



Founded 1975 · Volume 50 No. 006 | 16Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group



ALL DECKED-UP FOR RAMADAN

People in Ibri are celebrating the holy month of Ramadan by decorating their neighbourhood with vibrant lamps and lanterns.

— Shihab Al Shandoudi

— Shihab Al Shandoudi

OMAN ATTRACTS OVER OMR26BN IN FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENTS

The rapid growth in investments reflects the success of Oman's strategic business initiatives



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The volume of total foreign direct investment (FDI) in Oman witnessed a 17.6% rise over the past five years bringing the cumulative value to OMR26.677 billion by end of the third quarter of 2024.

This rapid growth reflects Oman's success in boosting its position as a global investment hub, supported by strategic initiatives, attractive business environment and advanced infrastructure.

Qais bin Mohammed Al-Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP), said that the initiatives taken to develop business environment have given an impetus for building a promising economic future.

He noted that the positive indicators in the investment sector demonstrate the success of Oman's policies and initiatives in

providing a comprehensive climate for attracting investment projects.

He further said that the measures taken to complete the setting up of the Investment and Trade Court reflect the government's commitment to providing a stable legal environment that encourages foreign investments.

Competitive incentives

The ministry is committed to offering the necessary facilities and competitive incentives to make it easier for investors to conduct business in a dynamic environment, he added.

He pointed out that developing the investment and business environment is a top priority for driving sustainable growth, and the ministry is working on implementing various initiatives to diversify the national economy and create job opportunities across different sectors.

Ibtisam bint Ahmed Al-Fa-

roojiyah, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion for Investment Promotion, said that the ministry is reviewing investment policies, laws, and incentives, and working on promoting foreign investment through local, regional, and international promotional activities, exhibitions, and investment forums, as well as marketing campaigns to attract investors.

She added that investment opportunities are being framed and enhanced with feasibility studies and then made available to investors to boost investment in targeted sectors and to further accelerate the pace of attracting more foreign investments into Oman.

This helps in economic diversification and increases the share of non-oil revenues in the gross domestic product (GDP) thereby positively reflecting investor confidence and enhancing Oman's competitive indicators. **>A6**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES



OMAN Plans to create jobs in real estate sector

1 The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning has confirmed that it will be launching an initiative that will create between 300 and 400 job opportunities in the real estate sector. **>A3**

MOUNT CARSTENSZ

Omani scales highest mountain in Indonesia

JAKARTA: Omani mountaineer Sulaiman Hamoud Al Na'abi has conquered Mount Carstensz, which is classified as one of the highest peaks in Indonesia, with a height of about 4,884 metres above sea level.

Al Na'abi has become the first Omani to complete the Seven Summits Challenge according to the two internationally recognised classifications.

He had previously climbed all the highest peaks on every continent around the world, most notably the Mount Everest, which is 8,849 metres high, and Lhotse, the fourth highest peak in the world, which is 8,516 metres high. **>A6**

OMAN OCCI to discuss business challenges

2 The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) will organise four Ramadan evenings during the holy month to discuss economic issues and challenges facing the business community. **>A5**

WORLD
**Trump and Zelensky
cancel signing of deal**

3 A press conference at the White House on Friday where US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky planned to sign the minerals deal was cancelled. **>A7**



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Isha	7:25pm
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ITB Berlin an opportunity to attract investment in Oman's tourism sector

It is considered
one of the largest
international tourism
exhibitions

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, will participate on Tuesday in the activities of the International Tourism Exchange Berlin 2025, which will be held in the German capital.

It is considered one of the largest international tourism exhibitions and a platform for exchanging experiences and developments in the tourism industry and will



continue for several days.

This participation comes as a confirmation of the Sultanate of Oman's plans to develop the tourism sector and enhance its position as a global tourism destination, and an opportunity to introduce the tourism components,

products, services and tourism experiences that the Sultanate of Oman abounds with, and to attract more tourists from European export markets in general, and to promote the investment opportunities available in the tourism sector and conclude partnerships and

agreements in areas related to the tourism sector.

The Sultanate of Oman's participation in this current edition of the exhibition includes 55 tourism and hotel establishments, and 4 strategic partners: Oman Air, Oman Airports, Omran Group, and

the national travel operator “Visit Oman”.

Haitham Mohammed Al Ghasani, Director-General of Tourism Promotion at the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, said that participation in this exhibition will enhance the position of the Sultanate of Oman on the world tourism map, introducing the investment opportunities and great tourism potential that the Sultanate of Oman possesses, and exploring new ways to enhance cooperation with Germany in particular and the countries participating in the exhibition in general.

He stressed that investment in the Omani tourism sector represents a promising future, based on the incentives and competitive advantages provided by the government to investors in this field.

He added that the participation reflects the Sultanate of Oman's

commitment to expanding the base of international visitors, while working to diversify its tourism products and enhance economic activity by investing in the tourism sector and highlighting the Sultanate of Oman's strategic location, stunning natural landscapes and cultural heritage, stressing that the Sultanate of Oman is an ideal destination for tourists looking for unique experiences.

The ITB Berlin 2025 exhibition will cover a wide range of interests and will include the organisation of many conferences and discussion panels that will address the latest developments in the global tourism sector, including digital innovations, sustainable tourism, and advanced travel experiences with a focus on future trends in the tourism industry and taking advantage of modern marketing tools such as artificial intelligence.



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٣ ميونداي توسان NX4
روي - عدد ١ | الخوير - عدد ١
المعبلة - عدد ١

٤ هيونداي أكسنت BN7
صحم - عدد ١ | العامرات - عدد ١
ضنك - عدد ١ | صلالة - عدد ١

السحب الكبير

١٧ - أبريل - ٢٠٢٥
الخميس ٧:٠٠ مساء

المعرض ساري من ٢٣ فبراير ٢٠٢٥ إلى ٧ أبريل ٢٠٢٥

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Plans to create 300 to 400 job opportunities in realty sector

There are plans to collaborate with a consulting firm to conduct a study on the impact of VAT on real estate trading

Times News Sector

MUSCAT: The Oman Real Estate Association has announced plans to organise a real estate conference and exhibition as part of the upcoming Dhofar Autumn Festival activities.

The announcement was made during the association's annual meeting attended by association members, officials from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, real estate sector stakeholders, and members of the media.

During the meeting, the association



revealed plans to collaborate with a consulting firm to conduct a study on the impact of value-added tax (VAT) on real estate trading.

The event also included discussions on updates in the real estate sector, challenges in property financing, and initiatives aimed at diversifying housing options and

facilitating access for citizens. These measures aim to sustain the positive impact on the sector.

The Ministry of Housing confirmed its intention to launch an initiative that will create 300 to 400 job opportunities in the real estate sector, further promoting growth and development in the

industry.

In his speech, Engineer Khalid bin Nasser Al-Mahrouqi, Director General of Real Estate Development at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, stated that the ministry will launch a new data platform to guide real estate investors, with the initial phase providing limited information.

He pointed out that the Development Platform is the mechanism for dealing with all developers in Oman, and the Oman Real Estate Association has played a role in raising awareness among developers. Any developer selling off-plan without opening an escrow account will be considered as a violation and referred to the public prosecution.

Al-Mahrouqi also highlighted the presence of hidden trade in the real estate development sector, with more than 500 companies operating without being registered with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning or the Oman Real Estate Association, leading to many cases in the courts.

He confirmed that more than 900 homeowners' associations are registered in Oman, which is a positive indicator, though

20% of them face issues. Efforts are ongoing to correct the situation concerning homeowners' associations.

Ali Al-Issaei, Secretary of the Real Estate Registry at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, explained that the Urban Observatory is a set of data that helps decision-makers and planners.

The tasks assigned to real estate brokerage offices are part of an initiative to transfer real estate registry work related to documentation to these offices in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, which is expected to create 300-400 jobs across Oman.

Al-Issaei noted that the scale of real estate development currently witnessed in Oman is a new experience compared to other countries, and the Real Estate Regulatory Law has now reached the State Council.

This law was formulated with the participation of all parties and is open to consensus on the executive regulation of the law. There is a need for awareness to overcome challenges in the real estate sector, with parts of the regulation focusing on valuation and real

estate brokerage. There is a move to make real estate brokerage governed and evaluated, with significant opportunities for Omanis in valuation offices.

Al-Issaei added that there are institutes providing valuation certificates to trainees, and the upcoming phase will involve governance of the real estate sector and exploring job opportunities for Omanis in this field. In response to a question about fraud in the sector, he confirmed that the ministry can establish controls to reduce fraud in the real estate sector.

Dr. Matar Al-Buraiki, Director of Homeowners' Associations at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, stated that the ministry will implement new procedures to reduce developers' dominance over homeowners' associations and facilitate smooth elections for these associations.

This meeting is part of a series of events organised by the Oman Real Estate Association aimed at regulating the real estate market, addressing the challenges faced by professionals in the sector, and finding ways to overcome them to achieve the aspirations of this vital sector.



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» WORDS OF WISDOM



He is the One GOD; the Creator, the Initiator, the Designer. To Him belong the most beautiful names. Glorifying Him is everything in the heavens and the earth. He is the Almighty, Most Wise. -Quran 59:24

» IFTAR DRINK

Anupma Nagvanshi

STRAWBERRY BUTTERFLY
PEA FLOWER TEA LATTE



Ingredients:
1/4 cup strawberry puree + honey
(add honey more or less as per your taste)
1/2 tsp chopped ginger
3/4 cup almond milk
1/2 cup butterfly pea flower tea (chilled)
Ice cubes - enough to fill to the top of your cup

Strawberry Puree:
Blend together:
1 cup strawberries (frozen)
1/2 tsp chopped ginger
2 spoon honey

Directions:
In a cup add strawberry, ginger and honey mix puree. Fill the cup with enough ice to fill the cup to the top. Slowly, pour the almond milk into the cup. Then carefully, add the chilled butterfly pea flower tea, making sure to hit the ice while pouring to help create the layered effect.

Butterfly Pea Flower Tea:
Brew butterfly pea flower tea
Boil 6-7 butterfly pea flowers in 1 cup hot water till the flowers release their color, strain the water and let it cool down a bit and store it in the fridge

» RAMADAN HEALTH TIP

HEALTHY EATING AND
CHECK-UP VITAL FOR
PEOPLE ON FAST WITH
DIABETES & CHRONIC
DISEASES IN RAMADAN



As the holy month of Ramadan has arrived, individuals on fast during Ramadan should undertake health check-up, specially those suffering from diabetes and chronic diseases.

