulated all the 32 teams that qualified for the FIH Hockey5s World Cup and said: "I would like to congratulate all the 16 men's and women's teams that will be a part of the record books as the first teams to compete in an FIH Hockey5s World Cup. You represent the very best of Hockey5s; and you will be the trailblaz-

ers and the role models for all future players who take up this new and exciting format of our beloved sport"

Speaking about the new era that the FIH Hockey5s World Cup 2024 ushers in, he added: "The draw ceremony today not only sets up the path to the gold medal for our teams, but also heralds the dawn of a new era in Hockey. Hockey5s is not just a very exciting format, but it is also a highly accessible version of Hockey that I am sure will inspire even more youngsters to pick up the stick and the ball and start playing our beautiful sport.

"Special thanks to Oman Hockey Association as they will, as we know it, put together a fantastic show for the inaugural Hockey5s World Cup."

Oman qualified as host nation for the tournament but featured in the Hockey5s Asia Cup that concluded in Salalah on Saturday. In the men's event, Oman finished third to pick up a bronze after defeating Malaysia.

India won the men's and women's titles. India men along with Pakistan and Malaysia made it from Asia while India women qualified along with Thailand and Malaysia.

Verstappen’s perfect ten

Unmatched Dutch driver makes F1 history as he became the first to win ten consecutive races after winning the Italian GP

MILAN: Red Bull's Max Verstappen set an all-time record for consecutive wins with victory in the Italian Grand Prix on Sunday. The Dutchman became the first driver in F1 history to win ten races in a row. As well as winning the past 10 races, Verstappen has taken victory in 12 of the 14 grands prix so far this season.

Verstappen and Red Bull came out on top in a battle against the Ferraris and made more F1 history – the Dutchman moving ahead of Sebastian Vettel's record of nine consecutive wins with 10 wins on the bounce and the team stretching their winning run to 15 races.

Verstappen slotted behind the pole-sitting Carlos Sainz at the start but hounded his rival as the opening stint wore on, eventually forcing the Ferrari driver into a mistake at the first chicane on Lap 15 and then sweeping past around the outside of the Curva Grande.

From there, the reigning double world champion never looked back, pulling out a comfortable advantage up front for his latest



F1 record as Sainz, team-mate Sergio Perez and the other Ferrari of Charles Leclerc fought over the remaining podium positions.

After an action-packed finale and some fierce defending from Sainz, it was Perez who emerged with the runner-up spot behind Verstappen, giving Red Bull their sixth one-two finish of the season as they turned the tables on Ferrari at the famous marque's home track.

Verstappen now leads Perez in the championship by 145 points as his third drivers' title draws ever closer.

Speaking after the win Verstappen said: "I mean I never would

have believed [10 wins] was possible, but we had to work for it today, so that made it a lot more fun. We had good pace and good on the tyres, but they had strong top speed."

"It was so hard to get close and get a move into T1, I had to force [Sainz] into a mistake. I tried to stay patient, it's a long race, and I could see they were struggling with the tyres and I just had to pick my moment."

Sainz and Leclerc sent heart rates racing at the Scuderia as they went wheel-to-wheel over third all the way to the chequered flag – a huge lock-up from the Monégasque into the first chicane on

the last lap settling the scrap in his team-mate's favour.

Behind the drama at the front, Mercedes logged a solid double points finish as George Russell and Lewis Hamilton came home fifth and sixth respectively, despite both drivers being hit with five-second time penalties.

Russell took his for leaving the track and gaining an advantage at the first chicane in a fight with Alpine driver Esteban Ocon, while Hamilton – who used a different tyre strategy to make up ground late on – took his for a clash with McLaren's Oscar Piastri at the second chicane.

Alex Albon gave Williams some

more points in seventh, defending from the other McLaren of Lando Norris in a race to the finish line, as the Aston Martin of Fernando Alonso and Alfa Romeo of Valtteri Bottas completed the top 10.

Liam Lawson finished on the brink of the points in his second appearance in place of Daniel Ricciardo at AlphaTauri, with Piastri 12th after that incident with Hamilton and a five-second penalty for leaving the track and gaining an advantage.

Williams rookie Logan Sargeant was left to rue his own coming together with Bottas, and a five-second time penalty for causing that collision, en route to 13th, followed

by the other Alfa Romeo of Zhou Guanyu and Pierre Gasly's Alpine.

It was a quiet afternoon for Aston Martin's Lance Stroll after his back-of-the grid start, the Canadian taking 16th at the chequered flag from the Haas machines of Nico Hulkenberg and Kevin Magnussen, who had another challenging race day.

Two drivers failed to make it to the finish, with Esteban Ocon retiring late on in the second of the Alpines and Yuki Tsunoda watching the action from the sidelines after a reported engine failure on the formation lap put his AlphaTauri out before the race had even started. - Agencies

LEGEND DEPARTS

Former Zimbabwe captain Heath Streak dies aged 49

JOHANNESBURG: Former Zimbabwe captain and coach Heath Streak, who had been suffering from colon cancer, has died at the age of 49.

He had been receiving specialist treatment at a Johannesburg hospital, travelling from his home in Bulawayo on a bi-weekly basis since May. He is survived by his wife, Nadine, and four children.

Streak is Zimbabwe's all-time leading wicket-taker and once took 6-87 in a Test against England to earn a place on the Lord's honours board.

He was serving an eight-year ban from cricket, issued in 2021, for corruption offences.

"He was carried to be with the angels," his wife Nadine wrote on social media. "In the early hours of this morning, Sunday 3 September, the greatest love of my life and the father of my beautiful children, was carried to be with the angels from his home where he wished to spend his last days surrounded by his family and closest loved ones. "He was covered in love and peace and did not walk off the park alone."

He represented Zimbabwe in 65 Tests, making him their second-most capped Test player, and 189 ODIs between 1993 and 2005. He was their leading bowler, with 216 Test wickets and 239 ODI wickets - also the only Zimbabwe bowler to take more than 100 Test wickets and over 200 ODI wickets. He was also their seventh-highest Test run-scorer, with 1990 runs, and one of 16



Zimbabwe batters to score more than 2000 ODI runs, finishing with 2943.

The son of Denis, who played cricket for Rhodesia, Streak made his international debut as a 19-year-old in an abandoned match against South Africa in Bengaluru during the 1993 Hero Cup, a five-team tournament played in India. Coincidentally, one of the umpires in Streak's debut game - Pilo Reporter - also died on September 3 in Mumbai at the age of 84.

As a county cricketer, he had spells with Warwickshire and Hampshire.

After making his debut in 1993, Streak played in all eight Tests that Zimbabwe won over the course of his career. He was a mainstay of the ODI side and played in three World Cups - in 1996, 1999 and 2003 - and took 3 for 36 and 3 for 35 in their wins over India and South Africa in

the 1999 tournament in England.

In a statement, Zimbabwe Cricket said: "Our heartfelt condolences go out to the family, friends, and fans of former captain Heath Streak. His contributions to cricket will always be remembered, and he will be dearly missed. Rest in peace."

He also found gigs as a bowling coach around the world and had stints with Bangladesh (2014-2016) and Gujarat Lions (in the 2016 and 2017 editions of the IPL) and then returned home to take over as Zimbabwe's head coach in October 2016, tasked with ensuring the team qualified for the 2019 World Cup. At the 2018 World Cup qualifier held in Zimbabwe, the team lost a crucial match to the UAE and missed out on the World Cup. Streak and his entire coaching staff were sacked. He went on to have short stints with Scotland, Somerset and Kolkata Knight Riders. - Agencies

PREMIER LEAGUE

Salah scores as Liverpool demolish Aston Villa 3-0

LONDON: Mohamed Salah put speculation about his future behind him by scoring as Liverpool comfortably beat Aston Villa 3-0 to continue their strong start to the season in the Premier League on Sunday.

Jurgen Klopp's side rejected a US\$188.8mn bid for the Egypt international from Saudi Pro League club Al Ittihad, with the Reds insisting the 31-year-old is not for sale, BBC Sport reported.

And Salah emphasised his worth to Liverpool when he scored their third goal in the second half at Anfield, firing in at the back post from Darwin Nunez's cross to seal a third league win in a row.

Dominik Szoboszlai got the hosts up and running after just three minutes, scoring his first goal for the club with a crisp strike through a crowded box.

