

HM THE SULTAN GREETES PRESIDENT OF KYRGYZSTAN

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Sadyr Japarov of the Kyrgyz Republic on the occasion of his country's Independence Day anniversary. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan wished President Japarov good health and happiness and the people of Kyrgyzstan further progress and prosperity. - **ONA**



6 085010 120010

HM THE SULTAN GREETES PRESIDENT OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Paula-Mae Weekes of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on her country's Independence Day anniversary. In the cable, His Majesty expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes to President Paula-Mae and the people of her country. - **ONA**



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CABLE

His Majesty the Sultan greetes King of Malaysia

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, King of Malaysia on the occasion of his country's National Day anniversary. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan wished the Malaysian monarch good health and happiness and the people of Malaysia further progress and growth. - **ONA**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Pact for government records signed

1 The National Records and Archives Authority (NRAA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for operating and managing the electronic documents and records of 'Wusool System' at the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA). **>A2**

WORLD

Flood-hit Pakistan to get \$1.17bn from IMF

2 The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has agreed to release \$1.17 billion (€1.17 billion) in funds to the government of Pakistan as the country deals with a spiralling death toll and widespread destruction from floods that the government has deemed a "climate catastrophe." **>A6**

MARKET

Deal signed for liquid fertiliser unit in Sohar

3 Sohar Freezone has signed a land lease agreement with Integrated Solutions Plant and Land Services (FZC) for 15,000 sqm within the freezone to establish a liquid fertiliser plant. The project represents an investment of OMR 2.2 million. **>B1**

Ministry of Finance
has already
approved the sum
in coordination
with the Ministry of
Education and the
Ministry of Social
Development

MUSCAT: In implementation of the Royal orders of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, a total sum of OMR4,073,070 has been endorsed to provide school supplies and daily nutrition, during the first semester, for government school students from Social Insurance and low-income families.



The Minister of Social Development said in a statement that the Ministry of Finance approved the sum in coordination with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Development to enable the students to get the provisions right from the start of

this school year (2022-2023).

One-time disbursal

The Ministry of Social Development explained that a one-time OMR25 will be disbursed for each eligible student to cover school supplies in the beginning of the

school year starting in September 2022. Meanwhile, OMR11-worth vouchers will be given to each student (from the above-mentioned segments) to purchase daily meals. Each coupon will carry a value of 500 baisas to cover a total of 22 school days each month, ac-

cording to the statement.

The Ministry of Social Development pointed out that it will transfer the approved for students to the bank accounts of the Social Insurance Families, while the Ministry of Education will do the same for low-income families. **>A5**

59,030

The number of beneficiaries (students from the designated social segments) in all governorates of Oman stands at 59,030 (24,665 students from Social Insurance Families and 34,365 from low-income families).

AS PER ROYAL ORDERS

Programme initiated to provide daily meals to eligible students

MUSCAT: In implementation of the orders of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to provide schools provisions for students who belong to social insurance families and low-income families, a joint committee from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Development initiated a programme to provide daily meals for eligible students.

The joint committee is acting in coordination with the representatives of government firms and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources.

This was unveiled during a meeting with Dr. Madiha Ahmed Al Shaibani, Minister of Education, and Dr. Saud Hamad Al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, in the presence of chief executive officers of some Omani government firms.



ACTION PLAN: The joint committee is acting in coordination with the representatives of government firms and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources. - **ONA**

The meeting looked into proposed mechanisms to put the Royal orders to action, bearing in mind standard health and safety procedures.

The meeting named the suppliers and regulated their relationship with small and medium enterprises leasing the shops.

- **ONA**

NCSI DATA

Each day, Sultanate witnesses filing of 10 divorce cases

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The number of divorce cases went up to 3,837 in 2021 as compared to 3,426 in 2020, with the Muscat governorate registering 853 such cases, the highest among the governorates in the Sultanate of Oman, according to the report published by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) for August 2022.

As for the increase that roughly translates into 10 divorce cases each day in the Sultanate in 2021, different demographers and social experts have proffered different theories for such a disturbing trend. Adnan Al Hesni from the wilayat of Seeb in Muscat governorate attributes the tendency to the rise in feminism in the Sultanate and blind aping of the ways of the West.

Moath Al-Saidi from wilayat of Al-Khaboura in North Al Batinah governorate said one of the

reasons for divorce is the growing requirements of the traditional Omani family in the face of rising costs, especially during the wave of COVID-19.

The pandemic, he said, has wreaked havoc on the Omani society and many small and medium businesses suffered huge financial losses and are lying shut.

Besides, "the differences in intellect between the spouses, the disparity in social status or age between them, high dowries or the huge costs of wedding parties, reservation of marriage halls, the attendant costs of food and travel for the honeymoon and the demand for a separate house and a car, are among the reasons for divorce when the husband feels that his wife has burdened him with unbearable debts and financial consequences. Then there were the rising costs of raising children to contend with," he said.



Mohammed Shanfari from the Wilayat of Salalah in the governorate of Dhofar said that social media is also one of the causes of divorce as addiction to it of either

of the spouses means ignoring or neglecting their domestic duties. Besides, a whole world of glamour and glitz opens before them wherein they come across all the

luxuries of life in terms of clothing, homes, fashion or other such pastimes of the rich and find themselves at a disadvantage.

This in conjunction with a gap in communication or understanding creates a psychological, sexual and social distance between the husband and wife contributing to the increasing cases of divorce, he further added.

Rashid Al-Sudairi from the wilayat of Yanqul in Al Dhahirah governorate, said: "Greed for the wife's salary is also one of the reasons for divorce. In today's society many grooms plan beforehand to get for themselves an earning wife so that life continues smoothly and without any financial strain."

"There have been cases where the wife's earning has been used on the expenses of the family or to obtain loans from banks. This develops into marital problems later on," he further said.

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PRAYER TIMINGS



Dhuhr.....	12:12pm
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Maghrib.....	6:31pm
Isha.....	7:44pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:31am

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Pact inked to operate, manage govt’s records electronically

MUSCAT: The National Records and Archives Authority (NRAA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for operating and managing the electronic documents and records of ‘Wusool System’ at the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA).

The TRA will be the first government department to run the electronic system (Wusool) after the NRAA, as part of the first phase of the system, to be installed in 20 government departments in partnerships and cooperation with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology.

The MoU was signed by Dr. Hamad Mohammed Al Dhoyani, Chairman of NRAA, and Eng. Omar Hamdan Al Ismaili, CEO of TRA.

Wusool constitutes a cornerstone initiative of digital transformation in the government sector. Besides enabling government departments to electronically manage their informational records—applying the latest global practices in the field, the new system will furnish a streamlined, secure environment for the data.

Dr. Hamad Al Dhoyani said that the next few months will see the propagation of the system in all target departments, once all operational requirements are finalised.

The operating MoU itself has been signed electronically via ‘Wusool’ system, using electronic authentication certificates issued by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology. — **ONA**



PAKISTAN AMBASSADOR CALLS ON GOVERNOR OF DHOFAR

The Ambassador of Pakistan to Oman, Imran Ali Choudry called on Syed Marwan bin Turki Al Saeed, Governor of Dhofar, and discussed bilateral relations and mutual interest. The Ambassador discussed the problems faced by the Pakistani community residing in Dhofar. On behalf of the Government of Oman, the Governor expressed his deep condolences for the devastating floods in Pakistan. The meeting was attended by the Community welfare Attaché Antique Rahman and the Chairman Board of Directors Pakistan Schools Oman Ameer Hamza. — **Supplied pictures**





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TWO-DAY CONFERENCE



Forum reviews ways to attract local and foreign investments

SALALAH: GCC states’ economic diversification conference kicked off on Tuesday under the auspices of Qais Mohammed Al Yusef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

The two-day conference is being organised by in cooperation with Smart Investment Gateway and the GCC regional programme at Konrad Adenauer firm.

The conference explores future visions for economic diversification in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and reviews efforts to attract local and foreign investments.

The conference will study the different experiences of member states, as well as proposals to upgrade economic diversification ventures. — **ONA**

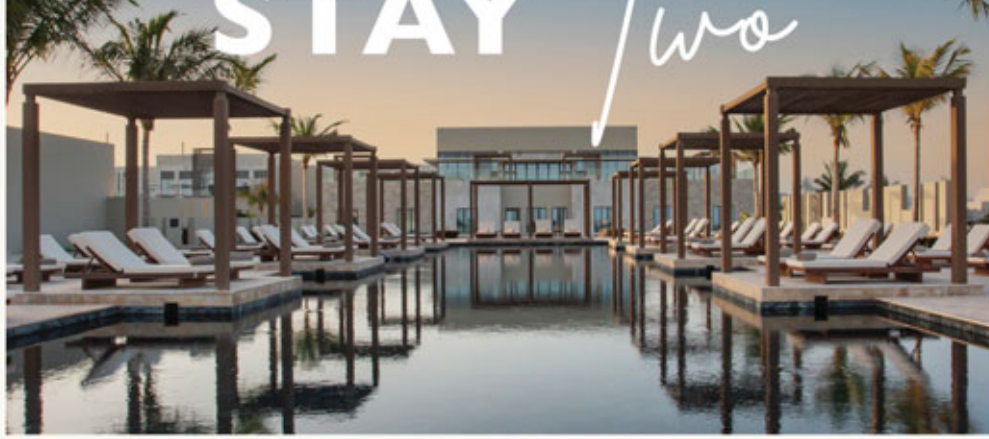




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APPEAL

HUMANITARIAN DISASTER: At least 1,136 people have been killed so far and roads, crops, homes and bridges washed away across Pakistan. -ONA

Grand Mufti seeks aid for flood-hit Pakistan, Sudan

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Grand Mufti of the Sultanate of Oman has urged people to offer assistance to Pakistan and Sudan to mitigate the effects of the floods in both the nations. His Eminence Sheikh Ahmed bin Hamad Al Khalili, Grand Mufti of Oman, said in a tweet through his personal account: "We have been afflicted by what has befallen our brothers in some Islamic countries, such as Pakistan and Sudan from the pandemics that have affected cities and villages and a lot of money and lives. "We call on everyone to hasten to extend a helping hand to them. However, they have our kind sympathy for what has befallen them, and we sincerely pray to God to

The UN Chief, Antonio Guterres, has also urged the world to come to Pakistan's aid and has appealed to them to help the tens of millions affected by the disaster.

bring them security, peace and tranquility." The UN Chief, Antonio Guterres, has also urged the world to come to Pakistan's aid and has appealed to them to help the tens of millions affected by the disaster. At least 1,136 people have died so far and roads, crops, homes and bridges washed away across the country. Yesterday, the country's Cli-

mate Change Minister Sherry Rehman described the situation as a "climate-induced humanitarian disaster of epic proportions." This year's flood is comparable to the that of 2010 - the severest in Pakistan's history - which left more than 2,000 people dead. Guterres said: "Let's stop sleepwalking towards the destruction of our planet by climate change."

Trending

ON SOCIAL MEDIA

38,287 REACH

man

WorldNews | Indian business conglomerate Adani Group's chairman Gautam Adani is now the world's third-richest person.



TIMESOFOMAN.COM
Indian businessman Gautam Adani now world's 3rd richest person,



Story on an Indian businessman becoming the world's 3rd richest person

A story on an Indian businessman becoming the world's 3rd richest person reached 38,287 people and had 3,193 link clicks on Facebook.

384 VIEWS

Success reported in reclamation trials of saline-sodic soils in Oman



Reclamation trials of saline-sodic soils

The Morning Minute video on reclamation trials of saline-sodic soils in Oman had 384 views and 21 likes on Instagram

860 REACH

MIDDAY UPDATE



The Midday Update video

The Midday Update video had 389 views and reached 860 people on Facebook.



