

OMAN RANKS FIRST IN ENERGY REGULATION AMONG GCC STATES

The Sultanate of Oman achieved advanced places in Regulatory Indicators for Sustainable Energy (RISE) affiliated to the World Bank. Oman occupied first place in RISE at the level of GCC states and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. It also ranked 6th globally on the same index. **>A5**



6 085010 120010

HM RECEIVES A CABLE OF THANKS

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from Lt. Gen Abdul Fattah Al Burhan, Chairman of the Transitional Sovereignty Council in Sudan, in response to His Majesty's cable of greetings on the occasion of Sudan's 67th Independence Anniversary. In his cable, Al Burhan expressed his thanks and appreciation to His Majesty the Sultan's sincere sentiments. He wished His Majesty good health and the Omani people further development and growth. **-ONA**



Founded 1975 · Volume 47 No. 220 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

[TIMESOFOMAN.COM](#) [FACEBOOK.COM/TIMESOFOMAN](#) [TWITTER.COM/TIMESOFOMAN](#) [YOUTUBE.COM/USER/TIMESOFOMANONLINE](#) [TIMESOFOMAN.COM/WHATSAPP](#) [TIMESOFOMAN.COM/RSS](#) [LINKEDIN.COM/COMPANY/TIMES-OF-OMAN](#) [INSTAGRAM.COM/TIMESOFOMAN](#)

Scan the code
or Call 24790000

"Someday" is today!

Grow your business with Najahi
Business Banking from Bank Muscat.

Bank Muscat. Better Everyday.

MONTREAL

His Majesty issues Royal Decree on air services agreement

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Tuesday issued Royal decree No. (5/2023) ratifying the protocol of amending the air services agreement between the governments of the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Turkey, signed in Montreal on 29 September 2022.

Ratifies the protocol

Article (1) ratifies the aforementioned protocol in accordance with the version attached to this decree.

Article (2) says that this decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from its data of issue. **-ONA**

A unique experience
theguideoman.com @guideoman

26th
MUSCAT

BUY MORE WIN MORE
CHANCE TO WIN
OMR 4000*

1 GET A CAN
2 SCAN QR CODE
3 UPLOAD RECEIPT FROM CAN
4 ENTER THE RAFFLE
*TICKET APPLY

HIS MAJESTY THE SULTAN LEAVES FOR UAE TODAY

His Majesty the Sultan will be accompanied by an official delegation

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik will pay a visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Wednesday.

A statement to this effect was issued by the Diwan of Royal Court on Tuesday, reading as follows: "His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik will leave tomorrow for the United Arab Emirates (UAE), in response to UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's invi-



tation to His Majesty to take part in a fraternal meeting between GCC Leaders, King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and President Abdel Fatah El-Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

Official delegation

His Majesty the Sultan will be accompanied by an official delegation comprising Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal Al Busaidi, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, Gen. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister and Sayyid Dr. Ahmed bin Hilal Al Busaidi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the UAE.

May the Almighty Allah guard His Majesty the Sultan wherever he might be and grant him permanent success!

- ONA

ARABIAN GULF CUP

Oman erupt in joy as team inches closer to Gulf Cup title

Times News Service

MUSCAT: It was a little late in the night in Oman when the final whistle at the Al Minaa Olympic Stadium in Basra, Iraq, was blown by the UAE referee Adel Al Naqbi, signalling the victory of Oman over Bahrain in the semi-final of the 25th Arabian Gulf Cup on Monday.

Far away from a packed Al Minaa Olympic Stadium, the end of the match triggered massive celebrations in the Sultanate as unmindful of the late hour, hundreds of cars started honking in capital Muscat to celebrate the Red Warriors' victory and the march into the final.

Fans turned up in good numbers at the Shatti Al Qurum service road and all eyes are now on Thursday evening when the talented bunch of national team footballers take on hosts Iraq in



the summit clash at the Basra International Stadium. The match kicks off at 8pm, Oman time.

This will be Oman's fifth appearance in the final of the Gulf Cup and in the previous four occasions, Oman have managed to win twice. The Red Warriors will now target their third ever title while Iraq will eye for their

fourth crown.

The last time Oman played in the final was in the 23rd edition in Kuwait when they edged the UAE in a penalty shootout on January 5, 2018. Hopes are high among Oman fans as they believe that the young team has the potential to achieve big things. **>A2**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Empty Quarter Festival to start on 25 January

1 The Directorate General of Heritage and Tourism in Dhofar will organise the Empty Quarter Festival in the Wilayat of Thumrait from during 25 January till 3 February. The festival fits with the plan to make Dhofar a sustainable tourism destination. **>A3**

WORLD

India sets example in fight against Covid

2 India's fight against the Covid crisis has set a positive global example, said Mark Suzman, CEO of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, adding that it can be a model for others on how it addressed the manufacturing and distribution of vaccines at such a scale. **>A7**

SPORTS

Ronaldo to lead Saudi XI in tie against PSG



3 After going to Saudi Arabia, Cristiano Ronaldo is almost certain to play in his first game, and it may pit him against Lionel Messi in a friendly game between the Saudi All-Star XI and Ligue 1 powerhouse Paris Saint-Germain, as reported by GOAL.com. **>A8**

GLOBAL DATABASE INDEX

Oman named one of the world's safest countries



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman is one of the safest countries in the world, according to a new report.

The Sultanate of Oman has been rated the fourth most secure country in the world.

Oman also occupies the 5th global position as a crime-free country, according to the Global Database Index (Numbeo).

Oman received 80.3 points in the security level and 19.7 points in scale measuring the spread of crime.

The results reflect the efforts made by the Royal Oman Police (ROP) in preserving security and public order, protecting lives and properties, preventing and combating all sorts of crimes.

The accomplishment also affirms the high level of awareness in Omani society, with citizens complementing the efforts of the ROP in maintaining law and order.

Abdul Latif Al Balushi, a citizen from Sohar said: "The Omani people are very kind hearted which makes Oman one of the safest country in the world."

Al-Balushi also said that it is the love and respect towards all religions that make Oman special.

A total of 142 countries were covered by the Numbeo Safety Index by Country 2023, with Qatar ranking first with a score of 85.2.

Qatar is followed by the UAE with a score of 84.9, Taiwan with a score of 84.1, Isle of Man with a score of 81.4 and then Oman with a score of 80.3.

The Numbeo database has been publishing annual reports since 2009, based on the crime rates in countries around the world. The index of crimes is measured according to the local laws of the countries.

In 2021, Oman was named among the top five safest countries in the world for expatriates, according to a global report that ranks countries on the basis of how easy they are for foreign nationals to live in.

Oman is ranked fifth among 59 of the countries polled, with only the United Arab Emirates (ranked third) finishing above it among the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, according to the Expat Insider report by Inter Nations.



PRAYER
TIMINGS



Dhuhr.....12:22pm

Asr.....3:27pm

Maghrib.....5:48pm

Isha.....7:02pm

Fajr (Tomorrow).....5:32am

Photography helps in strengthening cultural and artistic connections

National Museum in collaboration with the French Embassy in Oman hosted a discussion panel titled ‘Oman in Photography: A Scenographic Experience Through the Lens of Omani and French Photographers’

MUSCAT: The National Museum represented by the learning Centre, in collaboration with the French Embassy in the Sultanate of Oman, hosted yesterday a discussion panel titled “Oman in Photography: A Scenographic Experience Through the Lens of Omani and French Photographers”.

The conference was attended by Veronique Aulagnon, Ambassador of the French Republic to the Sultanate of Oman. It was also attended by photography enthusiasts, members of photography societies, students, teachers, professional and amateur photographers, as well as reputed and emerging visual artists.

Dr. Abdulmonam Mansour Al Hassani, Founder of the Photo Society of Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), highlighted the stages that photography underwent in Oman from 1970 until today.

Al Hassani reviewed the early features of photography in Oman during the 60s and 70s and the emergence of some individual Omani photographers.

He also touched on the institutional beginning of photography in 1988 by establishing a mini-group for photography in the Cultural Club. Through this group, photo exhibitions were held and despite their scarceness those gatherings exhibited a fascination with a silent nature, people's lives and Omani architecture.

Dr. Abdulmonam Al Hassani pointed out that in an organised manner the photography group at SQU was established during 1990, followed by the Omani Society for



Fine Arts in 1993 and the Photography Society in 2012.

Al Hassani highlighted the emergence of student institutions and the Stal Gallery team, in addition to some independent photographers who studied the art of photography and presented their experiences in their own unique way, away from institutional frameworks.

In her turn, Dr. Genevieve Galliano, Chief Curator at the Museum of Fine Arts in Lyon, touched on the history, activities and departments of the Museum of Fine Arts in Lyon, and explained the reasons of the Museum's invitation to Ferranti and the artistic purpose of this collaboration.

In preparation for the second phase of this collaboration,

the French Embassy invited the French photographer Ferranti to photograph landscapes and archaeological sites in the Sultanate of Oman.

Moreover, Ferranti showcased his work in taking photos of archaeological sites. He also shared his thoughts on capturing the essence of Oman in an artistic and professional manner.

Further, Omani photographer, Reem Al Sheikh, a specialist in abstract fine arts, shared the successive steps of her journey, the drive behind her work that led her to become the photographer she is today, and the reflection of her life on photography and the art of abstraction.

In their turn, photographers Mahmoud Al Zadjali and Israa Al



Balushi of Stal Gallery in Muscat, talked about their experience in being among young photographers in the Sultanate of Oman. They also pinpointed the mission of professional photographers in Oman and their role to represent the country in international events.