Key components of any Ramadan focused health awareness include

- Risk quantification and exemptions, clearing misconceptions
- Medication adjustment
- Medical management of diabetes
- SMBG (self monitoring of blood glucose) in people with diabetes
- Fluid and dietary advice
- Understanding when to break the fast – Recognition of complications (hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia symptoms)
- Physical activity advice.

Diet plays an important role in enhancing trouble free fasting avoiding hypoglycemia (low blood sugar less than 70 mg/dl) or hyperglycemia (high blood sugar greater than 300 mg/dl) and other related complications.

During this divine month, people of different ages fast for

almost 13 or more hours, refrain from eating or drinking from early dawn to dusk. It's important to have healthy diet as the nutrition needs and requirements for those on fast are diverse.

Revitalise at Iftar: Encourage breaking fast with dates, fruits and water. It's sunnah to have dates at iftar as it provides essential nutrients to the body. Avoid added sugar juices for people with diabetes. Minimise use of fried foods, opt for baked or grill foods.

In general avoid eating late night meals, restricting last meal to immediate post taraweeh. A meal comprising carbohydrates, lean protein and healthy fats fulfills nutritional needs. Hydrate well from iftar to suhoor avoiding carbonated drinks and excess use of caffeine. Drinks like lemonade and flavoured water are better options to quench thirst.

Gear up at Suhoor: Significant meal for people with diabetes and active children, provides energy and prepares

for the day's fast. Ideal time to have suhoor is 30 mins to 1 hour before fajr prayers (early dawn prayers).

Make an effort for using complex carbohydrates, choosing whole grain breads or cereal with protein comprising eggs, low fat cheese, dairy or lean meats.

Avoid junk foods and spices: Trending practice of eating a suhoor meal early mid night between 12-1 am not only increases hours of fasting causing altered sleep and dyspepsia but also causes lethargy and increased risk of dehydration and hypoglycemia during the day. In case of situations where someone cannot have suhoor, they can utilise ready to use nutritional drinks which provide sustained release of carbohydrates aiding nutritional support and glycemetic control.

Rest and sleep are important: Focus on getting proper sleep and rest which are essential for quality work and perform tireless prayers during the day. Lack

of sleep can cause headaches, dizziness and impact blood pressure. It is of prime importance to take all medications and insulin as advised by the doctor during assessment.

Note:Injecting insulin does not break the fast. Hypoglycemia (low sugar less than 70 mg /dl) awareness is must among diabetics and in such cases fast acting sugars like dates or a fruit juice should be used. Proper care with healthy eating and better time management can make fasting easier.

Wishing all a blessed Ramadan



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OCCI to discuss business challenges and solutions

The Chamber has been organising Ramadan evenings based on the role it plays in representing the private sector and enhancing dialogue with the public sector

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) will organise four Ramadan evenings during the holy month of Ramadan to discuss a number of economic issues and challenges facing the business community in the Sultanate of Oman. Officials, experts and decision-makers will get an opportunity to give their opinions during the meetings. The Chamber has been organising Ramadan evenings based on the role it plays in representing the



private sector and enhancing dialogue with the public sector, thus providing an interactive environment that allows business owners to present challenges, solutions and proposals in cooperation with the relevant authorities. The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry has worked to ensure that its Ramadan evenings programme this year keeps pace with a number of current issues of interest to the business community, and in a way that achieves the Chamber's strategic directions related to improving the business environment, attracting investments, and expanding the base of

economic diversification, which works to encourage innovation in economic solutions, raise awareness of policies and legislation, and support the growth of the private sector. The first evening, which will be held on March 10, will discuss the importance of Expo Japan 2025 for the private sector by highlighting the importance of participating in Expo exhibitions, the specific objectives of the Sultanate of Oman Pavilion, the pavilion's special economic events and programmes, and the importance of private sector institutions' participation in this exhibition.

The second Ramadan evening on March 12 will address the regulation of the labour market and employment, the contribution of the private sector to the labour market, and the banking challenges facing workers and employers in the private sector.

Taxes and their impact The third Ramadan evening, which will be held on March 17, will discuss taxes and their impact on economic development, by defining the role of taxes in achieving financial sustainability, supporting financial balance solutions and taxes as a tool of financial policy, their impact on economic development, financing national projects and tax policies in the Sultanate of Oman, and their impact on the business environment and the development and growth of investment. The Chamber's Ramadan evenings this year will conclude on March 19 with a discussion of the economic importance of local content, during which the national strategy for developing local content will be introduced, as well as the importance of maximising the contribution of local content to the national economy and its role in developing small and medium enterprises.

BROKERAGE ACTIVITY

FSA launches 5 digital platforms for remote trading

Times News Service

Muscat: The Financial Services Authority (FSA) has launched 5 digital platforms for remote trading for companies operating in the field of securities licenced to practice brokerage activity.

These platforms aim to provide a unified and integrated digital station in each brokerage company, which facilitates the investment process in the capital market and makes investment faster and more efficient, which will be positively reflected in activating trading operations on the Muscat Stock Exchange.

These platforms keep pace with the regulatory requirements in modern financial markets, according to a methodology that contributes to improving services and ensuring data protection, thus enhancing investor confidence.

These platforms are owned by Ubar Financial Investments, United Securities, International Securities, Jabal Asset Management and CFI Financial, in cooperation with all relevant parties represented by the National Programme for Financial Sus-

tainability and Financial Sector Development (Istidama), Muscat Stock Exchange, Muscat Clearing and Depository Company, and Oman Credit and Financial Information Center (Mala'a).

Abdullah bin Salem Al Salmi, CEO of the Financial Services Authority, said that these platforms represent a qualitative leap and a valuable addition and they contribute to facilitating access for individuals and institutions of various sizes of investment portfolios necessary to enter the world of investment in the Omani capital market through a unified and integrated station.

He explained that the digital platforms will be a gateway for investment in the stock market, specifically in the Muscat Stock Exchange, considering that the investor can complete the investment procedures and steps with ease and convenience, as the investor can choose the digital platform of the company licensed to practice brokerage activity, and can get an investor account and the ability to reserve shares and send buy and sell orders for the security, financial transfer procedures and other advantages.

BY THE END OF 2024

Oman Housing Bank provides over OMR145 million loans

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Housing Bank announced that it had provided housing loans with a total value exceeding OMR145 million by the end of 2024, benefiting 3,250 citizens from various governorates of Oman as part of its ongoing efforts to support the housing sector and enable citizens to own their homes.

The bank's financial data showed that the highest financing was provided through the main branch in Muscat, amounting to OMR38.3 million, benefiting 837 recipients.

This was followed by the Rustaq branch with OMR34.58 million for 813 recipients, and the Nizwa



branch, which provided OMR19.38 million for 423 recipients.

Musa bin Masoud Al-Jididi, CEO of Oman Housing Bank, affirmed that these financings are part of the bank's strategy aimed at enhancing the housing stability of Omani citizens by offering easy loans with competitive terms that meet the needs of various segments, contributing to the realisation of Oman Vision 2040 in the housing and social development sectors.

In a statement to the Oman News Agency, he added that these loans cover different categories, including those wishing to buy homes, purchase land and build on it, or construct a house, providing recipients with multiple

opportunities to achieve their housing goals.

He emphasised that Oman Housing Bank's commitment to continuing to provide innovative financing solutions that support urban development in Oman and enhance the quality of life for citizens in line with national goals aimed at providing a sustainable and integrated housing environment.

Al-Jididi explained that the bank is undergoing comprehensive updates to its services and products, aiming to enhance and offer innovative housing solutions. He noted that the bank is preparing to enter a new phase of development and expansion, working on updating its digital system and

providing integrated electronic services to manage loans and accounts easily and securely.

The CEO stated that the bank had significantly reduced the waiting period by restructuring internal approval mechanisms and expanding specialised work teams, reducing the waiting time from 4 years to less than 8 months.

He noted that Oman Housing Bank continues to provide easy financing solutions across all governorates of Oman, ensuring comprehensive coverage of citizens' needs nationwide.

The bank is committed to distributing financing equitably across its branches to support Omani families in owning suitable housing.



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INVITATION TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Board of Directors of Sharqiyah Desalination Company SAOG (the "Company") has the pleasure to invite all of its shareholders to attend the Annual General Meeting, which will be held at 3:00 pm on Sunday, 16 March 2025, through the electronic platform to hold general meetings hosted by Muscat Clearing and Depository SAOC which can be accessed via: www.mcd.gov.om (the MCD Portal). If the quorum for holding the first Annual General Meeting is not met, a second Annual General Meeting will be held at 3:00 pm on Thursday, 20th March 2025, via the MCD Portal to discuss the following agenda:

- To consider and approve the Board of Director's Report on the Company's activities and its financial position for the financial year ended 31st December 2024 (as per Annexure 1).
- To consider and approve the Company's Corporate Governance Report for the financial year ended 31st December 2024 (as per Annexure 2).
- To consider the Board of Directors' Evaluation Report for the financial year ended 31st December 2024 (as per Annexure 3).
- To consider the Auditor's Report on the Company's audited financial statement for the financial year ended 31st December 2024 (as per Annexure 4).
- To consider and approve the proposal to distribute cash dividends of 15 baiza per share to the shareholders as the date of the AGM for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.
- To ratify the Board of Directors and Committees' sitting fees paid during the preceding year and to determine the Board of Directors and Committees' sitting fees for the upcoming financial year (as per Annexure 5).
- To notify the AGM of the transactions carried out by the Company with related parties during the financial year ended 31st December 2024 (as per Annexure 7).
- To consider and approve the related parties' transactions that the Company will enter into during the financial year ending 31st December 2025 (as per Annexure 8).
- To elect a new Board of Directors.

Any person who wishes to nominate himself/herself to the Board of Director may fill out the nomination form and deliver it to the Company at least five (5) days prior to the AGM, not later than close of business on Tuesday, 11 March 2025. The candidate should observe the conditions required for the membership of the Board of Directors.

- To appoint the statutory auditors for the financial year ending 31st December 2025 and determining their fees.

In accordance with the Company's Articles of Association and the controls for Convening General Meetings of Public Joint Stock Companies using modern technology issued by the Capital Market Authority, we would like to draw to your attention the following:

- Juristic persons shall have the right to appoint a proxy to attend the General Meetings and vote on their behalf via electronic means, subject to the proxy holder having an investor number issued by the Muscat Clearing and Depository SAOC.
- Voting on agenda items shall begin three (3) days prior to the date of the General Meetings and shall continue until the end of the voting process on the Meeting Day. In the event of a deviation (either an increase or a decrease) in the shareholders' poll balance, the voting process shall be null, and void and a re-vote shall be counted once again on the day of the Meetings.