Sultanate of Oman
Consumer Protection Authority

Honda Marine Engine Recall Campaign



Date of the campaign : 31 August 2022

Campaign type : Safety

Campaign section : Marine Engine

Product Description :

Engine Type

Model

Code

VIN No

From

To

Honda Marine Engine

BF175D

BBSJ

1010003

1011032

BF175D

BBSJ

8010001

8011002

BF200D

BBRJ

1000017

1013729

BF200D

BBRJ

8000012

8011053

BF225D

BBPJ

1000004

1013426

BF225D

BBPJ

8000002

8012093

BF250D

BBNJ

1000047

1018616

BF250D

BBNJ

8000015

8013300

BF200D

BBRJ

6000002

6011013

BF200D

BBRJ

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OMAN

IN 2022

Oman issues over 150 navigation licences to foreign ships

MUSCAT: More than 150 navigation licences have been issued to foreign ships within the first six months of 2022 to work in Omani territorial waters.

A total of 167 navigation licences to foreign ships to work in Omani territorial waters was issued during the first half of this year.

An increase of 36%

This is an increase of 36 per cent compared to the same period in 2021, the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology said on Tuesday.

Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology pointed that the licences issued to the ships included licences for tugs boat, oil tankers, yachts, tour vessels, unloading vessels and service ships.

Ship registration

The number of services offered by the ship registration and maritime safety division during the first half of this year amounted to 1,685 services including 209 registration certificates of new sea units and 859 renewal certificates.

Regarding the certificates and documents for seamen, the ministry has issued 395 certificates and documents and 224 certificates related to marine activities during the first half of 2022.

Compliance certificates

This is an increase of 96 percent compared to the same period in 2021 besides issuance and renewal of 12 security compliance certificates for the ports' facilities.

The number of ships inspected and details of it were saved to database of the 'Riyadh Memorandum of Understanding' and 'Indian Ocean Memorandum of Understanding'. Inspection and control on vessels reached 135 ships during the first half of the year with 24 ships as violating ships. — **ONA**



INTERNSHIP PROGRAMMES

Oman Air continues to train aviation and logistics professionals

Times News Service

MUSCAT: In line with Oman's Vision 2040 strategy, which aims to develop a diversified and sustainable economy, Oman Air, the national carrier of the Sultanate of Oman, continues to provide Omani nationals the opportunity to gain insights into the aviation and logistics world through specialised internship programmes at Oman Air headquarters.

In 2021, Oman Air provided internship opportunities to 250 students from various universities and colleges in Oman and abroad. Furthermore, more than 160 additional students are expected to finish their internship programme by the end of August 2022.

Oman Air, Senior Vice President – People, Hilal Al Siyabi, stated: "Oman Air is pleased to lend its support to the youth of Oman and guide them through our internship programmes. We remain committed to Oman's economic diversification and Omanisation objectives by training the next generation of Omanis in the aviation and logistic sectors. We want to encourage future aviation professionals to explore the full spectrum of positions available in the industry, whether for a flying or non-flying career."

Oman Air's Talent department, in coordination with various units of the airline, accommodates undergraduate trainees by equipping them with the skills necessary to apply for and succeed in jobs with in their chosen fields, such as human resources, flight operations, airport management, marketing, corporate communications and media, logistics and supply chain, engineering, digital and operations management, among many others.

"Interns are assigned designated coaches who are responsible for providing orientation and supervision and are accountable for mentoring and guiding the interns to maximise their potential." Al Siyabi added. "We would like to thank the employees who contribute their expertise to the next generation. We acknowledge their efforts and appreciate their participation in achieving the company's obligation to train future leaders."

Current graduate trainees and undergraduate students who need to fulfill their curriculum requirements for graduation purposes can submit a 'Training and Internship Request' available on the official Oman Air website under the 'Careers' section.



SHOWCASING TALENTS

Indian School Darsait hosts STAI 2022

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Under the aegis of the Board of Directors, Indian Schools in Oman, the inauguration of Science Technology and Innovation in Education (STAI) was conducted on 27th August 2022 at the Senior School auditorium, Indian School Darsait.

The event was aimed at showcasing the talents of young minds in the areas of Science, Technology and Innovation under the tag line 'Ingenious Creative mind'.

The Chief Guest Dr. Ali Saud Al Bimani, Vice-Chancellor, National University of Science & Technology inaugurated the STAI 2022 and expressed his views with his key profound thoughts on how 'out of the box' thinking results in creativity.

Mohammad Al Adavi, Director of the clubs and Sports Centre Department graced the occasion as Guest of Honour and Dr. Sivakumar Manickam, Chairman, BoD, Indian Schools in Oman presided over the function.

Among the other dignitaries present on this occasion were, Sayed Salman, Vice Chairman, Board of Directors, Ashwini Sawrikar, Finance Director, Sebastian Chughath, President, School Management Committee, Indian School Darsait, M P Vinoba, Sr. Principal and Education Advisor (BoD), Dr. Gokuladas VK, Asst. Education Advisor (Operations, BoD), STAI Chairperson - Ajit Vasudevan, Convener and Head Academic and Staff Welfare & Grievances Subcommittees, Indian School Darsait and members of the School Management Committee.

Tribute to Oman and India

The event began with a tribute to India and the Sultanate of Oman, the Royal Anthem of Oman, followed by the school choir singing the National Anthem of India.

The function was inaugurated by lighting a ceremonial lamp and the school choir rendering a devotional song, to invoke the blessing of the almighty.

The formal proceedings of the event continued to unfold, with the welcome address by Ajit Vasudevan, Chairperson STAI 2022, who in his address, motivated the participants and shared his views on the various fields of science and technology and extended an official welcome to the esteemed dignitaries.

Dr. Sivakumar Manickam in his address shared majorly the role of technology in education. "Innovations have always been cornerstones of our growth. They are dominant forces in modern society that ultimately lead to overall development. STAI 2022 provides such a platform for students to use their scientific knowledge and bring the best invention from their brains. Apart from allowing students to work together in groups and learning from each other, sharing their ideas and collectively galvanising those ideas to bring something innovative", he said.

The keynote Address was delivered by Subhra Priyadarshini Chief Editor of Nature India, Springer Nature who joined the event online.

Her speech included valuable and excellent views on how remarkable things could be achieved with keen sense of observation and learning from numerous things in nature.

She also mentioned about students' choice of opting careers as science journalists and communicators. The speech consisted of invaluable information that kept the audience engrossed and interested.

A short video on the highlights of STAI 2022 was presented revealing the details from online competitions held from 24th August to 26th August 2022 which was followed by a semi classical dance performance given by ISD students.

The vote of thanks was proposed by the Principal Amar Srivastava, who generously expressed his gratitude and appreciation to all the dignitaries for having spent their valuable time for the event, the participants were recognised and acknowledged for their effort and participation.

Staff and the core team of STAI 2022 were also given due appreciation for the relentless support rendered throughout the event.

The inaugural function was followed by a spirited and spectacular competition in digital symposium – Artificial Intelligence: Past, Present & Future.

As many as 15 teams competed neck and neck transporting the audience to new avenues of possibilities in Artificial Intelligence.

FROM A1 The daily meal vouchers will be distributed by the Ministry of Education.

The number of beneficiaries (students from the designated social segments) in all governorates of Oman stands at 59,030 (24,665 students from Social Insurance Families and 34,365 from low-income families).

A number of parents of students coming from families have also hailed the Royal Directives of His Majesty the Sultan.



ROYAL DIRECTIVES

Ministry to distribute daily meal vouchers

FROM A1 The daily meal vouchers will be distributed by the Ministry of Education.

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2	Storage space construction (Carpentry)
3	Increasing of height and repainting of MS gates (4 Nos)
4	Design, Supply and Installation of equipment for primary play field
5	Annual maintenance for complete MEP works including ACs.
6	Annual contract for cleaning services.
7	Repairing and repainting of basketball (multipurpose) court.

Competitive tenders are invited from the establishments specialized in each area. The collection of tender documents from School will commence from **01/09/2022** after a payment of **R.O. 10/-** for each job.

Last date of tender submission is on or before **15/09/2022 before 2:00pm**.

The completed tender in all aspects should be dropped in the box kept in school office.

A separate tender should be submitted in a sealed envelope addressed to:
The Chairperson, Purchase Subcommittee, Indian School Al Maabela

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



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IMF to provide \$1.17 billion funds to Pakistan amid devastating floods

The money was originally part of a government bailout loan from 2019

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has agreed to release \$1.17 billion (€1.17 billion) in funds to the government of Pakistan as the country deals with a spiraling death toll and widespread destruction from floods that the government has deemed a “climate catastrophe.”

The money was originally part of a government bailout loan from 2019, but the final payments had been held up after the previous administration of Imran Khan did not meet the IMF’s demands to cut energy subsidies.

“Alhamdulillah the IMF Board has approved the revival of our EFF program,” Pakistan’s finance minister Miftah Ismail said on Twitter. The IMF has also agreed to extend the program by an additional \$1 billion, he later added.

It comes as the United Nations launches an appeal on Tuesday for \$160 million to fund emergency aid.

The country’s planning minister Ahsan Iqbal believes reconstruction



could cost upwards of \$10 billion.

IMF welcomes spending cuts

The current government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif attracted widespread criticism in recent months after it imposed three fuel price hikes — cumulatively totaling 50% — and raised the cost of electricity to effectively end the subsidies of his predecessor.

However, the policies brought government spending in line with the IMF’s existing requirements

for the massive loan. In a statement, the IMF did not mention the floods specifically but instead welcomed the new spending cuts.

“Pakistan’s economy has been buffeted by adverse external conditions, due to spillovers from the war in Ukraine, and domestic challenges,” the IMF’s deputy managing director Antoinette Sayeh said.

“Steadfast implementation of corrective policies and reforms remain essential to regain macroeconomic stability, address imbalances and lay the foundation for

inclusive and sustainable growth.”

Trade with India on the table

The unprecedented humanitarian and economic crisis has prompted the Pakistani government to consider resuming trade with its arch-rival, India.

“We can consider importing vegetables from India,” Ismail told local news channel Geo News TV.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was saddened by the devastation caused by the floods. **DW**



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SUSTAINED GUNFIRE

Heavy gunfire rocks Baghdad’s Green Zone amid violent protests

BAGHDAD: Violence in Iraq continued for the second day as militants fired rockets at Baghdad’s high-security Green Zone on Tuesday, Iraq’s military said.

Earlier, sounds of sustained gunfire and rockets rang through the night.

The violence between rival Shiite Muslim groups has killed more than 20 people since it broke out on Monday. At least 380 people were also injured, a medical source said.

Iraq’s military announced a nationwide curfew as gunmen cruised empty streets in pickup trucks carrying machine guns and brandishing grenade launchers. The caretaker premier of Iraq suspended Cabinet sessions.

The violent confrontation erupted after Moqtada al-Sadr, a powerful cleric and a former anti-

US insurgent leader, announced he would resign from politics.

Al-Sadr had won the most seats in the elections last October but failed to form a government after refusing to negotiate with Iran-backed groups to form a government.

Al-Sadr’s followers have organised street protests and occupied government buildings to block political activity, which has fueled tensions culminating in the violence since Monday.

His militia numbers in the thousands and has millions of loyal supporters. The clashes occurred between al-Sadr’s supporters and the army and men of the Hashed al-Shaabi, former paramilitaries integrated into the Iraqi forces. These heavily-armed paramilitary groups are trained by Iran. **DW**

SUBPOENA

Elon Musk subpoenas Twitter whistleblower over spam accounts

CALIFORNIA: Elon Musk has subpoenaed a Twitter whistleblower who made allegations about the way the platform handles spam accounts, a move which could help the billionaire’s case as he prepares to go to trial over his aborted deal to buy the website.

According to court documents filed on Monday, Musk is seeking information from whistleblower Peiter Zatkos about the way Twitter measures spam accounts. Musk previously cited “the company’s lax testing methodologies” for counting fake accounts as a key reason for pulling out of his deal to buy the social media giant for \$44 billion (€44 billion).

In July, Zatkos made a whistleblower complaint to the United States Congress in which he accused Twitter of “extreme, egregious deficiencies” when it comes to preventing spam accounts and protecting users’ privacy.