They explained how photography encourages communication between generations and regions. They also underscored the role of

photography in strengthening cultural and artistic connections.

A mini-exhibition was held on the sidelines of the event to showcase some of Oman's picturesque natural scenery and various archaeological sites.

The conference offered a global panoramic view on the art of photography as it is practiced nowadays and described the experience of French and Omani photographers in

capturing the heritage, landscapes and archaeological sites of Oman.

The event also contributed to building bridges between Omani and French photographers. Moreover, during the conference, the scenography links between various forms of art were displayed.

The conference was held within the framework of cooperation between the National Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts of Lyon. -ONA

25TH GULF CUP

<FROM

A1

Oman move closer to their third Gulf Cup crown

Oman's success in the Gulf Cup came late in the history of the tournament, which began in 1970. The first time Oman reached the final was in the 17th edition in Qatar in 2004. The runner-up finish was followed by another second-placed silver medal in the next edition in 2007.

It was January 17, 2009, when Oman's football history scripted a golden chapter under Frenchman Claude Le Roy, as the Red Warriors clinched the title for the first time in front of thousands of fans at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Muscat.

The next title was in 2017-18 when under Late Dutch coach Pim Verbeek, the team lifted the trophy. For Iraq, who have won the title thrice and reached the final on other two occasions, it will be



their first appearance in the final since 2013. They were champions in 1979, 1984 and 1988 while the other time they reached the final was in 1976.

On Monday, Oman moved a step closer to their third title as the victory came through a moment of magic late in the match. Striker Ja-

meel al Yahmadi unleashed a stinging long-ranger in the 83rd minute of the match to beat the outstretched hands of Bahrain goalkeeper and captain Sayed Jafar. Yahmadi's effort was the icing on the cake for Oman as the goal is arguably one of the best the ongoing Arabian Gulf Cup has witnessed.







FRESHEN UP
WITH THE NEW
LEMON &
MINT



Call Center Number
24 596 999

EMPTY QUARTER FESTIVAL IN THUMRAIT WILAYAT TO KICK OFF ON 25 JANUARY

The festival fits with the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism’s plan to make Dhofar a sustainable tourism destination throughout the year



SALALAH: The Directorate General of Heritage and Tourism in the Governorate of Dhofar will organise during 25 January till 3 February, the Empty Quarter Festival in Al Shasr area of the Wilayat of Thumrait.

The festival fits with the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism’s plan to make Dhofar a sustainable tourism destination throughout the year.

Khalid bin Abdullah Al-Abri, Director General of the Directorate General of Heritage and Tourism in Dhofar Governorate, said in an interview that the festival will host a set of heritage, tourism, entertainment and sports activities, in addition to organising challenge competitions and local bazaars.

He added, “The Empty Quar-

ter Festival will be held in the Al Khadf area in Niyabat Al-Shasr in the Wilayat of Thumrait, which has been known throughout the history as the gateway to the Empty Quarter desert and is distinguished by its soft sands and attractive tourism sites, noting that the period of holding the festival corresponds to the influx of international and domestic tourism in this tourist season.”

He stressed the Directorate’s endeavour to place this festival on the map of regional tourism festivals, which qualifies it to host the World Desert Championships and stimulates the desire of tourism partners to support and sponsor the festival, which brings economic and marketing returns to the Sultanate of Oman.

He explained that the festival o-



sis is the main station at which all services, various events and public facilities will be available for visitors, including mobile vehicles for entrepreneurs, the heritage village will contain an exhibition of handicrafts, a corner for families, and a square for traditional events. -ONA



Conference to shed light on investment opportunities

LONDON: The commercial attaché in the Sultanate’s embassy in London, UK, will organise on Thursday business conference with the participation of Oman Investment Authority and its affiliated companies concerned with economic diversification.

The event is being organised in cooperation with the Business Centre of West London University.

Economic diversification

The conference would shed light on the investment opportunities and the various sectors for investment in the Sultanate in order to achieve the economic diversification through the logistics, tourism, mining, food security and fisheries sectors.

The government companies will showcase the incentives the Omani market offers to investors and the incentives of the Investor Residency Programme and its affiliated services.

The conference would see the announcement of “Invest in Oman” Services by opening commercial registration, award of registration certificate and the licence of the activity for the first time in the Sultanate’s embassy in London as well as opening of bank accounts for individual investors and companies in the Sultanate’s embassy in London.

The conference would also familiarise the participants with the services of Credit Oman and the services it offer for investors. -ONA



MEETING: The event is being organised in cooperation with the Business Centre of West London University. -ONA

OUR FINANCIAL STRENGTH
HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY
RECOGNISED
**7 TIMES
WINNER**
OF AIWA AWARDS UNDER
**BEST
PERFORMING
COMPANIES
CATEGORY**

جوائز
الاقتصاد
لأفضل الشركات
العمانية أداء
ALAM AL-IKTISAAD AWARDS

PROVIDING FLEXIBLE INSURANCE SOLUTIONS SINCE 1985
FOR ALL YOUR INSURANCE NEEDS, CHOOSE US

OMAN UNITED INSURANCE COMPANY SAOG
Post Box 1522, Ruwi, PC 112 Sultanate of Oman
24477300 | info@omanutd.com | www.omanutd.com

Oman United Insurance Co. SAOG



SAMAIL GAP:

THE HISTORICAL TRADE ROUTE



Samail is located in Al-Dakhiliyah region of Oman and the wadi of Samail is also known as the Samail Gap that divides Al Hajar Mountains into the Eastern and Western subranges. It has been there since the olden times and is one of the main communication routes connecting the seaside with the interior. There are several intertwined wadis decorated with little towers and forts. It has a very peculiar shape that attracts the eyes of the visitors. Caravans had used this route for trading in frankincense, and its explorers include Marco Polo and Ibn Battutah.



Samail is also known for many villages. Located in the south-west of the Wilayat is Al Afiya village and Saija village is located under a mountainous footpath surrounded by mountains on all sides. While Al Afiya village is an ideal destination for nature lovers, Saija village is known for its abundance of water and extends from Al Hajar Al Gharbi to Jabal Akhdar.





PURE AND NATURAL OMANI WATER

Winter Special Offer

* Offer Valid Till: 25/1/2023

12
Tissue Boxes



60
5GB Refill Coupons



60
250 ml Bottle



FREE DELIVERY

For 50 OMR

* This Offer Only Available On Tanuf App

Download on the App Store

Available on the Google Play



Scan the code

COMMENTARY

Organisational psychology and its development



MOHAMMED ANWAR AL BALUSHI

Nowadays, the “Organisational Development” department or section is commonly seen in most organisations. What is the aim and practice of organisational development, and how can it add value to organisations, and in what ways? To further explore the word development, we might ask which areas of the organisations need to be developed?

It is important to ask, are organisations developing people or are people developing organisations? Of course, this can be one of the debatable questions and should be handled carefully. In how far should the Organisational Development Team (ODT) be responsible for both intangible and tangible parts of the organisation?



The psychology of an organisation is fundamental to its development from a practical standpoint. So, what is organisational Psychology? In the absence of understanding the organisational psychology, it might be intricate to develop the organisations.

In most cases, we have seen that organisational performance has been below average last year due to various economic factors, which is one of the external factors. Can the Organisational Development Team figure out what is causing the company’s declining profitability?

It is my strong belief that the success of an organisation depends on the “Strong and competent employees”, and that it is always the employees who double a company’s profits by their consistent efforts, both physically, by sitting late, and mentally, by bringing new ideas and suggestions to the organisation.

Is there a way to have those strong and competent employees to serve the organisation in a good manner? Is not this a challenging question?

Management always follows two methods, to increase the profitability of the organisation, in my opinion. The first way is to replace existing employees by recruiting new ones, and the second way is to develop existing employees. In your opinion, which is the most meaningful and rightful approach?

What should be the ODT’s starting point for developing the organisation? It is crucial for managers to understand the psyche of the employees they manage as without understanding the root cause of the employee’s poor performance, the employee may not be developed or kept in the right position.

It will take less effort for the ODT to develop the organisations, if they know that, the right person is at the right place at the right time.

Unless he or she is at the right place, the individual might not perform well and become a burden on the team. Therefore, the ODT has to work harder on training, coaching, and developing these types of employees.

TALKS SESSION

Oman, UAE hold official talks in legislative field



ABU DHABI: A session of official talks was held here yesterday between the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on the legislative field.

During the talks, Oman was represented by Khalid Hilal Al Ma’awali, Chairman of the Shura Council, while the UAE was represented by Saqr Ghobash, Speaker of the Federal National Council of the UAE.

During the talks session, the two sides discussed several matters of mutual interest. -ONA

ANNOUNCEMENT

Arbitration centre

MANAMA: The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Commercial Arbitration Centre declared Oman as head of the centre from January to December 2023.

The announcement was made during the 84th board meeting of the GCC Commercial Arbitration Centre, held at the centre’s headquarters in Bahrain.

POST-MATCH COMMENTS

Victory has given lot more confidence, says Oman’s coach Branko Ivankovic

Times News Service

MUSCAT: In his post-match comments, Oman’s coach Branko Ivankovic of Croatia said: “It is a great feeling to be in the final. The players did a commendable job and demonstrated a good execution of the plan. I am proud of them and congratulate them on their efforts. They played an excellent tactical game and didn’t make any mistakes.

“The goal [scored by Jameel al Yahmadi] was a reward of teamwork and individual brilliance. We made it to the final despite having injuries to a couple of our key players.”

