LET'S TALK
Times OF OMAN

HOLIDAY NOTICE

The next edition of Times of Oman will be on Wednesday, July 13 and T weekly on July 15, due to Eid Al Adha holidays.

OMANI WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION IN MUTTRAH LAUNCHED

The Ministry of Social Development has issued a decision announcing the launch of Omani Women's Association (OWA) in the Wilayat of Muttrah. As many as 60 OWAs, and six branches of the same, operate in different governorates of the Sultanate of Oman. >A5

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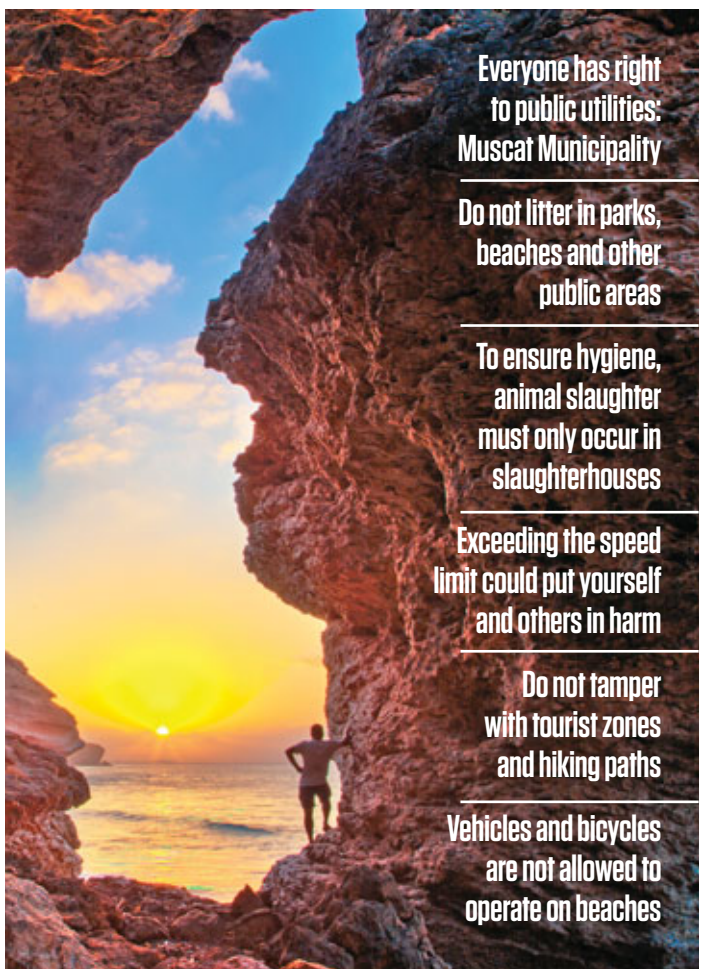
Eid Greetings

The Board of Directors, management and the staff of Muscat Media Group and Times of Oman, extend their heartiest greetings to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on the advent of the Blessed Eid Al Adha.

LET'S ALL ENJOY THE EID HOLIDAYS, BUT RESPONSIBLY

Road safety experts have advised people sitting on the back seats to fasten their seatbelts at all times



Times News Service

MUSCAT: While all of us are preparing to enjoy the five-day Eid Al Adha holiday that begins on Friday, people around the country have been asked to behave responsibly by following rules such as keeping public areas clean and not breaking the speed limits while travelling on roads.

With many people planning to visit tourist areas and public spaces such as beaches and parks in Muscat as well as other areas of the country, Muscat Municipality has reminded people to be mindful that such places are for everyone to enjoy.

"It is part of our plan to increase green cover along roads and streets, and raise trees, flowers and plants in areas planned for walking, resting and various physical activities," said Dr Suhail bin Salem Al Shanfari, director of the Information and Awareness Department at Muscat Municipality.

"However, we sometimes face challenges from certain individuals, sometimes in the form of sabotage and tampering with public facilities, deforming parks and other negative and undesirable actions, especially in green areas and along beaches.

"These activities have economic and social consequences, and although awareness campaigns through the media are on, the community has a big say in stopping such actions," he added.

Self-awareness

"We rely on developing self-awareness, rather than the imposition of penalties. During the Eid Al Adha holiday, we hope people will preserve public places, as well as areas they visit for hiking. Take care to leave these places as clean as you found them."

With the Eid Al Adha holiday running from Friday, 8 July, to Tuesday the 12th, it is quite common for people in Oman to go to their hometowns in the interior to celebrate with their families, while others choose to visit locations either within or outside the country. >A2

His Majesty sends written message to King of Jordan

A3

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HOLY CITY OF MAKKAH

Omani pilgrims reflect on sacred days of Haj

SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

MAKKAH: Over 6,000 pilgrims from Oman are now in the holy city of Makkah performing the annual Haj pilgrimage and are united to one goal of asking God for forgiveness and repentance from their mistakes committed in the past.

One of them is 47-year old Mohammed Al-Barwani, an oil and gas specialist who manages to juggle between Islamic jurisdiction and his professional specialisation.

"The time of Haj is the time of meeting people from different backgrounds, nationalities and professions. This is part of the spirit of Haj to share knowledge and experiences while you submit yourself to God," Mohammed explained the essence of Haj.

He also explained that tolerance is the essential part of the pilgrimage. "When you meet a lot of people, whether you talk to them or not, you need to be tolerant. Not all of them will be in the right frame of mind because they are here with just one focus. The focus to be forgiven by God. So, sometimes, during the Tawaf, (circling of the holy Kaaba), someone may seem to be aggressive, pushing people and you need to forgive them to help them get forgiven by God for their past sins," Mohammed added.

Mohammed is part of Wifaaq, a group that arranged about 100 Omani pilgrims for this year's Haj session. But he is not the only one in the many Omani groups who shares the same sentiment of tolerance, patience and repentance.

Sheikh Hatim Al-Abdulsalam has dedicated his life towards Islam for many years and repeatedly reminds everyone of the benefits of successful Haj practices.

"There are many benefits of performing the Haj, not a matter of being forgiven for what you have done in the past. It is also the time of soul-searching to look deep within yourself for what kind of life you went through during your lifetime. It is time to change for the better. When you go back home, you should dedicate more time to help people," Sheikh Hatim, told *Times of Oman*.

He also reminded all Haj goers to meditate when they are in Makkah and cast their minds back in the history of Islam.

"A lot of events happened in this holy city. We need to recall the history because Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) dedicated his life to serve his followers. There are dedicated places and we need to visit those places and meditate on the original blessings and goodness and their messages to the mankind," Sheikh Hatim added.

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN
Oman, Brunei to boost business, investments

1 Oman and Brunei Darussalam explored business and investment opportunities and means of promoting bilateral economic and trade ties. >A5

MARKET
Pact signed for marine fuel at Sohar Port

2 OOMCO and Sohar Port have signed a pact for to fuel vessels visiting Sohar Port. >B1

SPORTS
Djokovic defeats Jannik Sinner

3 Six-time champion Novak Djokovic beat Italy's Jannik Sinner in the quarter-finals of the ongoing Wimbledon on Tuesday. >B6

OMAN

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PRAYER TIMINGS

Dhuhr....12:17pm
Asr....3:36pm
Maghrib....7:03pm
Isha....8:24pm
Fajr (Tomorrow)....4:00am

BOULEVARD BOUTIQUE MALL

Akbar Ceylon Tea outlet launched in the Sultanate

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the Sultanate of Oman, Ameer Ajwad, launched an exclusive outlet of Premium Quality Ceylon Tea (Akbar Tea) at Boulevard Boutique Mall in Muscat, on July 5, 2022.

Akbar Tea is a product of Akbar Brothers (Pvt) Ltd who is the largest Ceylon Tea exporter for more than 29 years. Akbar Tea is the most globally outreached Sri Lankan brand of the year 2020 and the best exporter in the Sri Lankan Tea industry for the 12th consecutive year. Akbar brothers had become the first Sri Lankan Tea Company being awarded with the internationally recognised ISO90002 and HACCP quality certificates.

Opening the tea outlet, Ambassador Ameer Ajwad stated that Akbar Tea was one of the Sri Lanka's foremost exporters of high quality Ceylon Tea and that over 75 million cups of Akbar Tea is drunk daily world-wide. The Ambassador expressed hope that the Akbar Tea outlet in the heart of the city of Muscat will serve the Ceylon Tea lovers in Oman.

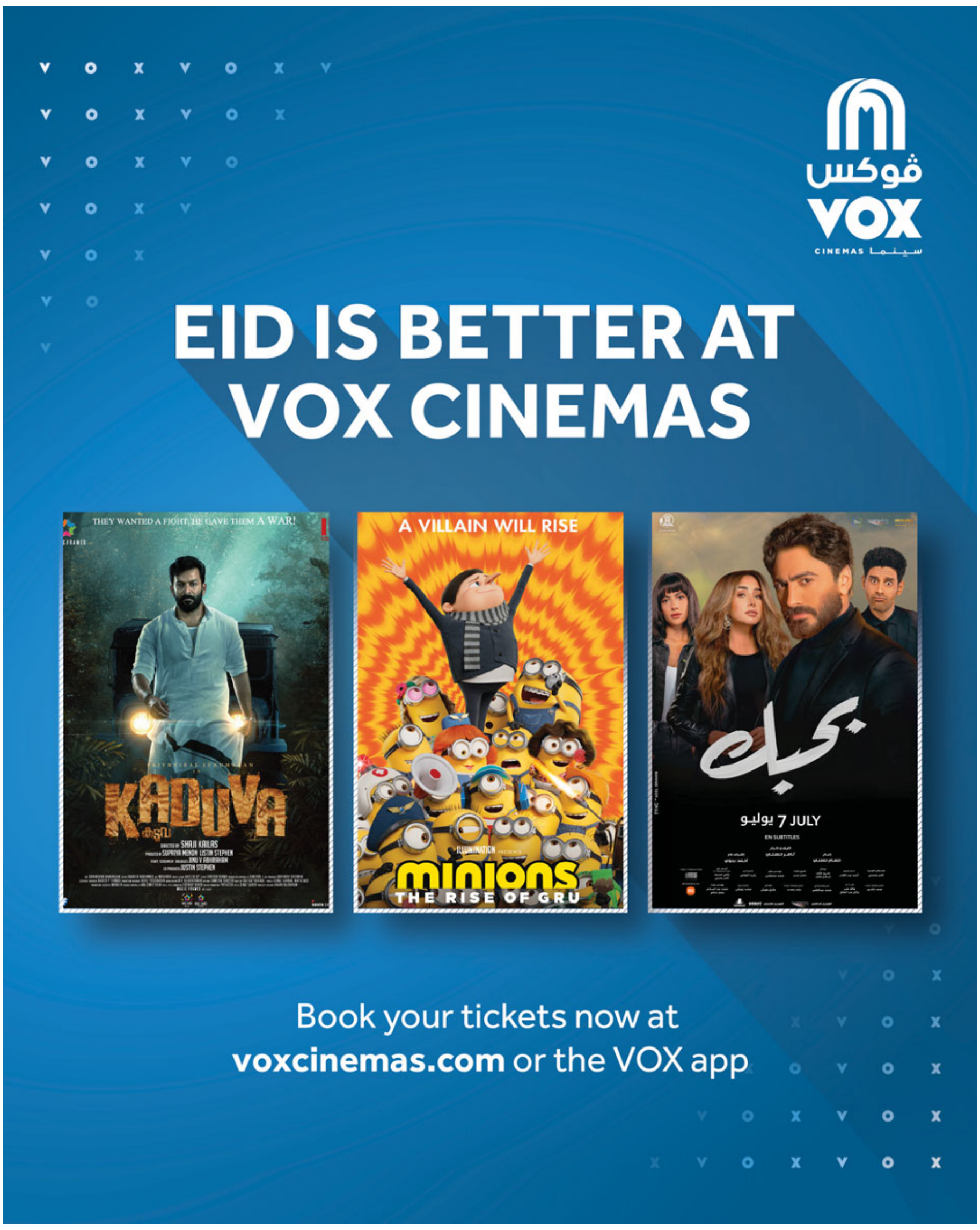
Under the Akbar Tea brand umbrella, the company offers a comprehensive product range of Ceylon Tea as traditional black and green tea in loose packs and tea-bags, together with flavoured & herbal teas, ice tea and a variety of different packaging options. Akbar tea is a popular Ceylon tea brand in US and Europe and now available in the Omani market in Muscat and Salalah.