For further information please contact the legal advisor
Mr. Nasser Saud Al Habsi on telephone number: +968 90888666 or
Ms. Dalia Sharabati on telephone number: +968 96573312.



Ramadan Iftar Program

The Prophet (ﷺ) said "Whoever breaks the fast for a fasting person, will have a reward similar to his reward, however, nothing is detracted from the reward of a fasting person".

The Oman Charitable Organization is pleased to announce that it will receive donations for Ramadan Iftar Program in Sultanate of Oman for the year 1446 AH AD 2025

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Green Walkway project inaugurated in Seeb

The project features a dedicated sports walkway and a bicycle track, each extending 3,400 metres, along with pedestrian overpasses to ensure ease of movement

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Muscat Municipality celebrated the launch of the Green Walkway project in South Al Maabelah, in the Wilayat of Seeb, last Wednesday. The event was held under the patronage of His Excellency Salim bin Nasser Al Afi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, and was attended by His Excellency Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Hamidi, Chairman of Muscat Municipality, and Mr Stephen L. Lover, President and General Manager of Occidental Oman, along with several officials from both the public and private sectors.

The project spans an area of more than 152,000 square metres and has been implemented in collaboration with Occidental Oman as part of its corporate social responsibility programmes. The project includes a range of integrated facilities catering to various com-



munity needs.

It features a dedicated sports walkway and a bicycle track, each extending 3,400 metres, along with pedestrian overpasses to ensure ease of movement.

Additionally, the site includes designated play areas for children, fitness equipment, multipurpose sports courts, and a skateboarding area, making it an ideal destination for families and individuals seeking a comprehensive recreational environment.

The project also features expansive green spaces, modern lighting, restaurants, cafes, rest areas and designated locations for food trucks.

Commenting on the launch, Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Hamidi, Chairman of Muscat Municipality, stated: "This project reflects Muscat Governorate's commitment, through Muscat Municipality, to providing sustainable facilities that enhance the quality of life and align with the development pillars of the governorate. The Green Walkway project represents a qualitative addition to Muscat's urban environment, serving a broad segment of society by combining sustainability, recreation, and public health promotion. It adds aesthetic value to the area while providing a suitable environment for sports and leisure ac-

tivities, which aligns with modern urban planning. We also appreciate the role of the private sector in supporting developmental initiatives that benefit the community."

Stephen L. Lover, President and General Manager of Occidental Oman, added: "We are proud to contribute and collaborate with Muscat Municipality in implementing this pioneering project, which serves as a model for modern developments focused on environmental conservation and sustainable urban growth. This partnership is part of our corporate social responsibility. It underscores our firm commitment to supporting initiatives that promote sustainable development and provide a healthy environment for the community, in alignment with Oman Vision 2040."

It is worth noting that Muscat Municipality remains committed to supporting national efforts to achieve the ambitious vision of 'A Sustainable, Thriving, and Vibrant Muscat' by working in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to implement high-quality projects that meet community aspirations, boost tourism and development, and enhance the overall quality of life in line with national priorities.

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

<FROM A1> UK emerges as largest foreign investor

The government, represented by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion and other investment authorities, is currently focusing on several key sectors derived from Oman Vision 2040.

These sectors include transport and logistics, renewable energy, information technology (IT), food security, tourism, mining, and industries, in addition to supporting and complementary sectors such as the circular economy, health, and education.

NCSI data

Statistics from the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) show that the United Kingdom emerged as the largest foreign investor, contributing investments valued at OMR13.66 billion, followed by the United States at OMR5.25 billion, the United Arab Emirates at OMR 836.5 million, Kuwait at OMR 833.5 million, China at OMR 817.8 million and Switzerland at OMR 551.9 million, until the end of third quarter of 2024.

Qatar's investments in Oman reached OMR488.3 million by the end of the third quarter of last year, Bahrain's investments reached OMR375.7 million, and investments from the Netherlands and India were approximately OMR359.1 million and OMR286.1 million, respectively.

Al-Faroojiyah further said that these statistics show that the manufacturing sector received FDI valued OMR2.13 billion, financial intermediaries OMR1.36 billion and real estate activities



OMR969.1 million.

She explained that the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion has governed investment opportunities within



the 'Invest in Oman' platform, publishing 20 investment opportunities in tourism, real estate development, aviation, logistics, and industry sectors. Industrial land

for investment opportunities in the manufacturing sector has been allocated in cooperation with the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), with investors showing interest in lands in the industrial cities of Rusayl, Sohar, and Samail.

21 events held

The ministry has promoted Oman internationally in 21 events last year, received delegations from 23 countries, organised 8 local promotional events, and targeted 6 G20 countries and 4 markets in collaboration with the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI). These efforts aim to attract various sectors and increase the value of foreign investment.

Eng. Nasser bin Khalifa Al-Kindi, CEO of Invest in Oman, said that the 'Invest in Oman' brings together various government institutions to facilitate the investor journey and attract high-capital investors to strategic priority sectors. It serves as a digital window to promote Oman's investment environment and inform investors about available opportunities through a clear map.

He added that the number of investment projects being processed reached 59 projects worth OMR3.2 billion, of which 29 projects worth OMR1.2 billion have been localised. India, China, and Egypt topped the list of investing countries in terms of the number of investors, with the industry sector leading the investment sectors, followed by renewable energy and health.

Printed and published by:
Muscat Media Group
Post Box: 770,
Postal Code: 112

Founder: Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali
Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali
Deputy Editor-in-Chief: Anees bin Essa Al Zedjali
Chief Executive Officer: Ahmed Essa Al Zedjali

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ADVERTISING: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24812624, E-mail: advertising@timesofoman.com
CIRCULATION: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24818270, E-mail: circulation@timesofoman.com

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

HM sends cable of congratulations

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to Zeljka Cvijanovic, Chair of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina on her country's Independence Day anniversary. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere congratulations and wishes to her coupled with His Majesty's wishes of achievement of aspirations of progress, stability and development of her country's people. — OMA



THE SIMPLE DETAILS IN EVERYDAY LIFE



Jotun's 2025 Global Colour Collection highlights the impact of soft tones

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Often, the smallest things in our lives have the greatest impact. It could be the sunlight on the side of a building, a kind word from a stranger, the feel of a pebble on the beach—or the colour of the room we wake up in every day. These are the simple details in everyday life—those little things that seem to shape our days.

The colours around us affect our emotions—even our energy levels—but they don't have to be bold or dramatic to make a difference. In the recently launched 2025 Global Colour Collection called NUANCES, Jotun celebrates the subtle details and gradations of color that do so much to set the atmosphere and create a sense of home.

"Bold colours might have a more obvious visual impact, but even a slight shift in hue can change the mood," says Rana Khadra, Colour & Creative Manager at Jotun Middle East, India, and Africa. "We respond to the gradations and tones we encounter each day on both conscious and subconscious levels. In our homes and on our walls, it's often those subtle differences that make all the difference."

Launched in October 2024, Jotun's NUANCES collection features 30 colours across six families—blue, gray, peach, yellow, beige, and green—each with four variations of different intensities, all sharing a single base hue. The collection is designed as both a guide and an inspiration, helping people find the perfect subtle differences to create the mood they want.

Based on proven colour theory



principles, the Global Colour Collection offers both practical and inspirational guidance on how to use layering, monochromatic schemes, and varying intensities to achieve depth and impact.

The collection is showcased through beautiful interior photography that brings all 30 colours to life in a home setting. It also features large-scale artwork created specifically for this launch by French-born artist Agathe Bergeot, incorporating many of the shades from Jotun's 2025 Color Collection.

The NUANCES Colour Collection was launched in October 2024 with a series of exhibitions held across Jotun's global markets: Europe, Africa, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and China.

Each exhibition will feature an inspiring, eye-catching installation, showcasing large-scale three-dimensional forms—columns, drapes, and arches—embodying the NUANCES colour groups. These sculptural, inviting spaces subtly hint at different areas within a home, broken down into abstract shapes that encourage visitors to step inside, explore Jotun's world of colors, and appreciate the everyday beauty of simple details.



SULEIMAN AL NA'ABI

<FROM A1> Omani mountaineer scales Indonesian peak

Suleiman Al Na'abi said: "The adventure began on 18 February, when I was able to first reach the Timika region of West Papua province, and there I joined the international team. We made all the administrative preparations required and received the special permits to reach the main camp. On the 28th of this month, we arrived at the main camp and immediately prepared for the climb. And finally I was able to reach the summit."

He added: "This adventure is one of the most difficult stages of the Seven Summits Challenge, as

Mount Carstensz is characterised by steep rocky terrain that requires advanced technical climbing skills due to its steep slopes and the use of rock climbing techniques."

He explained that the mountain is located in a remote area in the forests of Papua, Indonesia, which makes reaching its foothills a difficult task, and changing weather further complicates the task. Although it is located in a tropical region, the weather is unstable, with heavy rains and dense fog that affects visibility. It requires an adventurer to remain careful and alert at all times.



HIJRI YEAR 1446

His Majesty
the Sultan
greet
citizens,
residents
on advent of
Holy Month of
Ramadan

Muscat: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has extended his greetings to Omani citizens, residents in the Sultanate of Oman and to the Islamic nation on the occasion of the advent of the holy month of Ramadan for Hijri Year 1446.

Profound faith

The Diwan of Royal Court issued a statement to this effect reading as follows: "Upon the blessed advent of the holy month of Ramadan and, as Muslims in the East and West of the globe look forward to the holy month's blissful manifestations of spiritual security and profound faith, as they engage, day and night, in the recitation of the Holy Qur'an that was revealed as a book of guidance for all mankind, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has expressed his sincere greetings to Omani citizens, residents of the benign land of the Sultanate of Oman and to the Sultanate nation on this blessed occasion.

Fasting and worship

As he extends his greetings on this occasion, His Majesty the Sultan prays to the Almighty Allah to grant all success in fasting and worship throughout the holy month. His Majesty the Sultan also prayed to the Almighty to endow all His acceptance of their deeds.

Generous blessings

May Allah the Almighty protect His Majesty the Sultan and bestow upon him His generous blessings and prolong his life. Happy Holy Month of Ramadan to all, this year and every year." -ONA

INDIA

49 trapped people rescued so far, says Indian state's CM



CHAMOLI: Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Saturday conducted an aerial survey and took stock of rescue operations in the Chamoli avalanche at the disaster control room set up in Delharadun. Out of 55 workers, 49 have been rescued till Saturday noon, according to the Uttarakhand government.