The Croatian coach expressed his happiness at his success in making the Omani fans happy.

“This goal was a reward for the players’ performance during the match,” Ivankovic said.

Fans thanked

The experienced Croatian “thanked the fans who flew in specially to watch the semi-final from Oman.”

“I am happy that the fans could enjoy a good match and watch the team’s victory and progress into the final.”

Ivankovic said: “I am satisfied with the team’s performance. The match against the defending champions was difficult. We deserved the victory and it has come against the holders.

Good experience

“The victory has given a lot more confidence to the players, who have gained good experience with each match over the past few days. I try to make my boys believe in themselves and emphasise the mindset of having a winning mentality in them. I thank the fans for trusting us, and our goal is always to bring joy and smiles on the faces of our fans.”

The Croatian added: “I am now looking ahead to face Iraq in the final. I have followed the Iraq team a lot. I thank the Iraqi fans who have supported the teams during the ongoing tournament. I realise the challenge of facing a host nation in the final. I aim to win and bring the title back to Oman. Each team goes into the finals with an aim to win. We are



ready to face Iraq in the final.”

The finalists

It may be mentioned that Oman and Iraq, the finalists, were in the same group before advancing to the knockout round. The group stage match between them ended in a goalless draw with Iraq going on to top group only on goal difference after both the teams collected seven points each at the end of the group engagements.

Bahrain coach all praise for Yahmadi’s goal

A disappointed Bahrain coach Helio Sousa of Portugal said that the “semi-final was a balanced match and the only difference was a result of a great goal.”

“I am proud of my players who fought till the end. It was a balanced match and only a superb effort and a goal could make the difference [pointing to Jameel al Yahmadi’s stunning pile-driver],” he said.

Good matches

He added: “We played good matches during the tournament. Today’s match was decided by small details. Both the teams played a very good match. We will certainly work on change. We are building a team for the future, and we are trying to create a balanced team between experience and youth. We had an opportunity to give the youth a chance during the Gulf Cup. We have the Asian Cup in the summer, and we will continue to work for improvement.”

Oman ranks first in energy regulation among GCC states

In the General Level of Sustainable Energy Regulation index, Oman ranked second among GCC states, 5th among MENA countries and 38th at the global level

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman achieved advanced places in Regulatory Indicators for Sustainable Energy (RISE) affiliated to the World Bank.

Oman occupied first place in RISE at the level of GCC states and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. It also ranked 6th globally on the same index.

In the General Level of Sustainable Energy Regulation index, Oman ranked second among GCC states, 5th among MENA countries and 38th at the global level.

The figures indicate Oman’s robust progress in achieving the goals of Oman Vision 2040, including the global competitiveness goal.

The accomplishment also reflects the positive aspect of applied policies and regulatory frameworks in Oman. This will contribute to attracting investments in areas related to the energy sector and generating opportunities for training and



employing for Omanis.

The Authority for Public Services Regulation said that one of the most important factors that contributed to Oman’s accessing these high rankings is the attention that the government and relevant authorities accorded to developing sustainable energy spheres and providing necessary enablers through approved plans to implement the transition to

alternative energy and diversify its sources.

Other factors include market liberalization (through bilateral sales and spot market), adopting a national strategy for an orderly transition to zero neutrality (in carbon emissions), establishing the Oman Sustainability Centre, setting regulatory frameworks for environment-friendly vehicles, sector-based governance, setting the necessary incentives to support areas related to renewable energy and backing up initiatives.

RISE, which deals with national policies and regulatory frameworks for sustainable energy, covers 140 countries, representing more than 90% of the world’s population. It is considered a reference for policy maker, helping them to standardize their regulatory frameworks in the areas of renewable energy regulation. -ONA

European Union outlines plan for clean tech future

The EU’s Green Deal plan aims to make Europe the home of clean technology and industrial innovation on the road to net-zero CO2 emissions by 2050

BRUSSELS: Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Commission, presented a “Green Deal Industrial Plan” at the World Economic Forum in Davos on Tuesday. The EU must invest to stay competitive “before the fossil fuel economy becomes obsolete,” von der Leyen said.

The EU’s Green Deal plan aims to make Europe the home of clean technology and industrial innovation on the road to net-zero CO2 emissions by 2050. “To help make this happen, we will put forward a new Net-Zero Industry Act,” EU chief said. “The aim will be to focus investment on strategic projects along the entire supply chain.”

The EU aims to be competitive
The EU is concerned that European companies will move to China or to the US, which has a \$369 billion (€341 billion) scheme to subsidise green production. “We see aggressive attempts to attract our industrial capacities away to China and elsewhere,” von der Leyen said. The EU plans to provide money for industry “to keep European industry attractive.” Von der Leyen added, “There is



a need to be competitive with the offers and incentives that are currently available outside the EU.” She also set out a framework to relax strict EU state aid rules, at least temporarily, to allow for “easier calculations. Simpler procedures. Accelerated approvals.” The Commission President said that because not all countries in the 27-nation bloc have the same capacity to support national industries, using state aid alone could result in unfair competition and “fragmentation” that would damage the EU’s single market. “To avoid a fragmenting effect on the single market and to support the clean tech transition across the whole Union we must also step up EU funding,” von der Leyen said. “For the medium term, we will prepare a European Sovereignty Fund as part of the mid-term review of our budget later this year,” she noted.

Seeking a level playing field with China
In her speech, von der Leyen also said the EU needs to work and trade with China on clean tech and push for a level playing field rather than seek to decouple from the world’s second-largest economy. She mentioned that China had made boosting clean tech innovation and manufacturing a key priority in its five-year plan, dominating in sectors such as electric vehicles and solar panels. “But competition on net-zero must be based on a level-playing field,” she said, adding that China heavily subsidises its industry and restricts access to its market for EU companies. “We will still need to work and trade with China – especially when it comes to this transition. So we need to focus on de-risking rather than decoupling,” she said. Ursula von der Leyen also prom-

ised that there would be “no let-up” in EU support for Ukraine, as she spoke in Davos. “There will be no let-up in our steadfast support to Ukraine, from helping to restore power, heating and water, to preparing for the long-term effort of reconstruction,” she said. Von der Leyen reminded that many had doubts about European support to Ukraine, but now Ukraine has a candidate status, EU countries are supplying arms to Ukraine, and millions of Ukrainian refugees live in the EU. The first €3 billion (\$3.2 billion) disbursement of an €18 billion support package for Ukraine on Tuesday was “a strong message” to support Ukraine’s financial stability, she said. “We are in it for as long as it takes and stand with our Ukrainian friends,” von der Leyen said. “There will be no impunity to Russian crimes.” – **dw**

LONDON’S HIGH COURT



UK court grants permission to appeal over Rwanda policy

LONDON: London’s High Court has granted permission to asylum seekers in the UK and charities supporting them to appeal against a ruling that deemed the UK government’s plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda lawful. Previously, in December 2022, the High Court ruled the government’s Rwanda asylum plan breached neither domestic laws nor the United Nations Refugee Convention. The court ruling was met with disappointment, and Asylum Aid – a charity organization that offers legal advice and support to people seeking refuge in the UK – applied for permission to appeal the December judgment, arguing the High Court had “erred” in its ruling. The organisation claims the Rwanda asylum procedure is unfair because it gives asylum seekers – generally new arrivals to the UK who are in detention – just seven days to grapple with the fact that they are being considered for deportation to Rwanda. According to Asylum Aid, this short time frame would not give asylum seekers enough time to find legal representation to argue their case. After a hearing at the High Court on Monday, Judges Clive Lewis and Jonathan Swift granted permission to legally challenge Britain’s Rwanda asylum policy at the Court of Appeal. This decision means that no deportation flights will be taking

off from the UK to Rwanda any time soon, and asylum seekers can challenge the entire deportation plan at the Court of Appeal. Sophie Lucas, a lawyer at Duncan Lewis Solicitors who represents some asylum seekers and refugee charities like Care4Calais, welcomed the court’s decision. “The six asylum seekers who we represent who were due to be sent to Rwanda can continue to now challenge aspects of the lawfulness of the whole plan at the Court of Appeal, which I imagine would take place closer to Easter. Whichever party succeeds in the Court of Appeal, it is likely that this will go to the Supreme Court,” she told DW. “But this entire legal process is a torturous ordeal for the asylum seekers, who will continue living in limbo until the complex legal procedures are over. They will have to wait months on end to find out if they can actually start rebuilding their lives in the UK,” she added. Meanwhile, the British government is prepared for the lengthy legal process and remains committed to its asylum policy. “Unfortunately you have got to let that play out,” UK Home Secretary Suella Braverman said at an event during the British Conservative Party’s October 2022 conference, adding that the legal battles in the case could go all the way to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

The UK’s Rwanda asylum plan Last April, Britain’s then home secretary, Priti Patel, signed an agreement with Rwanda in which the latter would receive asylum seekers who had arrived in the UK illegally. The policy was introduced in a bid to stop people seeking refuge from trying to enter the UK by small boat or truck across the English Channel. While the first deportation flight was set to take off to Rwanda on June 14 last year, several protests and legal challenges raised by rights groups and immigration lawyers, as well as a last minute intervention by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), grounded the flight and asylum seekers found their deportation flight tickets canceled. Prior to the High Court’s final ruling on the policy, the United Nations’ Refugee Agency (UNHCR) also expressed concern about the Rwanda arrangement in a statement, saying “it breaches international law and shifts the UK’s responsibilities onto a country already striving to manage existing responsibilities to a large refugee population from neighboring countries.” But on December 19, 2022, the High Court ruled the government’s asylum plan was lawful, and the UK also said it would pay Rwanda £120 million (€135 million/\$146 million) over the next five years to support the scheme.