“If accurate measurements [of the number of spam accounts] ever became public, it would harm the image and valuation of the company,” he said at the time.

A lawyer for Twitter told the court last week that Musk’s focus on spam accounts as a reason for backing out of the deal was “legally irrelevant” because Twitter always said its spam counts were only estimates and not binding representations. The five-day trial is due to kick off on October 17.



Who is Twitter whistleblower Peiter Zatkos?

Zatkos is a famed hacker better known by his online alias “Mudge.”

In November 2020, he was hired by Twitter’s CEO at the time, Jack Dorsey, to be the company’s head of cybersecurity. His employment was terminated in January 2022.

Months after leaving the company, Zatkos filed a whistleblower complaint in which he said Twitter executives are incentivized

with hefty bonuses to boost user numbers and are not focused on culling fake accounts.

Among other things, he also accused the company of making “false and misleading statements” to the Federal Trade Commission about the protection of users’ personal information.

On August 23, American media reported on Zatkos’s allegations for the first time, right as Musk and Twitter were embroiled in a public legal battle over the same issues. **DW**

BUSINESS CONGLOMERATE

Indian businessman Adani now world’s 3rd richest person, overtakes Louis Vuitton chief

NEW DELHI: Indian business conglomerate Adani Group’s chairman Gautam Adani is now the world’s third-richest person after overtaking France’s Bernard Arnault, according to Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

With a total net worth of USD 137.4 billion, 60-year-old Adani has surpassed the wealth of Louis Vuitton chairman Arnault and is now just behind business magnate Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos in the ranking. In the latest Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Reliance chief Mukesh Ambani is at number 11 with a total USD 91.9 billion worth.

This is the first time an Asian person has broken into the top three of the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

The index is a daily ranking of the world’s richest people. Details about the calculations are provided in the net worth analysis on each billionaire’s profile page. The figures are updated at the close of every trading day in New York.

The net worth of Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos are currently at USD 251 billion and USD 153 billion, respectively.

Adani is a first-generation entrepreneur and the Adani Group comprises of 7 publicly listed entities with businesses spanning energy,



ports and logistics, mining and resources, gas, defence and aerospace and airports. In each of its business areas, the Group has established a leadership position in India.

The Adani Group is the third largest conglomerate (after Reliance Industries and the Tata Group) in India. Listed Adani group companies are Adani Enterprises, Adani Green Energy, Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone, Adani Power, Adani Total Gas, and Adani Transmission.

Over the past 5 years, flagship company Adani Enterprises has

invested heavily in new growth sectors that include airports, cement, copper refining, data centres, green hydrogen, petrochemical refining, roads and solar cell manufacturing.

Looking ahead, it plans to foray into the telecom space and has massive plans to grow its green hydrogen and airports businesses.

Recently, the Group also announced plans to set up a 4.1 mtpa integrated alumina refinery and a 30 mtpa iron ore beneficiation plant in Odisha that could cost over Rs 580 billion. **ANI**

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WORLD 



Sri Lankan President presents Interim Budget, says talks with IMF in final stage

The Interim Budget is being presented to the Sri Lankan Parliament, in order to prepare the basic foundation for changing the economic trajectory

COLOMBO: To provide relief to the Island nation amid the unprecedented economic crisis, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe on Tuesday presented the Interim Budget and said that the talks with International Monetary Fund is in final stage.

The budget is focused on increasing the government revenue. The Interim Budget is being presented to the Sri Lankan Parlia-



ment, in order to prepare the basic foundation for changing the economic trajectory of the country. “We are now adopting the short-term measures. Negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have successfully reached

its final stage. Discussions on debt restructuring will be held with the main countries that provide loan assistance to our country,” he said.

In presenting the Interim Budget, the President pointed out

at the extent and depth of the economic crisis that the island nation is facing. “Due to these short-sighted economic practices, the country’s progress has been hampered from time to time. Many of those setbacks occurred in the

name of the citizens who also accepted those policies without any criticism,” he said.

To solve this economic crisis, Wickremesinghe said that one of the basic tasks that the country needs is to extricate from the traditional political perspectives and impartially appraise the reality of the ground situation in the context of the global environment.

He noted that the crisis will not be solved by accusing one another, nor by faulting the past and can only be solved by adopting short- and long-term plans. Wickremesinghe added, “the United Nations in collaboration with leading international organizations, is launching a programme to ensure food security. The process of providing daily needs like gas, electricity and fuel without a shortage has been initiated. Schools have opened, and the universities are commencing their academic activities.”

The Sri Lankan President said that all of this reflects that we are on the correct course in the short term for recovery.

However, he highlighted that Sri Lanka cannot be complacent. “We should prepare a National Eco-

nomc Policy for implementation continuously at least over a period of 25 years. As I mentioned at the beginning, this Interim Budget forms the basic foundation for the National Economic Policy, which is envisaged to be established through the 2023 Budget.”

During his speech he mentioned that once the discussions with the IMF are concluded, he expects to provide the information on the same to the Parliament.

“Our fiscal stabilisation programme envisages government revenue increasing to around 15 percent of GDP by 2025 from the 8.2 percent of GDP as at end 2021. The government is targeting a primary surplus more than 2 percent of GDP in 2025 and expects to improve upon this level thereafter. We aim to reduce public sector debt from around 110 percent of GDP as at end 2021, to no more than 100 percent of GDP in the medium term.”

“It is expected that inflation will be brought back under control to a mid-single digit level in the medium term. In line with this, interest rates are also expected to reach a moderate level gradually.” **ANI**

NEW AVENUE

‘Waste to Wealth’ emerging as new avenue for startups in India: Union Minister Jitendra Singh

NEW DELHI: Union Minister Jitendra Singh has said that “waste to wealth” is emerging as a new avenue for startups in India, the Ministry of Science and Technology said on Saturday.

According to a release issued by the Ministry, Singh addressed National Seminar on “Waste to Wealth” organised under the “Ek Kaam Desh ke Naam” programme, at which Industry leaders from all over India, from Kerala to Haryana and Gujarat to Odisha, were felicitated for having excelled in using latest technologies for waste to wealth conversion to generate business, livelihood and new opportunities for Startups.

Singh reiterated Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s reference to Amrit Kaal and said the next 25 years will see a sudden surge in India’s economy and this will happen through the utilisation of resources which have either remained unexplored in the past or which could not be utilised because of the lack of technology to re-use the waste products.

Referring to PM Modi’s call for “Swachhta” in his Independence



Day address and also Modi’s leading role in all the international movements related to climate concerns, the Union Minister said, the waste to wealth methodology serves the dual purpose of not only keeping the environment clean but also creating wealth out of elements which otherwise pollute the environment.

He made an interesting disclosure during the Swachhata campaign held in October last year to commemorate the Gandhi Jayanti, the cleaning of Central government offices in New Delhi and subsequent disposal of electronic

scrap from discarded mobile phones, computers, etc. had generated revenue of over Rs 62 crores when it was taken to the market.

Singh said, there is a need to create awareness about several waste products which can generate income without much effort and in this regard, he referred to the use of cooking oil from the kitchen which could be sold off at the rate of around Rs 20 per litre to the industry which had the technology to convert it into alternative fuel.

Similarly, he referred to Fly Ash produced through combustion of coal which could be utilised for making bricks for construction etc. All these, he said, were new resources of livelihood, simply through optimum utilisation of waste products, said in a statement.

He emphasised close integration of industry with scientific research to ensure sustainable Startups.

He lauded the efforts made through this programme in which representatives of industry and senior scientists from CSIR, the Ministry of Science and Technology, young students, and potential startups participated. **ANI**

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Japan signals a shift back to nuclear energy, 11 years after Fukushima disaster

TOKYO: Eleven years after the disaster at the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Plant and successive Japanese governments adopting a cautious line on atomic energy — including a commitment to no new reactor construction, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has signaled a change of heart.

Chairing a recent meeting of the Green Transformation Implementation Council, Kishida instructed government officials and energy experts to step up the resumption of operations at more nuclear plants, to look into significantly extending the operational lifetimes of reactors and the development and deployment of next-generation nuclear power facilities.

The changes are a crucial policy reversal and demonstrate both the negative impact the Russian invasion of Ukraine is having on energy prices in Japan and the slow-but-sure reversal in anti-nuclear attitudes among the Japanese public.

Kishida has told officials to draw up firm plans for the return to nuclear energy before the end of the year, including more measures to convince people still skeptical of the benefits of atomic energy of its value.



Opposition in retreat

Polls show that is happening, with 74% of people responding to a Yahoo Japan poll in July saying they supported the resumption of more reactors — a sharp reversal from well over 80% who were firmly against nuclear power in the immediate aftermath of the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami that crippled the Fukushima plant.

Yet there are still some staunch opponents of nuclear, which they describe as a misguided approach to the nation’s energy needs when other — far safer — options are available.

To date, 10 of the 54 reactors that were operational before the Fukushima crisis are again operational after undergoing extensive seismic remodeling and exhaus-

tive security tests.

The Japanese government is hoping to have another seven units up and running by next summer and for nuclear power plants to be meeting as much as 20% of the nation’s energy needs by 2030. Perhaps controversially, experts are also examining extending the operational lifetimes of reactors from the present limit of 40 years — which is rapidly approaching for some of the older units — to 60 years.

Hisanori Nei, a professor of energy policy at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, said the government’s change of direction on nuclear power “comes as no surprise.”

“Before the election in July, the government did not want to announce this plan because they were concerned about a backlash, but Kishida won that vote and now he has three years until he has to have another election,” Nei told DW.

“So the timing is not a surprise, as industry has been lobbying hard for this to happen and the ministries have also been releasing policy papers hinting that this was coming.”

Are smaller reactor units the answer?

The government’s hand has been further forced by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and soaring

energy prices, to which Japan is extremely susceptible as it has no domestic energy resources and relies almost entirely on imports, he added.

One new technology that has particular promise as a solution, the government believes, is small module reactor units (SMRs).

Japan announced on August 26 that it has reached an outline agreement with the US and nine other countries to cooperate on the development of SMRs, which have a capacity of around 300,000 kilowatts instead of the 1 million kw capacity of a conventional reactor.

The benefits of smaller units are that they are cheaper to construct and are less likely to cause a major crisis in the event of an accident. In Japan, the government is considering deploying numerous SMRs to meet the energy needs of individual cities.

‘No positives’ to nuclear

Aileen Mioko-Smith, a campaigner with Kyoto-based Green Action Japan, said there are “no positives” to be drawn from the government’s return to nuclear energy.

“Every reactor that they want to restart or extend the operational life of is potentially another Fukushima disaster,” she said. “They tell us that they have learned their lessons and that the technology is safe, but they cannot guarantee that.” **DW**

OPENING FIRE

Madagascar Police say officers killed 19 in albino protest

ANTANANARIVO: Madagascar police said on Tuesday that officers killed 19 people and injured 21 after opening fire on a crowd of protesters that allegedly tried to storm a police station in the southeastern district of Ikongo on Monday. Police said the group of around 500 protesters were carrying “weapons” and were demanding that four people suspected of kidnapping an albino child and killing the child’s mother be handed over to them.

Malagasy President Andry Rajoelina expressed his condolences and said that an investigation into

the incident would be launched.

What did police say?

Police said officers did “everything to avoid a confrontation or violence,” initially firing tear gas to try to disperse the crowd.

“We could not do anything else but protect ourselves and the barracks,” national police chief Andry Rakotondrazaka said. Police had “no choice but to resort to self-defence,” he said.

The police chief said that some of the group were armed with “long-bladed knives and sticks” and others threw stones at police.

Rakotondrazaka said the wounded had been taken to hospital, and that some required surgery.

On Monday, soon after the incident, police had given a death toll of 11. A senior doctor later told the AFP news agency that 18 had died, nine at the scene and nine in hospital.