The hosts increased their lead in the 22nd minute when Nunez's shot hit the post and bounced in off the unlucky Matty Cash.

Liverpool looked capable of scoring with every attack in a rampant first half, although Villa's cause was not helped by an enforced change as centre-back Diego Carlos limped off with an injury inside the opening 20 minutes.

Keeper Alisson made a good stop to push out Cash's header in the second half, but Salah's second goal of the season wrapped up a win that moved Liverpool up to third in the Premier League, two points behind leaders Man City.

In another match on Sunday,



Odsonne Edouard scored twice as Crystal Palace beat Wolves 3-2 in a match with a frantic finish.

Edouard opened the scoring after he got in between two Wolves defenders to finish from Tyrick Mitchell's excellent cross. Wolves substitute Hwang Hee-chan equalised six minutes after entering the field, getting on the end of a free-kick from Pedro Neto.

But just minutes after being denied from a free-kick by Wolves keeper Jose Sa, Eberechi Eze got on the end of a knock down from Jean-Philippe Mateta to slide home. Then Edouard combined with Mateta and produced a calm slotted finish.

Matheus Cunha headed home from close range in added time but the points were already heading to Palace.

Halaand scores hat-trick in Man City win

Earlier on Saturday, Manchester

City recorded their fourth win from four games after beating Fulham 5-1, while Tottenham registered an impressive 5-2 win away to Burnley.

Julian Alvarez opened the scoring for City half hour into the game before Tim Ream equalised for Fulham two minutes later.

Nathan Ake's header made it 2-1 on the stroke of halftime with Fulham asking for a positional offside, which the VAR didn't give and another hat-trick from Erling Haaland - the first a trademark finish when through on goal, the second a powerfully hit penalty and the third a crisp finish inside the box - sealed the win.

Lyle Foster gave Burnley a fourth minute lead at home to Tottenham, but they were then blown away by another impressive display from Ange Postecoglou's side.

Son Heung-min netted a hat-trick, with Cristian Romero and James Maddison also scoring before Josh Brownhill netted a late consolation for the home side.

Brighton's teenage striker, Evan Ferguson scored a hat-trick, with goals in the 27th, 65th and 70th minute as his side beat Newcastle United 3-1. Callum Wilson netted a late consolation for Newcastle, who have lost three of their first four games of the season.

In other games on Saturday, Chelsea suffered a 1-0 defeat to Nottingham Forest, Brentford held Bournemouth 2-2 and Sheffield United drew with Everton 2-2. - Agencies

INDIA GDP FORECAST

Morgan Stanley has upwardly revised its economic growth forecast for India for fiscal year 2024 after April-June quarter data showed it grew at its quickest pace in a year. > **B2**

MARKET BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,774.54 points, down by 0.51 percent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 1.55 percent at 473.03 points. Taageer Finance, up 3.33 percent, was the top gainer while, A'Saffa Foods, down 10 percent, was the top loser. > **B2**

Key workshops on sectoral plans to achieve carbon neutrality launched

The workshops seek to follow up and implement the national strategy for an orderly transition to carbon neutrality

MUSCAT: The Environment Authority has launched workshops on sectoral plans for carbon neutrality. Organised by the National Net-Zero Programme in Muscat, the workshops seek to follow up and implement the national strategy for an orderly transition to carbon neutrality. They constitute an effort to reach a unified implementation plan, while at the same time adding a number of projects to achieve the interim goals based on the motives.

During the first week (3-5 September 2023), the workshops discuss the electricity sector's targets to reach zero carbon emissions, the initiatives and projects implemented in the sector, major challenges and the capabilities required to address them.



Then, the programme will proceed to other sectors, including the sectors of cities and buildings, transport, industry, oil and gas sector and other possible sectors.

The mechanisms of action in this programme focus on resolving challenges and providing all means to meet the Sultanate of Oman's goal of achieving zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Representatives of government and private sector establishments taking part in the programme include Oman Investment Authority (OIA), Nama Power and Water Procurement, Nama Elec-

tricity Distribution, the Authority for Public Services Regulation (APSR), Nama Dhofar Services, OQ, and Hydrom.

Oman was among the earliest countries that announced a strategic approach to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050, following the directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik in October 2022.

Accordingly, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change placed Oman in the list of countries that endorsed a national strategy for carbon neutrality. — **ONA**



CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN

Instructions issued for opening bank accounts for freelancers in Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) has issued instructions to all licenced banks to extend banking services to freelancers. This is in continuation to the initiatives under the National Employment Programme to support and provide incentives to freelancers.

The important features of the instructions include, opening bank accounts for commercial purpose of the freelancers, in accordance with the commercial registration issued by Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP), as per the list of activities specified by the Ministry.

Banks must notify such customers to stop using their personal bank accounts for commercial transactions and shall take necessary measures to fully comply with



the directives, within a maximum period of three months from the date of issue of the instruction.

CBO also urged banks to provide necessary credit facilities to this category of customers and permitted the banks to include within the percentages specified by CBO to finance Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

Banks were also encouraged to extend the freelancers the same benefits and services offered to SMEs and employees working in the private sector.

FOR COMPANIES LICENCED BY THE CMA

Risk-based approach to identify money laundering, financing terrorism launched

MUSCAT: The Capital Market Authority (CMA), represented by Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Financing Terrorism Department, launched Strix System. The system supports risk-based approach to identify Money Laundering and Financing Terrorism (ML/FT) risks for companies licenced by the CMA.

Strix allows positioning each company in the risk measurement indicator in accordance with internationally recognised standards and legislative requirements related to combating such practices in Oman. This enhances the regulatory efforts of the CMA and its ability to determine risks encountering licensed institutions to take the necessary action to deal with such risks.

This move translates the national priorities of Oman Vision 2040 and achieves one of the three sectoral objectives that the CMA's Strategic Plan (2021-2025) is based on, enhancing the CMA's performance through speeding



up the digital transformation process and to carry on the CMA's approach in digitalising and providing its services to the public in a timely manner.

In addition, this project aims at automating the process of collecting data related to licenced companies in the capital market and insurance sectors to be reviewed by CMA employees using this software then analysing and clas-



sifying this data according to risks related to each company individually. Finally, a risk-based regulatory plan is developed.

Notably, the launch of Strix is part of the preparation framework for the mutual evaluation for Money Laundering and Financing Terrorism in Oman by the FATF during the upcoming phase. The CMA endeavours to accomplish best results for the Sultanate of

Oman. It also represents the importance of ML/FT risk-assessment to measure the risk levels of sectors regulated by the CMA and focusing on aspects requiring enhancement and development particularly those related to licensed companies' compliance with Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Financing Terrorism requirements and procedures.

— **ONA**

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND INVESTMENT PROMOTION

Factories in Oman that obtain new national product identity will receive many privileges

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, emphasised that, the Omani factories that obtain the new national product identity will receive various privileges.

The new national product identity aims at creating a unified national framework to define the national product, unifying its marketing identity, raising consumer awareness of Omani products, and to create a list of Omani products with high added value.

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion stressed that, the new identity will contribute to raise local and foreign consumer awareness of Omani products, and enhancing the local added value of national products.

Engineer Mahmoud Al Suti, an industrial planning engineer at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, clarified that the require-



ments for obtaining the national product identity are: adherence to the requirements stipulated in the Ministerial decision No. 62/2023 that related to issuing regulations regulating the licencing of the national product identity, and filling out the application form for obtaining the logo of the national product electronically or on paper, that based on the numbers of the last fiscal year.

In case the logo is requested for more than one product, the primary raw materials page in the form to be filled out for each product separately, and to attach a list

of the required products with HS Codes, along with the company's profile as well as attaching the industrial or craft license.

New identity logo

Engineer Mahmoud Al-Suti said: "The benefit of the company obtaining the new identity logo is that, it will enable company's factory to promote its products as being made in the Sultanate of Oman and achieving local content. It also contribute to promote Omani products in various countries, in addition to obtaining privileges related to priority for purchasing and using national products in procurement and projects."

He stressed that the factory must be existing and have completed at least 6 months of starting production, where the percentage of local content must be 20 percent or more.

Engineer Mahmoud Al Suti also clarified that, the steps to obtain the national product iden-

tity logo, are including that, the applicant to fill out the contact information through the email: Madeinoman@tejarah.gov.om, or by scanning the QR Code, filling in the information related to the company and others related to the product, then to complete the data and to ensure that, the percentage of local content is calculated and to get the respond with approval or rejection.