A total of 55 Border Roads Organisation construction workers were trapped under snow after an avalanche hit the state's Chamoli district on Friday. The avalanche struck a General Reserve Engineer Force (GREF) camp near Mana village in Garhwal Sector. Out of the 55 workers, 49 have been rescued till Saturday noon according to the Uttarakhand government.

As per an initial statement by the Indian Army, the avalanche struck at around 7.15 am on February 28 and a Border Roads Organisation (BRO) Labour Camp, located between Mana and Badrinath, was hit, burying the workers inside eight containers and one shed. Over 100 personnel's personnel from Ibx Bigade, were immediately mobilised comprising doctors ambulances and plant equipment and by 1150 am, the teams had located five containers and successfully rescued 10 individuals, all alive. Of the 10 rescued, four personnel

World Food Programme stresses need to maintain ceasefire in Gaza



With the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is intensifying, and citizens are facing great difficulties in securing food and water, which exacerbate their suffering



GAZA: The World Food Programme (WFP) said that “the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip must continue and cannot be reversed.”

The United Nations programme said in a post on X that “after six weeks of the ceasefire in Gaza, our teams were able to reach one million people across the Strip, by restoring supply distribution points, reopening bakeries, and expand-

ing cash assistance,” noting that the path to safe and sustainable humanitarian access is clear.

The World Food Programme stressed the need to continue the ceasefire in Gaza, saying, "It cannot be reversed."

About 1.5 million citizens in the Strip are facing tragic conditions and circumstances, in light of the continued forced displacement

due to the war of extermination and the widespread destruction inflicted by the Israeli occupation forces on their homes over more than 15 months of the aggression.

With the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is intensifying, and citizens are facing great difficulties in securing food and water, which exacerbates their suffering.

Israeli forces continue large-scale military onslaught on Tulkarm camp

For the 34th consecutive day, the Israeli occupation forces continue their aggression on the city of Tulkarm and its camp, and on Nour Shams camp for the 21st day, coinciding with the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, and escalated the forced displacement of citizens after forcing them to leave their homes at gunpoint.

WUFA correspondent reported that the occupation forces forced citizens last night to evacuate their homes in Jabal al-Nasr neighborhood in Nour Shams camp east of Tulkarm, in light of the tight siege imposed on it, while raiding homes and vandalizing their contents, and converting some of them into military barracks, and using them as sniper and surveillance sites.

 Full story @ timesofoman.com/world

OVAL OFFICE

Trump, Zelensky cancel signing of minerals deal

WASHINGTON: A press conference at the White House on Friday where US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky planned to sign the US-Ukraine minerals deal was cancelled, following a tense shouting match between the two inside the Oval Office earlier in the day.

What should have been a normal press pool spray before the high-stakes Trump-Zelensky bilateral meeting transpired into a fireworks-filled blowup aired on TV that no one would expect, all starting with an interjection by US Vice President JD Vance, who was present in the room, demand-



ing that the Ukrainian leader be thankful for Trump's effort to get his country out of its three-year conflict with Russia.

“You should be thanking the president for trying to bring an end to this conflict,” Vance told Zelensky during the unprecedented public confrontation, which later saw the three of them -- Trump and Vance versus Zelensky -- repeatedly race to talk over one another.

Rebuking Vance, Zelensky's remarks that the United States will "in the future" feel the problem brought to it by the Ukraine-Russia conflict was pushed back by Trump, who said Zelensky was "in no position to dictate what we are going to feel" given that he "allowed" himself "to be in a very bad position." — Xinhua

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

SEPARATE AND CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024 (EXPRESSED IN OMANI RIAL)

Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Al Jazeera Services Co. SAOG, I am pleased to welcome you to the Annual General Meeting of the Company. I take this opportunity to place before you the Annual Report for the year ended on 31 December 2024.

Profits and Assets

The revenue from catering and allied services business for the year 2024 was up by 5% to RO 10,723,180 from RO 10,253,146 for the year 2023. The operating profit for the year 2024 at RO 675,116 was down by 1% compared to RO 683,312 for the year 2023. The decrease in operating profit was due to competitive pressure in a challenging business environment.

The net gains from the investment segment for the year 2024 was RO 434,775 against gain of RO 362,954 for the year 2023.

The share of profit from associate company, Al Anwar Ceramic Tiles Co. SAOG at RO 63,787 was down by 95% from RO 1,405,492 reported for the year 2023. The decline in share of profit from associate was mainly due to growing competition from low-cost imports and geo-political developments in the region.

As a result of the above, the net profit after tax for the year 2024 was RO 966,814 down by 58% compared to RO 2,285,982 for the year 2023.

The shareholders' equity as on 31 December 2024 was down by 13% to RO 15,440,741 compared to RO 17,756,948 on 31 December 2023. The net assets per share as on 31 December 2024 was 197 baiza against 159 baiza as on 31 December 2023.

During the year 2024, the Company reduced its share capital by 30% to RO 7,820,202 from RO 11,171,717 in year 2023 and distributed the reduced capital of RO 3,351,515 to the shareholders.

Corporate Governance

I am pleased to report that your Company has adhered to all the applicable regulations of the code of corporate governance issued by the Financial Services Authority. A report on Corporate Governance and a Management Discussion and Analysis forms part of the Annual Report 2024.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The Company acknowledges its corporate social responsibilities (CSR) and strives to serve the community by providing assistance to the approved organizations engaged in charitable and community development activities through CSR program. The amount spent on CSR during the year 2024 amounted to RO 13,500 and we propose to allocate RO 15,000 for CSR activities in the year 2025.

Dividend

The Board of Directors has recommended a cash dividend of 15% (15 baiza per share) amounting to RO 1,173,030 for the year 2024 to the Shareholders registered on the date of the Annual General Meeting scheduled on 24 March 2025.

Future outlook

We are cautiously optimistic and remain focused on our core business of catering and allied services. Our outlook for the future remains stable.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank our valued Customers, Shareholders, Muscat Stock Exchange and Financial Services Authority for their unwavering support. I would also like to thank management and employees for their commitment and sincere hard work.

We pay tribute to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, under whose visionary leadership and wise guidance Oman continues its steadfast march towards sustainable economic growth and social development.

Abdurehda Mustafa Sultan
Deputy Chairman

The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder, who request them, either in Arabic or English, within 7 days from the receipt of the request.

	Group 31 Dec 2024	Parent Company 31 Dec 2024	Group 31 Dec 2023	Parent Company 31 Dec 2023
	RO	RO	RO	RO
ASSETS				
Non-current assets				
Furniture and equipment	81,201	5,242	76,777	7,306
Goodwill	90,000	-	90,000	-
Investment in subsidiaries	-	320,444	-	320,444
Investment in an associate	11,023,808	11,023,808	12,519,136	12,519,136
Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income	9,897	9,897	9,897	9,897
Deferred tax asset	179,330	161,312	223,772	221,041
Total non-current assets	11,384,236	11,520,763	12,919,582	13,077,824
Current assets				
Inventories	326,768	-	362,240	-
Trade and other receivables	3,934,757	92,755	3,875,863	2,119
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	2,143,126	2,143,126	787,055	787,055
Due from related parties	3,284	1,582,393	3,073	1,669,522
Cash and bank balances	454,455	148,785	2,704,683	2,272,307
Total current assets	6,862,390	3,967,059	7,722,314	4,731,003
Total assets	18,246,626	15,487,762	20,641,896	17,808,827
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES				
Shareholders' capital and reserves				
Share capital	7,820,202	7,820,202	11,171,717	11,171,717
Legal reserve	2,635,348	2,608,734	3,735,270	3,735,270
Retained earnings	5,140,933	4,985,887	3,045,583	2,887,601
Investment fair value reserve	(205,129)	(205,129)	(273,623)	(273,623)
Other reserves	49,387	49,387	49,387	49,387
Total shareholders' capital and reserves	15,440,741	15,257,081	17,756,948	17,580,352
Non-current liabilities				
Employee benefit liabilities	504,993	53,506	558,414	52,259
Total non-current liabilities	504,993	53,506	558,414	52,259
Current liabilities				
Trade and other payables	1,738,301	19,113	1,789,875	20,971
Due to related parties	383,070	137,175	367,278	134,358
Provision for taxation	179,521	20,887	169,381	20,887
Total current liabilities	2,300,892	177,175	2,326,534	176,216
Total liabilities	2,805,885	230,681	2,884,948	228,475
Total shareholders' capital and reserves and liabilities	18,246,626	15,487,762	20,641,896	17,808,827
Net assets per share	0.197	0.195	0.159	0.157

	Group Year Ended 31 Dec 2024	Parent Company Year Ended 31 Dec 2024	Group Year Ended 31 Dec 2023	Parent Company Year Ended 31 Dec 2023
	RO	RO	RO	RO
Income				
Revenue from contracts with customers	10,723,180	-	10,253,146	-
Direct costs	(8,820,696)	-	(8,474,423)	-
Gross profit	1,902,484	-	1,778,723	-
Other income	30,626	-	39,394	-
	1,933,110	-	1,818,657	-
Expenses				
Employees' salaries and other related costs	(523,492)	(156,690)	(510,548)	(171,745)
General, administrative and selling expenses	(685,293)	(97,058)	(581,041)	(91,894)
Depreciation	(49,209)	(2,330)	(43,756)	(2,024)
	(1,257,994)	(256,078)	(1,135,345)	(265,663)
Profit / (loss) from operations	675,116	(256,078)	683,312	(265,663)
Net gains from investments	434,775	434,775	362,954	362,954
Share of profit from investment in an associate	63,767	63,767	1,405,492	1,405,492
Dividend from a subsidiary	-	783,363	-	798,423
Financial costs	(7,770)	(6,348)	(8,523)	(7,449)
Profit before tax for the year	1,165,888	1,019,479	2,443,235	2,293,757
Income tax expense	(199,074)	(59,729)	(157,253)	(14,931)
Net profit after tax for the year	966,814	959,750	2,285,982	2,278,826
Other comprehensive income				
Items that will not be reclassified to profit and loss				
Share of fair value reserve from investment in an associate	68,494	68,494	112,469	112,469
Total other comprehensive income	68,494	68,494	112,469	112,469
Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to the owners of the Parent Company	1,035,308	1,028,244	2,398,451	2,391,295
Basic and diluted earnings per share	0.009	0.009	0.020	0.020

SOHAR INTERNATIONAL
As part of its commitment to enhancing financial governance and optimizing public expenditure, Sohar International has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Finance to officially launch the Treasury Single Account (TSA).

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



'INVESTMENT JOURNEY'
The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) announced the launch of a marketing campaign under the theme "Investment Journey" across various social media platforms.