People with albinism, which is caused by a lack of melanin, are often kidnapped or attacked in parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, where the body parts of people who have the condition are sought for witchcraft practices. **DW**



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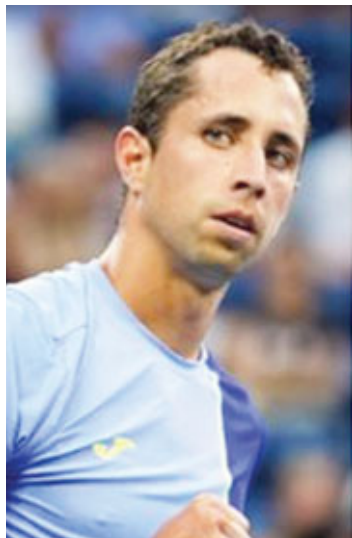


Tsitsipas stunned by Galan, Fritz knocked out by Holt in US Open

The first round of the US Open is seeing top-seeded players being upset by qualifiers

NEW YORK: In a significant upset, Stefanos Tsitsipas was knocked out of the US Open in the first round by qualifier, Daniel Elahi Galan. Another major upset saw 10th-seeded Taylor Fritz failing to advance to the next round.

The first round of the US Open is seeing top-seeded players being upset by qualifiers and players ranked below in the rankings and the most recent addition to that list was Stefanos Tsitsipas and Taylor Fritz being ousted by qualifiers. The Colombian showed great aggression right from the word go, not giving the



world number four any chance to dominate. Tsitsipas looked out of touch, struggling to find his rhythm and lost the first set 0-6.

It took the Greek 54 minutes to win his first game of the match. Winning the first game came too late and did not affect the second set as Daniel looked in immaculate touch and won the set 1-6.

He had his right forearm treat-



ed numerous times throughout the match.

It seemed that the Greek had finally found his rhythm in the third set, proving his mettle and taking the third set 6-3, making a comeback.

The fourth set proved to be the final nail in the coffin for world number four, losing the set in a thrilling display of tennis, 5-7.

Daniel Elahi Galan proved too

good for Tsitsipas and clinched the match in four sets 6-0, 6-1, 3-6, 7-5. Tsitsipas was in contention to become the world number one before entering the final Grand Slam of the year but this loss has put his hopes of doing so to rest.

The Colombian expressed his happiness in his post-match interview and termed this match one of the best in his career.

He said, "Definitely one of the best moments of my career," Galan said. "Definitely the best match of my career, not only because of the circumstances, also the opponent. I'm really happy."

In another shocker 10th-seeded Tony Fritz was knocked out by American qualifier Brandon Holt in four sets 6-7(3), 7-6(1), 6-3, 6-4 to storm into the second round, making a great debut at the Grand Slam.

He termed this match the biggest he had played so far in his tennis career and said it was special since his friends and family were present on the court to witness his win.

He is also the son of two-time US Open Champion, former tennis player Tracy Austin. **ANI**

Serena Williams wins Round 1, crowd pays her gigantic tribute

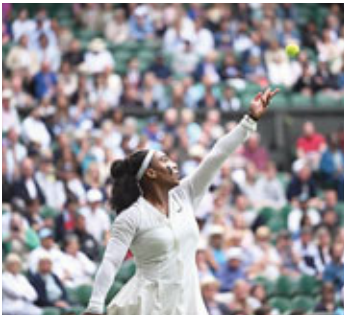
NEW YORK: Serena Williams won her first-round match in the US Open in New York in what could probably be her last tournament before she retires.

Williams won 6-3 6-3 against Montenegro's Danka Kovinic who is ranked 80th in the world. The 40-year-old also kept her first-round match win record flawless with this win, taking it to an impressive 21-0. The packed to capacity Arthur Ashe Stadium erupted with support for the 23-time Grand Slam singles champion displaying a "We love Serena" sign. Prior to the match, the stadium watched a video montage in celebration of what Williams has achieved as a player and a person.

Among those who were in attendance at the stadium included Mike Tyson, Gladys Knight and former president Bill Clinton among others. The champions' 4-year-old daughter was also in the guest box.

Williams will play Estonian second seed Anett Kontaveit in the second round on Wednesday.

With this win, Williams became only the fourth woman in the Open Era to win matches in her teens,



20s, 30s and 40s. She joined legends like Venus Williams, Hall of Famer Martina Navratilova and Japan's Kimiko Date, who have achieved this feat.

After the match, Williams received a standing ovation and she remained on court for the U.S. Open's video tribute narrated by Oprah Winfrey, the Washington Post reported.

"I've always just got to do the best that I can," Williams told the audience during her on-court interview with TV personality Gayle King. "I feel so comfortable on this court and in front of everyone here. When I step out on the court I just want to do the best that I can do on that particular day," she said. **ANI**

TITLE SPONSOR

Legends League Cricket onboards SKYEXCH.NET as the title sponsor for Season 2

Times News Service

NEW DELHI: Legends League Cricket announced SKYEXCH.NET as their title sponsor for the second edition of the League. SKYEXCH.NET, is a one stop on-line sports news hub and it aims to give in depth coverage to the league.

Commenting on the announcement of the Title Sponsorship, Raman Raheja, Co-Founder & CEO, Legends League Cricket said, "We welcome SKYEXCH.NET and I am confident that together we will be able to bring forth quality cricketing coverage for the fans. Our objective will



be to ensure cricket fans get an enthralling account of the games and enjoy every bit of the action that takes place. We wish to have a long-lasting relationship, where both of us can help each other in meeting our objectives."

While the website is covering all Cricket leagues extensively

along with other sports, Legends League Cricket is slated to start from September 16 with an exclusive benefit match between Indian Maharajas and World Giants aiming to extend the same set of excitement around Legends League Cricket too.

"Cricket is one of the most loving sports in India. We have been looking for properties where we can get right kind of visibility and the last season was wonderful from viewership standpoint. We hope to catch the right eyeballs for our brand too.," said, SKYEXCH.NET Managing Director Ian Michael Viner.

CRICKET

Steve Smith feels he can play in Australia's T-20 title defence

CANBERRA: Former Australia captain Steve Smith feels he can play a significant part in this year's ICC Men's T20 World Cup campaign if he is utilized in the hosts' title defence later this year in October.

Smith, who scored 69 runs in four innings last season, has found it challenging to get into Australia's T20I squad in recent times, frequently being used to play the role of an anchor to repair an innings after a bad start. Despite concerns that his game is not suited to the shorter format, the 33-year-old



feels he can be a useful asset in national colours, as seen by a 37* (27) performance to help the team win a series against Sri Lanka in June

earlier this year.

ICC quoted Smith as saying, "I feel like when I'm playing good T20 cricket, I'm in that team for sure. I think the role that I've been given in the last couple of years is the Mr. Fix-it sort of role, and that tag's been taken away from me now (since) the Sri Lanka tour."

While not known for his sheer might with the bat, Smith has produced a lot of quick-fire half-centuries in Australian colours, with all four of his T20I half-centuries coming at a strike rate in an abundance of 140. **ANI**



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MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,576.76 points, down by 0.28 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.19 per cent at 489.25 points. Al Anwar Investment, up 9.33 per cent, was the top gainer while Gulf International Chemicals, down 9 per cent, was the top loser.

Pact signed for OMR2.2mn liquid fertiliser unit in Sohar

The pact includes the potential for future expansion which would see the liquid fertiliser plant produce ammonium sulphate to strengthen Oman's export sector, especially in Pakistan and Tanzania

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Sohar Freezone has signed a land lease agreement with Integrated Solutions Plant and Land Services (FZC) for 15,000 sqm within the freezone to establish a liquid fertiliser plant.

The project represents an investment of OMR2.2 million and it includes the potential for future expansion which would see the plant produce ammonium sulphate to strengthen Oman's export sector, especially in Pakistan and Tanzania.

Omar bin Mahmood Al Mahrizi, CEO of Sohar Freezone, Deputy CEO of Sohar Port, said, "The addition of a new liquid fertiliser plant, in partnership with Integrated Solutions Plant and Land Services (FZC), enhances Sohar's ability to serve the local, regional, and global markets with high-quality agents for industrial production. Sohar can offer companies in all sectors a world-class integrated logistics and industrial hub with direct shipping to key markets and broadening our tenant profile to



Egypt for the first time is a key step in our ongoing expansion."

Hussein Amin, Partner at Integrated Solutions Plant and Land Services (FZC) LLC, added, "We

are delighted to establish a presence at Sohar with the 15,000 sqm space within Sohar Freezone, which will help us expand operations and reach new clients in de-

veloping markets. Integrated Solutions Plant and Land Services is at the forefront of producing high-grade, organic liquid fertiliser in support of growing populations

and increasing needs in this sector. Sohar represents an opportunity to connect with customers worldwide using established shipping lines and trade agreements."

Sohar Port and Freezone is an engine for economic diversification, sustainability, and investment to meet Oman's development goals. The fully integrated industrial and logistics hub offers a wealth of attractive incentives to make doing business easier and more efficient.

Businesses benefit from 100 per cent foreign ownership, attractive local labour requirements, 0 per cent import or export duties and 0 per cent income tax, and the on-site One-Stop-Shop service is available to assist with the acquisition of all necessary registration, licenses, and visas. Sohar Port operates a custom clearing service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and is linked to the freezone by a bonded transport corridor which allows goods to travel between port and freezone within 14 minutes.

BANKING SECTOR

ahlibank's iGeneration programme to enhance youth's technical skills

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Continuing its long-term commitment to empower Omani youth with professional skills, and enhance their career development opportunities in the banking sector, ahlibank has launched iGeneration programme that aims to create a favourable environment for the Sultanate's workforce and equip them with emerging critical skills required for today's job market.

The programme targets graduates and entry-level employees with two-to-three years of experience to provide them with a hands-on technical experience in the banking sector. It will also allow them to demonstrate their knowledge, providing a platform to enhance their technical skills and develop viable solutions to tackle day-to-day business challenges.

In addition, those selected for the programme will also develop capabilities such as effective communication, critical thinking, teamwork, and presentation skills that will enable them to grow and lead in the chosen areas.

Mohammed Al Mufargi, Assistant General Manager- Head of Human Resources, ahlibank said, "At ahlibank, our investment in people continues to be paramount. We believe in the importance of



developing young minds and nurturing their skills.

"Through programmes such as these, we not only hope to attract talent but also provide them with the necessary skills, knowledge, tools and training required for them to achieve their full potential. We opt to enhance the professional competencies of our entry-level employees and open new avenues for young Omani graduates stepping into the workforce through our organisation."

As part of the bank's digital

transformation strategy, iGeneration programme also reinforces ahlibank's focus to attract and retain high calibre future employees to support its digital transformation journey. It is one of several key programmes, along with the immensely successful 'Himam' annual graduate development programme, which aims to enhance the bank's contribution to the national objective as outlined in Oman Vision 2040 to create a sustainable workforce for the growing needs of the labour market by

equipping young national talent with the required set of skills.

Taher Al Balushi, Deputy General Manager - Strategy and Transformation, ahlibank, said, "We are extremely proud of ahlibank's digital transformation strategy that has contributed to us becoming one of Oman's leading banks. Our strategy is customer-centric and leverages the capability of technology to power our digital transformation. Our transformation has also focused on effectively changing our mindset and best practices to create value for our end-users. However, none of this would be possible without employees with strong technology expertise; and that is why at ahlibank we create programmes and initiatives that drive the organisation's digital transformation and provide employees with the capabilities required to harness the opportunities of digital banking."

With a strong belief in learning and development, ahlibank boasts of a highly motivated and committed cadre of employees. The bank continues to focus on developing innovative learning opportunities for the Omani youth through such programmes, to foster future leaders to support its ongoing digital transformation process. Potential candidates can register online through ahlibank's website.

AGREEMENT



Entrepreneurship training programmes for Omanis with special abilities

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Khimji Ramdas (KR) Eshraqa's 'Tasees', signed an agreement with Qadiroon, an initiative of ASAAS Muscat in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Small Medium Enterprises Development Authority at the second edition of the Qadiroon Forum, organised at the Grand Millennium Muscat.