In case that the conditions are met, a national product certificate will be issued to the applicant, where the design of the national product logo will be attached along with the instruction manual that related to how to use the logo on products.

It is worth noting that the logo of the new national product symbolises a number of connotations and meanings. The symbol represents the Omani Khanjar, which indicates the values in its originality, meanings and connection with the Sultanate of Oman, the state and the people.

FORENSIC ACCOUNTING & FRAUD AUDITING

Learn how to prevent, detect, and investigate fraud and corruption

TRAINING WORKSHOP @ MUSCAT

Dates: 11 to 14 September.
Trainer: Simon Padgett FCCA (UK), CPA, CFE, MBA

Meet our Trainer Mr. Simon Padgett, Forensic Accountant
Simon is the Managing Partner of the International CPA Practice "Forensicintegrity"

- 28 years of experience in the Field of Forensic Accounting and Fraud and Corruption Investigations.
- Simon was Head/Director of Forensic Services for BDO and PwC in Vancouver, Canada.
- He was also and ex Head/Director of Forensic Services at Provit Consulting in the United Arab Emirates

COURSE TOPICS

- Current Fraud Trends
- Fraud Prevention Programs
- Fraud Risk Assessment
- Profiling the Fraudster
- Fraud Investigation and Detection
- Anti-Money Laundering
- Cyber Crime and Internet Fraud
- Fraud risks of CHATGPT
- Blockchain and Crypto Fraud
- Integrating Fraud Control into your Internal Control Strategy
- Study of Recent World Wide Fraud Scandals
- The Role of Internal Audit in Managing Fraud, etc.

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Training and Consultancy Services
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MARKET



MSM index ends lower marginally

Taageer Finance, up 3.33 percent, was the top gainer while, A'Saffa Foods, down 10 percent, was the top loser at the end of the session

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,774.54 points, down by 0.51 percent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 1.55 percent at 473.03 points. Taageer Finance, up 3.33 percent, was the top gainer while, A'Saffa Foods, down 10 percent, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 501 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR2.07 million, with more than 9.93 million shares changing hands. Out of 43 traded securities, 5 advanced, 24 declined, and 14 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net sellers for OMR225,000 while GCC and Arab investors were net buyers for OMR184,000, followed by foreign investors for OMR41,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,808.32 points, down 0.3 percent. Prices of Taageer Finance, Global Financial Investments,

OMINVEST were up by 3.33 percent, 1.67 percent, 0.50 percent respectively. Prices of Al Anwar Investment, Al Madina Takaful, Oman United Insurance, United Finance, Al Sharqia Investment were up by 2.44 percent, 2.27 percent, 1.82 percent, 1.67 percent, 1.41 percent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,925.50 points, down 1.41 percent. Prices of were up by respectively. Prices of A'Saffa Foods, Voltamp Energy, Gulf Mushroom Products, Al Maha Ceramics, Galfar Engineering were up by 10.00 percent, 3.91 percent, 3.51 percent, 3.45 percent, 3.07 percent respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.72 percent before closing at 1,650.98 points. Prices of Muscat Desalination were up by 1.09 percent respectively. Prices of Al Jazeera Services, Renaissance Services, Oman Telecom, Ooredo, Abraj Energy were up by 3.42 percent, 2.14 percent, 1.07 percent, 0.78 percent, 0.67 percent respectively.

— United Securities

OMAN STOCKS							
INDICES							
Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%	
MSX 30 INDEX	4,802.99	4,772.88	4,774.54	4,798.97	-24.42	-0.51	
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,839.47	7,802.03	7,808.32	7,831.43	-23.11	-0.30	
Industry Index	6,001.24	5,925.50	5,925.50	6,010.53	-85.03	-1.41	
Services Index	1,667.80	1,650.98	1,650.98	1,662.96	-11.98	-0.72	
MSX Shariah Index	479.03	472.46	473.03	480.48	-7.46	-1.55	
MSX TR INDEX	6,323.72	6,284.07	6,286.26	6,315.34	-29.08	-0.46	
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,554.31	8,513.45	8,520.32	8,545.53	-25.21	-0.30	
SERVICES TR IDX	1,841.99	1,823.42	1,823.42	1,835.70	-12.28	-0.67	
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,410.82	6,329.91	6,329.91	6,420.74	-90.84	-1.41	
Trading Summary							
Volume	.....	Turnover	.....	Trades	.....	Market Cap	.....
9,935,843	.....	2,070,169	.....	501	.....	23,815,388,981	.....
				5	.....	24	.....
						14	.....
						43	.....

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BR	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO	6,000	366	2	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.060	0.001	1.667	0.061	0.058	0.060	0.100	12,200,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	1,166,250	466,385	59	0.400	0.400	0.399	0.400	0.398	0.002	0.503	0.400	0.400	0.420	0.100	267,346,170
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	78,200	23,147	3	0.296	0.296	0.296	0.296	0.296	0.000	0.000	0.296	0.292	0.296	0.100	481,280,121
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO	109,694	7,349	5	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.000	0.000	0.067	0.065	0.067	0.100	8,165,625
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	4,000	1,400	2	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.000	0.000	0.350	0.350	0.370	0.100	115,805,449
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	5,500	1,458	1	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.000	0.000	0.265	0.265	0.285	0.100	33,097,959
OM0000003000	AL MAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING	10,242	10,371	5	1.070	1.070	1.012	1.012	1.012	0.000	0.000	1.012	1.000	1.012	0.100	69,828,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	240,000	25,720	13	0.108	0.108	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.000	0.000	0.107	0.106	0.107	0.100	585,064,070
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	1,916,209	544,716	111	0.285	0.285	0.283	0.284	0.285	-0.001	-0.351	0.284	0.283	0.284	0.100	2,131,816,786
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	475,039	181,922	26	0.386	0.386	0.381	0.383	0.386	-0.003	-0.777	0.383	0.382	0.383	0.100	249,311,640
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	303,900	309,888	9	1.020	1.020	1.019	1.019	1.030	-0.011	-1.068	1.019	1.019	1.020	0.100	764,250,000
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INVESTMENT HO	10,000	700	2	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.071	-0.001	-1.408	0.070	0.069	0.070	0.100	6,300,000
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	424,596	25,104	14	0.059	0.060	0.059	0.059	0.060	-0.001	-1.667	0.059	0.059	0.064	0.100	2,011,511
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	20,800	5,639	4	0.273	0.273	0.270	0.270	0.275	-0.005	-1.818	0.270	0.270	0.270	0.100	27,000,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	38,184	16,127	5	0.420	0.420	0.410	0.411	0.420	-0.009	-2.143	0.411	0.412	0.418	0.100	97,164,510
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	70,728	6,097	4	0.088	0.088	0.085	0.086	0.088	-0.002	-2.273	0.086	0.085	0.086	0.100	15,050,000
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	22,500	4,735	5	0.213	0.213	0.210	0.210	0.216	-0.006	-2.778	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.100	46,200,000
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	20,080	4,579	3	0.235	0.235	0.226	0.226	0.234	-0.008	-3.419	0.226	0.226	0.257	0.100	13,832,166
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	2,000	560	2	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.290	-0.010	-3.448	0.280	0.275	0.280	0.100	15,400,000
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	947,500	70,307	52	0.075	0.076	0.072	0.072	0.075	-0.003	-4.000	0.072	0.071	0.072	0.100	14,373,763
Total	20	5,872,732	1,706,569	327												
Parallel Market																
OM0000003281	TAAGEER FINANCE	10,000	930	1	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.090	0.003	3.333	0.093	0.090	0.096	0.100	24,536,658
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	810	75	1	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.092	0.001	1.087	0.093	0.087	0.093	0.100	14,466,187
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	78,670	3,426	11	0.044	0.044	0.043	0.044	0.044	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.043	0.044	0.100	3,740,000
OM0000002333	SALALAH PORT SERVICES	375	156	1	0.416	0.416	0.416	0.416	0.416	0.000	0.000	0.416	0.000	0.000	0.100	74,812,358
OM0000003141	BANKA WATER AND POWER	538,680	23,490	28	0.044	0.045	0.042	0.043	0.043	0.000	0.000	0.043	0.042	0.045	0.100	6,880,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	100,000	2,500	2	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.000	0.000	0.025	0.024	0.025	0.100	16,872,186
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	100,000	2,500	1	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.000	0.000	0.025	0.023	0.025	0.100	17,860,159
OM0000006963	PHOENIX POWER	1,600,976	104,063	5	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.000	0.000	0.065	0.063	0.065	0.100	95,069,095
OM0000001418	RAISUT CEMENT	136,000	21,185	12	0.157	0.157	0.155	0.155	0.156	-0.001	-0.641	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.100	31,000,000
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	40,738	12,039	17	0.296	0.297	0.295	0.296	0.298	-0.002	-0.671	0.296	0.296	0.296	0.100	227,979,200
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	899,115	89,012	42	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.100	-0.001	-1.000	0.099	0.098	0.100	0.100	221,458,350
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	279,050	22,415	19	0.081	0.081	0.080	0.080	0.082	-0.002	-2.439	0.080	0.079	0.086	0.100	16,480,000
OM0000001020	OMAN CHROMITE	3,000	15,000	3	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.150	-0.150	-2.913	5.000	4.900	5.070	0.100	15,000,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	85,000	13,455	8	0.159	0.159	0.158	0.158	0.163	-0.005	-3.067	0.158	0.157	0.159	0.100	32,071,858
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	10,917	2,402	2	0.220	0.220	0.220	0.220	0.228	-0.008	-3.500	0.220	0.225	0.249	0.100	10,068,476
OM0000007910	AMAN REAL ESTATE	780	78	1	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.104	-0.004	-3.846	0.100	0.099	0.103	0.100	20,000,000
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	62,500	7,688	5	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.128	-0.005	-3.906	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.100	10,012,538
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	2,300	725	3	0.315	0.315	0.315	0.315	0.350	-0.035	-10.000	0.315	0.315	0.350	0.100	37,800,000
Total	18	3,948,906	321,140	162												