– **dw**

VISIT AFRICA

Back to roots: Why African-Americans are flocking to Ghana

ACCRA: Tonya Saafir-Ankomah originally hails from Mississippi in the United States of America, but more than ten years ago, she decided to move abroad. “I had this strong urge to come to Africa. I wanted to experience it. Something has been tugging at my heart to come and visit the motherland,” she told DW. Saafir-Ankomah said she was inspired by a couple from Tennessee who had visited Ghana several times. “They [the couple] would talk about it all the time, show me pictures, videos and things like that, which stirred up a desire in me even more to come.” Saafir-Ankomah finally made it to Africa for the first time in 2010, and Ghana in West Africa was her destination. She quickly fell in love with the continent. The trained lawyer now lives in the capital, Accra, and married a Ghanaian. “I love it here, I would much rather be here than in the [United] States for sure,” she said. Saafir-Ankomah has since become an ambassador urging many Africans in the diaspora to visit Africa to experience the rich heritage. At least 1,500 African-Americans have moved to Ghana since 2019, following a campaign by Ghana’s government. The campaign, dubbed the “Year of Return,” became a catalyst for many descendants of Africans in the diaspora to embark on a spiritual journey. At the time, it also marked 400 years since the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in Jamestown, Virginia. “The Year of Return” was also to celebrate the resilience of all the victims of the trans-Atlantic slave tradewho were forcefully displaced throughout the world, ending up in North America, South America, the Caribbean, Europe and Asia.

– **dw**



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



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

EDITORIAL: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24813153, E-mail: editor@timesofoman.com
ADVERTISING: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24812624, E-mail: advertising@timesofoman.com
CIRCULATION: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24818270, E-mail: circulation@timesofoman.com

SOCIAL DEMOCRAT

Boris Pistorius set to become Germany’s new defence minister

BERLIN: Social Democrat interior minister of the state of Lower Saxony Boris Pistorius is to serve as Germany’s next defence minister, several German news outlets reported on Tuesday. German Defence Minister Christine Lambrecht resigned Monday after her government came under rising pressure to allow allies to send German-made heavy tanks to Ukraine, at the start of what is likely to be a pivotal week for Western plans to further arm Ukraine. Chancellor Olaf Scholz has chosen a man who is rather unknown abroad: Boris Pistorius has been the interior minister of Lower Saxony for nine years. He is popular there and is seen as someone who gets things done.

Internal security
Since 2013, Pistorius has been dealing with internal security, cybercrime, migration, and sports in the SPD-led state government in Lower Saxony. So the 62-year-old lawyer has experience running a ministry, and he brings with him another prerequisite that will certainly be in demand in the coming years: Boris Pistorius is regarded as assertive and a go-getter. Pistorius joined the center-left Social Democrats (SPD) at age 16, he later completed his military service in 1980/81 but has no experience in the military field. However, he does have experience in dealing with the police force and its restructuring to bring in young officers and reach out to the citizens. Pistorius sees the security apparatus as an important pillar of democracy. This is reflected in his project to make the police sustainably strong against political extremism. When party SPD leader Saskia Esken spoke of “latent racism” in the ranks of the security forces in the summer of 2020, he opposed her. With her remarks she was exposing the 300,000 police officers in Germany to “unjustified general suspicion,” he said.

Big challenges await Pistorius
Chancellor Scholz pledged €100 billion to the German armed forces following the Russian attack on Ukraine. At least 20 billion euros would be needed for the procurement of ammunition alone. New frigates, tanks or F-35 combat aircraft also cost billions, plus investments in infrastructure and digitisation. An acceleration of procurement procedures is needed. But former Defence Minister Christine Lambrecht made headlines as recently as December when she put the purchase of Puma infantry fighting vehicles on hold. During a firing exercise, all 18 infantry fighting vehicles

used in the exercise failed. In retrospect, this may have been a bit hasty. It has since emerged that most of the Puma’s problems were minor, and 17 of them were swiftly repaired. The chancellor will expect Lambrecht’s successor to get the Bundeswehr on track as far as possible and, beyond that, implement administratively what is decided in the chancellor’s office – such as the initiative for German and European missile defence with the Israeli Arrow-3 system. **European missile defence** The discussion on whether or not to supply battle tanks to Ukraine is no different. The chancellor is putting on the brakes and does not want to be driven. All decisions will be made exclusively in coordination “with our friends and allies,” he says again and again, and most recently last Friday at a press conference in the Chancellor’s Office. “We will also maintain this principle,” Scholz stressed. “So it will not come about that we in Germany publish excited statements, quick statements or have the need to have to say something every ten minutes. We decide on serious things that are related to war and peace and the security of our country as well as the security of Europe.” **Leopard 2 deliveries** In other words, no matter how much debate there is in Germany and Europe about Leopard 2 deliveries, Scholz stands by his opinion not to weaken the Bundeswehr with weapons deliveries to Ukraine. Whether Germany can stick to its line, however, appears questionable in light of the international debate on combat tanks. On January 20, NATO defense ministers will meet again at the US Ramstein Airbase in southwestern Germany to discuss further arms deliveries to Ukraine. The UK wants to give Ukraine 14 Challenger 2 main battle tanks. Poland wants to supply Leopard tanks to Ukraine, and Finland is also in favor. However, since the Leopard tanks were developed in Germany, the delivery hinges on the permission of the German government for the transfer of German-made armaments to third parties. Finally, the appointment of Pistorius also means that the cabinet no longer has gender parity. At the beginning of his term in office, Chancellor Olaf Scholz had said that men and women each make up half of society – and therefore women should also have half of the power. If Scholz wants to maintain parity, another cabinet reshuffle would be necessary. – **dw**

Indian government’s fight against Covid sets positive global example

India is in a ‘bright spot’ as the country has accelerated its broader healthcare ecosystem, said Mark Suzman, CEO of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

NEW DELHI: India’s fight against the Covid crisis has set a positive global example, said Mark Suzman, CEO of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, adding that it can be a model for others on how it addressed the manufacturing and distribution of vaccines at such a scale.

“We were proud to be able to help work with the Indian government and with partners like the Serum Institute of India, to help manufacture some of the vaccines and to help with some of the primary health care facilities to help with distribution and in some of the states like Uttar Pradesh and

Bihar where we work closely, but it really is a model both because of the direct COVID response, but also because the infrastructure that’s been put in place has lots of positive effects by other forms of healthcare,” Suzman told ANI in an exclusive interview.

According to India’s health ministry’s latest data, it has administered over 2.2 billion doses.

Asked what challenges the foundation faced during and post-Covid, the pandemic has had a devastating impact, and more so the knock-on impact on economic growth on poverty and people’s health.

“Yes, well, globally COVID has had a devastating impact. And not just in terms of the direct impact of the disease itself, but the knock-on impact on economic growth on poverty on health. So across large parts, I think around a third of the developing world is likely to be in recession,” he said.

However, he believes India is in a “bright spot” as the country has accelerated its broader healthcare ecosystem.

“From vaccination campaigns to nutrition campaigns to sanitation campaigns. And so in all of those areas, we’re trying to sound the call to action and saying the world really needs to support and engage much more deeply so that we can start to accelerate progress again.”



Gates Foundation has been working in India for nearly two decades, and it works across a number of sectors from agriculture to financial services, and health, among others.

Further, on India’s G20 Presidency, he said the Indian government has already shown a strong commitment to driving forward in mitigating global health issues, and broader development issues like digital infrastructure, and fi-

“The pandemic has had a devastating impact, and more so the knock-on impact on economic growth on poverty and people’s health

Mark Suzman
CEO of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

ancial services, which again can be examples of India addressing some of these issues.

“And so I think at the government of India’s stated ambition to try and tackle both those things, the issues of pandemic preparedness and global health response so that we can both finish the job on COVID and be ready to address the next pandemic, but also to think about these wider development challenges and using new tools like

the digital financial infrastructure that India has developed through UPI, but also some of the new initiatives like the use of environment Digital Health Initiative, which we think again as some very positive models that we’ll be able to use in Africa and other parts of the developing world,” the CEO said.

Meanwhile, on Monday, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced that it will spend \$8.3 billion in 2023 in its continued efforts to fight poverty, disease, and inequity.

By 2026, it aims to meet its commitment to reach an annual payout of \$9 billion by 2026.

On the pledge for 2023 and its commitment to fight malaria through equipping partner countries, Suzman said: “Malaria kills hundreds of thousands of people every year still and is responsible for many millions of cases. India has made great strides addressing some of the most serious incidents remaining in sort of central and west Africa, but they’re also it’s in South Asia and Latin America.”

He continued there have been a number of steps -- from the provision of new insecticides and mosquito nets and other treatments and tools in malarial areas, which have been very successful.

“There are some new scientific advances using monoclonal antibodies, which is sort of complex

and still expensive, but we’ve seen 80 to 90 per cent success rates in addressing malaria and we think those are going to be the tools that over the next decade or two, the world will actually move from containing and preventing malaria to eventually eradicating it. And that is our innovation,” he further said.

The foundation’s mission is to see a world where every person should have the chance to lead a healthy and productive life.

Finally, asked about is the foundation also working on reverse zoonosis, he said they are talking with the department of biotechnology in India, adding the foundation is aware of those challenges of how animal health is linked to human health.