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MSX trading rises to OMR234.5mn

Last month the MSX also witnessed losing stocks outperforming winning stocks, with the prices of 43 securities declining, compared to 37 securities which rose, and 18 securities remaining unchanged at their previous levels

MUSCAT: The value of trading at the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) rose in February to OMR234.5 million, compared to OMR75.3 million in January 2025, benefiting from the implementation of special deals on the ahlibank share, which witnessed trading worth OMR162.7 million, representing 69.3 percent of the total trading value.

Ahli United Bank of Bahrain, a part of Kuwait Finance House (KFH), sold all its 822.4 million shares (35% ownership) in ahlibank Oman to a group of investors from Oman.



The Muscat Stock Exchange witnessed mixed performance last month, with investors focusing on limited shares, at a time when 20 percent of the capital of Asyad Shipping Company was offered for public subscription as part of the company's plan to transform into a public joint stock company. This offering came shortly after the listing of OQ Basic Industries Company on the Muscat Stock Exchange last December, which put pressure on liquidity at a time when investment funds and institutions seek to absorb sales from individual subscribers.

Investors focused in February's trading on OQ Exploration and Production, saw trading worth OMR13.8 million, the eighth sovereign sukuk issue, saw trading worth OMR10.3 million, OQ Basic Industries, saw trading worth OMR5.2 million, and Bank Muscat saw trading worth OMR4.4 million.

In February, the Muscat Stock Exchange recorded a decline in many of its indicators. The market value fell to OMR27.31 billion, recording losses during the month estimated at OMR228.7 million. The number of executed deals decreased from about 22,000 to 17,347, recording a decline of about 21 percent.

The Muscat Stock Exchange in February also witnessed losing stocks outperforming winning stocks, with the prices of 43 securities declining, compared to 37 securities which rose, and 18 securities remaining unchanged at their previous levels.

Except for the industrial sector index, which rose by 422 points last month, other indices recorded a decline. The main index of the Muscat Stock Exchange fell by 107 points and closed at 4,435 points, the financial sector index fell by 84 points, the services sector index

MSX ends lower in weekly trading

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The MSX 30 continued its downward trajectory the week, declining by 0.18% as selling pressure persisted across multiple sessions, according to an industry watcher.

"Despite the index's decline, trading activity surged, with volumes rising by 67% and trading value increasing by 83%, indicating heightened investor participation," said George Pavel, General Manager at Naga.com Middle East.

Among individual stocks, Oman Cement emerged as a standout performer, rallying by 19.76% and ranking among the top gainers. On the downside, Oman Telecom was among the laggards with a 4.42% drop, followed by Muscat Finance (-4.08%) and Oman Cables Industry (-3.95%).

Sector-wise, the financial sector edged lower by 0.12%, with mixed performances among key banking stocks. Bank Muscat slipped by 0.39%, while National Bank of Oman saw a more pronounced decline of 3.45%. In contrast, Sohar International Bank defied the sectoral trend, advancing by 3.05%.

The industrial sector posted a strong 3.7% gain, driven by robust performances from Oman Cement, Al Anwar Ceramic, which surged by 14.81%, and Jazeera Steel Products, which climbed by 5.41%. The resilience in industrial stocks provided some support to the broader market amid the ongoing downtrend.

Meanwhile, the services sector dipped by 0.35%, weighed down by Oman Telecom and

Ooredoo's 3.38% decline. However, Abraj Energy Services provided some support, rising by 1.68% in addition to OQ Exploration and Production.

In terms of market activity, OQ Exploration and Production led the market in trading value, followed closely by Bank Muscat. OQ Base Industries recorded the highest trading volume and gained 1.98% over the week. OQ Exploration and Production also saw strong buying interest, rising by 4.5% after announcing positive financial results, albeit with a weaker year-on-year performance.

"On the macroeconomic front, Oman's fiscal outlook remains promising. The country could see a budget surplus for 2024 due to higher-than-expected oil prices with a conservative price forecast of \$60 per barrel," said George Pavel. "With current prices exceeding this level, improved fiscal stability may bolster investor confidence and lend medium-term support to the Muscat stock market," he further added.

fell by 59 points, and the Sharia index lost about 8 points.

Al Jazeera Steel Products share topped the gainers, rising by 25 percent and closing at 390 baisas. Oman Cement share rose by about 24 percent and closed at 491 baisas. Building Materials Industry share rose to 82 baisas, recording a 20 percent increase. Voltamp Energy share rose by 19.8 percent and closed at 599 baisas. **-ONA**

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MARKET

Campaign to highlight investment opportunities

This aims to shed light on the range of investment opportunities within the special economic zones, free zones, and industrial estates under Opaz’s supervision

Times News Service

MUSCAT: In celebration of the holy month of Ramadan, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) announced the launch of a marketing campaign under the theme “Investment Journey” across various social media platforms.



This aims to shed light on the range of investment opportunities within the special economic zones, free zones, and industrial estates under Opaz’s supervision. The primary objective of the “Investment Journey” campaign is to raise awareness about these strategic areas by sharing com-

elling content that narrates the experiences of entrepreneurs and investors. From the initial registration of companies to their expansion into global markets, the campaign will emphasize the array of facilities and incentives available to support investors. Additionally, the campaign aims to stimu-

late investment by showcasing the competitive advantages and development projects within the targeted areas and facilitating interaction with the public through diverse digital platforms, which is also a key focus, contributing to an increased follower base and attracting more potential investors. This initiative aligns with Opaz’s ongoing efforts to foster economic development and ensure the sustainability of special economic zones, free zones, and industrial estates. By adopting contemporary marketing strategies, Opaz seeks to elevate its digital presence and strengthen communication with investors both locally and globally. The “Investment Journey” campaign is integral to Opaz’s mission of presenting promising opportunities to local and international investors in these areas. It highlights the various facilities and benefits designed to support business growth. Ramadan offers a unique opportunity to engage with entrepreneurs and investors through innovative content, showcasing the full spectrum of the investment journey—from company establishment to global market expansion.

ELEVATING RETAIL SERVICES

Oman Oil opens three new Café Amazon branches

MUSCAT: As part of its efforts to enhance customer experience and elevate retail services at Oman Oil fuel stations, Oman Oil Marketing Company has opened three new Café Amazon branches in Bousher, Al Khuwair 33, and Al Amerat Heights, along with the renovation of an Ahlain store in Bousher. A formal inauguration ceremony was held on 24 February to mark the opening of the new Café Amazon branches and the renovated Ahlain store in Bousher. This initiative reflects the company’s commitment to providing a fully integrated ser-



vice station that caters to the needs of motorists. With the opening of the new three Café Amazon branches, the total number of outlets in Oman has risen to 15, including 13 in Muscat Governorate and two in strategic locations in Dhofar Governorate. This expansion aligns with the

ongoing growth of the Ahlain convenience store network, which now comprises 58 stores across various governorates and wilayats of Oman. Ten of these stores have undergone comprehensive renovations, introducing a modern design that meets customer expectations, with further upgrades planned throughout the year. Oman Oil fuel stations are designed in line with Oman Oil Marketing Company’s vision to expand its service offerings, providing motorists with a fully integrated experience beyond fuel services. These

stations offer a diverse selection of beverages, snacks, essential products, and accessories, ensuring a comprehensive and high-quality shopping experience. Hussain Al Ishaqi, GM National Retail, stated: “Our strategy is always centred on enhancing the customer experience and delivering the best possible services. The expansion of Café Amazon branches and the revamped Ahlain stores play a key role in this vision, offering a modern and fully integrated service destination that enhances the convenience shopping experience.”

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING



Sohar International launches treasury single account for Finance Ministry

Times News Service

MUSCAT: As part of its commitment to enhancing financial governance and optimising public expenditure, Sohar International has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Finance to officially launch the Treasury Single Account (TSA).

The bank has distinguished itself as a leader in the initiative, demonstrating exceptional efficiency in the development and administration of the TSA framework. Notably, Sohar International remains one of the first financial institutions to have completed the signing and announced the full-scale launch of the TSA initiative in Oman. Commenting on the announcement, Khalil Salim Al Hedaifi, Chief Government and Private Banking Officer at Sohar International, stated: “We recognize that fiscal prudence and strategic resource allocation are paramount to national economic stability. We are, therefore, honoured to collaborate with the Ministry of Finance in shaping a more efficient and dynamic public finance framework. Sohar International’s significant progress in the TSA initiative underscores our ability to drive financial innovation with precision. More than just operational execution, this initiative

represents a fundamental shift towards greater fiscal discipline and optimized resource utilization—aligning Oman’s financial governance with global best practices. By centralizing public funds under a unified structure, we are strengthening economic resilience, ensuring seamless financial integration, and reinforcing the sustainability of public expenditure.” Sohar International has played a pivotal role in designing a centralizing and resilient system that consolidates government accounts under a unified financial structure. This transformative initiative enhances financial oversight, strengthens liquidity management, and reinforces budgetary discipline—ensuring greater transparency and efficiency in public fund utilization. The bank’s leadership in this national endeavor reflects its expertise in managing complex financial ecosystems and reaffirms its position as a trusted partner in Oman’s economic advancement. Beyond strengthening financial governance, the TSA initiative exemplifies the impact of public-private partnerships in advancing Oman’s economic objectives. Sohar International’s advanced digital banking capabilities will facilitate seamless transaction processing, data-driven financial decision-making, and enhanced reporting accuracy.