SPACE FOUNDATION

Global space economy has great potential

ABU DHABI: The global space economy has great potential in terms of economic prospects, with the sector going past the half-a-trillion-dollars mark in 2022, only a few decades after the term “space economy” came into existence.

Worth over \$1 trillion
Several studies by specialised global institutions indicate that the global space sector will be worth over \$1 trillion in the next few years.

In its Space Report, the Space Foundation, a nonprofit advocate organisation offering a gateway to education, information and collaboration for space exploration and space-inspired industries that define the global space ecosystem, said that the space economy grew 8 percent in 2022, with its value totalling US\$546 billion, and is projected to grow by 41 percent in the next five years.

— WAM

ECONOMY



Morgan Stanley raises India's GDP forecast for fiscal year 2024

NEW DELHI: Morgan Stanley has upwardly revised their economic growth forecast for India for fiscal year 2024 after April-June quarter data showed it grew at its quickest pace in a year.

The multinational investment bank raised India's growth forecast to 6.4 per cent from its earlier estimate of 6.2 per cent. It attributed the growth forecast revision to robust domestic demand.

India's GDP growth for the June quarter came at 7.8 per cent, higher than Morgan Stanley's ex-

pectation of 7.4 per cent.

Upside surprise

“This was above our (7.4 per cent) but in line with consensus (7.8 per cent) expectations; the upside surprise was led by sharper-than-anticipated growth in private consumption,” Morgan Stanley said in a report.

“The robust momentum in domestic demand conditions continues to reflect in the GDP numbers, which have surprised on the upside for two consecutive

quarters,” it said, citing firm GST collections, credit growth, and Purchasing Managing Index.

It expects the resilience to be sustained. Stronger balance sheets across the economy and the government's pro-active supply-side responses are likely to provide a secure foundation for a strong multiyear growth cycle.

However, it cautioned risks lie in weak global growth conditions, trends in global commodity prices and “idiosyncratic” weather conditions. — ANI

INTERNATIONAL FAIR

Digital, green innovation drive high-quality development of China's services trade

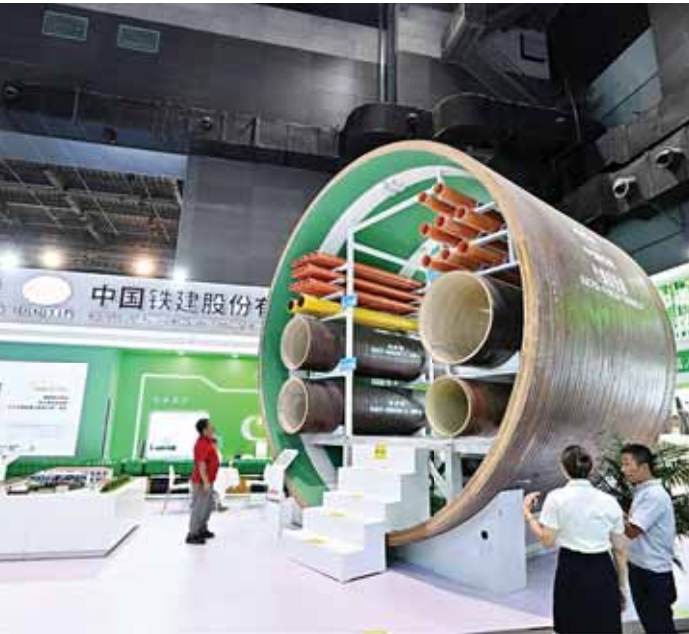
BEIJING: China's high-quality development featuring digital and green transition has provided crucial support for services trade and opened up new space for foreign companies.

Themed “Opening-up Leads Development, Cooperation Delivers the Future,” the 2023 China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) is being held in Beijing from Sept. 2 to 6. The digital and green drive is a major feature of the event, which has several related themed forums and exhibitions of cutting-edge services, technologies, and business models. Digital technologies, including the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence (AI), and blockchain, have become a bright spot of the year's service trade fair, with multinationals flocking to tap opportunities.

At this year's event, Intel China, participating in the fair for the second time, showcased technologies and solutions in the areas of AI, personal computers, data centers, and smart retail sales.

Zhou Bing, vice president of Intel, said the CIFTIS features “vitality and opportunities this year,” adding that the company has announced cooperation with many Chinese partners at the fair.

The vast blue ocean of China's digitalization drive has provided massive global market potential. The country's digital economy exceeded 50 trillion yuan (about



6.96 trillion U.S. dollars) for the first time in 2022, accounting for 41.5 percent of GDP.

Service trade
In the first half of the year, the country's digitally delivered service trade increased by 12.3 percent year on year, 3.8 percentage points higher than the total service trade growth rate.

China has intensified its policy support to create a sound digital business environment. In August, the country unveiled guidelines to attract foreign investment, in-

cluding measures encouraging multinationals to grasp growth opportunities in the country's digital economic development.

The country's Ministry of Commerce also announced Saturday that 16 more e-commerce parks will be listed as national e-commerce demonstration bases this year at the ongoing CIFTIS.

Visitors to the 2023 CIFTIS need only scan a QR code on the fair's poster with a mobile phone and fill in the travel information, and then the system can estimate the carbon emissions generated.

If the low carbon standard is met, the visitor has a chance to win an environmentally friendly gift.

“The 2023 CIFTIS plays an important exemplary role in key areas such as green and low-carbon transformation,” said Zhao Bingdi, president of Panasonic Corporation of China.

Panasonic, which participated in the fair offline for the first time, set the theme as “Green Impact.” “We should grasp the green and low-carbon business opportunities and constantly expand the application fields of products and services,” he added.

China unveiled at the 2023 CIFTIS that it will establish a national voluntary greenhouse gas emission reduction trading market and support for the services sector's role in green development.

According to Michael Bi, Managing Partner of EY Greater China Markets, China's move to vigorously promote the development of green transformation further broadens the market development space for foreign companies and provides new trade growth drivers.

He added that EY China will also release a white paper entitled “Green Power Trading: Accelerating Green Energy Consumption” at the year's service trade fair to provide suggestions for enterprises to reduce carbon emissions.

— Xinhua

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LIFESTYLE

BONE HEALTH CAN BE IMPROVED BY EATING MORE LEGUMES,

ACCORDING to a University of Helsinki study, substituting red and processed meat with pea-protein intake, b and faba bean-based foods ensures enough amino acid intake without having any negative effects on bone metabolism.