The agreement was signed by Nailesh Khimji, Director, Khimji Ramdas Group, and Mohammed Mustafa al Shamali, CEO of ASAAS Muscat.

Under the agreement, Tasees will conduct entrepreneurship training programmes for Omanis with special abilities from various wilayats.

The workshops will enhance

their business skills and help them understand the requisites of starting their dream business ventures, thereby helping them become financially independent.

Nailesh Khimji said, "We aim to align with the larger goal of building an inclusive society, Tasees is pleased to partner with Qadiroon and foster an entrepreneurial spirit among Omanis with special abilities. Our objectives align closely with Qadiroon's goal of providing opportunities for men and women of determination to achieve success in the marketplace and reach higher personal goals. We keenly look forward to supporting individual and institutional advancement and the development of fresh ideas and business initiatives that are in line with Vision 2040."

OFFICIAL DATA

China's SMEs show stable development in January-July

BEIJING: China's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) showed stable development in the first seven months of the year, laying a solid foundation for the steady operation of the country's macroeconomy, data from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology showed.

The combined operating revenue of the country's major small and medium-sized industrial firms rose 8.1 per cent year on year in the January-July period. The profits of these companies during the period were up 1.6 per cent from a year earlier.

Preferential policies have been rolled out to ease the financial burden of smaller businesses and further boost their vitality. In the first half, the country's micro, small and medium-sized enterprises received nearly 1.8 trillion yuan (about \$261.62 billion) in tax-and-fee cuts and deferrals, as well as tax refunds.

ENERGY CRISIS

Can EU tame soaring electricity prices?

BRUSSELS: The European Union first proposed a cap on the price of gas and electricity in March, after energy prices took off when Russian tanks rolled into Ukraine.

The European Commission, the EU's executive arm, said the bloc should consider "options for temporary market intervention in the short term to limit price increases." Six months on, and despite the year-ahead contract for German electricity reaching €995 (\$995) per megawatt hour on Friday - a tenfold increase from last year - an EU-wide cap has still not been levied.

In recent days, the leaders of several EU states have called for urgent action to tame energy prices, including Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo who threatened to go it alone if the EU failed to intervene.

Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer said an EU solution was the best way to "finally stop the madness that is taking place in energy markets."

The Czech Republic, which holds the EU's 6-month rotating presidency, on Monday called an emer-



gency meeting of EU energy ministers for September 9 to look at price capping and market intervention.

How is electricity currently priced?

While some suppliers produce their own energy, most of the price that electricity firms pay is set by fi-

nancial markets, where producers, utility firms and speculators compete based on supply and demand.

Electricity producers are paid the same price despite having vastly different expenditures. Gas power stations are much more expensive to run than wind or solar farms and, therefore, tend to set

the overall market price.

Gas also commands a premium as it is used to respond to fluctuations in electricity demand. Gas power plants can be quickly fired up during periods of peak demand. The increasing use of wind and solar energy, which fluctuate depending on the weather, has in-

creased the marginal or critical role of gas in times of need.

Prices hit a record last week after Russia said it would halt deliveries to Germany through the Nord Stream 1 gas pipeline for three days for maintenance.

However, the move is widely seen as a political power play. Berlin thinks Russia could cut supplies altogether in retaliation for Western sanctions over the war in Ukraine.

When will prices come down?

While European leaders had hoped the energy crisis would be short-lived, some industry experts now believe prices will likely stay elevated for several years.

The CEO of energy giant Shell Ben van Beurden told a conference in Norway on Monday that high prices could last for "a number of winters" and spoke of the possible need for energy rationing.

Belgium's energy minister, Tinne Van der Straeten, warned Monday that the next "five to 10" winters will be "terrible" if nothing is done to cap prices. **aw**

MARKET



MSX index ends lower

Al Anwar Investment, up 9.33 per cent were net buyers, was the top gainer while Gulf International Chemicals, down 9 per cent, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,576.76 points, down by 0.28 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.19 per cent at 489.25 points. Al Anwar Investment, up 9.33 per cent were net buyers, was the top gainer while Gulf International Chemicals, down 9 per cent were net buyers, was the top loser. Shares of Ahli Bank were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded while A'Saffa Foods were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 853 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR4.7 million, with more than 24.8 million shares changing hands. Out of 50 traded securities, 18 advanced, 16 declined, and 16 remained unchanged. At the session, foreign investors were net buyers for OMR24,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,338.96 points, down 0.2 per cent. Prices of Al Anwar Investment, DIDIC, Taageer Finance, Oman & Emirates Investment and Global Financial Investments were up by 9.33 per cent, 5 per cent, 4.3 per cent, 3.53 per cent and 1.54 per cent respectively.

Prices of United Finance, National Bank Oman, Bank Nizwa and Bank Muscat were down by 4.35 per cent, 1.49 per cent, 1.02 per cent and 0.66 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,534.19 points, up 0.28 per cent. Prices of A'Saffa Foods, Dhofar Cattle Feed, Oman Fisheries, National Aluminium and Voltamp Energy were up by 7.86 per cent, 7.32 per cent, 6.25 per cent, 6.02 per cent and 4.51 per cent respectively. Prices of Gulf International Chemicals, Ray-sut Cement, Galfar Engineering and Jazeera Steel Products were down by 9 per cent, 2.49 per cent, 1.22 per cent and 0.66 per cent respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.14 per cent before closing at 1,658.99 points. Prices of National Gas, Muscat Desalination and Phoenix Power were up by 2.96 per cent, 2.7 per cent and 2.27 per cent respectively. Prices of Majan College, Sharqiyah Desalination, Oman National Engineering, Renaissance Services and Al Batinah Power were down by 8.23 per cent, 6.03 per cent, 2.68 per cent, 2.33 per cent and 2.33 per cent respectively. — United Securities

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

OMAN STOCKS

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,593.74	4,571.06	4,576.76	4,589.72	-12.96	-0.28
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,370.18	7,325.48	7,338.96	7,353.62	-14.66	-0.20
Industry Index	6,538.51	6,499.60	6,534.18	6,515.88	18.30	0.28
Services Index	1,664.99	1,651.26	1,658.99	1,661.37	-2.39	-0.14
MSX Shariah Index	489.79	488.65	489.25	488.32	0.94	0.19
MSX TR INDEX	5,793.77	5,765.16	5,772.36	5,788.70	-16.34	-0.28
FINANCIAL TR IDX	7,712.07	7,665.28	7,679.35	7,694.74	-15.34	-0.20
SERVICES TR IDX	1,728.94	1,714.67	1,722.71	1,725.18	-2.48	-0.14
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,785.88	6,745.50	6,781.38	6,762.39	19.00	0.28

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
24,806,960	4,700,955	853	23,224,395,837	18	16	16	50

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, AUGUST 30

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PD	LAST BD	LAST OFFER	P/B VALUE	MARKET CAP
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REGULAR MARKET

OM0000003281	TAAGEER FINANCE	90,936	8,722	10	0.096	0.097	0.094	0.097	0.083	0.004	4.301	0.097	0.097	0.100	0.100	25,090,195
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV H	599,340	39,661	23	0.065	0.067	0.065	0.066	0.065	0.001	1.538	0.066	0.066	0.067	0.100	13,200,000
OM0000000440	AL SHARIAH INV	516,722	44,626	41	0.085	0.088	0.085	0.086	0.085	0.001	1.176	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.100	7,740,000
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	2,000	840	1	0.420	0.420	0.420	0.420	0.418	0.002	0.478	0.420	0.404	0.420	0.100	92,400,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	114,140	49,328	6	0.432	0.434	0.432	0.432	0.430	0.002	0.465	0.432	0.432	0.438	0.100	23,760,000
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSUR	2,000	580	3	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.000	0.000	0.290	0.288	0.290	0.100	29,000,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	14,600	4,292	2	0.294	0.294	0.294	0.294	0.294	0.000	0.000	0.294	0.290	0.294	0.100	97,276,577
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	5,357,330	728,597	10	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.000	0.000	0.136	0.130	0.136	0.100	265,153,415
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	386,240	347,616	18	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.000	0.000	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.100	675,000,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INT BANK	689,000	70,914	16	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.000	0.000	0.106	0.102	0.106	0.100	318,946,603
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	797,869	483,953	34	0.608	0.608	0.604	0.604	0.608	-0.004	-0.658	0.604	0.604	0.604	0.100	1,266,931,913
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	10,670	3,206	7	0.302	0.302	0.300	0.300	0.302	-0.002	-0.662	0.300	0.292	0.314	0.100	37,469,388
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	5,000	1,415	1	0.283	0.283	0.283	0.283	0.286	-0.003	-1.049	0.283	0.282	0.314	0.100	17,320,809
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	538,749	142,238	4	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.269	-0.004	-1.487	0.265	0.261	0.265	0.100	430,875,784
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SER	438,972	225,893	15	0.516	0.516	0.504	0.504	0.516	-0.012	-2.328	0.504	0.502	0.506	0.100	119,150,640
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT ENG	42,000	4,588	7	0.110	0.110	0.109	0.109	0.112	-0.003	-2.679	0.109	0.108	0.109	0.100	15,260,000
Total		16	9,583,569	2,156,780	196											

Parallel Market

OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	1,863,755	150,026	80	0.077	0.082	0.077	0.082	0.075	0.007	9.333	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.100	16,400,000
OM0000002804	ASAFA FOODS	2,730,694	802,454	116	0.287	0.306	0.283	0.302	0.280	0.022	7.857	0.302	0.302	0.304	0.100	36,240,000
OM0000001331	DHOFAH CATTLE	54,267	4,677	5	0.078	0.088	0.078	0.088	0.082	0.006	7.317	0.088	0.087	0.100	7,114,800	
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	1,689,932	197,727	122	0.113	0.120	0.113	0.119	0.112	0.007	6.250	0.119	0.119	0.118	0.100	21,667,329
OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD.	269,050	23,259	18	0.085	0.089	0.085	0.088	0.083	0.005	6.024	0.089	0.088	0.091	0.100	2,954,288
OM0000001539	DHOFAH INT	5,348	674	1	0.126	0.126	0.126	0.126	0.120	0.006	5.000	0.126	0.120	0.132	0.100	51,565,036
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	36,554	4,185	8	0.107	0.116	0.107	0.116	0.111	0.005	4.505	0.111	0.111	0.111	0.100	9,442,719
OM0000001020	OMAN CHROMITE	423	1,100	1	2.600	2.600	2.600	2.600	2.500	0.100	4.000	2.600	2.250	2.600	1.000	7,800,000
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	68,298	6,030	11	0.084	0.090	0.084	0.088	0.085	0.003	3.529	0.088	0.088	0.090	0.100	1,740,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	621,087	85,788	67	0.135	0.140	0.135	0.139	0.135	0.004	2.963	0.139	0.139	0.139	0.100	11,815,000
OM0000007084	MCT DESALINATE	10,000	1,130	5	0.112	0.114	0.112	0.114	0.111	0.003	2.703	0.114	0.112	0.114	0.100	17,732,746
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	1,000	45	2	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.044	0.001	2.273	0.045	0.044	0.045	0.100	65,817,066
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	492,811	32,909	22	0.066	0.068	0.066	0.067	0.066	0.001	1.515	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.100	20,578,804
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	145,000	22,475	8	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.000	0.000	0.155	0.150	0.155	0.100	810,048,482
OM0000002287	GULF MUSHROOM P	40,500	10,305	3	0.250	0.252	0.250	0.252	0.252	0.000	0.000	0.252	0.252	0.270	0.100	10,484,528
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MRK	1,000	920	1	0.920	0.920	0.920	0.920	0.920	0.000	0.000	0.920	0.912	0.920	0.100	87,400,000
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAH	4,873,622	678,959	15	0.140	0.140	0.138	0.140	0.140	0.000	0.000	0.140	0.140	0.148	0.100	419,489,201
OM0000004346	SMN POWER HOLDING	300,000	8,400	7	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.000	0.000	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.100	5,589,777
OM0000004735	SEMBOOP SALAF	1,105	72	2	0.065	0.070	0.065	0.070	0.070	0.000	0.000	0.070	0.065	0.070	0.100	66,820,037
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	60,000	5,340	4	0.089	0.089	0.089	0.089	0.089	0.000	0.000	0.089	0.088	0.089	0.100	15,575,000
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	63,000	2,886	4	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.000	0.000	0.046	0.045	0.046	0.100	11,500,000
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	730	32	1	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.042	0.043	0.100	31,433,879
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	102,535	10,041	9	0.099	0.099	0.097	0.097	0.097	-0.001	-1.020	0.097	0.097	0.097	0.100	21,984,444
OM0000003821	GALFAR ENGINEER	309,575	50,192	24	0.167	0.167	0.161	0.162	0.164	-0.002	-1.220	0.162	0.162	0.162	0.100	32,883,804
OM0000008447	OMAN RETT FUND	10,500	687	2	0.066	0.066	0.065	0.065	0.066	-0.001	-1.515	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.100	30,627,115
OM0000001178	MUSCAT GASES	315	45	1	0.143	0.143	0.143	0.143	0.146	-0.003	-2.055	0.143	0.143	0.143	0.100	4,290,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	187,863	7,890	8	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	-0.002	-2.326	0.042	0.041	0.042	0.100	28,345,272
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	955,700	227,078	87	0.242	0.243	0.232	0.235	0.241	-0.006	-2.490	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.100	47,000,000
OM0000002374	UNION FINANCE	103,747	8,735	11	0.084	0.088	0.084	0.088	0.082	0.004	4.348	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.100	30,787,000
OM0000004669	SHARQIYAH DESALIN	5,660	617	3	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.116	-0.007	-6.034	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.100	10,660,435
OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	250	36	1	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.158	-0.013	-8.228	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.100	13,050,000
OM0000002028	GULF INT CHEMI	2,350	115	3	0.091	0.100	0.091	0.091	0.100	-0.009	-9.000	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	1,911,000
Total		32	15,019,661	2,343,101	652											