PARTNERSHIP

The Sustainable City – Yiti and ahli Islamic sign pact to advance sustainable urban development

MUSCAT: The Sustainable City – Yiti, Oman’s flagship sustainable development and the pioneering net zero emissions community, has signed a strategic partnership with ahli Islamic, marking a significant milestone in facilitating financial solutions that align with the project’s long-term sustainability and development objectives. The partnership was formalized at a signing ceremony held on-site at The Sustainable City – Yiti, attended by senior executives from both The Sustainable City – Yiti and ahli Islamic, along with key stakeholders. The agreement was signed by Mohammed Al Ghufaili, COO of Omran Group and Board Member of The Sustainable City – Yiti and Yousuf Al Rawahi, DGM – Head of ahli Islamic. This collaboration reflects a shared commitment to supporting Oman’s Vision 2040 by fostering ethical investment in sustainable real estate, enhancing financial accessibility, and promoting responsible urban growth. As Oman’s largest sustainable urban development, The Sustainable City – Yiti integrates renewable energy, food production, water and waste recycling, smart mobility, and climate-resilient infrastructure to create a truly future-ready community. With 96% of its infrastructure already completed, the project is progressing steadily towards its full realization in 2026, bringing together residential, commercial, hospitality, and educational spaces designed to advance sustainable living. Mohammed Al Ghufaili, COO of Omran Group and Board Member of The Sustainable City – Yiti, commented: “With an investment of nearly one billion US dollars, we are redefining the real estate landscape by integrating sustainability, innovation, and long-term value creation. This collaboration with ahli Islamic reinforces our commitment to responsible growth, ensuring that we deliver a world-class, net-zero



emissions community that aligns with Oman’s Vision 2040 and sets a benchmark for sustainable cities worldwide.” Yousuf Al Rawahi, DGM – Head of ahli Islamic added: “Our collaboration with The Sustainable City – Yiti reflects the overall commitment and endeavor to support Sharia-compliant and sustainable investments that align with Oman Vision 2040. By providing the needed financial solutions, we empower individuals and businesses to be part of a groundbreaking net-zero emissions community. Together, we are fostering a responsible urban grown society, while ensuring long-term value creation, and contributing to a more sustainable future for many in the Sultanate of Oman.” Developed by Diamond Developers, a subsidiary of SEE Holding, in collaboration with Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran), The Sustainable City – Yiti is a flagship sustainability project in Oman. Spanning nearly one million square meters along the Gulf of Oman coastline, it

offers an innovative live-work-thrive model that integrates smart infrastructure, low-carbon living, and sustainable tourism. The development features a diverse mix of residential, commercial, hospitality, and educational spaces, designed to foster a thriving and sustainable community. It includes state-of-the-art commercial and hospitality zones with a central plaza, retail areas, and two hotels, alongside essential community infrastructure such as a school, a nursery, an equestrian center, an indoor sports complex, and outdoor leisure areas. Designed to achieve net zero emissions by 2040, The Sustainable City – Yiti serves as a model for sustainable urban living and a key contributor to Oman’s environmental and economic transformation. This collaboration marks a milestone in Oman’s commitment to sustainable urban development, ensuring that The Sustainable City – Yiti continues to lead the way in shaping resilient, smart, and future-ready communities.

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HH Sayyid Theyazin affirms that government-citizens dialogue shapes decision-making



MUSCAT: HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, stressed keenness to enhance dialogue between the government and citizens in all decisions taken of concern to society.

HH Sayyid Theyazin said that the 3rd dialogue session on “Culture, Sports and Youth”—held as part of “Together We Progress” Forum—laid emphasis on outstanding achievements in the fields of culture, sports and youth.

HH Sayyid Theyazin pointed out that there is cooperation with the Ministry of Education to support talents at an early age. He reiterated the desire of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth to discover the potential of talents in cultural or sports fields.

Currently, emphasis is laid on the integrated sports city project, where the sports stadium football serves as a core component which, he added, would offer the Sultanate of Oman an opportunity to host regional and international tournaments.

HH Sayyid Theyazin added that the Military Discipline Programme saw the participation of nearly 700 students in 2024. He described the programme as “an enriching experience that builds and hones young people’s skills, preparing them to face the challenges of the future”.

For his part, Sayyid Said Sultan Al Busaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth for Culture, said that the Ministry focuses on maximizing gains from industries of the cultural sector. He added that many studies in this regard are being conducted in cooperation with different government departments.

Meanwhile, Basil Ahmed Al Rowas, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth for Sports and Youth, pointed out that updates to the Omani sports strategy, approved in mid-2024 after in-depth study of the reality of Omani sports, dealt with four main components: society, sports, governance of sports bodies and sports economy.

The designs for the sports city project have been finalized and action is now focused on the stage of the city’s main components, said Al Rowas, noting that all the details will be announced shortly.

Al Rowas pointed out that the Ministry of Labour issued a decision in December 2024 to disengage from official duty the civil service sector players throughout the sports season. He added that steps are underway to study similar measures for players from other sectors.

He pointed out that the Ministry is implementing many programmes that contribute to sponsoring promising athletes, including the preparation centres to groom talents in a number of sports in cooperation with clubs and sports federations.

The dialogue session on the fu-



ture of professions and jobs in the Sultanate of Oman also reviewed the visions and aspirations for the labour market.

The dialogue session saw the participation of Dr. Mahad Said Ba’owin, Minister of Labour, Sayyid Salim Musallam Al Busaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labour for Human Resources Development, Khalid Salim Al Ghamhari, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labour for Labour, and Dr. Ali Amir Al Shidhani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Communications and Information Technology.

The Minister of Labour said that the labour market requires various additional skills. The Ministry, he added, is working on bridging the gap through training before employment and on-job training. The Ministry, he noted, allocated 9,000 training opportunities followed with employment during 2024. It also increased the number to 14,000 opportunities in 2025.

Employment in the public sector, the minister explained, will be on an actual-need basis, especially in the health and education fields which offer around 6,000 job opportunities annually, as well as the military sector with a similar number. He pointed out that economic movements in the Sultanate of Oman resulted in new investments, which will require time to see their yield in terms of employment.

For his part, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labour for Human Resources Development explained that the outputs of vocational education receive acceptance for employment in some public and private sectors. There are more than 8,000 students in 8 colleges, indicating that there is a trend to evaluate the training system in the Sultanate of Oman at the government, private and vocational training levels.

He pointed out that more than 66 companies and 43,000 job seekers participate in the “Tawteen” platform. The platform pertains with matching the vacant positions with the job seekers’ qualifications. When there is a match,

the job seeker is contacted. He explained that the ministry is working on preparing graduates before entering the labour market by establishing digital incubators and incubators in ministries and major companies.

On his turn, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labour for Labour said that there are initiatives for contracts in the field of refrigeration and air conditioning whereas skilled people who graduated from vocational colleges can compete for. He noted that a team has been established to promote the graduates of training colleges and their specializations in the labour market.

Furthermore, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology said that training, qualification and drafting the right policies are among the most prominent steps being worked on for the labour market in light of the technological leaps and the witnessed development and loss of some types of jobs.

The Undersecretary added that the government responds to future professions through various programmes, including the “Makin” initiative, which seeks to provide income-generating opportunities for Omani youth in the digital sector. The Ministry of Labour, he affirmed, has trained 100 people in the field of semiconductors as an example.

The second discussion panel touched on the retirement scheme that is addressed by the social protection system in the Sultanate of Oman. The scheme aims to enhance protection for all working groups after the end of their work period in the public and private sectors. This session was participated by Eng. Salem Nasser Al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Social Protection Fund and Dr. Faisal Abdullah Al Farsi, CEO of the Social Protection Fund.

The Minister of Energy and Minerals pointed out that the total number of beneficiaries from the Fund’s scheme reached more than 1.472 million people till Feb-

ruary 2025. The fund covers different segments, namely seniors, children, people with disability, widows, orphans and low-income families.

The Minister said that work is underway to enhance the social protection system, and that community comments and suggestions are being monitored to improve the system.

For his part, the CEO of the Social Protection Fund said that the Social Protection Law focuses directly on the family through some of the benefits that are provided. He indicated that the number of active Omani insured persons with the Social Protection Fund reached around 590,000 people in all social insurance programmes.

The forum concluded its work with the fourth discussion panel on economic diversification sectors. This session reviewed the qualitative projects that are being focused on by companies affiliated with Oman Investment Authority (OIA) to enhance economic sustainability and explore the prospects for development and innovation in various sectors. The session was attended by Eng. Abdulrahman Salem Al Hatmi, CEO of Asyad Group, Dr. Hashel Obaid Al Mahrouqi, CEO of Omran Group, Ashraf Hamad Al Maamari, CEO of OQ Group, Eng. Matar Salem Al Badi, CEO of Minerals Development Oman, Eng. Said Abdullah Al Mandhari, CEO of ITHCA Group, Talal Said Al Maamari, CEO of Omantel, Haitham Salem Al Salmi, CEO of Muscat Stock Exchange and Abdullah Mohammed Al Rashdi, CEO of Oman Food Investment Holding Company.

During the panel, the CEOs discussed the projects implemented by their companies in various sectors and their contribution to employment and Omanisation efforts, empowering national competencies, and focusing on digital transformation in their businesses and activities.

The CEOs stressed the importance of enhancing In-country Value (ICV) through the programmes and initiatives undertaken by these companies to empower small and medium enterprises. This, they af-



firmed, will contribute to enhancing the competitiveness of the national economy.

During the event, HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth felicitated the winners of the “Idea Makers” initiative in its second edition within the “Together We Progress” forum. The initiative covers three areas, which are governorates development, challenges facing government companies, and academic research specialized in localizing modern technologies.

In the segment of governorates development, the Gelatos Team won first place for its innovation of manufacturing of halal gelatin from fish waste. The Previe Team, which innovated a natural preservative extracted from marine waste, won second place. The third position was bagged by the Innovation Team for its innovation of a drone developed with artificial intelligence to treat potholes on asphalt roads.

In the segment of ‘challenges facing government companies’ the Info8 Team won first place. The team developed a digital platform supported by artificial intelligence that helps companies detect and predict leaks in water pipelines. The Ardak Team came in second place for its project to use local biogenetic resources to extract minerals and value-added products. The third place was won by the Wadi Romb / Cold Asphalt Team for its idea to convert demolition and construction waste into cold asphalt used in road maintenance.

In the segment of academic research specialized in localizing modern technologies, the research project “Plastic with Added Value” won first place. The second position was won by the project for treating filtrate, which is concerned with bio coagulation using natural tannins extracted from date seeds. The project of studying the selection of the most efficient reverse osmosis membranes won third place.

Dr. Abdullah Nasser Al Harrasi, Minister of Information, said that the “Together We Progress” forum constitutes an important platform for dialogue between members of society and government departments.

The minister pointed out that this edition of the forum achieved great success. He explained that the forum saw in-depth dialogue

through which members of society presented many visions and ideas about various aspects of government action in various areas, such as the economy, investment, economic diversification and the development of governorates.

Dr. Abdullah told Oman News Agency (ONA) that these visions are accorded attention by the government, which studies the visions in depth.

The first day included a presentation about the proposals made by members of society during the 2nd edition of the forum, said the minister, noting that the current edition of the forum also outlined the achievements made and the tasks implemented through the endorsement of government decisions, policies and programmes.

The Minister of Information explained that the ideas and visions of community members, notably the youth, are considered by the government as an important basis for developing government work. He added that such opinions reflect conscious social participation in national development.

Over two days, the forum included two sessions covering the topics of economy and development. The discussions highlighted features of the upcoming five-year development plan, as well as efforts of economic diversification and investment and its role in developing the national economy. Together We Progress also included five discussion panels which covered the topics of governorates development and their role in boosting the national economy, the future of professions and jobs, the retirement scheme, culture, sports and youth, and the future of economic diversification sectors.