"Decreasing the consumption of red and processed meat in the diet to the upper limit of the Planetary Health Diet while increasing the consumption of legumes cultivated in Finland, such as peas and faba beans, is safe from the perspective of protein nutrition. Similarly, bone health is not compromised by such a dietary change either," says Docent Suvi Itkonen from the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry.

In the BeanMan study, 102 Finnish men followed a study diet for six weeks.

- One group consumed 760 grams of red and processed meat per week, which accounted for 25% of the total protein intake. The amount corresponds to the average protein consumption of Finnish men.
- The other group consumed food products based on legumes, mainly peas and faba beans, corresponding to 20% of the total protein intake. In addition, the amount of red and processed meat consumed per week in this group amounted to the upper limit of the Planetary Health Diet (200 g or 5% of the total protein intake).

Otherwise, the study subjects followed their habitual diet but were not allowed to eat other red or processed meat or legumes than those provided by the study.

The researchers did not find any differences between the dietary groups in markers of bone formation or resorption. Neither did the intake of calcium or vitamin D differ between the groups. Calcium intake was in line with the current dietary recommendations, and the intake of vitamin D was very close to the recommendations. Mean essential amino acid and protein intakes met the recommendations in both groups.

"Reducing red meat consumption is extremely important in terms of environmental impact," Itkonen notes.

Increasingly plant-based diets are becoming more and more popular, and the recently updated Nordic Nutrition Recommendations also emphasise the restriction of meat consumption and the moderation of dairy consumption.

"In this study, the subjects consumed dairy products as in their habitual diets, thus their calcium and vitamin D intakes were unchanged. However, in terms of bone health, it is important to bear in mind that if one reduces the amount of dairy in the diet, it is necessary to ensure the intake of calcium and vitamin D from other sources. These sources can be plant-based beverages and yoghurt-like products fortified with those nutrients or, when necessary, dietary supplements," Itkonen points out.

Other findings in the BeanMan study related to, among others, lipid metabolism, gut health and nutrient intakes will be published later. -ANI

LESS RED MEAT

Alcaraz and Medvedev advance

World No.1 powers into last 16 with a win over British Dan Evans, now faces Matteo Arnaldi in the fourth round

NEW YORK: World No.1 Carlos Alcaraz of Spain and third seed Daniil Medvedev of Russia surged into the last 16 of the US Open on Saturday. Alcaraz, looking to become the first man to successfully defend the title since Roger Federer in 2008, produced a flurry of magical shots en route to dispatching British 26th seed Dan Evans 6-2, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3.

It was another stylish victory for the 20-year-old Spaniard, who will next face Italy's Matteo Arnaldi in the fourth round. Alcaraz also conjured one of the shots of the tournament to clinch a decisive break in the fourth set, curling a logic-defying forehand up the line past Evans for a 4-2 lead.

Alcaraz, who will surrender his world No.1 ranking to Novak Djokovic at the end of this tournament, admitted he was motivated by matching Federer in defending his crown.

"Obviously defending the title is a goal for me," he said. "I'm looking for that. Nobody's done it here since Roger so I'd love to be part of tournament history with him."

Meanwhile Russia's 2021 US Open champion and third seed Daniil Medvedev made it safely into the last 16 in a late-night 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (8/6) victory over Argentina's Sebastian Baez.

Alcaraz's win keeps him on track for a repeat quarter-final against Italy's Jannik Sinner, a year after the two men dueled in an epic five-hour five-setter that finished at 2.50am, the latest finish in US Open history.



Evans received a standing ovation as he left Arthur Ashe Stadium, saying his overriding emotions after the gallant defeat were a mixture of "frustration" and "annoyance". "My goal was to hang around and pick up the pieces, really. If I had a chance to come forward, I would, but I knew I'd be running. I did a decent job," he said. "It's still tough, but my tennis is in a good spot and that's important."

Sixth seed Sinner did his part to keep the rematch on course Saturday with a stylish 6-3, 2-6, 6-4, 6-2 win over Swiss veteran Stan Wawrinka. Sinner, 22 will play Germany's Alexander Zverev after the 2020 finalist beat Bulgarian 19th seed Grigor Dimitrov in a 6-7 (2-7), 7-6 (8-6), 6-1, 6-1 victory.

Alcaraz's last-16 opponent Arnaldi, meanwhile, advanced after upsetting 16th-seeded Briton Cameron Norrie, winning 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 in just under two hours.

Arnaldi, 22, had never played in the main draw of a Grand Slam before this season, with a brief run to the second round at Roland Garros his best performance in a major championship.

There was better luck for another member of Britain's US Open contingent elsewhere though, with Jack Draper reaching the last 16 of a Grand Slam for the first time with a 6-4, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 victory over American world No.89 Michael Mmoh.

Draper will face eighth-seeded Russian Andrey Rublev next for a place in the quarter-finals.

Rublev, a quarter-finalist at last year's tournament, defeated France's Arthur Rinderknech 3-6, 6-3, 6-1, 7-5 to advance.

Medvedev, who lifted the title in 2021, took his fourth match point at 01:30 local time to win.

The 27-year-old Russian also finished his previous match against Chris O'Connell in the early hours and said finishing so late was "tough". "I just want to go to sleep. It's good we did not finish at 4am," he said. "When you go to play at 11pm, it just feels tough. This time I decided not to sleep before and I ate, so I was feeling pretty bad on the court."

Medvedev will play Alex de Minaur in the fourth round after the Australian 13th seed recorded a 6-1, 6-3, 6-2 win over Chile's Nicolas Jarry in one hour and 44 minutes.

Jabeur claims thriller

NEW YORK: Tunisia's Ons Jabeur kept her dream of a first Grand Slam title alive with victory in a three-set thriller in the women's event of the US Open on Saturday.

Arguably the game of day six, the popular Tunisian fifth seed Jabeur overcame a courageous display by injured opponent Marie Bouzkova to advance.

Czech No.31 seed Bouzkova started strongly to win the opening set against Jabeur, who has been laid low by flu since the start of the championships.

But the game changed midway through the second set when Bouzkova suffered what appeared to be a thigh injury, severely hampering her mobility thereafter.

Despite grimacing and wincing in pain, she somehow managed to keep on playing as Jabeur dug deep to complete a 5-7, 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 in 2hr 56min on the Arthur Ashe Stadium court.

"This is a tough sport. You always don't want to give up. I really respect her for that," Jabeur said.

"Hopefully I'll continue with this warrior symbol," she said after winning in two hours and 56 minutes.

Jabeur, who faces China's Zheng Qinwen in the last 16 next, is chasing a first Grand Slam title after suffering agonising defeats in three major championship finals in the past two seasons.

Elsewhere on Saturday, Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka maintained her dominant start to the tournament with a 60-minute demolition of



France's Clara Burel, winning 6-1, 6-1.

The Belarusian right-hander will play Russia's 13th seed Daria Kasatkina on Monday in the last 16. Kasatkina booked her place in the fourth round with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Belgium's Greet Minnen.

Meanwhile, 17th seed Madison Keys became the second American woman into the last 16 after Coco Gauff with a 5-7, 6-2, 6-2 win over Russian 14th seed Liudmila Samsonova.

Keys will play compatriot and third seed Jessica Pegula in the last 16.

Pegula outfought Ukraine's 26th-ranked Elina Svitolina 6-4, 4-6, 6-2 to reach the fourth round.

Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova reached last 16, taking just 56 minutes to dismantle Russia's Ekaterina Alexandrova 6-2, 6-1. Vondrousova plays US youngster Peyton Stearns in the next round.

Zheng matched her best result at a Grand Slam - a fourth round appearance at last year's French Open - by rallying to beat Italy's Lucia Bronzetti 6-3, 4-6, 6-4. - Agencies

LA LIGA

Bellingham scores late winner for Real Madrid

MADRID: Jude Bellingham scored in the fifth minute of injury time to give Real Madrid a 2-1 win at home to Getafe on Saturday.

The goal was a reward for Madrid's efforts after falling behind to a 10th minute strike from former striker Borja Mayoral, who found space to take the ball past Kepa before slotting home.

Joselu equalised after a long VAR check in the 47th minute and Madrid were denied by the woodwork three times and a series of fine saves from Getafe keeper, David Soria until well into injury time.

Soria was unable to hold onto Lucas Vazquez's shot from outside the area, allowing Bellingham to slot the ball from close range.