“We also are global supporters of an initiative called the Coalition for epidemic preparedness initiative (CEPI) which is a major global effort that is trying to develop protective vaccines against other diseases that could become future pandemics. And so, we work on all of those areas, but really in partnership, we don’t take the lead on those research. We do it through coalitions with partnerships with governments like India or the United States.”

An infection or disease that is transmissible from humans to animals under natural conditions is called reverse zoonosis. -ANI

TRIAL IN ABSENTIA



Belarus starts trial of opposition leader Tsikhanouskaya

MINSK: The trial in absentia of Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya opened in Minsk on Tuesday, state news agency Belta said.

According to Belta, Tsikhanouskaya faces charges including high treason, “conspiracy to seize power” and creating and leading an extremist organisation.

Tsikhanouskaya ran for president in 2020. Although the electoral commission in Minsk announced the victory of long-standing strongman Alexander Lukashenko, Tsikhanouskaya and her supporters allege that the results were fraudulent.

Opposition in exile

Following the election, she fled to the Lithuanian capital Vilnius and became the head of the opposition in exile.

On Monday, Tsikhanouskaya told the Reuters news agency, “In Belarus there are no honest trials. We live in absolute lawlessness in our country so tomorrow’s trial will be a farce and a show but not real justice.”

In a statement posted on Twitter, Tsikhanouskaya called the charges against her “the revenge of a pathetic dictator who lost power.”

“Belarus needs real justice, not a puppet show,” she declared.

Other charges against opposition figures

A day before the start of her trial, Belarus brought new charges against Tsikhanouskaya’s husband Siarhei Tsikhanouski, who was arrested in 2020 as he attempted to run for president.

Also on Monday, Minsk began the trial of Andrzej Poczobut, a journalist and activist who is also of Belarus’ ethnic Polish minority. Tsikhanouskaya called the trial “shameful” and called for Poczobut’s immediate release.

Belarus also put rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Ales Bialiatski and two others on trial this month on charges of financing protests and smuggling money, with possible prison sentences of up to 12 years.

Rights activists estimate around 1,500 people in Belarus are in jail on politically motivated charges.

-DW

PLANTING PROPAGANDA

SEOUL: The United States will invest \$50 million (€46 million) over the next five years to surreptitiously bring information about the outside world into North Korea — hoping to improve the image of the US and South Korea for North Koreans.

As part of a broader annual defence spending package, US President Joe Biden signed the Otto Warmbier Countering North Korean Censorship and Surveillance Act into law in late December.

The act is designed to counter the Pyongyang’s all-pervasive censorship and surveillance of its citizens. It’s named after the US student who was arrested in Pyongyang in 2016 on a charge of subversion and sentenced to 15 years in prison for stealing a poster. Released in June 2017 in a vegetative state, 22-year-old Warmbier died in a hospital in Ohio six days later.

Under the act, funds will be funneled to the US Agency for Global Media, which effectively serves as a promotional organisation for the US government, broadcasting and disseminating information around the world.

“It is interesting to me as the US now seems to be more willing to operate in the ‘gray zone’ that other countries have been exploiting for some time now, with info-warfare now just one of the coercive measures being brought to bear while still staying under the thresholds that would trigger a conventional conflict,” Dan Pinkston, a professor of international relations at the Seoul campus of Troy University, told DW.

Washington is playing catch-up to Russia, which has been particularly effective at planting propa-



ganda that furthers its own geopolitical aims, Pinkston said.

The US programme will focus on additional radio programming into the North as well as the development of “internet freedom tools,” which are designed to help users circumvent limitations placed on free access to the digital world by the North Korean government.

“Radio should be relatively easy but internet access will be more of a challenge,” said Pinkston, adding that the “more sophisticated approaches” may not be noticed by Pyongyang at first, but “could

quite quickly have an insidious effect on its own propaganda.”

“Ideally, a successful ‘attack’ using information will be overlooked for some time and therefore be more subtle and have the longer-term aim of destabilizing and making the people of North Korea ask more questions,” Pinkston said.

North Korea cracks down on foreign media

Euijin Kim, who fled with her mother and sister from North Hamgyong Province in the 1990s due to the food shortages that plagued

her homeland, said getting more information into the North would encourage criticism of the regime, but warned it would be dangerous.

Pyongyang has in recent months stepped-up its crackdown on anyone caught listening to foreign radio broadcasts or watching films or television programs smuggled into the country, analysts and defectors cautioned.

There have been reports that teenagers who were seen practicing dance moves to K-pop music were sent to penal colonies.

“Twenty years ago, very little information about the outside

world got into North Korea, but now many people there have seen news or television shows or films from abroad,” said Kim, a member of Freedom Speakers International, an organization which helps North Korean refugees learn English.

“But in the last year or so, it is clear that the government is trying very hard to control the information that is getting into the country,” she said. “The regime is very worried about that because it threatens them and only a few days ago, I heard that a teenage boy had been executed for watching a South Korean movie.”

The Seoul-based Daily NK news outlet reported in late December that North Korean citizens are being ordered to attend screenings of government movies showing the public humiliation and punishment of people who have been caught with foreign films. Foreign content has been described by the regime as “dangerous toxins that instill delusions about enemy countries and paralyze the revolutionary and class consciousness.”

Footage shows groups of people berated by crowds in a sports stadium, their heads bowed as they apparently await their public sentencing.

In January, the North Korean government will pass the Pyongyang Cultural Language Protection Act, which bans citizens from using foreign terms when they speak or write. It will also outlaw foreign fashion and hairstyles and increase punishments for accessing overseas media. “It is getting harder all the time,” said Kim. “People have their public faces and their private thoughts, but it is more and more dangerous to share those thoughts.” -DW

ONGOING INSURGENCY

Militants kidnap 50 women in Burkina Faso

OUAGADOUGOU: Some 50 women were abducted by militants in northern Burkina Faso, as they ventured out to find food for their families amid shortages due to militant blockades.

The Burkinabe government announced the kidnappings in the Northern province of Soum on Monday. It said the incidents occurred on January 12 and 13, and that a search for the women was underway.

The insurgency which crossed into Burkina Faso from neighbouring Mali since 2015 has seen occasional kidnappings of Westerners and locals. However, this is believed to be the first mass kidnapping of women in the landlocked west African country, among the poorest in the world.

How were the women kid-

napped? The government said the women were seized by armed men as they ventured to pick wild fruit outside the village of Liki, some 15 kilometres (10 miles) southeast of the town of Arbinda. The town has been blockaded by militants since early 2019.

Relatives of the missing women told the Reuters news agency they had started scouring for food when they ran out in the village. Men are usually too scared of being shot by the militants, so women are in the habit of taking the risk, as they had thus far been less of a target.

Insurgents have blockaded parts of the north in recent months, with many regions reliant on outside supplies for survival. Yet, militants attacked a supply convoy last September, killing

dozens of soldiers and turning the delivery of supplies into a dangerous ordeal.

One civil society activist, Id-rissa Badini, warned late last year that the population of Arbinda had used up its food reserves and was on the verge of a “humanitarian disaster.”

Reactions to the abduction

UN human rights chief Volker Turk expressed his alarm at the incident, saying it could be “the first such attack deliberately targeting women in Burkina Faso.” He called for the women’s immediate and unconditional release, urging the authorities to identify those responsible and hold them accountable. -DW



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

SPORTS

Ronaldo to lead Saudi XI in tie against PSG

On January 19, PSG will play a Saudi All-Star XI made up of players from Al-Hilal and Cristiano Ronaldo's new team, Al-Nassr, as part of a midseason tour

RIYADH: After going to Saudi Arabia, Cristiano Ronaldo is almost certain to play in his first game, and it may pit him against Lionel Messi in a friendly game between the Saudi All-Star XI and Ligue 1 powerhouse Paris Saint-Germain, as reported by GOAL.com.

As per GOAL.com, on January 19, PSG will play a Saudi All-



Star XI made up of players from Al-Hilal and Cristiano Ronaldo's new team, Al-Nassr, as part of a midseason tour. It might mark the first occasion since December 2020 that two of the greatest play-

ers in history face off against one another.

Ronaldo might make his Saudi Arabia debut in this match, and what better to debut than against longtime adversary Messi.

Although it should go without saying that Ronaldo would captain any all-star team, his recent move to the Middle East may make his new team reluctant to take a chance on him given that they have a league game three days after the rumoured date the competition will take place.

Ronaldo is scheduled to make his Saudi Pro League debut after serving a two-match suspension imposed by the English Football Association in November for knocking a phone out of an Everton fan's hand during a match against Manchester United at Goodison Park last season.

Ronaldo signed a 2.5-year contract worth USD 75 million a year with Al Nassr on December 30. According to FIFA regulations, in the case that a player is transferred to another nation before serving the entirety of a suspension, the suspension must still be served by the player. Following the termination of Ronaldo's Manchester United contract during the World Cup, the suspension was made official.

-ANI

LIVERPOOL COACH

Klopp: No quick fix to Liverpool problems



LONDON: Liverpool coach Jurgen Klopp says he is going nowhere and insists he is not being too loyal to players who are either out of form or past their best.

Speaking ahead of his side's FA Cup replay against Wolverhampton, which comes on the back of a 3-0 defeat to Brighton, which he called the "worst" he had seen, Klopp was asked about his side, which currently sits ninth in the Premier League table, 19 points behind league leaders Arsenal.

"Either I go, the manager position changes, or a lot of other things change," said Klopp.

"As far as I know, from what I

hear, I will not go. So that means maybe there's a point where we have to change other stuff. And we will see that. But it's something for the future, like in the summer, but not now," he continued.