PARTICIPATION

OETC delegation discusses latest trends in energy sector at CIGRE 2022 in Paris

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) is participating in CIGRE session 2022, taking place in Paris from August 28 to September 2 with the participation of 400 papers from all over the globe.

The conference witnesses the presence of a large number of senior officials from companies operating in the energy sector around the world in addition to a group of experts, engineers and those interested in the electrical energy field.

A delegation from OETC is taking part in CIGRE, which is held to discuss the latest trends in the energy sector, where the company participated in two technical papers.

Eng. Ayman Al-Namamni, Planning Engineer, presented the first research paper entitled "Long-Term Demand Forecast for Oman Electricity Transmission System Master Plan (2020-2040)", which



explains the forecasts of demand for electricity in Oman, taking into account the factors affecting the demand. It also explains the company's methodology in analysing the challenges facing the electric power sector in terms of tariff reform, demand price flexibility, energy efficiency programmes, renewable energy sources and electric vehicles.

The second research paper is

"Transmission Regulation: The Economic Regulation Applied for Oman Electricity Transmission Network" presented by Eng. Zahra Al-Rawahi, Regulatory Affairs Section Head, with the participation of Eng. Alaa Al-Kiyumi, Head of Revenue Assurance Department at Muscat Electricity Distribution Company.

The paper highlights the electricity sector regulations and the

role of the Authority of Public Services Regulation to observe, monitor and evaluate the electricity market to ensure fair competition and provide services at reasonable prices and high quality, which contributes to attracting new investors to the energy sector.

CHILDREN WITH DOWN SYNDROME LOVE CRISPY, OILY FOODS, DISLIKE STICKY EATABLES



LIFESTYLE

According to a study, children with Down syndrome love crispy, oily foods and dislike brittle or sticky foods. However, these choices may result in a less healthy diet. The result was published in the Journal of Texture Studies.

"Children with Down syndrome really enjoy foods like Pirate's Booty and puffed corn," said Carolyn Ross, a professor in WSU's School of Food Science. "Those foods aren't of high nutritional value, but they're dissolvable--a huge plus for these children. Now the challenge is making nutritious foods with those characteristics."

The paper examined what food textures children with Down syndrome liked or didn't like and how those preferenc-



It's been known for years that children with Down syndrome don't eat as much as typically developing children, but nobody has studied food textures as a factor.

es compared to typically developing children's preferences.

In the U.S., one in 772 babies (around 5,100 each year), are born with Down syndrome, a genetic condition caused by a full or partial extra copy of chromosome 21. Feeding and swallowing impairments are common, and a key predictor of increased death among those individuals.

It's been known for years that children with Down syndrome don't eat as much as typically developing children, but nobody has studied food textures as a factor. This research could help clinicians and parents determine what foods will get eaten, while hopefully prompting food manufacturers to tailor products to this population's specific needs, Ross said.

"This was a huge area of missing research," Ross said. "There are many anecdotal stories, and you can go down an online rabbit hole to find information. But studies like this can help parents and clinicians know what these children will be most likely to eat and help reduce incidences of choking. If we can add nutritional value to those foods, then we'll really help a lot of people."

Choking is one of the leading causes of death among people with Down syndrome because they may not chew food enough or "pack" it, overfilling their mouths and cheeks without swallowing.

Children with Down syndrome have various health issues, more than typically developing children, including feed-

ing and swallowing challenges and food texture sensitivities. Ross wants to help children with Down syndrome have more healthy eating options and become more comfortable with complex textures.

"We want to help people understand what food textures children with Down syndrome prefer, and how to move them from things like pureed foods to texturally complex foods, which tend to have more nutritional value," Ross said.

Ross and her team sent boxes with 16 commercially available kinds of food to 218 children aged 11 to 18 in 30 states. Of those boxes, 111 went to children with Down syndrome, the rest to a control group of typically developing youth.

The boxes contained

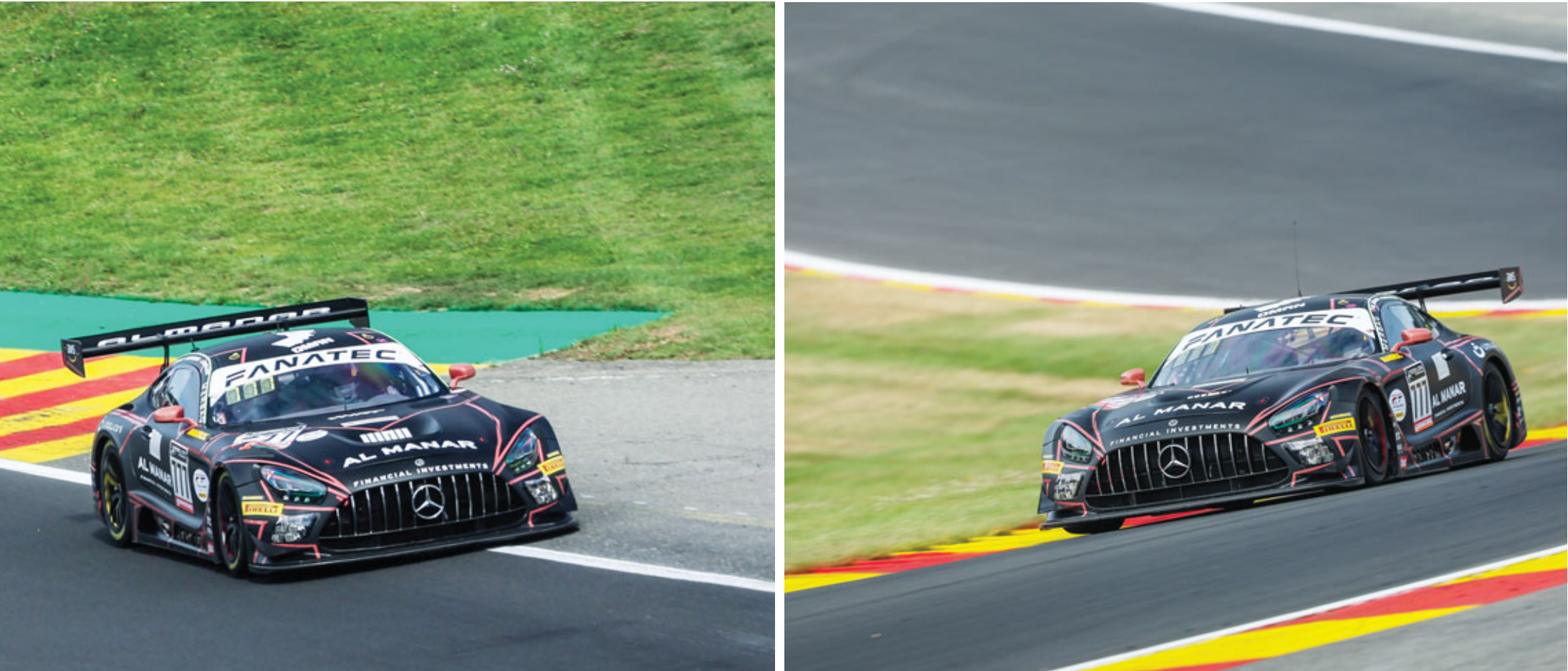
four items in each of four different texture groups to ensure that flavour wasn't the reason for a texture preference. The research team asked parents about disliked flavours before the boxes were sent, to avoid those products. All children in the study ate one of each item every day for a week to make sure enjoyment wasn't due to novelty.

The parents then filmed the children interacting with and eating each item, uploading the videos to the research team.

"We coded a lot of data; it's the biggest home-use test involving children with Down syndrome that we've ever heard of," Ross said. "And it showed a big difference in texture preference between children with and without Down syndrome." -ANI

SPORTS

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HOCKENHEIM GT CHALLENGE AWAITS OMAN’S AL-ZUBAIR AND TEAM-MATES SCHILLER AND JEFFRIES

HOCKENHEIM (GERMANY): Oman’s Al-Faisal Al-Zubair again joins forces with Germany’s Fabian Schiller and Zimbabwe’s Axcil Jeffries to take part in the three-hour round of the 2022 Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe Powered by AWS – Endurance Cup at Germany’s Hockenheim circuit this weekend (September 2-4).

The trio will compete in their usual Mercedes-AMG GT3 running under the Al-Manar Racing by HRT banner and entered in the Silver Cup category. They will be hoping to bounce back from a premature retirement at the recent Total-Energies 24 Hours of Spa that saw them slip to third place in the Silver Endurance Cup’s



Drivers’ Championship. Al-Zubair said: “I am looking forward to the race, three hours at Hockenheim. Unfortunately, I did not test there personally, as I

had schooling commitments. My two team-mates did test there. It was quite positive. I’m excited to getting back in the car after the Spa incident. Hopefully, we get a good bunch of results and keep up the momentum before the last round in Barcelona.” Benjamin Goethe, Thomas Neubauer and Jean-Baptiste Simmenauer currently top the standings with 84 points and a top finish could see the Audi R8 LMS GT3 trio clinch the title before the final round in Spain. Al-Zubair and the Al-Manar Racing by HRT team trail the second-placed Nicolas Schöll, Alex Aka and Marius Zug by just six points. The 4.574km German circuit hosted a round of the FIA Formula One World Championship until 2019 and also hosts German DTM races. It will be open to GT World Challenge Europe competitors for a paid test session from 14.00hrs on Thursday

(September 1), before all administration and technical checks are carried out on Friday. A free practice session runs for 90 minutes from 09.45hrs on Saturday morning and precedes another 90-minute pre-qualifying stint from 14.05hrs. After sharing the weekend’s timetable with the GT4 European Series, Clio Cup and MitJet2L Trophy Italy, the first of three 15-minute qualifying sessions gets underway from 09.45hrs on Sunday, with each driver taking part in one stint apiece. The three-hour Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe race is scheduled to fire into life from 15.00hrs.