During the event Mohammed Kaleel Ahmed Azam together with his Omani partners, Musallam Al Barami & Ali Salam Al Awaed made a presentation on a range of Akbar Tea varieties available in the outlet.

PREMIUM QUALITY: Sri Lankan Ambassador Ameer Ajwad stated that Akbar Tea is one of the Sri Lanka's foremost exporters of high quality Ceylon Tea.

Head of West Asia Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman Mohammed Al Shafari, Chairman of Muscat Media Group Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali and Deputy Director of Small and Medium Enterprises Department of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) Hussein Marzouq Abdullah Alharrasi graced the launching ceremony as guests of honour. Counsellor of the Sri Lanka Embassy Dilini Abeysekera and other well-wishers participated at the ceremony.

17 member delegation from Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) led by the Chairman of OCCI RedhaJuma Al Salih who undertook a business visit to Sri Lanka in March 2022, had a familiarization tour in the Akbar Tea Packing Facility in Colombo.



EID HOLIDAYS

< FROM A1

Drive safely

While people will be naturally excited to quickly go home once the work day has ended, Ali Al Barwani, the ex-CEO of the Oman Road Safety Association (ORSA), reminded people to not let their excitement spill on to the roads and end up in reckless driving, as such actions could endanger others and cause potentially fatal accidents.

"There are three reasons people are reckless on the road: First, it is summer, so the heat does affect them, and they think that by driving fast, they can spend lesser time under the hot sun," he said. "Second, because it is Eid holiday, they are very excited to go home, see their family and friends and start the celebrations, and they are impatient to reach their hometown so they may break the speed limit. I personally have seen people drive at speeds as high as 160 km/hr, when the speed limit is only about 120.

"Third, they believe that they will not be affected by the consequences of rash driving, and so continue to take such risks on the road," he added. "This is a crazy attitude, because none of us are any different from the others. If you take a risk on the road, remember that you are putting yourself in danger, as well as others in your car, and all those around you. It only takes one second to commit a serious accident: That's all. Once it has occurred, it cannot be reverted."

One of the most popular places people visit at this time of the year is Salalah. With the Khareef season in full swing, many flock to the capital of the southern Dhofar governorate to enjoy the seasonal monsoons that bring with them cool breezes, refreshing mists and turn the surrounding landscapes green as far as the eyes can see.

"Always remember to wear your seatbelt, and that includes those in the rear as well, especially small children," he advised. "We come across many people who do not fasten the seatbelts for their children sitting in the rear. Putting them on their mother's lap, or their father's lap, or their brother's or sister's lap is not safe. The ground in Salalah is wet right now, and if the vehicle slips and you are not secure, it could cause serious injury, and a commotion in the vehicle, when concentrating on the road is of utmost importance."

"When you are off-road, the terrain is unsteady and the vehicle could jerk suddenly. When that happens, your child, if he is not safely fastened, could fall from his seat and injure himself," he added.

MEETING

HM the Sultan sends written message to King of Jordan

AMMAN: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a written message to King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, dealing with the bilateral relations between the two countries and means of enhancing them.

The written message was handed over by Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, when he was received at Al Husseiniya Palace on Wednesday by Prince Faisal bin Al Hussein, Deputy to the King.

The meeting was attended by Ayman Al Safadi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates and Sheikh Hilal Marhoon Al Ma'amari, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

-ONA

VISIT

Oman, Jordan review bilateral ties, means of boosting cooperation

AMMAN: Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister met on Wednesday with Ayman Al Safadi, Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates.

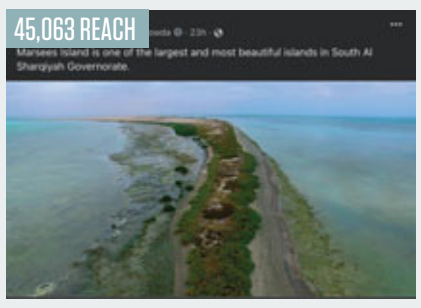
The two sides reviewed the existing relations and cooperation between Oman and Jordan in various areas, particularly the economic, cultural and investment fields. They also reiterated the keenness of the two countries' leaderships in boosting cooperation to serve the interests of the two countries' peoples.

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

The meeting was attended by Sheikh Hilal Marhoon Al Ma'amari, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. -ONA

Trending ON SOCIAL MEDIA

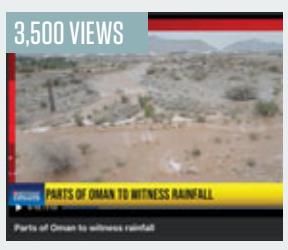
MOST READ ON FACEBOOK



We Love Oman story on Marsees Island

We Love Oman story on Marsees Island reached 45,063 people and had 1,529 link clicks on Facebook.

MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK



Video on Oman weather

A video on Oman weather had 3,500 views and reached 11,500 people on Facebook.

MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

Video on new SalamAir direct flights from Suhar to India

The Morning Minute video on SalamAir launches first direct flights to India from Suhar had 1,072 views and 58 likes on Instagram

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JOINT MEETING

Oman, Brunei explore business, investment opportunities

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN: The Sultanate of Oman and Brunei Darussalam explored business and investment opportunities, available incentives and means of promoting economic and business relations between the two countries.

This came during an event organised by Oman's Embassy in Brunei Darussalam in conjunction with the University of Brunei Darussalam (UBM).

The event, which coincides with the 3rd meeting of the joint Oman-Brunei Committee, includes seminars on investment and education. A heritage and tourism exhibition is also held on the sidelines of the event.

The event aims to broaden the vistas of joint cooperation and exchange of expertise in economic, cultural and tourism fields.

INAUGURATED: The event's opening ceremony was held under the patronage of Dato Seri Setia Dr Awang Haji Mohd Amin Liew Abdullah, Brunei's Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy. - ONA

This event comes within the framework of efforts exerted by Oman's Embassy in Brunei Darussalam to intensify communication between public and private establishments of the two countries.

The event's opening ceremony was held under the patronage of Dato Seri Setia Dr Awang Haji Mohd Amin Liew Abdullah, Brunei's Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy.

Strong ties

The Bruneian minister affirmed that the event reflects the advancement of relations between the two countries which share many similar cultural values.

He added that the event highlights the diverse advantages offered by the two countries to encourage investments.

On his turn, Sheikh Ahmed Hashel Al Maskari, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Brunei Darussalam said that this event aims to promote cooperation in investment, higher education and tourism fields within the framework of economic diplomacy and general diplomacy in a bid to enhance relations and achieve the aspirations of the two countries' peoples.

Meanwhile, the event highlights various investments of Oman-Brunei Investment Company, which has a total capital of $200 million in diverse sectors, including aviation, healthcare, tourism, hospitality, industry, communications and education.

Opening ceremony

The opening ceremony was attended by Dr. Saleh Said Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry, Dr. Hajah May Fa'ezah Binti Haji Ahmad Ariffin, Brunei's Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance and Economy for Economy, heads of the Diplomatic Missions to Brunei Darussalam and some businessmen, academics and media personalities.

-ONA

PROTOTYPE

Students in Oman invent a new vehicle safety system

MUSCAT: Students from National College of Automotive Technology have invented a prototype vehicle safety system comprising an air pressure built-in socket enabled to control tyre and engine operation when a safety issue arises.

A student from the 4-member team, Mohammed Habib Al Ajmi, told Oman News Agency (ONA) that an electronic simulator is fitted underneath the vehicle to prevent its collision in certain circumstances.

Al Ajmi added that another advantage of the model is the fact that its safety system automatically stops the engine running, once the fuel tank is opened at a filling station, to avoid a fire incident.

Al Ajmi pointed out that the project gains the support of the College and that the team hopes to develop an unmanned hi-tech local car that operates with remote sensors. -ONA

EMPOWERING WOMEN

Ministry announces launch of Omani Women's Association

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Social Development has issued a decision announcing the launch of Omani Women's Association (OWA) in the Wilayat of Muttrah.

Empowering women

The Omani Women's Association seeks to enhance the role of women in activating social development, upgrading women's status and empowering women to spread health and social awareness and develop leadership skills.

As many as 60 OWAs, and six branches of the same, operate in different governorates of the Sultanate of Oman.