"I am loyal, I think everyone should be loyal, but I am not too loyal," explained Klopp, saying it was a "complex" problem. You have a good player who did a lot of good stuff in the past and then maybe, in your mind, you think: "That's it for him now.' If you can then go out and bring in another player to replace him," Klopp said, adding this was not the case at Liverpool at the moment.. *Xinhua*

317-RUN LOSS

Sri Lanka seeks report over team's big loss

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) on Monday directed the manager of the men's national side to submit a report on the side's massive 317-run loss to India in the third and final ODI on Sunday at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

"Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) has directed the manager of the national team to submit a report pertaining to Sri Lanka's heavy defeat faced against India in the

3rd ODI, which was played on January 15, 2023 at Thiruvananthapuram," said a statement from the governing body of the sport in the country. "The report should consist of views of the captain, the head coach, and the selection panel and also the team manager pertaining to the loss," added the statement.

SLC has requested the team manager to submit the report within a 5-day period. *-ANI*

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Tennis Australia bans Russian, Belarusian flags

MELBOURNE: Tennis Australia has banned Russian and Belarusian flags at the Australian Open after a controversy erupted over the Russian flag seen hanging outside the court during Monday's match between Ukraine's Kateryna Baindl and Russia's Kamilla Rakhimova.

Players from Belarus and Russia are permitted to compete in this year's Australian Open, although they are not permitted to compete under their national flag or name, which has become standard in the international sport since Russia's

invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

"Flags from Russia and Belarus are banned onsite at the Australian Open," Tennis Australia said in a statement Tuesday as stated by Sydney Morning Herald.

"Our initial policy was that fans could bring them in but could not use them to cause disruption. Yesterday we had an incident where a flag was placed courtside. The ban is effective immediately. We will continue to work with the players and our fans to ensure the best possible environment to enjoy tennis," it said.

The red, white and blue-striped Russian flag was hoisted by supporters of Rakhimova as she competed against Baindl of Ukraine in the opening round, while Ukrainian supporters summoned security and law enforcement. Baindl ended up clinching victory in the match to move to the second round of the tournament.

Earlier, Vasy Myroshnychenko, Ukraine's ambassador to Australia and New Zealand, was outraged by the "display of the Russian flag" and urged Tennis Australia to for-

bid the flag from being flown at the competition.

"I strongly condemn the public display of the Russian flag during the game of the Ukrainian tennis player Kateryna Baindl at the Australian Open today. I call on Tennis Australia to immediately enforce its "neutral flag" policy," Myroshnychenko wrote on Twitter.

While players from Belarus and Russia are competing in the Australian Open, they were banned from playing at Wimbledon altogether in 2022.

-ANI

HITACHI

FRESHER FOOD, HEALTHIER LIFE.



INVERTER X Dual Fan Cooling

10 YEARS HITACHI COMPRESSOR WARRANTY

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by March 2023 reaching \$82.74, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by 82 cents from the price of Monday, which was at \$81.91. - **ONA**

MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,819.27 points, down by 0.16 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.16 per cent at 487.28 points. Al Anwar Investment, up 7.50 per cent, was the top gainer while A'Saffa Foods, down 10.00 per cent, was the top loser.

Saudi-Omani forum to enhance trade and investment relations

Saudi-Omani Investment Forum tasks include dialogue sessions to discuss the most promising investment sectors in the two countries, including renewable energy, supply chains, tourism, real estate, transport and logistics services

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion will organise the Saudi-Omani Investment Forum, scheduled to be held in Riyadh on February 1. The forum will be held in cooperation with the Saudi Ministry of Investment.

The forum seeks to consolidate existing trade and investment relations, find new strategic opportunities for joint investment and

encourage private sector institutions in the two countries to open up broader avenues for joint action that benefits both sides.

The forum tasks include dialogue sessions to discuss the most promising investment sectors in the two countries, including renewable energy, supply chains, tourism, real estate, transport and logistics services. The sessions will also look into other activities

of common interest that contribute to accelerating the volume of joint investment and enhancing trade exchange.

The forum will review prominent developments in the business and investment environment, as well as the functioning of industrial zones in the two countries. Private sector representatives on both sides will hold bilateral meetings to explore areas of cooperation, partnership and investment opportunities.

Government departments and major Omani and Saudi companies will showcase their products and services in a Saudi-Omani Industries Exhibition to be held on the sidelines of the forum.

Establishments that will take part in the forum include the Oman Investment Authority, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz), the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development (ASMED) and the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI). - **ONA**



GERMAN ENGINEERING GIANT



Siemens inks massive \$3.2 billion train contract in India

BERLIN: The rail division of Siemens said on Monday that it had sealed the biggest locomotive order in its history from the government-owned Indian Railways.

The deal, worth €3 billion (roughly \$3.2 billion), is for 1,200 electric locomotives over 11 years. The contract also includes maintenance and repair work for 35 years.

The electric locomotives are to be used for freight transport. Generating 9,000 horsepower, they can pull up to 4,500 metric tonnes of freight at up to 120 kilometres per hour (roughly 75 miles per hour).

Trains to be made in India

Most of the work is to be done at Siemens' facilities in India, with the trains manufactured at a Siemens Mobility plant in the country.

Assembly would be carried out jointly with Indian Railways employees in the state of Gujarat, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi hails from, on the western coast. Siemens also said that co-operation was planned for maintenance operations going forward.

Siemens has struck larger value contracts for rail projects abroad recently, but not for trains alone.

A recent deal valued at around €8 billion with Egypt was for the construction of an electric rail network, as well as a fleet of various types of locomotives.

The engineering giant said that India had one of the largest and fastest-growing rail networks in the world.

"The country wants to almost double rail freight capacity," CEO Roland Busch said. He said the order "will help achieve the country's ambitious goals of building the world's largest electrified rail network." - **DW**

PRICE FORECASTS

Goldman Sachs raises aluminium forecasts on higher Chinese and European demand

NEW YORK: Goldman Sachs Group Inc. raised its price forecasts for aluminium, saying higher demand in Europe and China could lead to supply shortages.

The metal will probably average \$3,125 a tonne this year in London, analysts including Nicholas Snowden and Aditi Rai said in a note to clients. That's up from the current price of \$2,595 and compares with the bank's previous forecast of \$2,563, according to Bloomberg.

Goldman sees the metal, used to make everything from beer cans to plane parts, climbing to \$3,750 a tonne in the next 12 months.

"With visible global inventories standing at just 1.4 million tons, down 900,000 tons from a year ago and now the lowest since 2002, the return of an aggregate deficit will quickly trigger scarcity concerns," the analysts said. "Set against a far more benign macro environment, with fading dollar headwinds and a slowing Fed hiking cycle, we expect upside price momentum to build progressively into spring."

Aluminium reached record highs soon after the Russia-



Ukraine war last February. It's since slumped as Europe's energy crisis and a slowing global economy led many smelters to curb production.

Like many Wall Street banks, Goldman is bullish on commodities as a whole, arguing that a lack of investment in recent years has led to low supply buffers. It sees the asset class generating investors' returns of more than 40 per cent this year as China reopens and the global economy picks up in the second half of the year. - **BNA**

DUBAI FINANCIAL MARKET

DFM concludes its investor roadshow in New York

DUBAI: The Dubai Financial Market (DFM) International Investor Roadshow 2023 in New York has successfully attracted numerous leading global investment institutions.

The event conveyed a strong message on the profound confidence of US-based investment international institutions towards Dubai capital markets. The investors have expressed their keenness to be present in the DFM platform.

The roadshow was organised in collaboration with Bank of America with the participation of three newly listed companies on Dubai capital markets namely: Salik, Empower and DEWA. This is in addition to Emaar Properties, Emirates NBD, Amanat, Emaar Development, Dubai Financial Market Company, DP World and Aramex.

The event included 82 one-on-one meetings with senior representatives of 35 international funds managing more than \$1 trillion of assets.

Hamed Ali, CEO of DFM and Nasdaq Dubai, said, "DFM is more globalised than ever, with international investors actively participating in our capital market, maintaining nearly 49 per cent trading activity during 2022 and 19 per cent ownership." - **WAM**

GOLD PRICES



Gold pulls back as firmer dollar dulls appeal

LONDON: Gold prices eased back toward the \$1,900 support level on Tuesday, pressured by an uptick in the dollar, although hopes of slower interest rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve limited further losses.

Spot gold was down 0.4 per cent at \$1,910.02 per ounce, as of 0742 GMT, following a rally that powered it to its highest level since April 2022 on Monday, Reuters reported.

US gold futures fell 0.6 per cent to \$1,910.80.

The dollar index gained 0.2 per cent, making gold more expensive for buyers holding other currencies. - **BNA**

YOUR SMART SEDAN!

Scan the QR Code to check out the SUZUKI DZIRE

Vehicles shown are for illustrative purposes only.

Keyless Push-start

Front Fog Lamp

Rear AC Vents

Rear Parking Sensors

MOOSA ABDUL RAHMAN HASSAN & Co. LLC

94760010
Wattayah

94106970: For branches at
Salalah | Sohar | Nizwa | Sur | Ibr

800 76 200

MARKET

MSX index ends lower



Al Anwar Investment, up 7.50 per cent, was the top gainer while A'Saffa Foods, down 10 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,819.27 points, down by 0.16 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.16 per cent at 487.28 points. Al Anwar Investment, up 7.50 per cent, was the top gainer while A'Saffa Foods, down 10 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 348 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR2.16 million, with more than 10.59 million shares changing hands.