2022 Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe – Endurance Cup Silver Cup – current positions (Drivers):

1. Benjamin Goethe/Thomas Neubauer/Jean-Baptiste Simmenauer ...84pts
2. Nicolas Schöll/Alex Aka/Marius Zug50pts
3. Al Faisal Al-Zubair/Axcil Jeffries/Fabian Schiller.....44pts
4. Tuomas Tujula/Stuart White/Konsta Lappalainen33pts
5. Jordan Love/Alain Valente/Jannes Fittje/Juuso Puhakka.....31pts
6. Thomas Drouet/Tommaso Mosca/Casper Stevenson.....24pts
6. Louis Proctor/Finlay Hutchinson/Diego Menchaca24pts, etc





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ROUND-UP

Zubair Corp organises workshop for executive management

The workshop aims to highlight the role of the private sector in realising the objectives of Oman Vision 2040

MUSCAT: Seeking to align its objectives with the Oman Vision 2040 national priorities, the Zubair Corporation in collaboration with the Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit, conducted a workshop aimed at highlighting the role of the private sector in realising the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

Held at the Bait Al Zubair museum, the workshop witnessed the participation of The Zubair Corporation and its affiliated companies' executive management.

During the workshop, a number of officials and supervisors from the Unit and national programmes presented working papers that shed light on the objectives of the vision, its national priorities and the role of the private sector in achieving them. The presented papers discussed various topics that resonate with the Corporation's efforts and its affiliated companies' strategies. It also explored ways of aligning the goals of the vision with the companies' vision.

Commenting on the initiative, Al Zubair Mohammed Al Zubair, Vice Chairman of The Zubair Corporation said: "It is essential for the private sector to align its strategies and aspirations with Oman Vision 2040. Hence, the Corporation sought to conduct this workshop in cooperation with Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit to raise awareness among its executive leadership on the Vision and its goals at each stage. Such workshops will help institutions and individuals play a pivotal role in achieving the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.



We extend our sincere gratitude to everyone involved in the preparation of this workshop, and we aspire to see the positive impact of the workshop on the performance of the corporation and its affiliated companies in the future."

Eng. Mohammed Said Al Masrori, General Supervisor of the Business Environment Team in the Unit emphasised that Oman Vision 2040 placed great importance on the private sector, and its pivotal role moving forward. The Vision allocated a national priority with clear indicators for the field which is "The Private Sector, Investment, and International Cooperation". The priority is connected

with the "Economy and Development" pillar that aims to enhance the contribution of the private sector to the economy. Another important priority that supports the private sector is the "Legislative, Judicial and Oversight System". This priority aims to strengthen the legislative and legal system to be a major enabler for the private sector during the next phase of the implementation of the vision.

Currently, both priorities have come into play, moving in a positive direction. This is exhibited through the development of initiatives and projects related to the two priorities. These ventures are aimed at improving the business

and investment environment in the Sultanate, as well as strengthening the partnership between the public and private sectors in developmental projects. It is expected that the private sector will play a leading role in economic development in the next stage, with the results of these initiatives and projects noticeable in the next phase.

The workshop commenced with a paper on Oman Vision 2040 Visuals, presented by Abdullah Said Al Hakmani, Director of the Technical Office for programmes in the Unit. The paper shed light on the different stages of preparation for Oman Vision 2040, the goals of the vision, and the establishment of the Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit. Furthermore, it discussed work methodologies and the follow-up system. Al Hakmani also showcased the indicators of the Oman Vision 2040 and the efforts made to achieve the vision. He also highlighted the vital national programmes related to the priorities of the Vision.

Al Sayyida Sharifa Bint Mohammed Al Busaidiyah Senior Legal Researcher of the Business Environment Team, Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit discussed during his presentation the efforts made towards initiating the projects related to the "Legislative, Judicial and Oversight System" priority. The development of



these projects and their implementation are being followed up by the Supreme Judicial Council and other relevant executive authorities.

Al Busaidiyah presented several initiatives that are seeing positive results in terms of simplifying procedures in the judicial system, especially notary services and facilitating the other litigation mechanisms. Some of the laws and legislations are currently being worked on with the relevant institutions and are witnessing promising progress. It is anticipated that these initiatives and projects will bring about a positive change in the business and investment environment in Oman.

Eng. Sulaiman Bin Saif Al Shaqsi Head of PMO of Oman National Programme for Investment & Exports Development (Nazdaher) presented a paper which demonstrated the programme's aims to enhance and promote the role of the private sector in leading economic development by establishing an attractive business environment. This will be achieved through the development of the economic sector, improving the business environment, addressing the challenges it faces and devising appropriate mechanisms. This strategic direction is the core of the Private sector, Investment and International Cooperation priority.

During his presentation, he

shed light on various investment sectors in the Sultanate, which include -energy, mining, manufacturing, transportation, aviation, tourism, information technology, communication technology, and food security. The programme ensures the accomplishment of initiatives as per the set timeline.

Furthermore, Al Siyabi indicated that the programme is working toward developing investment opportunities for 2022 in partnership with the concerned authorities in other sectors such as Education, Health, Sports, Culture and Youth. This is aimed at enabling these sectors to attract local and foreign private investments.

Mohammed bin Hamad Al-Hashemi, Executive Director of the National Program for Economic Diversification "Tanwee" gave a background about the programme in his paper and indicated that the programme is aligned with the government's efforts in economic diversification. These endeavours are in line with Oman Vision 2040 National Economic Diversification and Financial Sustainability priority which is also represented in the sectoral priorities included in the tenth five-year plan 2021-2025. The "Tanwee" programme focuses on planning roadmap and economic tools in addition to the sectors of economic diversification in the five-year plan.

NEWEST TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL



Ambassador of UAE to Oman visits Aster Royal Hospital

MUSCAT: The Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates in Oman Mohamed Sultan Al Suwaidi visited Aster Royal Hospital premises and shared his satisfaction with the Hospital's newest services and modern medical equipment.

During the visit, the Hospital's Group CEO, Dr Ashendu Pandey guided the United Arab Emirates Ambassador, alongside the other embassy's representatives, through a comprehensive visit to the hospital's facilities, starting with the state-of-the-art operation theatres and the one-of-a-kind in the private sector "cath-lab" - a special operation theatre dedicated to cardiac catheterisation, interventional radiology and other complex procedures.

The embassy's representatives also visited the four excellence centres - gastroenterology, urology, orthopaedics, obstetrics & gynaecology, as well as the interventional radiology & stroke unit.

The ambassador praised the capabilities of Aster Royal Hospital, referring, "This is a project that can contribute to the quality of medical services, expressing his appreciation to the entire As-

ter team, wishing them success and ease of opening."

The tour ended in the Radiology department - totally equipped by Siemens Healthineers and with the visit to the "VIP area" - a dedicated and exclusive centre, designed for VIP patients.

Aster Royal Hospital is a purpose-built hospital that offers global healthcare standards, aided by an expert team of Omani doctors, supported by international consultants and senior consultant doctors.

Aster Royal Hospital is equipped with two underground parking areas, and 200 inpatient beds, which turns it into the biggest private Hospital in Oman - bringing a total of 150 new doctors and staff members, modern technologies and infrastructure, ready for any major operation or complication with 24-hour emergency service.

This newest super-specialty hospital will be open to the public on September 1.

Aster Royal Hospital is part of Aster DM Healthcare which is currently one of the largest and fastest-growing conglomerates in the Mena region.

ALL-ROUND STYLISH

Huawei MatePad Pro: The all-round stylish and pro flagship tablet

MUSCAT: Huawei recently launched its all-new flagship tablet, the Huawei MatePad Pro, and this is great news for everyone. It redefines what a tablet can be by perfecting both the entertainment and productivity aspects.

The interesting thing about tablets is that they have become a must for families as everyone can use them for different purposes. Most of the time, it stands as the device that everyone in the household can use. If you are looking for a new tablet in Oman for this back-to-school season, whether it is for your personal use, for your children or for the whole family, then Huawei MatePad Pro is the right fit!

The Huawei MatePad Pro is now available in Oman for orders for OMR 259.9 for 128GB WiFi from the Huawei Experience Store at the Mall of Oman as well as certified retailers.

Stunning display and rich sound for flawless entertainment

Bolstering the entertainment aspect of Huawei MatePad Pro are the incredible display and sound. It has taken the display quality quite seriously by featuring an 11-inch OLED Huawei FullViewDisplay with 4.2 mm ultra-narrow bezels and a whopping 92% screen-to-body ratio that provides plenty of screen space with minimal distractions to enjoy your content. You also get to experience smooth scrolling and vivid pictures with a 120 Hz high refresh rate and the ability to render over a billion colours. Huawei MatePad Pro is also the first tablet to receive German TÜV Rheinland Full Care Display 3.0 certification and uses a hardware solution to lower blue light to protect your eyes.

Visuals only tell half the story; you also need sound for exciting



entertainment. Well, this is the first tablet to come equipped with Huawei Sound® that uses an array of 6-speakers to provide amazing sound quality for a complete entertainment experience.

The magnesium alloy frame of the Huawei MatePad Pro makes it unbelievably thin and light. At just 449g, this is, in fact, the lightest 11-inch tablet available on the market. And it has a thickness of only 5.9mm. The rear cover of the tablet features a classy metallic sheen adding to the premium feel of the tablet, and it is silky smooth and wear and fingerprint-resistant.

Online meetings have simplified our lives quite dramatically. However, that means, that to be productive, it is imperative for those video conferences to be free of hiccups. Huawei MatePad Pro brings PC-like Videoconferencing with excellent video and audio quality. It uses a 16 MP HD front camera and AI noise cancellation feature for more efficient communication. But the tablet goes beyond just videoconferences. It offers support for the new detachable Smart Magnetic Keyboard, which can be used in three different modes:

laptop form, detachable form, and studio form. You can also use the Huawei M-Pencil (2nd generation) with it for note-taking and sketching. It's worth mentioning that this is the first device to support Huawei Notes.

Huawei MatePad Pro allows you to access Huawei's native apps, such as the Gallery, in landscape mode. The Multi-window has been upgraded to support one-tap interaction. Currently, you can run up to four concurrent tasks with Multi-window, including two split windows and two App Bubbles.

Huawei MatePad Pro supports Tablet-PC Multi-screen Collaboration capabilities which contain three modes; Mirror Mode, Extend Mode and Collaborate Mode. The new Colour Capture feature allows you to select and apply colours across different apps in any use scenario, including Multi-window, App Multiplier, or small window. After Multi-screen Collaboration is established between a phone and tablet, you can click and select a colour on a phone window and apply it to the tablet, improving the efficiency of cross-device working and creation. Multi-screen col-

laboration enables simple drag-and-drop file transfers between smartphones and tablets. Peripheral sharing lets users type on the smartphone using the tablet's keyboard and screen, play music saved on the smartphone with the tablet's speakers and more. This solution also makes it possible for users to pick up calls or respond to text messages directly from the tablet, facilitating a seamless multi-device experience.

Long-lasting battery, unlimited fun

Huawei MatePad Pro doesn't sacrifice battery life for the sake of thinness. In its compact body, it packs an 8300mAh ultra-large battery. It can power 11.5 hours of 1080p HD video playback and 8.5 hours of web page browsing.

Huawei MatePad Pro offers a smart and seamless experience to users. The trusted, innovative, user-friendly and secure AppGallery is available on Huawei MatePad Pro, where users can easily navigate, explore, find and download a wide range of high-quality apps.

Data comes from Huawei labs. Actual data may vary depending on the configuration, manufacturing process, and measurement method.

Data comes from Huawei labs. The screen-to-body ratio is calculated by comparing the screen active area to the front panel area of the device. Actual measurements may vary.

The screen supports a maximum refresh rate of 120 Hz.

Full Care Display 3.0 is TÜV Rheinland's most comprehensive certification standard for mobile smart devices. Compared with the 2.0 standard, the 3.0 standard enhances pixel density, colour accuracy, gamma, and flicker, to ensure that the evaluation of these indicators more closely tracks the visual attributes of the human eye.