Real Sociedad showed their attacking power to claim their first win of the season, as they beat Granada 5-3.

Take Kubo scored two impressive goals in the first half, while Martin Zubimendi, Ander Barrenetxea and an own goal from Miki Bosch added to the score after the break.

Robin Le Normand's own goal gave Granada hope, but their second and third goals from Lucas Boye and Bryan Zaragoza Martinez came in the 83rd and 98th minute, when the game was all but over.

William Jose scored a 53rd minute free kick that gave Betis a 1-0 win at home to Rayo Vallecano, who had enough chances in the



game to take a point.

Alaves striker Kike Garcia saw Valencia keeper Giorgi Mamardashvili twice save a second minute penalty, but then made himself awkward from a cross from the left to force Valencia defender Cenk Ozkacar to put the ball into his own net in the sixth minute of the game.

Both sides had chances to score, but Alaves held on to inflict Valencia's second defeat in two games.

Cadiz won a bad-tempered game 3-1 at home to Villarreal on Friday, with Villarreal defender Alfonso Pedraza sent off for a headbutt in the 22nd minute, and coach Quique Setien also shown a red card as the players left the pitch at halftime.

Alexander Sorloth scored from

close range to put Villarreal ahead in the 10th minute, but Chris Ramos leveled eight minutes later and with Cadiz's rivals down to 10 men, two goals from Darwin Machis - the second a curling effort, gave Cadiz three points.

Celta Vigo took their first win of the season thanks to a late goal from Williot Swedberg after it looked as if Almeria would claim a point with a brave fightback.

Unai Nunez and Strand Larsen put Celta 2-0 up with goals in the 24th and 33rd minute, but Almeria fought back in the second half with quickfire goals from Sergio Akieme and Sergio Arribas, before Swedberg won the game with three minutes left on the clock. - Xinhua

BUNDESLIGA



Bayern snatch comeback win against Monchengladbach

BERLIN: Mathys Tel's late winner helped Bayern Munich secure its third straight victory after beating Borussia Monchengladbach 2-1 in the third round of Bundesliga on Saturday.

The German record champions took the reins from the start whereas Borussia Monchengladbach implemented a wait-and-see strategy and lurked for counterattacks.

Bayern came close through Leon Goretzka, who tested Monchengladbach goalkeeper Moritz Nicolas with a header in the third minute while Sane pulled narrowly wide in the 19th minute.

Monchengladbach posed a threat on fast breaks as Marvin Friedrich rattled the woodwork

before Maximilian Wober flicked on a corner that allowed Ko Itakura to head home the 1-0 lead on the half hour mark.

The visitors had the opportunity to double their lead, but Sven Ulreich denied Julian Weigl's low shot two minutes later.

After the half-time, Bayern started an onslaught on Monchengladbach's goal but still neither Goretzka nor Thomas Muller could beat Nicolas from promising positions.

The German giants eventually got rewarded in the 58th minute when Joshua Kimmich chipped the ball into the path of Sane, who poked home the 1-1 equaliser from close range.

Monchengladbach couldn't put up resistance while Bayern wasn't done with the scoring and marked the 2-1 winner through joker Tel, who nodded home Kimmich's pinpoint cross.

Elsewhere, Bayer Leverkusen maintain their perfect start into the season after Werkselt trashed newly promoted Darmstadt 5-1.

Werder Bremen secured its first win of the season as three second-half goals edged Mainz 4-0. Stuttgart won the Southern derby after Serhou Guirassy provided a brace to see off Freiburg 5-0.

Hoffenheim came from behind to shock Wolfsburg 3-1 and Augsburg shared the spoils with Bochum following a 2-2 stalemate. - Agencies

SERIE A

Lazio stun holders Napoli for first victory of season

ROME: Lazio registered their first win in the new Serie A season as they beat defending champions Napoli 2-1 away on Saturday.

Lazio had a shaky start as they suffered back-to-back defeats in the new season while Napoli managed two wins in as many games.

The away side broke the deadlock in the 30th minute with a spectacular fashion as Felipe

Anderson burst into the box and pulled back for Luis Alberto to finish with a smart back-heeled strike.

The Partenopei quickly got back on level terms two minutes later when a poor clearance went for Piotr Zielinski who scored the equaliser with a deflected shot.

Lazio restored the lead seven minutes into the second-half,

when Felipe Anderson won back possession and rolled across, Alberto's dummy allowed Daichi Kamada to gather the ball, as the new arrival took a few touches before sending the ball into the far corner.

Biancocelesti's another new face Matteo Guendouzi came off the bench later to make his debut. He had scored one and set up an-

other, but both goals were disallowed due to offside.

Also on Saturday, Atalanta bounced back from their setback to Frosinone as new signing Gianluca Scamacca's brace helped them beat Monza 3-0.

Elsewhere, Bologna rallied to defeat Cagliari 2-1, and Udinese shared the spoils with Frosinone at 0-0. - Agencies



Enjoy ultimate banking experience with BankDhofar’s Al Rifaa Privilege Account

BankDhofar is poised to reshape the landscape of premium banking services with the launch of Al Rifaa Privilege Account

MUSCAT: Rooted in a legacy of excellence and driven by a commitment to personalized service, BankDhofar’s new offering sets out to redefine banking as a bespoke experience for discerning customers. The innovative account is designed to cater to the distinct needs of the Bank’s valued customers, providing an elevated banking experience that combines exclusive benefits, personalised services, and gratifying rewards. Al Rifaa Privilege Account is tailored for individuals who demand exceptional financial solutions, opening the door to a world



of advantages, while setting a new standard in the banking industry. The Al Rifaa Privilege Account isn’t just an account; it’s a gateway to a premium lifestyle and financial empowerment. Designed for individuals who demand excellence in every aspect of their lives, this account is a testament to BankDhofar’s commit-

ment to innovation and customer-centricity. Account holders will have priority customer support in processing of transactions as well as at the Bank’s call centre; they will earn attractive interest rates on their deposits with preferential rates on the High Yield savings account and avail branded Platinum Debit and

Credit Card facility. The debit and credit cards offered to account holders are embedded with a host of benefits, ranging from special offers to airport lounge access, in addition to reward points on local and international purchases. Expressing delight on the launch of the new account, Abdul Hakeem

Omar Al Ojaili, CEO at BankDhofar, called it a grand new milestone in the Bank’s journey of progress. “BankDhofar is committed to delivering excellence and innovation to our customers. Al Rifaa Privilege Banking exemplifies our dedication to providing a superior banking experience, with a combination of financial exper-

tise with exclusive privileges. We are, indeed, excited to extend this extraordinary opportunity to our valued customers. We believe that banking is not just about transactions; it’s about enabling dreams and enhancing lifestyles. With Al Rifaa, we are raising the bar for personalised banking services in Oman,” he explained. This prestigious offering is meticulously designed to provide a banking journey that transcends traditional services, introducing clients to a world where financial empowerment meets personalised luxury. With a steadfast focus on technological advancements and customer empowerment, BankDhofar continues to lead the way in transforming Oman’s banking sector. BankDhofar national wide network currently consists of almost 100 branches including Maisarah and two corporate branches. The network also includes more than 300 (ATMs – CDMs – FFMs – MFKs) for BankDhofar and Maisarah. To learn more about the Al Rifaa Privilege Banking and its exceptional benefits, visit the Bank’s website <https://www.bankdhofar.com/priority/accounts/al-rifaa/> or visit your nearest BankDhofar branch.

OMAN ARAB BANK

Khalid Al Amri appointed Acting Head of Retail Banking of OAB

MUSCAT: Oman Arab Bank (OAB) has announced that Khalid Al Amri has been appointed as Acting Head of Retail Banking. Al Amri was previously Head of Branch Banking with OAB, a position he had held since 2021. As a seasoned professional, Al Amri’s new role will see his responsibilities include overseeing the bank’s retail banking strategy and ensuring the continued delivery of top-tier financial solutions and exceptional customer service, building on his years of experience leading OAB’s branch network, retail SME, direct sales and branch support. Sulaiman Al Harthi, CEO of Oman Arab Bank said: “OAB continues its successful track record in appointing Omani talent in top leadership positions within the organisation. As Khalid assumes his new position, I am confident that he will contribute to our ongoing achievements and strengthen our commitment to delivering innovative products and exceptional services to customers. There is no doubt that his leadership experience underscores his readiness to take on new responsibilities.” Throughout his years of dedicated service, Al Amri has consistently demonstrated a deep understanding of the financial landscape and an unwavering commitment to excellence. With 30 years of experience, in the fields of accounting and finance, investment, retail and wholesale/corporate banking businesses, he will add value to the bank’s retail segment and contribute to the overall growth of the bank.