Out of 38 traded securities, 8 advanced, 16 declined, and 14 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC and Arab investors were net buyers for OMR381,000 while domestic investors were net sellers for OMR204,000, followed by foreign investors for OMR177,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,850.06 points, down 0.02 per cent. Prices of Al Anwar Investment and Bank Nizwa were up by 7.50 per cent and 2.04 per cent respectively. Prices of Oman United Insurance, National Bank Oman and Al Omaniya Financial Services were down by 3.33 per cent, 1.72 per cent and 1.33 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,126.97 points, down 1.05 per cent. Prices of A'Saffa Foods, Voltamp Energy, Oman Fisheries, Al Maha Ceramics, and Galfar Engineering were up by 4.29 per cent, 3.45 per cent, 3.45 per cent, 1.86 per cent and 1.01 per cent respectively. Prices of Oman Telecom, SMN Power Holding, National Gas and Renaissance Services were down by 2.13 per cent 2.00 per cent, 1.87 per cent and 0.44 per cent respectively.

United Securities

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

OMAN STOCKS

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,840.68	4,816.28	4,819.27	4,827.09	-7.81	-0.16
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,869.06	7,842.39	7,850.06	7,851.31	-1.25	-0.02
Industry Index	6,195.78	6,123.28	6,126.97	6,192.09	-65.12	-1.05
Services Index	1,631.07	1,610.93	1,617.41	1,610.93	6.48	0.40
MSX Shariah Index	488.44	486.27	487.28	486.51	0.77	0.16
MSX TR INDEX	6,109.82	6,079.02	6,082.80	6,092.67	-9.86	-0.16
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,234.09	8,206.19	8,214.21	8,215.52	-1.31	-0.02
SERVICES TR IDX	1,723.91	1,702.62	1,709.47	1,702.62	6.85	0.40
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,450.58	6,375.09	6,378.94	6,446.73	-67.80	-1.05

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
10,592,119	2,156,731	348	23,704,738,767	8	16	14	38

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY 17

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST HD	LAST OFFR	PRN VALUE	MARKET CAP
------	---------------	--------	----------	--------	------------	------	-----	----------	-------------	-----------	--------	---------	---------	-----------	-----------	------------

REGULAR MARKET

OM0000003968	OOREDOO	427,000	187,026	2	0.438	0.438	0.438	0.438	0.430	0.008	1.860	0.438	0.388	0.438	0.100	285,113,573
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST& FIN	214,000	27,948	9	0.128	0.133	0.128	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.000	0.130	0.130	0.132	0.100	30,810,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	33,450	10,193	6	0.304	0.306	0.304	0.304	0.304	0.000	0.000	0.304	0.304	0.306	0.100	100,585,304
OM0000002188	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	118,500	40,830	7	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.000	0.000	0.340	0.340	0.360	0.100	74,800,000
OM0000002440	AL SHARGIA INV	76,800	5,760	5	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.068	0.075	0.100	6,750,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	4,211,904	1,174,254	84	0.279	0.280	0.278	0.280	0.280	0.000	0.000	0.280	0.279	0.280	0.100	2,101,793,177
OM0000003000	ALMAHA PETROLEUM	2,713	2,442	1	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.000	0.000	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.100	62,100,000
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV H	783,000	47,548	35	0.061	0.062	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.000	0.000	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.100	12,000,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INT. BANK	494,500	51,947	6	0.106	0.106	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.000	0.000	0.105	0.104	0.105	0.100	481,956,540
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	36,000	8,239	2	0.228	0.229	0.228	0.229	0.230	0.001	-0.435	0.229	0.226	0.229	0.100	28,601,633
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SER	5,000	2,240	1	0.448	0.448	0.448	0.448	0.450	-0.002	-0.444	0.448	0.440	0.448	0.100	105,911,680
OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FIN.S	2,000	296	1	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.150	-0.002	-1.333	0.148	0.148	0.150	0.100	44,875,618
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	397,850	113,392	9	0.286	0.286	0.285	0.285	0.290	-0.005	-1.724	0.285	0.285	0.290	0.100	463,394,711
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	6,650	6,118	4	0.920	0.920	0.920	0.920	0.940	-0.020	-2.128	0.920	0.900	0.920	0.100	690,000,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	100,000	41,000	2	0.410	0.410	0.410	0.410	0.420	-0.010	-2.381	0.410	0.410	0.000	0.100	22,550,000
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSUR.	57,500	16,671	4	0.288	0.290	0.288	0.290	0.300	-0.010	-3.333	0.290	0.290	0.300	0.100	29,000,000
Total	16	6,967,867	1,735,704	178												

Parallel Market

OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	41,830	3,495	3	0.083	0.086	0.083	0.086	0.080	0.006	7.500	0.086	0.083	0.086	0.100	17,200,000	
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	301,143	22,573	23	0.072	0.077	0.072	0.073	0.070	0.003	4.286	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.100	69,683,752	
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	535,650	16,070	10	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.029	0.001	3.448	0.030	0.028	0.030	0.100	20,246,623	
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	107,970	3,237	5	0.030	0.030	0.029	0.030	0.029	0.001	3.448	0.030	0.029	0.030	0.100	21,432,190	
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	248,841	24,856	13	0.098	0.100	0.098	0.100	0.098	0.002	2.041	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	223,695,303	
OM0000007084	MCT DESALINATE	13,000	1,297	5	0.099	0.100	0.099	0.100	0.099	0.001	1.010	0.100	0.098	0.100	0.100	15,555,040	
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	140,850	16,338	9	0.116	0.116	0.115	0.116	0.115	0.001	0.870	0.116	0.115	0.116	0.100	49,273,345	
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	40,200	6,432	3	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.000	0.000	0.160	0.160	0.164	0.100	320,050,046	
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	765,500	68,895	24	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.090	0.089	0.090	0.100	15,750,000	
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	34,261	1,474	6	0.043	0.044	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.000	0.000	0.043	0.043	0.044	0.100	62,891,863	
OM0000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	5,000	1,670	1	0.334	0.334	0.334	0.334	0.334	0.000	0.000	0.334	0.310	0.334	0.100	23,510,260	
OM0000003265	NAT. DETERGENT	555	297	1	0.536	0.536	0.536	0.536	0.538	-0.002	-0.372	0.536	0.000	0.536	0.000	10,720,000	
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	53,834	5,543	11	0.107	0.107	0.101	0.105	0.107	-0.002	-1.869	0.105	0.101	0.105	0.100	8,925,000	
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	70,600	3,512	9	0.051	0.051	0.049	0.049	0.050	-0.001	-2.000	0.049	0.049	0.050	0.100	5,782,144	
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	1,067,000	198,263	19	0.187	0.190	0.182	0.183	0.187	-0.004	-2.188	0.183	0.183	0.185	0.100	37,146,520	
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	6,210	589	5	0.096	0.096	0.094	0.094	0.097	-0.003	-3.093	0.094	0.093	0.103	0.100	17,115,370	
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	27,000	1,751	2	0.065	0.065	0.063	0.063	0.067	-0.004	-5.970	0.063	0.063	0.063	0.064	0.100	19,350,218
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	108,700	9,949	16	0.093	0.093	0.088	0.088	0.095	-0.007	-7.268	0.088	0.087	0.095	0.100	7,163,442	
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	100	23	1	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.250	-0.025	-10.000	0.225	0.000	0.235	0.100	27,000,000	
Total	19	3,589,344	386,264	166													

ECONOMIC WATCH

China's industrial output sustains growth in 2022

BEIJING: China's industrial production sustained its development in 2022, with the hi-tech manufacturing and equipment manufacturing sectors posting robust performance, official data showed.

The value-added industrial output, an important economic indicator, went up 3.6 per cent year on year in 2022, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed.

The country's industrial sector continued to serve as the "ballast stone" of its economy, said Kang Yi, head of the NBS, at a press conference. The contribution rate of the industrial sector to economic growth has reached 36 per cent, Kang said.

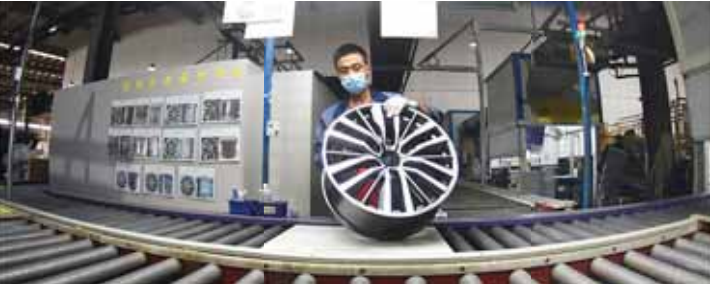
He added that China's total value-added industrial production hit 40.2 trillion yuan (about \$6 trillion), while the manufacturing sector's output reached 33.5 trillion yuan, both ranking first globally.

A breakdown of the figure by industries showed the mining industry's output increased by 7.3 per cent last year, while that of the manufacturing sector rose by 3 per cent.

Specifically, the high-tech manufacturing and equipment manufacturing sectors posted strong growth momentum, with their output values jumping 7.4 per cent and 5.6 per cent, respectively, both higher than the overall industrial output growth.

By ownership, state-controlled enterprises saw a 3.3 per cent increase in output in 2022, while the private sector's output grew 2.9 per cent. In terms of product types, new-energy vehicle output logged the most notable increase of 97.5 per cent year on year in 2022.