During the first day of the forum, three national electronic platforms were launched in a bid to enhance the quality of the offered government services, as well as easing access to these services.

Together We Progress constituted a platform that enhances interaction and communication between the government and the society. It also sheds light on policies, development programmes and government initiatives.

The forum constitutes a chance for citizens to express their opinions and suggestions and to voice their interests and the challenges they face to officials in a participatory environment. -ONA

The Golden Teens of Oman

The trio of Adam Al Barwani, Mahir Sampat and Pransh Jagwani claimed Oman's first ever gold in U18 event at the GCC Golf Championship in Jeddah recently with Adam also clinching the individual silver

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's U18 boys' team made history by clinching their first-ever gold medal at the GCC Golf Championship, a landmark achievement that underscores the nation's rapid progress in the sport.

After three consecutive years of finishing second, Oman's young golfers delivered a stellar performance at the Royal Greens Golf and Country Club in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, securing their place at the top of Gulf junior golf.

The trio of Adam Al Barwani (234), Mahir Sampat (253), and Pransh Jagwani (254) combined for a total score of 484, edging out Kuwait on countback after both teams finished level. The UAE secured third place with 493, followed by Bahrain (495), Qatar (516), and Saudi Arabia (523).

Adding to Oman's success, Adam capped off the team's dominant showing by winning the individual silver medal (234), finishing second in the U18 category behind Kuwait's Salem Al Abkal (223). The UAE's Mohammed Thabet (238) claimed bronze.

The victory represents a significant moment for Oman's young golfers, who have been steadily improving under the Oman Golf Association's (OGA) structured training and development programmes.

Dedication of the teenagers, competitive exposure, and investment in youth golf are now paying off, with this title marking a new era for the sport in the country.

Reflecting on the team's triumph, Mahir, a key player in Oman's gold-winning squad, expressed his pride.

He said: "I am delighted to win the gold medal at the GCC Championships for my country. I'm very glad that the commitment



Adding further significance to the triumph, it was announced during the closing ceremony that Oman will host the next edition of the GCC Golf Championship.

The tournament flag was officially handed over to the Omani delegation, and was received by Salim Al Busaidi, Counsellor, Oman Embassy in Jeddah, marking the beginning of preparations for Oman's turn to welcome the region's best golfers.

Oman's men's team struggles

While the U18 team celebrated a historic victory, Oman's men's team, comprising Azzan Al Rumhi, Badar Al Amri, Ahmed Al Wahabi, and Amjad Al Toky, endured a challenging outing, failing to reach the podium in both individual and team categories.

The UAE's Ahmed Skaik secured the men's individual gold, followed by Qatar's Daniel Sokolov in second place and the UAE's Jonathan Silveraj in third.

In the men's team category, the UAE dominated once again, taking gold ahead of Qatar and Bahrain.

Final men's team standings: Gold: UAE (210, 210, 212, 212 – total: 844), Silver: Qatar (215, 221, 219, 227 – total: 882), Bronze: Bahrain (226, 219, 221, 221 – total: 887), 4. Saudi Arabia: 908, 5. Oman : 965, 6. Kuwait: 1003.



Title a result of hard work and dedication of our young golfers: OGA Vice Chairman Faiz

MUSCAT: Oman's U18 golf team recently brought home the gold medal from the GCC championship, marking a significant milestone for the country's rising golfing talent.

Faiz Mohammad Riaz, Vice Chairman of the Oman Golf Association (OGA), praised the team's achievement, highlighting their commitment, discipline, and teamwork as the key factors behind their success.

"The title victory is not just about a medal; it reflects the hard work, discipline, and commitment of our young golfers," Faiz said.

"It's a reminder that with perseverance, we can compete at the highest levels in the region. Our young champions have shown that with passion and effort, great things are possible."

Faiz also took the time to acknowledge Adam, who earned a silver medal in the individual category. He commended Adam's focus and determination, emphasising that his success is a lesson for all young golfers.

"Adam's achievement is a result of his unwavering commitment and effort," added Faiz. "He has set a high standard for others to follow, proving that success comes through consistent hard work and dedication."

Looking ahead, Faiz encour-



aged Oman's young golfers to continue striving for excellence, urging them to embrace challenges and pursue greater success. "This win should be just the beginning. Champions are not made in comfort, but through challenges. Keep pushing your limits, continue to train with passion, and believe in yourselves," Faiz added.

"The future of Omani golf is bright, and we are proud to support the next generation of talent."

To celebrate the team's success, OGA will present the winners with a token of appreciation at a ceremony soon.

Faiz concluded by reaffirming the OGA's commitment to nurturing and developing young golfers in the country.



Spring Festival Maslenitsa in Oman

Organised by the Russian House in Oman, with the support of Oman’s Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, the Russian Ministry of Culture, the Government of St. Petersburg, and the Russian Embassy, the festival presented a vibrant display of music, dance, traditions, and culinary experiences

MUSCAT: The much-anticipated Spring Festival “Maslenitsa” took place in Muscat, celebrating the rich cultural heritage of Russia while strengthening cultural and business ties between Russia and Oman.

Organised by the Russian House in Oman, with the support of Oman’s Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, the Russian Ministry of Culture, the Government of St. Petersburg, and the Russian Embassy, the festival presented a vibrant display of music, dance, traditions, and culinary experiences.

A distinguished Russian delegation participated in the grand opening ceremony, including key representatives from federal and regional executive authorities of the Russian Federation. Among the honoured guests were Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation Andrey Malyshev,



Deputy Chair of the Committee on External Relations of St. Petersburg Nizami Mamyshev, Minister of Culture of the Tula Region Tatyana Rybkina, and other dignitaries.

Celebration of cultural exchange

“This year’s festival was particularly special as it coincided with the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Russia and Oman. The largest event ever for the Russian Community. We hope this event served as a platform for fostering deeper cultural understanding and stronger bonds between our two nations. This event is for all residence of Oman along with all nationalities residing in the Sultanate and not limited to the Russian speaking community,” added Igor Egorov, Chairman of the Russian Community in Oman.

“Spring Festival Maslenitsa is not just a festival; it is an immersive



cultural experience that allows people to connect with Russian traditions, history, and heritage. We were honoured to bring this celebration to Oman for the third consecutive year and were delighted to welcome thousands of visitors,” said Anna Popova, Head of the Russian House in Oman.

Exciting performances and activities

The festival featured performances by renowned Russian ensem-



bles such as the St. Petersburg Song and Dance Theatre “Moroshka” and the State Academic Honored Dance Ensemble of the Republic of Dagestan “Lezginka.” Additionally, as part of the “Russian Seasons” cultural project, theatrical performances and traditional folk music concerts were showcased.

Attendees enjoyed a wide range of interactive activities, including:

- Participating in cooking workshops featuring Russian pancakes and Eastern sweets
 - Playing traditional Russian folk musical instruments
 - Experiencing Russian folk crafts, including painting Matryoshka dolls and Filimonovo toys
- A grand fair was also held, featuring authentic handmade products and souvenirs from both Russia and Oman.



opportunities. The festival was made possible by the generous support of its sponsors, including Oman Oasis Water, the official hydration partner. Oman Oasis Water, a leading brand in the Sultanate, is known for its commitment to providing pure and high-quality drinking water to Omani residents, ensuring hydration and well-being in every drop.

Special features and partnerships

A highlight of the festival was a collaboration with the legendary Russian animation studio “Soyuzmultfilm,” bringing to life beloved childhood characters in giant puppet form to delight audiences of all ages.

Additionally, an exclusive VIP Majlis was available for sponsors and distinguished guests to network and explore business

30,000 visitors attended

With an attendance of over 30,000 visitors, the Spring Festival Maslenitsa delivered an unforgettable experience filled with joy, tradition, and cultural exchange. The public participated in the festivities at Marsa Plaza in Al-Mouj on February 21st and 22nd.

The celebrations concluded on February 23 with a special joint concert at Bait Al Zubair in collaboration with the Russian House.

SHARIA-COMPLIANT

Al Riadah Priority from Dhofar Islamic: Innovative services and exclusive offers

MUSCAT: Dhofar Islamic, the Islamic banking window of Bank Dhofar, offers distinguished Sharia-compliant banking solutions, delivering personalised services and exclusive benefits to enhance the customer experience.

The Al Riadah account provides customers with priority service for their daily banking transactions through a dedicated team of experienced relationship managers across the bank’s 25 branches in Oman.

A wide range of innovative products, services, and exclusive offers has been introduced to simplify banking. The Visa Signature debit card provides exceptional travel, dining, and shopping benefits, including complimentary



access to over 1,000 international airport lounges, free multi-trip travel insurance, and a 24/7 concierge service for booking flights, restaurants, and more. The World MasterCard credit card features

an attractive rewards program, enabling customers to earn points on every transaction and redeem them for cash.

Al Riadah customers enjoy a variety of flexible financing solutions at competitive rates. Options include personal, vehicle, and educational financing with repayment periods of up to 10 years. Housing financing is available for up to 25 years, while travel financing, including coverage for Hajj and Umrah expenses, comes with flexible repayment terms of up to 3 years.

Opening deposit accounts is quick and straightforward, with competitive profit rates calculated daily and paid monthly.

In February, Dhofar Islamic celebrated its 10th anniversary with

a rebrand from its previous name, Maisarah. The new logo, depicting a galaxy of stars, symbolizes the bank’s growth into a dynamic, service-focused institution, with each star representing core values like Sharia compliance, innovation, and customer satisfaction.

Dhofar Islamic has established a strong market presence in Oman’s expanding Islamic banking sector. As of 2024, the bank’s total income rose to OMR 23.29 million, while total assets grew by 10.24% to reach OMR 899.76 million. The continued growth in assets, along with an expanding financing portfolio and increasing customer deposits, reflects the bank’s commitment to delivering modern, tailored financial solutions.

PARTICIPATION

OAB showcases its innovative programmes to support national talent at SQU Career Fair

MUSCAT: Oman Arab Bank (OAB) concluded its participation in the Sultan Qaboos University Career Fair, held from February 17 to 19.

OAB’s booth attracted a large number of young visitors who expressed keen interest in exploring its pioneering initiatives, career opportunities, and innovative programs, particularly the “Ruwad Al Arabi” program, which targets university and college graduates.

OAB’s participation in the exhibition aligns with its commitment to supporting national talent and contributing to Oman’s employment objectives for youth, in line with the country’s future vision.