Throughout his years of dedicated service, Al Amri has consistently demonstrated a deep understanding of the financial landscape

OAB’s retail banking operations have been recognised with numerous awards and accolades, including winning Domestic Retail Bank of the Year – Oman at the prestigious Asian Banking & Finance (ABF) Retail Banking Awards 2023, where the bank also emerged victorious in the SME Payment Solutions of the Year – Oman category.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Nama Water offers training based on best professional practices to Omanis

MUSCAT: Nama Water Services (NWS) is considered to be one of the prominent companies that work on besides other institutions to develop and enhance the potential of Omani Youth including the graduates and students – who are still in school – and job seekers as well. The aim of this effort is to provide the target students with training opportunities according to the strategies and plans developed to refine these youth with knowledge and skills that are expected to support them in their future careers. Taqi bin Mohammed Al Lawati, Chief Executive of the Human Resources and Culture Unit commented on this initiative: “Nama Water Services is committed to supporting the national trends for the youth development. We are proud of training young people and making use of the theoretical knowledge that they acquired during their academic careers. We provide them with the opportunity to engage in an innovative and stimulating work environment that encourages them to Intellectual creativity. In addition, it will assist them in mastering the required skills through practical that can gain from the expertise and competencies who work in this Company.” During the first half of this year, more than 350 trainees benefited from the training opportunities provided by the company. Regarding this raise in the number of trainees, the Chief Executive of the Human Resources and Culture Unit stated that this is a result of the established training plan that aims to give young people the opportunities they need for practical training. In addition, it’s the continuous follow-up that takes place to ensure that the trainee receives the required doses of practical training, and



the prepared program is considered good nutrition for the students, as the training takes place under continuous guidance from the company’s highly qualified expertise. The trainee participates in practical and field projects and works alongside with various departments that he learns from them during this professional friction, latest technologies, and methods used in the business execution. Some of the trainees also get opportunities to attend seminars and workshops.

EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE

BLUELAKE Technologies felicitates Al-Raud Trading Co

MUSCAT: BLUELAKE Technologies, the authorised distributor of Haier products in Oman, is pleased to announce its partnership with Khemo Khanwani of Al-Raud Trading Co and extend its heartfelt appreciation for their exceptional performance in the first half of 2023. To commemorate this achievement, Ali Mohd Akbar Khan, the Asst. General Manager of BlueLake Technologies, presented a trophy to Khemo Khanwani at the Al-Raud office. Ali Mohd Akbar Khan expressed his gratitude, stating, “The best partnerships are not solely based on a common goal

but on a shared path of success, equality, and passion.” **Invaluable support** He acknowledged Khemo Khanwani’s invaluable support during the first half of the year and expressed confidence in both partners’ ability to reach their desired goals for 2023. In response, Khemo Khanwani, the owner of Al-Raud Trading Co, expressed his optimism about the future of the Haier brand, stating, “Haier is a strong brand, and I foresee a great future ahead. I appreciate all the support provided by BLUELAKE Technologies, and I assure you that Al-Raud Trad-

ing Co will achieve our targets for 2023. I will strive to make Haier the top brand in Salalah.” **Shared achievements** In addition to the trophy, Ali Mohd Akbar Khan presented a photo frame capturing memories from the six-month journey, symbolising the shared achievements and milestones reached by both companies. BLUELAKE Technologies looks forward to continuing its successful partnership with Al-Raud Trading Co and aims to strengthen the Haier brand’s presence in Salalah, providing exceptional products and services to customers in the region.

To commemorate this achievement, Ali Mohd Akbar Khan, the Asst. General Manager of BlueLake Technologies, presented a trophy to Khemo Khanwani at the Al-Raud office



ROUND-UP

Bank Nizwa opens Saham branch, expands Sharia-compliant banking in the Sultanate

With this strategic move, Bank Nizwa reaffirms its dedication to cultivating an extensive network of branches and delivering exceptional Sharia-compliant products and services to its valued clients in Saham and in Al Batinah

MUSCAT: In a remarkable display of its commitment to expanding its presence in the Sultanate, Bank Nizwa, the leading and most trusted Islamic Bank in Oman, proudly announces the opening of its 21th branch in Saham. The branch was opened in an official ceremony by His Excellency Dr. Sheikh Sultan bin Abdullah bin Saleh Al-Battashi, Wali of Willayat Saham alongside Sheikh Majid bin Ali Al Mamari, Hussain Al Shalwani, board members of Bank



Nizwa, Khaled Al Kayed, Chief Executive Officer of Bank Nizwa and Executive management members. With this strategic move, Bank Nizwa reaffirms its dedication to cultivating an extensive network of branches and delivering exceptional Sharia-compliant products and services to its valued clients in Saham and its neighbouring regions in Al Batinah. Illuminating the substantial role this branch plays in Bank Nizwa's overall expansions effort, Khalid Al Kayed, the CEO of Bank Nizwa, stated, "The opening of our new branch in Saham signifies a momentous milestone for Bank Nizwa. Within Saham lies a strategically vital market that opens doors to abundant growth prospects. This expansion aligns perfectly with our continuous commitment to extending our presence and offering exemplary Islamic banking solutions that are innovative and cater to the needs of our valued customers across the Sultanate."

Bank Nizwa leads the way in Islamic finance, setting itself apart with an unwavering commitment to delivering groundbreaking Sharia-compliant solutions tailored to the local market's distinctive needs. In step with the evolving preferences of its customers, the branch will offer an extensive array of banking solutions, encompassing in-branch, online, and digital services. Clients will gain access to a diverse portfolio of products and services thoughtfully tailored to cater to the specific requirements of individuals and businesses, incorporating specialised options

for wealth management. As Bank Nizwa extends its reach across the Sultanate, its unwavering dedication to its most prized asset—its people—remains steadfast. The new Saham branch proudly houses a team of exceptional Omani employees, boasting remarkable qualifications, extensive training, and invaluable experience. With indispensable skills, knowledge, and an innate understanding of the local dynamics, these individuals stand poised to meet the

diverse needs of the Saham community. Embracing the forefront of technology, the branch seamlessly integrates digitalisation and innovation into its operations, guaranteeing optimal efficiency and convenience for its esteemed customers. As the pioneer and leading full-fledged Islamic Bank in Oman, Bank Nizwa further solidifies its position in the Sultanate with the establishment of the Saham branch, fortifying its expansive network across the country. Acknowledging the strategic significance of Batinah due to its coastal location on the Gulf of Oman and its substantial population, the bank has already set up branches in Sohar, Rustaq, and Barka. Saham has also undergone notable development in recent years, marked by numerous upcoming projects in the area. Through its newly inaugurated Saham branch, Bank Nizwa will cater to the evolving needs of government institutions, private companies, and small-and-medium enterprises (SMEs) in the region, further advancing Sharia-compliant banking and its distinctive advantages. Bank Nizwa boasts an impeccable track record and is revered for its comprehensive range of services. These encompass a wide spectrum, ranging from easily accessible ATMs and CCDMs to cutting-edge online and mobile banking solutions. Additionally, the bank also offers personal financing, wealth management, Takaful, SME banking, business banking, and investment banking, all of which are aligned with Islamic principles.