— ONA

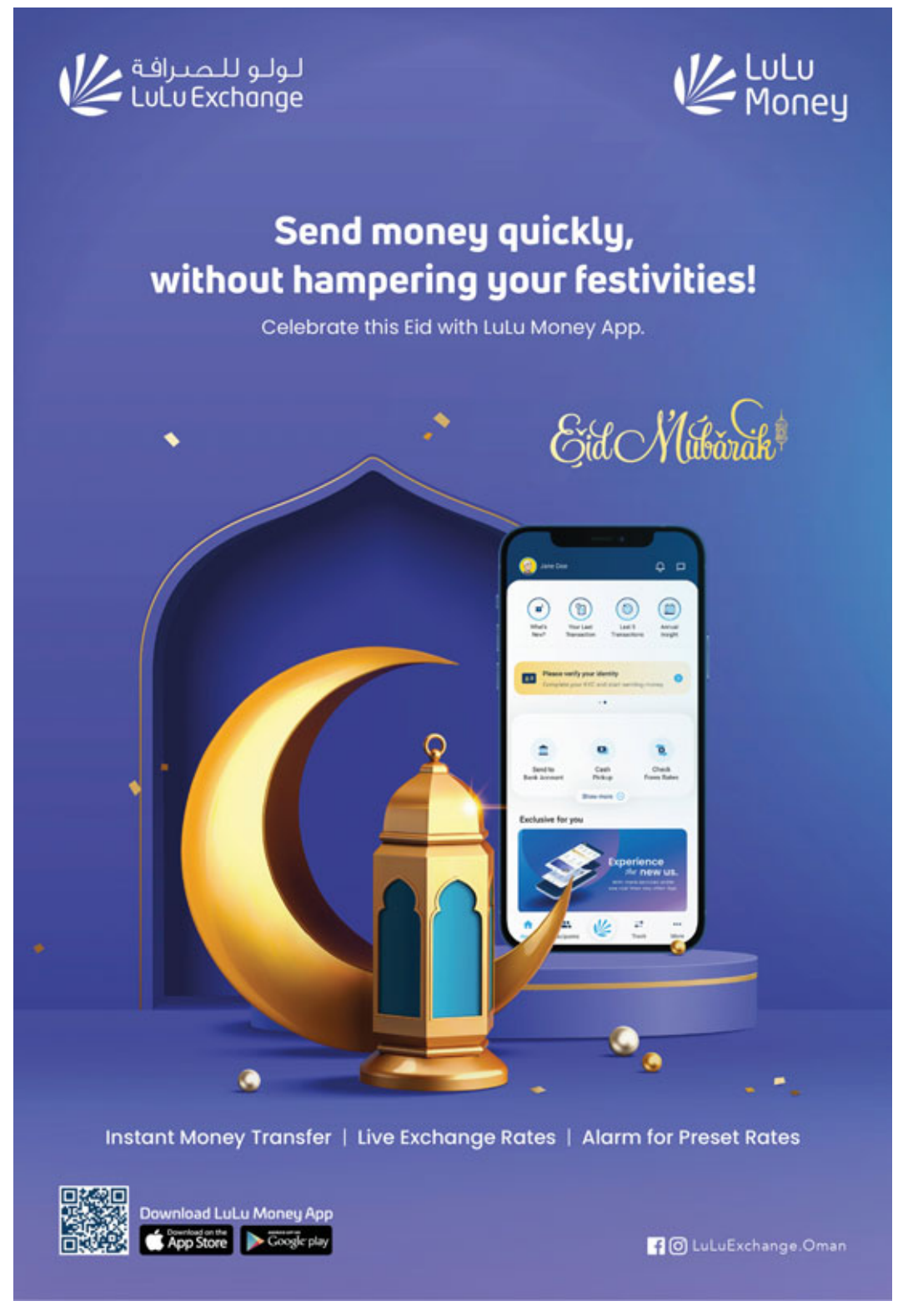
MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No. 21 /2021

Muscat Municipality invites interested companies to the following tenders:

Tender No.	Tender Description	Document Fee	Last date for inquires submission	Last date for obtaining Tender Docs.	Last date for Submission
27/2022/MM/PA-4-Recall-1	Supply of Gases	25/- OMR	25/07/2022	11/08/2022	14/08/2022
30/2022/MM/PA-7-Recall-1	Insurance of Muscat Municipality Properties	25/- OMR	13/07/2022	19/07/2022	21/07/2022
53/2022/MM/PA-15	Supply of Air Conditioners, Refrigerators and Water Coolers	25/- OMR	25/07/2022	11/08/2022	14/08/2022
54/2022/MM/PA-16	Supply of Sign Faces for Street Name, Way Number, House Number , Block Number and Flat Number with Accessories within Muscat Governorate	25/- OMR	25/07/2022	11/08/2022	14/08/2022

1. Specialized Companies with a valid registration certificate from Tender Board can obtain tender documents from the website through the following link: https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om. Starting from the date of this announcement until the end of deadline mentioned above.
2. Bidders shall submit their offers electronically through link mentioned above.
3. Tender Bonds shall be E-Bond which is equivalent to (1%) of the total value of the tender to be submitted through E-Tendering system, addressed to Muscat Municipality and valid for (90) days starting from the deadline for submission.
4. Tender not accompanied by a tender bond will be rejected.
5. Clarifications and support:
   - For any inquiries regarding tenders, please contact us through e-tendering website:
   - **(https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om)**
   - For technical support of e-tendering system, please send an email to) **etenderhd@mtc.gov.om (or call (+96824402200).**
   - For technical support of E-Bond through e-tendering system please send an email to) **esnad@gstb.gov.om (or call (+96824402200/24402330).**
   Website: www.mm.gov.om



WORLD

SYMPTOMS SIMILAR TO CHOLERA

Over 50 Afghan children contract unknown disease: Report

KABUL: More than 50 children in Afghanistan's southern Zabul province have contracted an unknown disease, according to local media.

The disease which is mainly found in Siori region, carries symptoms similar to cholera, Khaama Press reported. Abdul Hakim Hakimi, the Taliban's head of the public health department in Zabul, said that a mobile medical team has been sent to the province to examine the disease.

Meanwhile, several people in the province have been infected with cholera.

Cholera is a highly infectious disease caused by consuming food or drinking water having certain bacteria.

It causes severe diarrhoea and vomiting, which causes dehydration and can lead to death within a few hours if left untreated.

According to the World Health Organisation, "Cholera remains a global threat to public health and is an indicator of inequity and lack of social development."

The spread of cholera had earlier threatened the Afghan people who continued to deal with the aftermath of the recent 5.9-magnitude earthquake in Afghanistan, and now the unknown disease has also become a concern.

Afghanistan is also grappling with a serious humanitarian crisis as according to international assessments, the country now has the highest number of people in emergency food insecurity in the world, with more than 23 million in need of assistance, and approximately 95 per cent of the population having insufficient food consumption. ANI

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MAXIMUM-SECURITY PRISON

Rebels attack prison in Nigeria, free all Boko Haram suspects

ABUJA: Gunmen ambushed Kuje prison near Nigeria's capital city of Abuja, freeing around 600 of the nearly 900 inmates late Tuesday. Bandits attacked the maximum-security prison with guns and high-grade explosives. One security officer was killed during the raid and three others were injured.

Half of the escaped prisoners are now back in police custody, according to officials.

"They have reported themselves to the police, some we have successfully retrieved from the bushes where they were hiding, and (as of) now we have retrieved about 300 out of about 600 that got out of the jail cells," said Shuaib Belgore, who serves as the permanent secretary at Nigeria's Interior Ministry.

Belgore pointed to Boko Haram as collaborators in the attack and said that the gunmen came "specifically for their co-conspirators."

"Some of them are in the general (prison) population so they broke out and other people in that population escaped as well but many of them have returned," Belgore said. Kuje prison housed 64 suspected members of the Boko Haram extremist group — all of whom are still on the run.

While the Kuje prison raid was the first to occur in the capital, rebels have conducted several similar jailbreaks in northeastern Nigeria.

The attack occurred around the same time as an ambush carried out by rebels on a presidential convoy. The motorcade was en route to the hometown of President Muhammadu Buhari in northern Nigeria. Buhari was not present at the time. DW

Chaos in Johnson's govt as two more ministers resign

Will Quince, minister for children and families and junior transport minister Laura Trott resigned on Wednesday

LONDON: In another blow to Prime Minister Boris Johnson, two more ministers resigned from the UK government on Wednesday, following the departure of Health Secretary Sajid Javid and Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak, media reported.

Will Quince, minister for children and families and junior transport minister Laura Trott resigned on Wednesday. In his resignation letter, Quince said he had "no choice but to tender resignation", after being given an "inaccurate" briefing over Prime Minister Boris Johnson's appointment of a politician who was the subject of complaints.

"Thank you for meeting with me yesterday evening and for your sincere apology regarding the briefings I received from No. 10 ahead of Monday's media round, which we now know to be inaccurate," he said in his resignation letter to Johnson which was posted on Twitter.

"It is with great sadness and regret that I feel that I have no choice but to tender my resignation as Minister for Children and Families as I accepted and repeated those assurances in good faith."

Meanwhile, junior transport minister Laura Trott said she was quitting over a loss of "trust" in the government.

Earlier, on Tuesday, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson named the new UK Health Secretary and Finance Minister shortly after Health Secretary Sajid Javid and Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak tendered their resignation, media reports said.

UK Cabinet chief of staff Steve Barclay has been appointed as the new health secretary. Meanwhile, UK education secretary Nadhim Zahawi was named as the new finance minister.

In his resignation letter, Sunak said he was "sad to be leaving the government", but has come to the conclusion that he "cannot continue like this".

"The public rightly expect the government to be conducted properly, competently and seriously. I recognise this may be my last ministerial job, but I believe these standards are worth fighting for and that is why I am resigning," Rishi Sunak said.

Javid said he had lost confidence in Boris Johnson's ability to govern following multiple scandals, saying he could "no longer continue in good conscience". The minister said that many lawmakers and the public had lost confidence in Johnson's ability to govern in the national interest.

In his resignation letter, which he posted to Twitter, Javid told Johnson that "the values you represent reflect on your colleagues," and in light of recent scandals, the public had concluded that their party was neither "competent" nor "acting in the national interest." ANI

NUCLEAR ENERGY

European Parliament backs listing nuclear energy, gas as 'green'

LONDON: The European Parliament on Wednesday voted in favor of a proposal regarding labeling natural gas and nuclear power plants as climate-friendly investments.

The European Commission released the proposal, formally called the EU taxonomy, in December as a list of economic activities that investors can label and market as green in the EU.

A motion to block the proposal received 278 votes in favor and 328 against, while 33 lawmakers abstained.

Unless 20 of the EU's 27 member states oppose the proposal, it will be passed into law.

A controversial plan

The proposal was initially met with resistance among some EU member states, with one camp led by France strongly backing the green label for natural gas and nuclear energy. Meanwhile, Germany — which has been phasing out its nuclear power plants — had opposed the plan.

Some environmental groups and EU lawmakers have also criticized the plan for "greenwashing" fossil fuel and nuclear energy.

Austria and Luxembourg have even threatened to sue the EU if the plan becomes law.

Still, the proposal had the backing of the majority of the center-right European People's Party, the European Parliament's biggest lawmaker group.

Lawmakers of the centrist Renew Europe group were largely in favor of the proposal, while the Greens and Social Democrats mostly opposed it.

A total of 353 lawmakers — a majority of the Parliament's 705 lawmakers — are needed to reject a plan for it to fail.

A sharp reduction in Russian gas supplies to Europe in recent weeks has triggered more opposition to the EU taxonomy's classification of gas as green.

"It's dirty politics and it's an outrageous outcome to label gas and nuclear as green and keep more money flowing to [Russian President Vladimir] Putin's war chest," Greenpeace EU sustainable finance campaigner Ariadna Rodrigo said. "We will fight this in the courts," she added. DW

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Times News Service

DOHA: Arabic has been added as an official platform language on FIFA+, making the new digital destination for football fandom more accessible to over 300 million* native speakers around the world.

To mark the launch, two new original documentaries have also gone live; Mo: A Global Icon, charting the impact that Liverpool star Mo Salah has had on the world, and Habsi, a behind-the-scenes journey in to the career of goalkeeper Ali Al-Habsi, from Oman to the Premier League, FA Cup glory and beyond.

Arabic now takes the number of localised editions for FIFA+ to 10, following the addition of Bahasa, Italian, Japanese and Korean last month to the founding languages of English, French, Spanish, German and Portuguese.