Essam Al Busaidi, Chief Human Resources & Administration Officer at OAB, stated: “We were delighted to participate in the Sultan Qaboos University Career Fair, a platform that connects OAB with ambitious young graduates seeking promising career opportunities and actively contributing to sustainable development in Oman.



This participation highlights the bank’s role as a leading national institution in developing Omani talent and paving the way for a fu-

ture filled with success for young individuals aspiring to enter the job market.”

He added: “The high level of en-

gagement from visitors with our initiatives reaffirms our success in delivering carefully designed programs that empower professionals in the banking sector.

“We provide training opportunities that enable graduates and young individuals to expand their knowledge, develop essential personal and professional skills, and enhance their competitiveness in the job market. OAB remains committed to paving the way and offering comprehensive support to help them achieve their future aspirations.”

OAB has established itself as a leading institution in driving the banking sector toward a more active role in providing employment and training opportunities through various programs and initiatives. One of the most notable is the “Ruwad Al Arabi” program, designed to provide graduates with top-tier training experience, preparing them to enter the job market at the highest standards.

LUXURY IN MOTION



Audi takes centre-stage at Muscat International Airport’s new Podium Showcase Stand

MUSCAT: Audi has become the first brand to activate the newly introduced Podium Showcase Stand at Muscat International Airport, in partnership with JCDecaux Oman.

This high-visibility platform allows Audi to connect with travellers at one of Oman’s busiest transport hubs. Positioned at the departures and arrivals entrance doors, this dedicated space ensures extended exposure to both international and domestic travellers, as well as visitors accompanying them. Leveraging the strategic location, Audi is displaying one of its flagship models, ensuring uninterrupted engagement with premium travelers, business professionals, and high-value consumers in a setting where brand interaction is naturally heightened.

“Collaborating with JCDecaux Oman at Muscat International Airport has been a key part of Audi Oman’s branding strategy. The high visibility and strategic location of the Podium Showcase Stand provide the ideal setting to present our premium models to a sophisticated audience. As a gateway to Oman, the airport offers a unique opportunity to engage with high-net-worth individuals, and international travelers, reinforcing Audi’s commitment to innovation and luxury. This activation enhances our brand presence

in a high-impact environment, supporting our long-term marketing strategy in the region,” stated Christian Nehme, General Manager, Premium Motors Oman.

Bechir Chehab, Managing Director of JCDecaux Oman, added: “The launch of the Podium Showcase Stand at Muscat International Airport represents a significant step in elevating brand presence within a premium travel environment. This type of engagement, particularly in high dwell time areas like airports, can be an effective strategy for capturing the attention of the right audience. The collaboration with Premium Motors Oman and JCDecaux Oman played a significant role in this project, suggesting a well-coordinated effort to understand and meet Audi’s marketing goals. By utilizing the expertise of JCDecaux Oman to interpret client briefs accurately, Audi was able to secure a podium that aligns with their brand image and marketing objectives. Such partnerships can often lead to innovative solutions, leveraging the unique environment of an airport to maximize brand exposure and customer interaction. We extend our appreciation to Oman Airports for their support in facilitating this initiative and look forward to welcoming more brands to this exclusive space.”

ROUND-UP

MHD unveils Hongqi’s latest luxury SUVs in spectacular launch event

The grand event brought together distinguished guests, automotive enthusiasts, media and industry leaders who experienced firsthand Hongqi’s latest masterpieces—each representing a fusion of performance, technology, and timeless elegance

MUSCAT: MHD ACERE, the official distributor of Hongqi in Oman, hosted an exclusive evening of luxury, innovation, and automotive excellence at Crowne Plaza, Qurum, Muscat, unveiling the all-new Hongqi H6 & HS7, alongside the reimagined H9 & HS5.

The grand event, held on February 26, brought together distinguished guests, automotive enthusiasts, media and industry leaders who experienced firsthand Hongqi’s latest masterpieces—each representing a fusion of performance, technology, and timeless elegance.

Night of innovation and prestige

The evening commenced with an exhilarating reveal of the new



Hongqi lineup, showcasing state-of-the-art features, sophisticated designs, and advanced safety technologies. Guests were captivated

by the stunning power and refined luxury of each model, reinforcing Hongqi’s reputation as a pioneer in the premium SUV segment.

Star attractions

Hongqi H6 – A 2.0T luxury SUV with dynamic aesthetics, smart driving features, ambient interior lighting,

and advanced safety, setting new standards in comfort and technology. Hongqi HS7 – Offered in three spacious variants (6-seater &

7-seater 4WD models), boasting wireless fast charging, a premium Dynaudio sound system, an intelligent 4WD system, and smart technology for seamless convenience.

Hongqi H9 – The reimagined flagship SUV featuring a waterfall-inspired front grille, AI-integrated intelligent chassis, Dream Wings lighting, and a high-strength steel structure for a luxurious and secure drive.

Hongqi HS5 – A refined SUV that blends bold design, superior aerodynamics, 20-inch aluminum wheels, and integrated LED lighting, offering an elevated driving experience.

Speaking at the event, Mohsin Hani Al Bahrani, CEO of MHD ACERE, expressed his enthusiasm: “We are thrilled to witness the overwhelming response to the latest Hongqi lineup in Oman. These models reflect the brand’s commitment to excellence, blending luxury, performance, and innovation seamlessly. The new Hongqi H6, HS7, and the reimagined H9 and HS5 set new benchmarks in the premium SUV category, and we are excited to bring these exceptional vehicles to our valued customers.”

Unforgettable experience

Attendees had the exclusive opportunity to explore each model up close, experience cutting-edge features, and engage in insightful discussions with Hongqi’s automotive experts. The event was a true celebration of luxury and craftsmanship, further solidifying Hongqi’s growing presence in Oman’s premium automotive segment. As Hongqi continues its journey of redefining automotive excellence, MHD remains committed to delivering world-class experiences and innovative vehicles that cater to the evolving demands of luxury car enthusiasts.

The all-new Hongqi H6 & HS7, along with the reimagined H9 & HS5, are now available for bookings at Hongqi showrooms in Aziaba.

PROMOTION



Benefits on Ford

MUSCAT: Own any Ford vehicle from the latest range and get exclusive benefits. The benefits include 5 years/100,000 km of free service, a 5-year/100,000 km manufacturer’s warranty, 5 years/100,000 km of roadside assistance, Free Insurance, and 1-year free registration. Customers can also get a chance to win 1 out of 8 iPhone 16 Pro Max in the raffle draw (Conditions apply. Please visit the Ford showroom for details.). The offer ends on 17 April.

Commenting on the campaign, a Ford Oman representative said, “Our range of vehicles offers exceptional value, with key advantages such as spaciousness, comfort, power and safety, making them perfect for large families. With this campaign, we are making Ford ownership even more attractive, offering hassle-free, peace-of-mind experiences for our customers.”

Ford Oman’s impressive product line-up includes the Territory, Taurus, Expedition and Everest 4x4, each delivering distinct advantages for different lifestyles.

The Ford Territory, a value-driven 5-seater SUV, combines a striking design with modern technology and spacious interiors, making it an ideal choice for young professionals and busy families. Its 1.8L EcoBoost engine delivers 320 Nm of torque and 190 horsepower, ensuring confident performance with efficient fuel use, while its seven-speed automatic transmission ensures smooth and responsive driving.

For those seeking seamless connectivity and top-notch performance, the Ford Taurus impresses with a sleek, modern design and a powerful 2.0-litre EcoBoost engine. Producing 232 horsepower and 388 Nm of torque, the Taurus is paired with an eight-speed automatic transmission, offering front-wheel drive and multiple driving modes (Normal, Sport, Eco). Its fuel efficiency, rated at 15.3 km/l, further enhances its appeal as a flagship sedan.

In Oman, Ford vehicles are brought to you by Arabian Car Marketing Co.

RE-ACCREDITATION

Six hospitals of Badr Al Samaa Group receive ACHSI accreditation

MUSCAT: Badr Al Samaa Hospitals in Barka, Sohar, Salalah, and Nizwa have successfully achieved re-accreditation from the prestigious Australian Council on Healthcare Standards International (ACHSI).

Meanwhile, Badr Al Samaa Hospitals in Ruwi and Al Khoud received ACHSI accreditation for the first time, alongside their Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation, which they have maintained since 2016. Notably, all hospitals met 100% of the criteria outlined in the accreditation process, reflecting their unwavering commitment to excellence in healthcare.

ACHSI accreditation is an external assessment of the quality of care and services provided aimed at elevating and regulating the policies and protocols of healthcare services operations which eventually ensure better patient care, patient safety and satisfaction. This internationally recognized evaluation process helps assess and enhance the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of healthcare organizations. It also serves as a public acknowledgment that a healthcare organization has achieved the required quality standards.

Managing directors of Badr Al Samaa group, Abdul Latheef and Dr. P A Mohammed said, “We are thrilled to announce that six of our hospitals have received prestigious ACHSI accreditation for



their exceptional performance. We are committed to establishing and maintaining high standards in quality of care and patient safety, ensuring the highest level of care for our patients. Our doctors, paramedics, and allied health staff diligently follow established policies and protocols to ensure that every healthcare service meets these standards.”

The executive directors of Badr Al Samaa Group of Hospitals, Moiden Bilal and Firasath Hassan were proud to express that six hospitals of the group are benchmarked with international accredited standards. They said, “This accreditation has further elevated our healthcare standards and commitment to unmatched patient care, while our pricing remains the same and affordable. We have el-

evated our service quality to meet global standards, as demonstrated by the numerous recognitions and accreditations received from various organizations and healthcare accreditation bodies, with ACHSI being one of them.”

The ACHSI assessment was based on EQuIP 7 module, a set of standards established by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards International (ACHSI), provides a comprehensive framework for healthcare organizations to improve the quality and safety of care. These standards focus on a wide range of aspects, including patient-centered care, clinical governance, workforce development, and continuous quality improvement.

Jacob Oommen, Chief Operating Officer and Head of the Quality Accreditation Process at Badr Al

Samaa Group of Hospitals, elaborated on the EQuIP 7 module, stating, “EQuIP 7 empowers healthcare organizations to adopt best practices, uphold accountability, and implement evidence-based approaches to achieve optimal patient outcomes. By adhering to these standards, we reaffirm our commitment to delivering safe, effective, and compassionate care, fostering a culture of excellence in healthcare.”

He also commended the unwavering dedication and hard work of teams across all six hospitals, who consistently maintain the highest standards of quality throughout the year. In particular, he acknowledged the invaluable support of Dr. Asif Abdul Hameed, Group Quality Manager and Sr. Lincy Kurian, Senior Nursing Director.

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