ATTRACTIVE DESIGN

Enjoy distinctive luxury with Lexus RX

MUSCAT: The Lexus RX stands out in its class with its attractive design, inspiring technology and fuel-efficient performance. The, fifth-generation RX has been completely reimagined to deliver greater style, comfort and performance with a choice of three powertrains, two of which are electrified. The RX sports an attractive design with triple LED headlights which are sleeker, sharper and more horizontal and the body and spindle grilles merge at their boundaries to create a seamless expression symbolised by the sense of a solid mass, striving toward a new identity and originality. Complementing the RX's distinctive design is a thrilling drive personality imbued by three powertrain options. A newly developed inline 4-cylinder, 2.4-litre turbocharged engine that produces 275 hp and 430 nm of torque is paired to a new 8-speed Direct-Shift automatic transmission (8AT). Meanwhile, the new hybrid-electric system combines a 2.5-litre petrol engine and electric motor to produce a total of 247 hp, which is paired to an electronically-controlled continuously variable transmission (E-CVT) to provide a fuel consumption value of 20.7 km/L. A hybrid-electric system pairing a 2.4-litre turbocharged engine with an electric motor is also available, which provides a combined power of 366 hp mated to a 6-speed automatic transmission. The interior of the RX offers ample luggage space and five newly designed luxury seats with excellent legroom, including an 8-way adjustable powered driver seat. Drivers can also create an oasis with nature-inspired Thematic Ambient Illumination, an op-



tional feature that bathes the RX interior in a choice of 14 themes. Additional features include SmartAccess with a push-button start, a 21-speaker Mark Levinson Clari-Fi 2.0 sound system, and a panoramic roof with movable outer sliding glass for the front section. The vehicle's inviting interior provides drivers and passengers with a host of advanced features for a refined cabin experience. These include a new 14-inch touchscreen multimedia system with Apple CarPlay® and Android Auto™ compatibility, a 7-inch colour multi-information display (MID), a colour head-up display (HUD), a wireless charging system for smartphones, six USB chargers, and one 12 Volt charger. In addition, the 2023 RX offers the Lexus Climate Concierge system with Triple Zone Independent Temperature Controls. In the Lexus RX, safety is a top priority for the all-new RX. Drivers can enjoy complete

peace of mind, thanks to the Lexus Safety System+, an advanced safety and driver assistance system that includes a Pre-Collision System (PCS) together with new features such as Emergency Steering Assist, Acceleration Suppression at Low Speed and Intersection Collision Avoidance Assistance. The system also includes all-speed range Dynamic Radar Cruise Control (DRCC) with two new features; Turn Signal Control (TSC), Curve Speed Reduction (RSR), Lane Tracing Alert (LTA), Lane Departure Alert (LDA), and Adaptive High-beam System (AHS). In another world-first, the new Safe Exit Assist (SEA) feature uses an e-latch system combined with a Blind Spot Monitor (BSM) to help prevent accidents among many others. For those seeking to experience the ultimate in thrilling responsiveness, Lexus has introduced the first-ever turbo hybrid electric vehicle. The RX 500h F SPORT

Performance's new hybrid electric system comes with a front unit that integrates a high-torque 2.4-litre turbo engine, six-speed automatic transmission, and an electric motor. The RX 500h F SPORT Performance also features the new DIRECT4 all-wheel drive force system, which effectively maximises front and rear wheel grip to deliver an invigorating and torque-filled driving experience. In Oman, every Lexus vehicle comes with special benefits and privileges such as Manufacturer's Warranty of 4 years/100,000 Kms (whichever is earlier) and 24 hours on-road assistance from AAA. For more information, please visit www.lexusoman.com or www.facebook.com/LexusOmanSBA or instagram.com/oman.lexus/. For further details & to ascertain availability of stocks, please visit your nearest Saud Bahwan Automotive Showroom.

FOR CATERING SERVICES

Renaissance Services awarded OMR2.7mn contract by SQU Hospital

MUSCAT: Renaissance Services, the leading accommodation, services solutions and Integrated Facilities Management (IFM) company in the Sultanate of Oman, has been awarded an OMR2.7 million (\$7.02 million) contract by Sultan Qaboos University Hospital (SQUH). The contract is for the provision of catering services to patients and their companions for a two-year period starting in January 2024. Stephen R. Thomas, CEO, Renaissance Services said, "Meeting the nutrition and dietary needs of patients is an integral part of patient care and well-being. So, we are honoured and proud to be selected by SQUH for this prestigious contract at the nation's premier teaching hospital, with its reputation for adherence to highest international standards." Renaissance Services, which is ISO 22000 certified for its Food Safety Management System, has more than 32 years of experience in food services and serves over 15 million meals annually at more than 50 hospitals across Oman. Committed to delivering sustainable services with enhanced in-country value (ICV), the company is one of the largest employers of Omanis in the Sultanate's private sector with around 2,500 Omani employees. Renaissance expects the SQUH contract to further its objectives of generating employment opportunities for nationals and amplifying the use of locally-sourced



Renaissance Services is ISO 22000 certified for its Food Safety Management System

goods and services within its supply chain, in line with the goals of Oman Vision 2040. For more information about the company, please visit www.renaissanceservices.com.





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Offer valid from August 1st till September 30th 2023.

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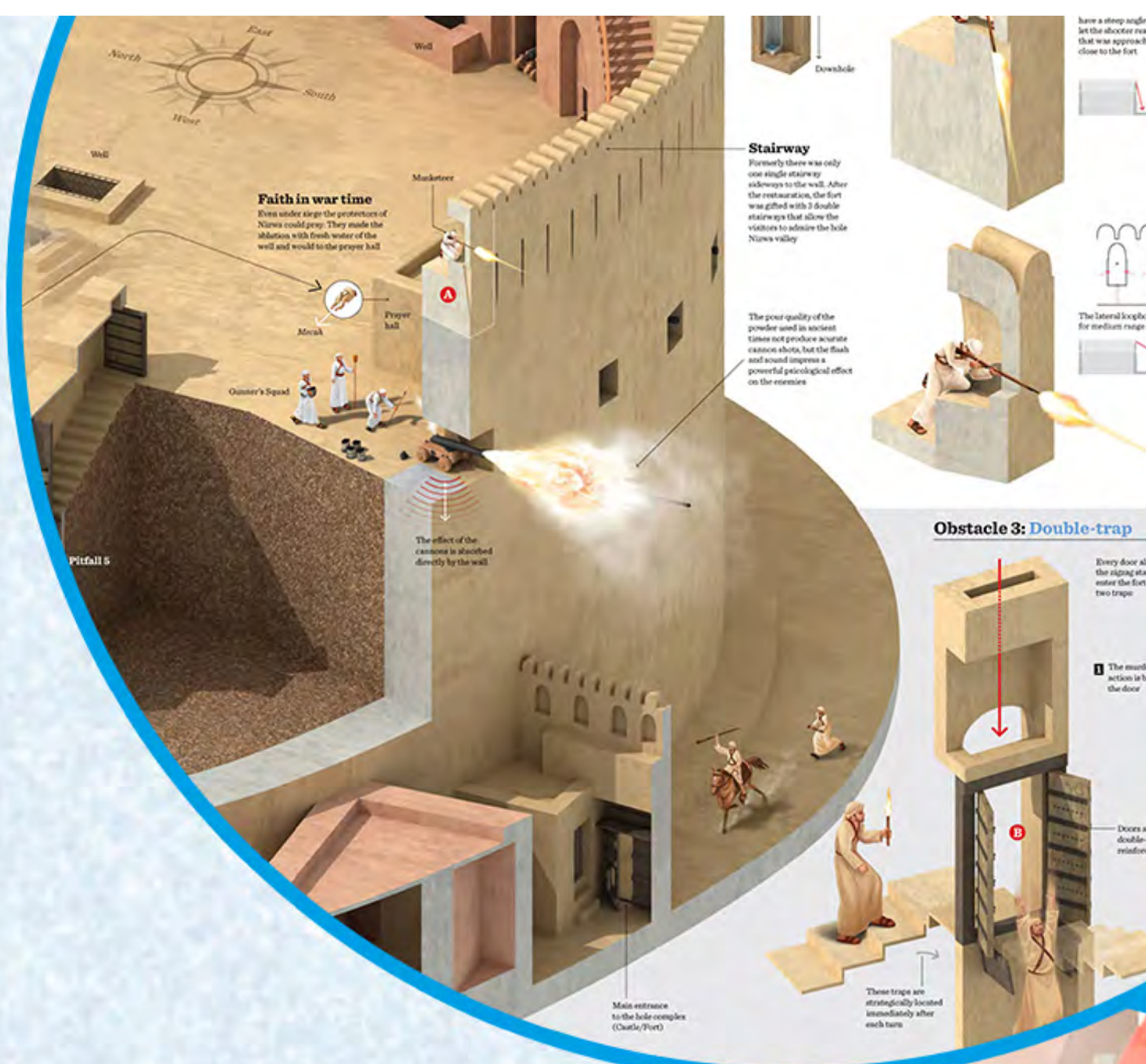
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