Arabic

The news also follows the 2022 addition of Arabic as an official FIFA language, as directed by the FIFA Statutes. Discussing the launch, FIFA+ Head of Content, James Marley, said: "The Arabic world is rich with football narratives, and we're not only excited to now be making FIFA+ more accessible to fans in the region, but to start bringing a global audience to many of its incredible stories.

"We're kicking off with Mo: A Global Icon and Habsi, but there is so much more to come, from grassroots to the professional game – particularly as we head towards the FIFA World Cup in Qatar."

Since launch, FIFA+ has continued to grow to wider audiences and develop new and exciting content streams.

Completely free, it is the new digital destination for football fandom, offering an extensive archive of all men's and women's FIFA World Cup matches, thousands of live fixtures every year, interactive games and predictors, and a slate of original documentaries, docuseries, talk shows and shorts, including "Croatia: Defining A Nation", "Ronaldinho", "HD Cutz", "Dani Crazy Dream" and "Icons".

HORSE SOKO

Royal Cavalry horse secures 1st place at French racecourse

PARIS: Horse Soko (Horse rider Olivier and horse trainer Elizabeth Bernard) for the Royal Cavalry secured first place in the fifth round, of the race held at the French racecourse of La Teste.

Arabian horses

The race was for thorough-bred Arabian horses for 1,900 metres. The win for the first place of Horse Soko was in the third category of the race. -ONA

MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,124.41 points, up by 0.14 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.47 per cent at 457.63 points. SMN Power Holding, up 8.7 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Oil Marketing, down 5.53 per cent, was the top loser.

Pact to provide marine fuels to vessels visiting Sohar Port inked

The bunker licence will see Oman Oil Marketing Company operate the 10,000 metric tonne bunker barge MT ALPHA to enhance the position of Sohar Port as the port of choice in the region for vessel owners and operators requiring bunkering services by improving turnaround times and maintaining supply chain efficiency

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Oil Marketing Company (OOMCO) and Sohar Port and Freezone have signed a bunker licence agreement for OOMCO to provide marine fuels to vessels visiting Sohar Port and also at the anchorage area.

The bunker licence will see Oman Oil Marketing Company operate the 10,000 metric tonne bunker barge MT ALPHA (IMO 9286451) to enhance the position of Sohar Port as the port of choice in the region for vessel owners and operators requiring bunkering services by improving turnaround times and maintaining supply chain efficiency.

The bunker barge is capable of supplying all low Sulphur fuel-compliant marine fuels, in line with IMO 2020.

Fuels available will include Very Low Sulphur Fuel Oil (VLSFO) 0.5 per cent and Low Sulphur Marine Gas Oil (MGO) 0.1 per cent and High Sulphur Fuel Oil (HSFO) 3.5 per cent at delivery rates up to 1,000 m3 per hour.

Tarik Al Junaidi, Chief Executive Officer of Oman Oil Marketing Company commented, "We are very pleased with the performance of our bunker equipment and team, and we look forward to utilizing our capability and resources to supply Sohar Port and Freezone with high-quality bunker fuels that meet the highest international standards and specifications. We believe that this service provides a significant stimulus for further growth for both Sohar Port and Freezone and OOMCO as we further consolidate our position as the leading marketer and distributor of multi-sector fuel in Oman and regionally. This bunker license represents an important joint effort to work together to further boost Oman's logistics sector and contribute to the national economic diversification efforts."

Omar bin Mahmood Al Mahrizi, Chief Executive Officer of Sohar Freezone CEO, DCEO Sohar Port, said, "Sohar is located close to some of the world's busiest shipping lanes. The need to serve these ships at Sohar Port quickly and efficiently to allow them to continue on their journey and meet transportation deadlines is highly important to help ensure the integrity of global supply chains and strengthen the position of Sohar as an integrated logistics hub with great connectivity to major shipping lines globally. We have been very pleased with the quality, safety and speed of the service offered by OOMCO and we are delighted to continue this relationship by working together. This will serve to strengthen Oman's shipping and logistics sector as demand for high-quality and regulatory-compliant bunker fuels increases in the future."

The bunker fuel market in the Middle East and Africa region is expected to grow by more than 12 per cent during the period 2022-2025. By offering convenient bunkering services to even the world's largest cargo ships, Sohar Port and Freezone will be able to serve the needs of the global shipping market, attract further investment and support Oman's journey to becoming a world-class international logistics hub.

CAPITAL MARKET AUTHORITY

CMA preparing standard insurance policy for SME owners in Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Capital Market Authority (CMA) organised a workshop titled 'The Role of Insurance in Risk Management in Small and Medium Enterprises' in collaboration with the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority on the premises of the authority.

Ahmed Ali Al Maamari, Vice President for Insurance Sector said in the workshop that the CMA, in cooperation with the partners in the public and private sectors, is preparing a standard insurance policy for the owners of small and medium enterprises, which will provide the minimum basic insurance coverage and additional benefits for this type of institutions, which is an advanced step in providing insurance coverage for this type of institution.

The organisation of the workshop came as part of the CMA's and the authority's keenness to provide all the factors that contribute to the growth and encourage the emergence of young nationals' initiatives that contribute to expanding the size of the private sector and drive economic development. Whereas the insurance cover is one of the most important facilitators that assist the survival and sustainability of SMEs as being one of the key requirements for risk management, which is inherent in any institutional building that proceeds according to a clear plan and programme to achieve development and success, further to its importance in boosting confidence and support for the entrepreneur.

Al Maamari confirmed that the CMA, through this workshop, seeks to achieve four main goals, which are instilling the concepts related to the insurance philosophy that illustrates the cooperative relationship between members of the insurance portfolio, the importance of insurance in risk management, encountering the many occurrences of risks the SMEs are exposed to such as unseen administrative expenses as well as introducing the various insurance products the SMEs need for their protection and sustainability.

It is worth noting that providing the initiatives related to insurance products for owners of SMEs contributes to achieving the national priorities of Oman Vision 2040, which is to stimulate the role of the private sector to achieve economic diversification and financial sustainability, as well as directing the institutions towards successful and sustainable economic management.

PURCHASING MANAGERS' INDEX

India's services sector PMI hits 11-year high in June

NEW DELHI: Services activity in India has increased in the month of June as the S&P Global India Services Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) showed a growth in comparison to the previous month, thereby hitting an 11-year high.

In June, the index came in at 59.2, as compared to 58.9 in May, data showed. The acceleration in the services' growth was broad-based led by improvements in demand following the retreat of pandemic restrictions, capacity expansion and a favourable economic environment, S&P Global said in a statement.

Substantial upturn

"Services firms noted a substantial upturn in new work intakes at the end of the first fiscal quarter, with the rate of increase improving to the best in over 11 years. Where growth was signalled, survey members commented on strengthening demand conditions, expanded client bases and fruitful marketing," the statement added.

It further added that firms were able to secure new orders despite charging more for their services. June data showed the fastest rise in selling prices since July 2017 as several companies sought to transfer part of their additional cost burdens to clients.

Stronger increases in charges were seen across the four broad areas of the service economy, with the sharpest upturn recorded in transport, information, and communication, it said.

"Unrelenting inflation somewhat concerned service providers, who were cautious in their forecasts. On average, business activity is expected to increase over the course of the coming 12 months, but the overall level of sentiment remained historically low," Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at S&P Global Market Intelligence, said.

Some companies responded to capacity pressures by hiring additional staff in June, but the vast majority have left their payroll numbers unchanged. Overall, employment in services sector rose marginally in June, following a decline in May. -ANI

REPORT

Global trade expected to grow steadily

DUBAI: Global trade, which hit a record high of $28.5 trillion in 2021, is expected to grow steadily in 2022 and in the coming years as a new era of multilateralism – underpinned by regionalisation, trade in services, innovation and sustainable trade – counters the impact of the slowing global economy, according to Dubai Multi Commodities Centre's (DMCC) latest Future of Trade 2022 report titled 'A New Era of Multilateralism'.

While trade growth may be somewhat slower in 2022 compared to 2021, overall, there is a reason for optimism, notwithstanding well-flagged issues such as the fallout from the war in Ukraine and the pandemic. Pent-up demand from the COVID-19 shock is already driving trade in goods; a rebound in trade in services is set to follow.

Geopolitics, as ever, will shape the trade landscape in the 2020s, building on new developments in regionalism, bilateral trade, and global investment flows. -WAM

MARKET

MSX index ends higher

SMN Power Holding, up 8.7 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Oil Marketing, down 5.53 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,124.41 points, up by 0.14 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.47 per cent at 457.63 points. SMN Power Holding, up 8.7 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Oil Marketing, down 5.53 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of National Bank Oman were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 230 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR2.21 million, with more than 10.67 million shares changing hands. Out of 37 traded securities, 10 advanced, 16 declined, and 11 remained unchanged. At the session close, foreign investors were net sellers for OMR407,000 while GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for OMR286,000, followed by domestic investors for OMR120,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 6,573.45 points, down 0.15 per cent. National Bank Oman was the only gainer up by 2.38 per cent. Prices of HSBC Bank Oman, Global Financial Investments, Ominvest, Al Anwar Investment and Bank Muscat were down by 1.67 per cent, 1.52 per cent, 1.31 per cent, 1.24 per cent and 0.38 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,816.34 points, down 0.12 per cent. Prices of Raysut Cement, Gulf Mushroom Products and Al Anwar Ceramics were up by 8.16 per cent, 6 per cent and 1.45 per cent respectively. Prices of A'Saffa Foods, Oman Fisheries, Oman Flour Mills, Galfar Engineering and Oman Cement were down by 5.41 per cent, 3.54 per cent, 3.45 per cent, 1.75 per cent and 0.79 per cent respectively.