ROUND-UP



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Renault Megane: The compact car that offers comfort and refinement

Admired for its driving performance, owners are praising Renault Megane for its driving comfort, technology and safety features

MUSCAT: Blending striking good looks and stunning performance, Renault Megane, the vibrant and chic saloon, has been making a statement in Oman.

Admired for its driving performance, owners are praising Renault Megane for its driving comfort, technology and safety features.

Tariq Al Khalil who has been driving Renault Megane for the last three years says, “The charismatic Renault Megane is a real head-turner. With its sedan body, dynamic lines and generous proportions, it has a style of its own, both lively and elegant.”

Khalid Al Salmi appreciates Renault Megane for its daring expressive design and assertive style. He says, “With its sleek silhouette, high-tech cockpit and sophisticated styling, Renault Megane combines elegance and versatility.”

Sulaiman Al Amri likes the car for its driving comfort and safety features. He explains, “Attractive and dynamic, Renault Megane makes a bold statement, unveiling its performance excellence and high-tech interior.”

Mansoor Sami compliments Renault Megane for its evolutionary look. He says, “With this vehicle you will enjoy the benefits of a host of advanced technologies.”

A spokesperson for Renault Oman, from the house of Suhail Bahwan Automobiles (SBA) said, “Its energetic lines and substantial proportions add to its increasing popularity with car aficionados in Oman. Megane presents a high-class driving experience, thanks to its technologies, design, and roominess. Renault Megane, which is available in 2.0 litres engine configuration along with 1.6 litres variant, is a popular car and much-loved car in the Sultanate.”

Acclaimed expertise

Renault’s designers have drawn upon their acclaimed expertise to seamlessly incorporate 503dm3 VDA of boot storage capacity without compromising the vehicle’s aesthetic appeal. Its generous dimensions (4.63m long and 1.81m



wide, with a record wheelbase in its class of 2.71m) underscore its status-enhancing credentials and provide additional room for occupants. Its sleek profile is the result of painstaking work on the proportion of glass to metal (one-third / two-thirds), as well as its low height (1.44m) and ground clearance (13cm).

Fitted as standard either across the range or in the higher-end versions, chrome detailing (grille, side mouldings, door window strips, door handles and exhaust tailpipes) point to the model’s quality and reinforce its status-enhancing appeal. Its 1.57m front and rear track – the widest in its class – and its range of wheel sizes up to 18 inches imbue it with a striking stance. Its broad, sculpted shoulders express its sportier style.

Megane is available in a choice of eight exterior colours. Its seven metallic options include Pearl White, Mercury, Mink Brown, Cosmos Blue, Comet Grey, Flame Red, Dune Beige. It is one non-metallic finish: Glacier White.

Multiple unique features

The Megane shares many styling features with its larger sibling Renault Talisman, including its lighting signature which is visible night and day: The front C-shaped lighting signature features LED 3D-effect light guides. Available as option on the top version of the Megane are full LED (LED Pure Vision technology) head lights. The rear LED lights form a unique horizontal 3D-effect signature featuring Edge Light technology. The

slender brush stroke-like lines emit a deep red light.

Carefully appointed ‘cockpit’-feel

The carefully appointed ‘cockpit’-feel cabin exudes an unmistakable ‘cockpit’-feel thanks to sculpted, enveloping seats and features such as a configurable colour 7-inch TFT data display, or a portrait-format 8.7-inch multimedia tablet, R-LINK 2 which supports Apple carplay and Android Auto. Furthermore, the positioning of all the vehicle’s technological features has been thought through to facilitate their everyday use.

Travelling comfort is further enhanced by the careful attention that has been paid to the interior finish, to the quality of the soft-to-the-touch materials, which are within easy reach of the driver and passengers: Materials found in Renault’s higher-end models, Plush foam-backed covering selected for the dashboard, upper door panels, door inserts and armrests, Satin-effect chrome instrument, air vent and centre console surrounds, Full-grain Nappa leather-trimmed steering wheel, available on the top trim level.

Class-leading comfort

The precision-designed seats promise and provide class-leading comfort and support thanks notably to the use of dual-density foam. The frames are the same as those employed for Koleos and Talisman. Leather seats available as option on the top version offer massage function for the driver plus electrically-

adjustable lumbar support.

The cabin offers a generous level of space for the driver and passengers alike: Shoulder and elbow room are amongst the best in the class (1,441mm shoulder room in the front and 1,377mm in the rear, with 1,492mm elbow room in the front and 1,413mm in the rear). 216mm knee room in the rear. The angle of the rear-seat back (27 degrees) optimises head room for taller passengers and improves postural comfort.

Innovative technology

The Megane is based upon the Renault-Nissan Alliance’s CMF-C/D modular architecture which it shares with other high-end Renault models, including the Talisman and the Koleos. The Megane comes with a wide range of features more commonly associated with the next segment up and unique in the segment: a configurable 7-inch TFT colour screen instrument display and the R-LINK 2 multimedia tablet available in two formats (7-inch landscape format, or 8.7-inch portrait format)

Digital surround

Higher-end versions of the Megane come with R-LINK 2 with a 7-inch landscape format or 8.7-inch portrait format (22cm), identical to that available for the Koleos and the Talisman. Unique in the segment, it benefits from a capacitive ‘pinch & zoom’ screen for simplified use, much like that of a smartphone or tablet computer.

R-LINK 2 is a control centre that manages the vehicle’s various func-

tions: multimedia, navigation, telephone, radio, driving aids (ADAS).

R-LINK 2 offers: an intuitive, easy-to-use interface, similar to that of a tablet or smartphone: click-and-drag to move icons, page scrolling, two-finger zoom, etc, easy customisation, courtesy of three configurable ‘home’ pages with widgets (icons) and up to six different profiles that allow swift access to pre-selected driving settings and in-car ambience preferences, a control centre which enables the activation and deactivation of the majority of the car’s functions, including the audio system, the hands-free telephone, the navigation and driving aids, connectivity, with smartphone replication Apple car play and android auto (available depending on market).

The Megane equipped with R-LINK 2 also benefit from 3D Sound by Arkamys and eight speakers. Thanks to its special digital signal processing software, this system adds depth and texture to listening pleasure.

Connectivity and charging options include: Bluetooth® for hands-free use of a telephone and audio streaming (standard on all versions), one or two USB ports (depending on version), a 3.5mm jack socket (standard on all versions), one cigar lighter cum 12V power source and one 12V power supply at rear (standard on all versions) and a SD card slot (standard with R-LINK 2),

Driving data (speed, RPM, fuel consumption, etc.) is displayed on a personalisable 7-inch colour screen situated behind the steering

wheel, in the driver’s line of sight.

Ensures driving comfort

More traditionally found in higher-segment vehicles, useful and easy to use ADAS contribute to driving comfort and safety. The Megane benefits from the very latest driving aid (ADAS) technologies that also equip Renault’s high-end models (Talisman, Koleos).

Blind Spot Warning (BSW): To ensure safe overtaking manoeuvres, this system alerts the driver by means of a visual signal on the side mirrors when another vehicle is detected in the blind spot. The system functions between 30kph and 140kph.

Unstable Trajectory Alert: this system detects the driver’s fatigue signs, and alert to prevent accidents.

Rear View Camera: When reversing, this camera provides a view of the space behind the vehicle on the touchscreen display. To further assist the manoeuvre, this image is accompanied by a moving guideline and a static guideline.

Front, rear and side parking sensors: These sensors assist the driver in successfully completing parking manoeuvres, without relinquishing any control of the car; 360° ultrasonic detectors alert the driver when there is the risk of hitting an obstacle, thereby protecting the vehicle.

Easy Park Assist: After helping the driver to identify a suitable parking spot by measuring the available space with its sensors, this system subsequently takes charge of the steering during the parking manoeuvre. Easy Park Assist caters for three different types of parking: parallel, perpendicular and angled. The central screen displays all the information required to complete the manoeuvre (graphic illustration, reversing camera and sensors). In every case, the driver has control over the braking and acceleration during the manoeuvre.

Unique machineries

In addition to these technologies from Renault’s high-end models – unique in the segment – and depending upon the version and market, the Megane offers the following features from the next segment up, designed to make life easier: Hands-free entry card with automatic vehicle locking. The electronic parking brake immobilises the vehicle when the engine stops and frees up space on the centre console. Automatic dual-zone climate control.

Easy Trunk Access (ETA): a hands-free boot opening system that works by detecting movement underneath the rear bumper. This is a unique feature in the compact saloon segment.

GUARANTEEING EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

OIFC’s Khedmah offers quality debt recovery service



MUSCAT: Reflecting on more than 40 years of experience in bill collection in the Sultanate, Oman Investment and Finance Company’s (OIFC) Khedmah continues to develop its scope of work, thereby including the purchase of debts from telecommunications companies and other businesses.

With a dedicated team and collection channels, the company is striving to enhance and develop the new service without compromising the quality of customer experience.

Commenting on the same, Mohammed bin Saif Al Toqi, Senior Director of Communications Operations at Khedmah, said, “We have been working on the debt

recovery activity plan for some time now since OIFC has a number of contracts with several telecom companies in Oman. We have started this service as a result of these contracts, whereby, we purchase the debts from the companies. In order to provide the payment mechanism, several procedures are followed, including directly contacting the subscriber and determining the most appropriate payment method.”

Keeping up with the latest advances at work, achieving growth as well as expanding its customer base, Khedmah continuously provides training to its employees and hosts workshops on and off the job.

The company believes that boosting the abilities of human resources and instilling the right skill set are key factors in preparing them for job requirements. The company also continues to develop systems to keep pace with the steady development in the sector, considering the standards of safety, speed and ease of use.

OIFC seeks to become a one-stop shop where everybody’s needs are met on the same platform. It is working toward adding new services to keep pace with the sector’s demands and facilitate the provision of services to subscribers. Additionally, the company keenly studies the market’s needs and stays

up-to-date with the advancements in global technologies to maintain its position in the sector.

OIFC has been the leading Investment and Services Company in Oman, specialising in billing and collection for four decades. It provides a central point for customers to pay all electricity, water and telecommunications bills along with many additional services through its network of 68 branches covering various governorates of Oman. The company complements its efforts through the many automatic payment machines distributed around the Sultanate and its electronic platforms such as the Khedmah application and website.



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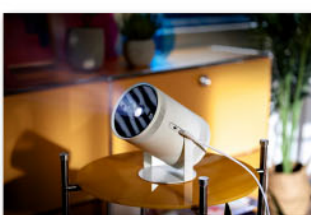
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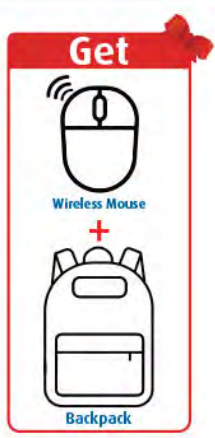
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For the love of dates

OMAN is known for its unique hospitality and it is common for visitors to be invited for Omani coffee and dates when travelling through the country. Be it any household or an office, guests are welcomed with home-grown dates and traditionally brewed drinks called kahwa.

One can find many date palm fields across many governorates in the Sultanate and farmers grow more than 250 indigenous varieties of dates. Khalas, Khu-naizi, and Fargh are some of the best dates grown in Oman. While Al Khalas is believed to be of the best quality, other varieties like Nagal, Ash Patash, Bunaranja, Mmajdool, Hili al Hassa, Barni, and Mathloob are quite in demand.

Though it is grown in almost most parts of Oman, Nizwa and Suwaiq are the main centres of date farming. Other notable places from where dates are brought are Sumail, Bidbid, Dima wa' Tayeen, Ibra, Samad A'Shan, and Al Rowdha.

Known for their nutritional value and health benefits, it is rich in fibre, iron, calcium, and lots of other vitamins and minerals as well they are used in many forms ... from half-ripe to fully ripe and even as date syrup.

Date harvest is a social event participated by all members of the family. They separate good quality dates and store it for consumption, for gifting or selling in the local markets and export to foreign markets.

In each region of the country the harvesting and the associated procurement of the priced fruit have traditional variations.