Services Index was up by 0.62 per cent before closing at 1,595.5 points. Prices of SMN Power Holding, Sembcorp Salalah, Ooredoo, Al Suwadi Power and Al Jazeera Services were up by 8.7 per cent, 6.15 per cent, 3.03 per cent, 2.08 per cent, and 1.08 per cent respectively. Prices of Oman Oil Marketing, National Gas, OIFC, Oman National Engineering and Barka Desalination were down by 5.53 per cent, 2.04 per cent, 1.58 per cent, 0.93 per cent and 0.71 per cent respectively. – **United Securities**

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,125.41	4,112.27	4,124.41	4,118.76	5.65	0.14
FINANCIAL INDEX	6,587.18	6,568.28	6,573.45	6,583.32	-9.87	-0.15
Industry Index	5,825.46	5,775.64	5,816.34	5,823.20	-6.86	-0.12
Services Index	1,595.50	1,585.04	1,595.50	1,585.59	9.91	0.62
MSX Shariah Index	457.63	454.99	457.63	455.48	2.15	0.47
MSX TR INDEX	5,200.28	5,183.72	5,199.03	5,191.91	7.12	0.14
FINANCIAL TR IDX	6,892.75	6,872.97	6,876.60	6,888.71	-12.11	-0.18
SERVICES TR IDX	1,649.71	1,638.90	1,649.71	1,639.47	10.25	0.62
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,045.85	5,994.15	6,036.38	6,043.51	-7.12	-0.12

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
10,675,173	2,207,857	230	22,337,057,245	10	16	11	37

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, JULY 6

REGULAR MARKET

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RO)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	60,085	19,888	9	0.330	0.340	0.330	0.340	0.330	0.010	3.030	0.340	0.320	0.336	0.100	221,321,038
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	6,451,000	1,392,991	15	0.210	0.216	0.210	0.215	0.210	0.005	2.381	0.215	0.207	0.215	0.100	349,578,467
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	20,000	8,400	1	0.420	0.420	0.420	0.420	0.414	0.006	1.449	0.420	0.414	0.428	0.100	92,400,000
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	29,634	8,357	6	0.282	0.282	0.282	0.282	0.279	0.003	1.075	0.282	0.281	0.282	0.100	17,259,605
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSUR	4,500	1,476	2	0.328	0.328	0.328	0.328	0.328	0.000	0.000	0.328	0.328	0.328	0.100	32,800,000
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	400	48	1	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.000	0.000	0.121	0.117	0.128	0.100	235,908,553
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INV.	10,000	850	1	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.087	0.087	0.000	0.000	0.085	0.085	0.089	0.100	7,830,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	8,650	7,474	4	0.864	0.864	0.864	0.864	0.864	0.000	0.000	0.864	0.864	0.880	0.100	648,000,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	730,129	382,596	26	0.524	0.526	0.524	0.524	0.526	-0.002	-0.380	0.524	0.522	0.524	0.100	1,966,676,030
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD	15,147	5,120	3	0.338	0.338	0.338	0.338	0.340	-0.002	-0.588	0.338	0.338	0.338	0.100	42,215,510
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	25,876	6,469	4	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.252	-0.002	-0.794	0.250	0.248	0.262	0.100	82,718,178
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT. ENG.	185,500	20,054	11	0.108	0.109	0.107	0.107	0.108	-0.001	-0.926	0.107	0.107	0.110	0.100	14,980,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	100,000	30,200	3	0.302	0.302	0.302	0.302	0.306	-0.004	-1.307	0.302	0.302	0.306	0.100	201,846,359
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV. H	38,890	2,528	5	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.066	-0.001	-1.515	0.065	0.064	0.072	0.100	13,000,000
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST& FIN.	57,800	7,275	4	0.126	0.126	0.125	0.125	0.127	-0.002	-1.575	0.125	0.125	0.126	0.100	29,625,000
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	4,604	2,600	5	0.580	0.580	0.560	0.560	0.580	-0.020	-3.448	0.560	0.560	0.560	0.100	88,200,000
Total	16	7,742,215	1,896,325	100												

Parallel Market

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RO)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	487	24	1	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.046	0.004	8.696	0.050	0.000	0.047	0.100	9,981,780
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	100	16	1	0.159	0.159	0.159	0.159	0.147	0.012	8.163	0.159	0.134	0.159	0.100	31,800,000
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	600	39	2	0.065	0.069	0.065	0.069	0.065	0.004	6.154	0.069	0.065	0.069	0.100	65,865,465
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM P	500	133	1	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.250	0.015	6.000	0.265	0.260	0.275	0.100	11,025,397
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	770	38	1	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.048	0.001	2.083	0.049	0.047	0.052	0.100	35,005,911
OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD.	6,000	504	2	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.000	0.000	0.084	0.082	0.084	0.100	2,820,002
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	903	93	3	0.109	0.109	0.100	0.109	0.109	0.000	0.000	0.109	0.100	0.109	0.100	8,872,900
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	4,399	414	1	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.000	0.000	0.094	0.094	0.100	0.100	210,273,585
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	127,500	5,893	8	0.047	0.047	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.000	0.000	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.100	31,044,822
OM0000007084	MCT DESALINATE	1,112	126	1	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.000	0.000	0.113	0.111	0.113	0.100	17,577,195
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	207,770	14,544	3	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.000	0.000	0.070	0.068	0.070	0.100	32,983,047
OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	10,713	1,506	2	0.141	0.141	0.140	0.140	0.141	-0.001	-0.709	0.140	0.140	0.141	0.100	10,573,080
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	65,300	5,224	3	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.081	-0.001	-1.235	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.100	16,000,000
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	509,244	60,909	8	0.120	0.120	0.118	0.118	0.120	-0.002	-1.667	0.118	0.116	0.120	0.100	236,036,909
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	1,817,623	206,184	72	0.116	0.116	0.112	0.112	0.114	-0.002	-1.754	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.100	22,734,482
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	10,000	1,440	2	0.144	0.144	0.144	0.144	0.147	-0.003	-2.041	0.144	0.142	0.145	0.100	12,240,000
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	52,000	5,712	5	0.111	0.111	0.109	0.109	0.113	-0.004	-3.540	0.109	0.108	0.111	0.100	19,846,545
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	48,830	6,836	6	0.140	0.140	0.140	0.140	0.148	-0.008	-5.405	0.140	0.138	0.140	0.100	16,800,000
OM0000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	90	74	1	0.820	0.820	0.820	0.820	0.868	-0.048	-5.530	0.820	0.820	0.868	0.100	50,245,500
Total	19	2,863,941	309,708	123												

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Euro falls to 20-year low against dollar

BRUSSELS: The eurozone's shared currency dropped to its lowest value against the dollar in two decades on Tuesday, as a new surge in European gas prices deepened fears of a recession. Economic growth in the eurozone has floundered, with prices soaring amid the economic impact of the war in Ukraine.

WEAKEST: The euro fell by as much as 1.3 per cent against the dollar to $1.0281 — its weakest rate since December 2002. - **DW**

How severe is the drop?

The euro fell by as much as 1.3 per cent against the dollar to $1.0281 — its weakest rate since December 2002. The dip is part of a longer-term trend, with the euro weakening 8 per cent against the dollar this year. It brings the euro closer to dollar parity — something unseen since the euro's creation in 1999. Euro-related currencies such as the Hungarian forint, Polish zloty and Romanian leu have also weakened considerably against the US currency.

Meanwhile, stocks indices in Frankfurt, London and Paris dropped more than 1 per cent by late Tuesday morning amid worries of an economic downturn across Europe.

The euro selloff also saw the currency drop to its lowest against the Swiss franc since 2015 when the Swiss National Bank abandoned its currency cap. It also fell against the pound, despite the sterling facing its economic woes.

Other currencies, such as the Japanese yen and Australian dollar, are also struggling amid fears of a global recession and a soaring dollar, seen as a safe haven in times of insecurity.

The fall of the euro is linked to growing fears about the likelihood of a recession in the 19-nation eurozone. Survey data has shown a slowing in business growth across the zone. Indicators suggest the region could slip into decline as the cost-of-living crisis tightens consumer demand.

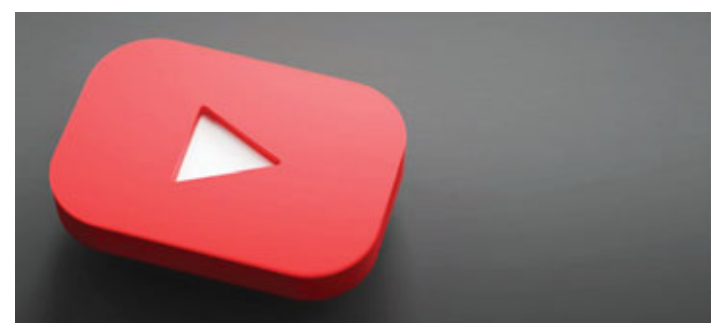
According to survey data published on Tuesday from S&P Global's closely-followed monthly purchasing managers' index (PMI) — a marker of corporate confidence — dropped to 52.0 in June from 54.8 in May. -**DW**

KASPERSKY REPORT

YouTube comments become new tool for scammers

DUBAI: Cryptocurrency is going through a turbulent time. With many rates unstable, crypto scammers have turned to new ways to hook their victims.

Kaspersky experts have witnessed one such unusual scheme, in which attackers promote fake crypto services on YouTube. They are trying to reach those interested in cheap cryptocurrency by leaving comments on popular videos – but of course, the currency won't be received.



The scammers choose trending videos on YouTube and leave comments promoting a fake "breach" in the crypto market. To make their message more visible, they falsify statistics in comments and place bot replies to amplify the initial comment.

The comment encourages viewers to visit the author's own YouTube channel and watch a video that provides instructions on how to benefit from a supposed exchange rate bug. Users may not notice that this video is the only one published on the channel.

The video is definitely fabricated: the edits in the exchange rate rows are visible to the naked eye, and the comments are packed with overjoyed feedback. The link under the video leads to a fraudulent exchanger.

Once a user arrives on the webpage linked in the description, the victim sees a facility to exchange bitcoin – but if they use it, they will never see this money again, as the service is fake.

"Cryptocurrency is coping with difficult times because of a constant drop in exchange rates. Those who want to buy currency at the best price are frequently being targeted by fraudsters. Our recent investigation shows that today attackers resort to new, and more mainstream ways to reach their victims – even considering their YouTube preferences. We strongly recommend users check carefully the crypto resources they turn to and do not rely on random comments on YouTube," comments Mikhail Sytnik, a security expert at Kaspersky.

To avoid scams, save money and keep personal data private, Kaspersky experts share the following simple tips:

Check any link before clicking. Hover over it to preview the URL and look for misspellings or other irregularities. It's also good practice to only enter a username and password over a secure connection. Look for the HTTPS prefix before the site URL, indicating the connection to the site is secure.

Sometimes fake emails and websites look just like real ones. It depends on how well the criminals did their homework. In particular, the hyperlinks will, most likely, be incorrect — with spelling mistakes. However, the links can also be disguised to look like valid links and redirect you to a different page, impersonating the legitimate site.

To protect your data and finances, it is good practice to make sure the online checkout and payment page are secure. You'll know it is if the web page's URL begins with HTTPS instead of the usual HTTP; an icon of a lock will also typically appear beside the URL and the address bar in some browsers will be green. If you don't see these features, do not proceed.

DEVELOPMENT

World Cup 2022 enhances Qatar economy

DOHA: With the beginning of the Fifa World Cup Qatar 2022 countdown, economists are asking a number of questions about the extent of the tournament's influence on the economic performance of Qatar in the medium and long term, in light of the good performance expected of the Qatari economy by many research centers and international institutions, despite the successive crises the world is currently going through, the resulting slowdown in economic growth and the unprecedented rise in inflation rates.

In spite of the gloomy forecasts for the global economy, the Qatari economy is marching to a different tune, according to the testimony of the International Monetary Fund, which recently predicted that Qatar's economic growth rate will reach 4.9 per cent, supported and driven by many fundamental factors, foremost of which are the constant rise in gas prices and the country's hosting of the Fifa.

According to recently announced official statistics, the direct financial revenues from organising the Fifa are estimated at 8 billion riyals ($2.2 billion), while the long-term economic revenues, during the period from 2022 to 2035 are estimated at 9.9 billion riyals ($2.7 billion), amid expectations of high tourism revenues. -**QNA**

LIFESTYLE

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT NEURONS INFLUENCE HOW HUMANS LEARN AND REMEMBER

A key finding from a review of the molecular mechanisms of learning and memory, conducted by Russian and US scientists and published in Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Review, shows that exploring the predictive properties of neuronal metabolism can contribute to our understanding of how humans learn and remember.

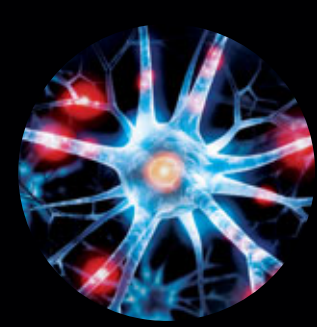
Exploring the predictive properties of neuronal metabolism can contribute to our understanding of how humans learn and remember. This key finding from a consideration of molecular mechanisms of learning and memory conducted by scientists from Russia and the U.S. has been published in Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews.

The emerging trend in neuroscience is to consider the work of neurons as anticipatory and future-oriented, although this approach is not yet mainstream and features in just a few publications. In a paper entitled 'Neuronal metabolism in learning and memory: The anticipatory activity perspective,' Yuri I. Alexandrov, HSE Professor and Head of the V.B. Shvyrkov Laboratory of Psychophysiology at the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Psychology, and Mikhail V. Pletnikov, Professor of the Department of Physiology at the State University of New York, University at Buffalo, argue that neurons behave proactively because they strive to survive — just as all living organisms. Neurons use microenvironmental metabolites as 'food', and neuronal impulse activity is aimed at obtaining these metabolites. Rather than responding to an incoming signal, neurons proactively trigger an influx of needed substances to the cell, such as neurotransmitters.

Yuri Alexandrov, Professor at HSE School of Psychology, says, "When a specialised set of our neurons fire together, we act to obtain a behavioural outcome, while the neurons also obtain their own micro-outcome in the form of needed metabolites. This process can be described as metabolic cooperation of cells, involving not only neurons but also glial, somatic, glandular, muscle and other cells throughout the body. This principle of how cells work is central to learning, which essentially means creating systemwide groups of metabolically cooperating cells that drive human behaviour."

The researchers note that for a long time, the 'stimulus-response' paradigm was dominant in the study of molecular mechanisms of learning and memory; it was assumed that just as the entire human body responds to environmental stimuli, neurons respond to incoming impulses which cause excitation of certain parts of the neuron's membrane. The neuron either fires or does not fire, depending on whether or not the excitation reaches a certain threshold.

> An important recent step in understanding how neurons work has been the idea that a neuron's anticipatory activity, rather than an external impulse, is what comes first. The neuron does not respond to incoming excitation but proactively triggers an influx of activity



Back in 1930s-1970s, the Russian physiologist Peter Anokhin developed his theory of functional systems, including the concept of 'integrative activity of neurons', according to which a neuron's excitation causes intraneuronal chemical processes — rather than a summation of local excitations on the membrane. These chemical processes lead to a neuronal spike.

Building on Anokhin's theory, his student Vyacheslav Shvyrkov and colleagues developed a systems-oriented aproach to the study of neurons.

However, Anokhin's understanding of the sequence of events was traditional: excitation of a neuron comes first, followed by a response.

"An important recent step in understanding how neurons work has been the idea that a neuron's anticipatory activity, rather than an external impulse, is what comes first. The neuron does not respond to incoming excitation but proactively triggers an influx of activity," Alexandrov explains.

The authors argue that exploring systemwide intercellular metabolic cooperation as a learning mechanism could be a promising area of focus for further experimental research.

This approach, they believe, could lead to breakthroughs in studying the behaviour of malignant cells and in developing new cancer treatments.

"Malignancies consist of cells that metabolically cooperate not only with their immediate environment but also with other cells in the body. We plan to conduct experimental studies to explore tumour cell responses to diametrically opposed individual behaviours, such as striving towards a desirable event or avoiding an undesirable or dangerous one. This can give us insight into how various systemwide cellular integrations impact tumour cells' survival. As a result, we hope to propose an effective approach to influencing tumour cells through human behaviour," Alexandrov concludes.

— ANI

SPORTS

Djokovic defeats Jannik Sinner in quarters, Ons Jabeur in semis

The Serbian, the No 1 seed, entered his 11th semi-final of Wimbledon after defeating Jannik Sinner 5-7, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2

LONDON: The six-time champion Novak Djokovic made a promising comeback from two sets down to beat Italy's Jannik Sinner in the quarter-finals of the ongoing Wimbledon on Tuesday.

The Serbian, the No 1 seed, entered his 11th semi-final of Wimbledon after defeating Jannik Sinner 5-7, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2, at the centre court. With this win, the 35-year-old has extended an unbeaten run at Wimbledon to a total of 26 matches. Djokovic was two sets down before he made a promising comeback from the third set to enter the semis. He will now be facing the British No.9 seed, Cameron Norrie, who also won his men's singles quarter-finals.

Playing at Court 1, the 26-year-old left-hander defeated Belgium's David Goffin 3-6, 7-5, 2-6, 6-3, 7-5 to secure his semi-finals berth.

Later, World Number five Rafael Nadal will square off with America's Taylor Fritz in their quarter-finals clash on Wednesday.

Maria beats Niemeier

Germany's Tatjana Maria continued her winning streak at Wimbledon after she claimed victory in the quarter-finals of the women's singles on Tuesday.

Playing at Court 1, the No 103-ranked overcame compatriot Jule Niemeier 4-6, 6-2, 7-5 in a 2-hour, 18-minute Wimbledon quarterfinal thriller. Maria, who trailed by a break in both second and third sets, is contesting her 46th Grand Slam (including qualifying). Prior to this fortnight, she had never passed the third round in any of them. The 34-year-old becomes the eighth player born in 1987 to reach the last four of a major.

The first was 17-year-old Maria Sharapova at Wimbledon 2004.

She will be squaring off against No 3 seed Ons Jabeur in the semi-final, who also won her quarter-finals clash on Tuesday.

Playing at the Centre Court, Jabeur rallied from a set down to defeat Marie Bouzkova in Tuesday's quarterfinals, 3-6, 6-1, 6-1, to reach the semi-finals at a major for the first time.

Maria and Jabeur will now be facing each other for the first time in four years on Thursday during the semi-finals. ANI

ICC MEN'S TEST PLAYER RANKINGS

Pant storms to 6th place, Virat drops by 3 spots in men's Test rankings

DUBAI: Hot streaks from Jonny Bairstow and Rishabh Pant have seen the batters climb into the top 10 in the ICC Men's Test Player Rankings.

Bairstow helped guide England to a stunning fourth-innings triumph over India with an unbeaten 114 and now climbs 11 places to tenth in the Test batting rankings. The 32-year-old is arguably in the finest form of his career with four tons in his past three Tests, including dual centuries in the rescheduled Test against India after reaching three figures in consecutive matches against New Zealand.

Bairstow has 1218 runs at an average of 55.36 with six centuries in the current ICC World Test Championship cycle.

Bairstow's stunning rise reflects in the rankings - ahead of the New Zealand series, the Yorkshireman was 47th in batters' ranking with 541 rating points. Four matches and four centuries later, he has broken into the top 10 for the first time since 2018.

Wicketkeeper-batter Pant helped put India on top early in the Test against England with 146 runs off just 111 balls in the first innings then followed up with 57 later in the match.

Pant's recent form with two tons and three half-centuries in his past six Test innings has earned him a highest-ever position in the Test batting rankings, moving six places to fifth.

Virat Kohli only managed scores of 11 and 20 against England and drops three places to 13th in the batting rankings.

Joe Root continues to hail supreme at the top of the rankings and an unbeaten century (142*) in England's record chase at Edgbaston sees him attain his highest rating points (923).

It also puts the former England captain in the elite list of top 20 highest-rated batters in ICC Rankings history.

James Anderson played his part to keep England in the contest in the recent Test against India with a five-for in the first innings and now has 17 wickets in three Tests since his recall. The resurgent pace bowler climbs one spot to sixth in the Test bowling rankings.

Nathan Lyon has been rewarded for taking nine wickets in the first Test against Sri Lanka with a rise of five spots to 13th.

There has been no change to the top 10 of the Test all-rounder rankings but Australia's Cameron Green moves closer to breaking into it for the first time after jumping three spots to 14th.

Akeal Hosein has surged 10 places and into the top 10 of the T20I bowling rankings after his economical efforts against Bangladesh ended with figures of 22/1 and 27/1. The left-arm orthodox spinner is now equal-eight with Sri Lanka's Maheesh Theekshana. Papua New Guinea's Norman Vanua jumped 10 places to ninth in the T20I all-rounder rankings following his 91 runs and three wickets in two matches.

There has been no movement at the top end of the T20I batting rankings. ANI

WORLD CUP

Ghana recruits five players, all eligible for World Cup duty

ACCRA: Four months before competing at the World Cup, Ghana's national team added five new recruits who are now eligible to play in Qatar.

Brighton defender Tariq Lamptey had played for England Under-21s, Hamburger SV pair Stephan Ambrosius and Ransford-Yeboah Königsdörffer both represented Germany Under-21s and Athletic Bilbao forward Iñaki Williams played one friendly for Spain, where he was born, six years ago. Another Germany-based player, Patric Pfeiffer, is a forward at Darmstadt. The Ghana soccer federation said today all five have switched nationality to represent the African country.

"This follows exhaustive engagements between the leadership of the (federation), the players and their parents in the last few months," the Ghana soccer body said in a statement.

FIFA eligibility rules let countries recruit players from their global diaspora in certain cases. Players are allowed to switch allegiance to a new national team if they never played a competitive game for the first country they were eligible to represent.

Ghana qualified for its fourth World Cup, and first since 2014, by eliminating Nigeria in a two-leg playoff in March.

Coach Otto Addo's team was drawn in a World Cup group with Portugal, South Korea and Uruguay. The Uruguay game will be a rematch of their controversial 2010 World Cup quarterfinal in South Africa, when Ghana was denied a late winning goal by Luis Suárez's handball save, missed the subsequent penalty, then lost in the shootout.

The World Cup scheduled to start in Qatar on 21 November 2022. ONA

EURO 2022

Is England ready for the biggest Euro 2022 tournament?

LONDON: With a shade over 24 hours until England host Austria at a sold-out Old Trafford, a handful of construction workers are busy building a fan park in Manchester city center. A few kilometers northeast of the building site, UEFA's Chief of Women's Football takes to the stage in a stadium hospitality room.

"I feel so many different kinds of emotions but can't wait for it to get started now," said Nadine Kessler, who won 29 caps for Germany between 2010 and 2016. "I really think it's completely incomparable to when I played. I might need to be a bit provocative, but I think in my days people were more concerned with how my jersey fit than the result. We've come a long way."

The buildup to the tournament has seen plenty of reflection on the growth of the game in recent years. But the day before it starts, with unfinished fan parks, sporadic advertising boards and a reported shortage of England women's shirts in major sports shops, there is a sense that organizers may not have foreseen the scale of interest and demand lingers in the grey air.

Is it actually coming home?

But logistical successes or failures will fade into the background, at least temporarily, come Wednesday evening.

"We really hope that the whole nation gets behind us," England's all-time record scorer Ellen White told DW ahead of the tournament.

"We obviously know that our group games are sold out, which is really exciting for us and that home advantage is big. So yeah, we're just really excited to face some very, very talented European teams."

The first of those is Austria, surprise semifinalists in 2017. The visitors will do well to match their achievement in the Netherlands, given the increasing depth of quality in the international game. England's Dutch coach Sarina Wiegman, who coached the hosts to the trophy five years ago, knows that the challenge, and the expectation, is even greater this time around.

"The development of the women's game has gone so so quickly, so the the change from 2017 to now is, I think, that so many more countries play at the highest level. So that's going to be really exciting," she told DW in an interview for the Project Fussball podcast. "And now you feel that huge momentum. We have had some games across the country, playing in different cities. And you can feel that people are getting excited. And so many tickets have been sold already."

Ticket sales have indeed been brisk, with more than half a million taking advantage of affordable prices before the tournament has even begun. About 200,000 remain, though plenty of games have sold out. Kessler, who won the tournament as a player with Germany said she'd become "obsessed" with watching the sale figures tick over on internal UEFA systems.

How big is big enough?

As positive as that has been for the women's game, it's also raised questions about the selection of stadiums for the tournament. Across town from Old Trafford, Manchester City's academy stadium has been the target of criticism from Iceland star Sara Bjork Gunnarsdottir, whose side open their campaign against Belgium at the ground, with capacity limited to 4,700, down from 7,000 due to UEFA regulations around standing on the terraces.

"I'm a little bit disappointed with some of the stadiums that we got," she told The Pitch podcast in April. "It's shocking. You're playing in England, you have so many stadiums, and we have a training ground from City. It's just embarrassing."

Despite the criticisms, Chris Bryant, the English FA's Head of Tournament Delivery is convinced that the right balance has been struck.

"We already set the aims incredibly high," Bryant said, in response to a question from DW on Tuesday. "Obviously we set ourselves objectives and we're just about where we thought we would be."

Bryant defended the selection of smaller venues, which also includes Rotherham's New York stadium, which will host a quarterfinal.

"I think we're really happy with the venue selection we've made. There are still tickets to sell, we want venues to be sold out, that's a huge part of our strategy. And it's not just a focus on England...we want all teams to experience a great atmosphere in all the stadiums."

That aim, at least, seems certain to be met in the opening fixture. An England win will likely see momentum build in the host country. UEFA and those invested in the women's game, will hope it will continue to gather pace as the tournament progresses. DW

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OER summit focuses on increasing competitiveness of manufacturing sector

The second edition of OER's Manufacturing Summit brought together government officials, C-suite executives, consultants and analysts to discuss a cross-section of issues impacting the manufacturing sector in Oman, solutions and the way ahead

MUSCAT: OER's Manufacturing Summit and Awards 2022, a flagship event by the Sultanate's premium business magazine, underlined the need to enhance competitiveness and transformation of Oman's manufacturing sector through a strong collaboration between the government and the private sector in addition to attracting FDI and adopting Industry 4.0 practices.

Dr Saleh bin Said Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry was the chief guest. The summit was held under the auspices of Sheikh Salim bin Mustahail Al Mashani.

In his presentation, Eng. Salim bin Suleiman Al Thuli, CEO, Khazaen Economic City said Khazaen, an integrated economic city, is expected to attract a broad range of business sectors around its logistics and industrial core to maximise growth and economic value creation. It provides an attractive opportunity for investors to set up their industrial and logistics projects in Khazaen, the largest economic development zone in Greater Muscat. It has successfully signed more than 50 projects with a total investment value of OMR30 million. Khazaen is planning to host a pre-built warehouse with 33,600 sqm of built-up area, he added.

Khalid Ansari, CEO, KMA and Partners in his presentation highlighted the importance of the manufacturing sector and added that every OMR1 spent in manufacturing added OMR1.4 to the economy. Manufacturing is the highest multiplier of any economic sector. No other sector does more to generate broad-scale economic growth and ultimately higher living standards.

Manufacturers in Oman should create opportunities in transport, food, apparel, health, travel, housing, education and telecommunications. He further suggested setting up a high-powered 'Trouble-shooting Unit' reporting to the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, dedicated only to finding a timely solution to the challenges facing the manufacturing companies.

OCCI, Madayn, MIZAH, Credit Oman and Oman Manufacturers Association (OMFA) were the endorsement partners of the Summit, which was organised by UMS Events. Raysut Cement was the Strategic Partner. Muscat Thread Mills, Al Jazeera Steel Products Company, Khazaen Economic City, Sohar Aluminium, Dhofar International Development and Investment Holding Co. SAOG (DIDIC), Oman Cables Industry, Al Tamman Indisil Ferrochrome, Voltas Oman, Atyab Food Industries, Gulf Mushroom Products Company, Sebacic Oman and Skyline Duqm were the Associate Partners and MHD Ford Trucks was the Official Commercial Vehicles Partner. *Times of Oman* and *Al Shabiba* were the Media Partners, *Alam Al-Iktisaad* magazine, the Arabic media partner and oerlive.com, the Online Media Partner. SSA International was the Knowledge Partner.

The first panel discussion deliberated on 'Manufacturing: Enhancing Competitiveness and Transformation.' The panel discussion focused on increasing the competitiveness of Oman's manufacturing sector, promoting exports, ensuring supply chain reliability, attracting FDI and adopting Industry 4.0 practices. The panellists included Ali Khasoob, CEO, Atyab, AN Venkat, CEO, Al Jazeera Steel Products Company, Cinzia Farise, CEO, Oman Cables Industry, Khalid Al Maawali, Executive Director, Sebacic Oman, Himansu Mohapatra, Group GM – Investment, Muscat Overseas Group, Khalid Ramis Al Rawas, Executive Assistant to the CEO, Raysut Cement Company. Mayank Singh, Executive Vice President and Group Editor of UMS moderated the session.

The second panel discussion focused on 'Manufacturing: A key enabler of Oman Vision 2040.' The panel discussion did a deep dive into unlocking the potential of manufacturing for Oman's future and also addressing its key concerns. The panellists also underlined the need for enhanced collaboration between the government and the private sector to make the manufacturing sector competitive.

The panellists included Abdullah Nasser Al Hadhrami, CEO, Gulf Mushroom Products Co, Dr. Fady G. Elassaad, CEO, Dhofar Cattle Feed Company, Dr. Ibrahim Al Balushi, CEO, Karwa Motors, Maqbool Ali Salman, Vice Chairman, Oman Manufacturers Association, Naveen Narayanan, Managing Director, SSA International and Omar Al Balushi, Casthouse and Port Manager, Sohar Aluminium. Oommen John, Editor, Oman Economic Review (OER) moderated the session.

The summit also had presentations by Naveen Narayanan, Managing Director, SSA International, Patrick Kabasci, Executive Director, Digital Operations at INC Invention Center, Germany and Prashant Singh Kataula, Head of Business Development, Voltas Oman. Kulbhushan, Business Transformation Leader made a presentation on 'Emerging Trends in Manufacturing Operational Excellence.'

Atulya Sharma, CEO, UMS Group, in his welcome address said, Oman's 'Manufacturing for Wellbeing' sets a vision for the manufacturing sector of 2040, where knowledge-driven industries will sustain diversification, innovation and high-tech development.

The second edition of OER's Manufacturing Summit brought together government officials, C-suite executives, consultants and analysts to discuss a cross-section of issues impacting the manufacturing sector in Oman, solutions and the way ahead. Manufacturing sector Excellence Awards 2022 in diverse categories was also presented during the summit. The awards recognised exceptional organisations in the sector.

A workshop on 'Digital and Smart Manufacturing,' was conducted by Ganesh Iyer, Vice-Chairman, SSA APAC, Naveen Narayanan, Managing Director of SSA International, Patrick Kabasci and Kulbhushan. The objective was to create awareness of emerging themes in smart manufacturing and learn diagnostic tools to assess readiness and opportunity areas for smart manufacturing.

NATIONAL BANK OF OMAN

NBO offers immediate transaction processing through Corporate Internet Banking

MUSCAT: Continuing to unlock opportunities for businesses to go digital, the National Bank of Oman (NBO) is now offering immediate transaction processing through its Corporate Internet Banking (CIB). With the new feature, any transaction up to OMR20,000 initiated through the platform will be processed instantly, 24/7, even on weekends, official holidays and offline periods.

Mohammed Yahya Al Jabri, Head of Global Transaction Banking at NBO, said, "For companies, the initiation and execution of real-time transactions have become an essential part of modern business processes. Staying on par with global advances in payments technology, our new feature is just one way we're serving these needs. Accessible through our easy-to-use digital platform, it is the ideal solution for streamlining the payment process and improving cash flow, making day-to-day banking more efficient while supporting their wider business ambitions."

National Bank of Oman's corporate banking suite offers a range of innovative solutions that cater to its customer's everyday banking needs, backed up by the support of experienced and dedicated relationship managers. Using cutting-edge technology and leading security features, its CIB platform empowers companies and government entities to make instant transactions, payments and transfers, access account balances, make on-the-spot enquiries, access non-financial services and complete transaction histories on all of their accounts. Available free and accessible 24/7, the frequently-updated digital feature is enhanced by the bank's best-in-class expertise and superior customer experience.

ROUND-UP

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Alizz Islamic Bank supports Omani Haj Mission with cultural contest

'Manasik' contest is held under the supervision of a number of prominent scholars who are keen to educate pilgrims about the best and correct ways to prepare for and complete all Haj rituals

MUSCAT: In line with its strategy to promote Islamic values and religious occasions, Alizz Islamic Bank announced its support for this year's Omani Haj Mission, represented by Al Iftaa Delegation and via the 'Manasik' contest which covers Haj rituals.

This contest is held under the supervision of a number of prominent scholars who are keen to educate pilgrims about the best and correct ways to prepare for and complete all Haj rituals.

These contests contribute to raising awareness about theoretical and practical matters and promoting the culture of Haj among the younger generation. It does so by presenting questions and useful information on the principles of Haj to be adhered to, as well as the merits and rewards of Haj.

In addition to being a source of knowledge to pilgrims, this contest also serves as a recreational activity since it's held during the hajj season and stimulates the spirit of participation.

The bank's support of this contest is part of its commitment to promote religious values in online spaces for scholars and researchers interested in new and contemporary issues related to Hajj in light of the recent circumstances that had greatly impacted people's lives during the last two years.

Commenting on the bank's support of the "Manasik" contest, Issa bin Salem Al-Riyami, Head of the Sharia Compliance and Audit Department at Alizz Islamic Bank, said: "Haj is one of the five pillars of Islam and every Muslim is required to perform it at least once in their lifetime. We, at Alizz Islamic Bank, are keen to be present at such religious events which undoubtedly play a significant role in educating pilgrims about Haj provisions."

Issa Al Riyami added: "We have strengthened our collaborative relationship with the Ministry of Endowment and Religious Affairs, whereby we both aim to spread awareness about our noble religion.

"The bank offers Sharia-compliant products and services as we believe that it's our responsibility to support the growth and prosperity of society, give back to it and make a positive change in the communities we live and work in.

He concluded: "We plan to do more in the coming months to support religious events and occasions that have the potential to add social value so that we can spread the message of Islam and promote the religious tolerance that the Sultanate is renowned for."

ED GOODWIN AWARD FOR EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

ABQ Seeb student wins regional award

MUSCAT: Anabia Raqueebuddin, a Grade 5 student at ABQ Seeb International School, was awarded the BSME (British Schools in the Middle East) Ed Goodwin Award for Exceptional Service.

The award is named in honour of Ed Goodwin OBE, who had been BSME Chairperson for 12 years. To ensure that his commitment to service is honoured and continued, the BSME Ed Goodwin Award for Exceptional Service is an annual award recognising the exceptional contributions of students in BSME schools to their local or global community.

Throughout the school year, many students in BSME schools devote their time and resources to service. This service takes on many forms, however, the underlying principle is clear: the award recipients are all committed to serving others.

The awards are presented at the BSME Annual Conference to Head Teachers, who then receive the awards on the students' behalf. Anabia's award was presented during the recent BSME Conference in Dubai.

Anabia was nominated by her teacher, Vaishali Arora. Arora explained: "Technology literacy is one of many 21st century skills our students learn as part of ABQ's unique Discovering You Programme. I was aware that Anabia made fantastic videos on specific digital video creation and editing applications and asked her to teach me how to use the platform."

Anabia said, "I was very excited to have an opportunity to teach a teacher. I wanted her to be able to refer back to my explanations, so I decided to create a tutorial video on how to produce or edit a video using this specific computer programme. I won this award because of my creativity, but also because of my amazing teacher who recognised my talent and encouraged me to share my knowledge with others."

The teacher shared the tutorial video with some of her other students and they all started creating their videos for various academic subjects. Whenever a student got stuck or required further guidance with the programme, Anabia assisted them during break time.

The school principal, Sharl Prinsloo, is also extremely proud of Anabia's success and said, "This is a perfect example of mastering the 21st-century skills of creativity, communication, collaboration, information literacy, technology literacy, flexibility, leadership, initiative, productivity, as well as social skills, which all form part of ABQ's Discovering You Programme."

The Discovering You Programme provides a platform for students and parents to engage with experienced mentors to create a dynamic plan for each student's future. ABQ has developed this two-part (Grades 3-7 and 8-12) market-leading mentorship programme with a focus on 21st-century skills, educational goal setting and career guidance.

This personalised education and the mentoring programme produce a holistic picture of each student's academic and non-academic capabilities, whilst also identifying specific areas for potential growth and development.

ABQ Seeb International School forms part of the ABQ Education Group, the largest international school operator in Oman. The other schools in their portfolio are ABQ Azzan Bin Qais International School and ABQ Sohar International School.

CAMPAIGN

Buy Kia and stand a chance to win fully paid trip to watch Fifa World Cup in Qatar

MUSCAT: Kia is offering football fans a fantastic opportunity to win with Kia and enjoy a fully paid trip to watch the Fifa World Cup event in Qatar.

Kia customers owning a brand new Kia can get a chance to Scratch & Win more than 100 match tickets where they can witness teams like Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Japan and more, live in action. Apart from Fifa Qatar match tickets, customers will also get Comprehensive Service up to 50,000 km and 1 Year of Insurance. The campaign will end on 4th November 2022. (Conditions apply. Please visit the Kia showroom for details.)

Speaking about this fantastic campaign by Kia, a representative from Reliable International Automotive, the dealers for Kia in Oman said, "Fifa 2022 in Qatar is the most exciting event, millions of football fans across the world are looking forward to. In Oman too, there are scores of fans eagerly looking forward to witnessing this event live. At Kia, we wish to get customers closer to experiencing their desires and hence this campaign. When customers buy a Kia, they get a chance to scratch and win more than 100 match tickets. Not just that, they also get accommodation in Qatar. An absolute advantage considering the demand hotels will have and the difficulties fans can face in getting accommodations during this event. Besides this, customers will get comprehensive service and 1-year insurance as well. This is definitely the best time of the year to own a Kia and be a winner."

People looking forward to owning a Kia can choose from a range of exciting models. They include the Kia Sportage. The all-new Sportage is equipped with a comprehensive range of powerful, responsive and efficient powertrains. A 2.0 RVC 4WD with Nu 2.0 MPI churning 157 hp at 19.5 kg.m torque. This is paired to a 6-speed AT. The Sportage is also available as 1.6T 2WD SRF, 1.6T 2WD SPL and 1.6T 4WD SPL with Gamma 1.6T GDI with 176 HP and 27 kg.m. torque. These are paired to a 7-speed DCT.

The interior of the all-new Sportage plays with boldness in character. The interior offers a unique high-tech environment that is visually impressive, as well as spacious and intuitive. Throughout the cabin, the highest quality materials that are opulent to touch have been used, while dynamic and vibrant colour options add vibrancy and energy. Fully immersive, in-car sound is delivered to the occupants of the all-new Sportage via an 8" audio display system and steering audio control. The Sportage is also equipped with rear AC vent, Bluetooth with voice recognition, Android auto and car play, drive mode select, remote engine start, paddle shifter and more.

The K5's powerful and angular design language represents another chapter of boldness and passion for the brand. In terms of performance, the K5 makes a fine mark with a 2.5L GDI engine dishing out 191 HP and 25.1 KG.M. Torque. This is paired with an 8-speed Automatic Transmission. Creating an inviting and comfortable interior are a range of features that include Tinted Glass, Tilt & Telescopic Steering, Radio with USB, Audio Remote Control, Driver's Seat Height Adjuster, Rear AC Vents, Leather AT Knob, Power Driver Seat, Smart Key with Button Start, Panoramic Sunroof, Auto A/C, 8" Audio Display, Android Auto & Car Play, Driver Seat Memory Seating System, Navigation with 10.25" Display, Mood Lamp, Premium Music System, Red Leather Seats and more.

REMITTANCE AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE BRAND

Unimoni Exchange relocates its Wadi Kabir branch

MUSCAT: Unimoni Exchange, a leading remittance and foreign exchange brand in the Sultanate of Oman, has relocated its Wadi Kabir branch to a more conveniently accessible location Near Nesto Hyper Market Wadi Kabir.

The relocated branch was inaugurated by Sheikh Saif Hashil Rashid Al Maskery, Chairman, Unimoni Exchange Oman in the presence of Tonny George Alexander, Director, and Boban MP, Chief Executive Officer along with other Senior Officials of Unimoni Oman.

"In our constant endeavour to provide the best customer experience we are glad to relocate our Wadi Kabir branch to a convenient location near Nesto Hypermarket Wadi Kabir. Our new branch is well equipped to provide greater experiences and enhanced convenience with a new look and feel. We look forward to welcoming our existing and new customers," said Boban.

Operating the largest retail network with 60 branches, Unimoni Oman offers a suite of services for consumers and corporates, delivered through multiple touchpoints such as retail stores, digital and mobile solutions, and self-service kiosks, across the Sultanate.

Unimoni commenced its operation in Oman in the year 1995. The brand offers its customers money transfer and foreign exchange services. An ISO-certified brand and member of prestigious global associations have been recognised and awarded for its quality and business excellence over the years.

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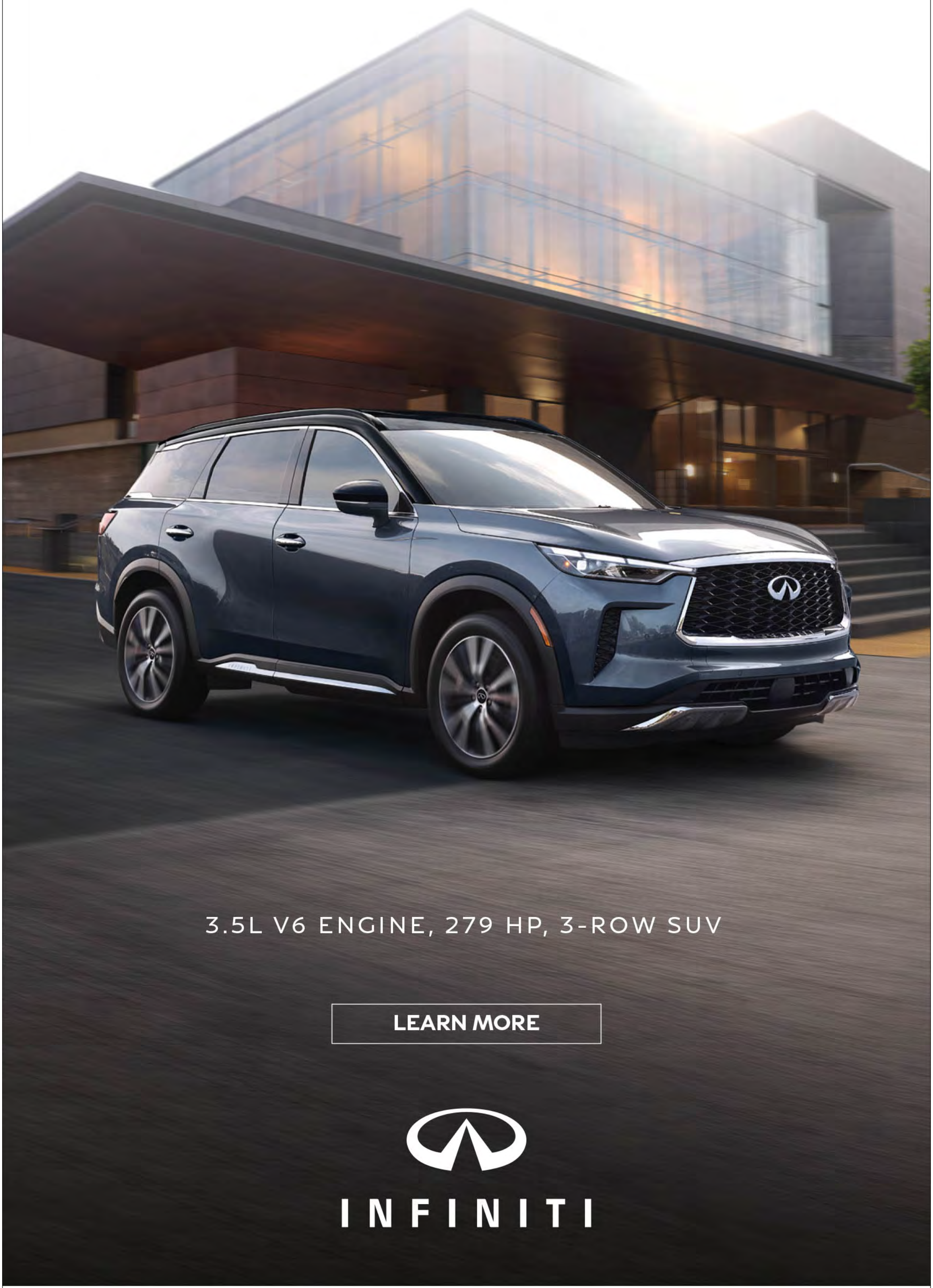

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