The industrial output measures the activity of large enterprises each with an annual main business turnover of at least 20 million yuan. In December alone, the industrial output grew 1.3 per cent from a year earlier and 0.06 per cent from November, the NBS said. *Xinhua*



EUROPEAN UNION

Europe may avoid recession in 2023, economic chiefs say

BRUSSELS: Economic officials from the European Union on Monday offered a rosier vision for the bloc's economic future, with the latest data showing Europe may avoid a recession that had been predicted several months ago.

EU Economic Commissioner Paolo Gentiloni said that although the bloc's economic situation "is still uncertain ... we had some encouraging news."

"We managed to reduce our energy dependence, energy prices went down significantly and inflation peaked last year in Europe," Gentiloni said ahead of monthly talks with eurozone finance ministers in Brussels.

"So, there is a chance to avoid a deep recession and maybe to enter a more limited, shallow contraction," he added.

EU trade commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis echoed Gentiloni's assessment, but added that the bloc should still "remain vigilant."

"Clearly, we are seeing some positive signs and for example (the) EU labor market remains very strong. There are also some indications that inflation may have peaked. But I would say we must remain vigilant (...)," Dombrovskis told reporters before a Eurogroup meeting.

The remarks come on the heels of a report earlier this month highlighting that business activity in the eurozone's private sector shrank less than expected. S&P Global's final composite Purchasing Managers' Index had said the eurozone's economy did continue to contract in December, but the strength of the downturn moderated for a second successive month, tentatively pointing to a contraction in the economy that may be milder than was initially anticipated. A survey released on Monday by the World Economic Forum found that almost two-thirds of senior economists from the public and private sector believe a global recession is likely this year. Some 18% of respondents considered a recession extremely likely. Although one-third did think a worldwide recession could be avoided, there was a consensus on the notion that prospects for economic growth in Europe and the United States were "bleak."

- DW

oman OASIS
RELAXED DRINKING WATER

SEASONAL OFFER

50% ONLY

HOT & COLD DISPENSER

PLUS 2 FULL BOTTLES

PLUS 30 REFILL COUPONS

20% ONLY

WHITE TAP DISPENSER OR TAP DISPENSER OR MANUAL WATER PUMP OR CRADLE WITH TAP

PLUS 2 FULL BOTTLES

PLUS 15 REFILL COUPONS

Offer valid from 1st January to 31st March 2023.

CALL TOLL-FREE 800 71 222 or GSM: 9275 5522

REPORT

Worldwide semiconductor revenue rose 1.1% to \$601.7 billion in 2022

DUBAI: Worldwide semiconductor revenue increased 1.1 per cent in 2022 to a total of \$601.7 billion, up from \$595 billion in 2021, according to preliminary results by Gartner, Inc.

The combined revenue of the top 25 semiconductor vendors increased by 2.8 per cent in 2022 and accounted for 77.5 per cent of the market.

"2022 began with many semiconductor devices in shortage resulting in extended lead times and increasing pricing which led to reduced electronic equipment production for many end markets. As a result, OEMs started hedging themselves from shortages by stockpiling chip inventory," said Andrew Norwood, VP Analyst at Gartner.

"However, by the second half of 2022, the global economy began to slow under the strain of high inflation, rising interest rates, higher energy costs and continued COVID-19 lockdowns in China, which impacted many global supply chains. Consumers also began to reduce spending, with PC and smartphone demand suffering, and then enterprises starting to reduce spending in anticipation of a global recession, all of which impacted overall semiconductor growth," Norwood said.

Samsung Electronics maintained the top spot although revenue declined 10.4 per cent in 2022, primarily due to declines



in memory and NAND flash sales. Intel held on to the No. 2 position with a 9.7 per cent market share. The company was impacted by the significant decline of the consumer PC market and strong competition in its core x86 processor businesses and revenue growth declined by 19.5 per cent.

Memory revenue declined

Memory, which accounted for around 25 per cent of semiconductor sales in 2022, was the worst-performing device category, experiencing a 10 per cent revenue decrease. By the middle of 2022, the memory market was already showing signs of a significant collapse in demand as electronic equipment OEMs started to deplete the memory inventory

The combined revenue of the top 25 semiconductor vendors increased by 2.8 per cent in 2022 and accounted for 77.5 per cent of the market

they had been holding in anticipation of stronger demand. Conditions have now worsened to the point where most memory companies have announced capital expenditure (Capex) reductions for 2023, and some have cut wafer production to reduce inventory levels and try to bring the markets back into balance.

Non-memory revenue up

Overall non-memory revenue grew 5.3 per cent in 2022, but the performance varied wildly across the different device categories. The strongest growth came from analogue with a 19 per cent increase, closely followed by discrete, up 15 per cent from 2021. The growth for both analogue and discrete was driven by strong demand from the automotive and industrial end markets underpinned by secular growth trends in vehicle electrification, industrial automation, and energy transition.



Is the new year inspiring you to try a fresh new look? Before splurging on an entirely different wardrobe, try a tactic that will instantly elevate your style and give your confidence a boost: refreshing your hairstyle.

This year's hair trends are all about movement, and also making the most of your own natural hair type for a great new look — and feel!

Here are some fun hair trends for women and men that may just make you smile and do a double take when you catch a glimpse of yourself in the mirror.

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR NATURAL HAIR FOR A GREAT NEW LOOK

For Men

Take on the adventure of an amazing new style that can help you look your best all year long.

Brushed-Up Styles

Inspired by the looks of the 1950s, TikTok and YouTube influencers are bringing an exciting modern twist to classic brushed-up hairstyles. This new take on a retro haircut includes medium-length hair on top that is styled back, usually in a messy way. The short sides are cut in a fade, undercut or taper. Finish off the look with a spray to easily keep your hair in place.

Embrace Texture

Whether your hair is straight or curly, this year is texture's time to shine! Try any fibre cream to define your hair and add rough texture without making it feel crunchy or stiff. -BPT



For Women:

All these trending do's have the advantage of working well with any kind of hair, from straight to curly or fine to thick. You can make any one of these styles your own for a fresh new look you'll love.

Bangs

Try this trending fringe to guarantee your year will start with a bang! From 70s-inspired butterfly bangs to timeless side-swept bangs, any fringe with texture is making a comeback in the new year. Bangs frame your face and can create instant volume, making them a great accent for any hair type, length and texture.



Modern Shag

This version of the shag is here to stay! Inspired by '80s rock stars, this layered cut features face-framing bangs, texture and layers. Also known as the wolf cut, a shag haircut is a versatile style that works great with any hair type.

Lots of Layers

2023 is the year of flowy hair. No matter what your hair's curl pattern or texture type, layered styles that emphasise movement are sure to be a hit! Keep your hair feeling weightless by using a volumising shampoo and conditioner for a boost of bounce.



SPORTS

Bumper entry announced for Oman International Rally

Dakar Rally winner and MERC legend Nasser Saleh Al-Attiyah heads the field

MUSCAT: The Oman Automobile Association (OAA) has announced an impressive line-up of international drivers and national entries for the Oman International Rally, round one of the FIA Middle East Rally Championship (MERC), taking place on January 26th-28th. Fifteen international crews and 10 teams taking part in a national event grace the entry list announced by the organising committee. The field includes individuals from nine countries and is headed by the global motor sport stars of the moment, Nasser Saleh Al-Attiyah and his Andorra-based co-driver Mathieu Baumel. On Sunday, the duo secured Al-Attiyah's fifth success in the



world-renowned Dakar Rally and a fourth triumph for his co-driver. The Qatari makes the switch from that all-conquering Toyota Hilux to join forces with Autotek Motorsport in a bid to begin another defence of his regional rally title in a Volkswagen Polo GTi. Al-Attiyah has seven wins under his belt in the Sultanate of Oman and is a clear favourite for victory next week over the 13 gravel stages that make up the challenge in Oman. Four Rally2 cars grace the en-

try list, with local hopes resting on the shoulders of the Oman Rally Team's Abdullah Al-Rawahi and his Jordanian co-driver Ata Al-Hmoud in their Škoda Fabia. Al-Rawahi finished fourth in last year's championship. Qatar's Nasser Khalifa Al-Atya – the runner-up in the regional series back in 1993 – again teams up with Giovanni Bernacchini to drive a Ford Fiesta R5. His Italian co-driver took part in the Dakar Classic event in Saudi Arabia over the last two weeks.



Completing the Rally2 line-up will be Petr Kačirek in his Duck Racing Škoda Fabia. The Czech finished second overall behind Al-Attiyah in Oman last year with Václav Kopáček. Václav is replaced by Petra Řiháková on this occasion, with whom Kačirek has taken part in numerous Czech events in the past. Kuwait's Meshari Al-Thefiri is a multiple former MERC2 champion and will drive a Mitsubishi Evo X in Oman, where he lines up against 10 other Group NR4 cars

on the entry list to compete in the MERC2 category. The defending champion Issa Abu Jamous returns to defend his title in a Mitsubishi Lancer Evo IX and lines up against fellow Jordanians, Ihab Al-Shorafa, Shadi Shaban, Sheikh Bader Al-Fayez and Shaker Jweihan, in addition to Kuwait's Mohammed Al-Zafiri and Yousef Al-Dhefiri, Lebanon's Ahmad Khaled and Oman's Abdullah Al-Zubair and Zakariya Al-Aamri. Local drivers dominate the en-

try for the Oman national event: Haitham Al-Zadjali and Ghaith Al-Qasmi wheel out a pair of Mitsubishi and there are two Subaru Imprezas for Faisal Al-Rashdi and Jarah Al-Touqi. UTVs are becoming popular across several FIA motor sport disciplines and rally organisers have received entries from three crews driving Yamaha YXZs – Oman's Mohammed Al-Mazrui and Mutasim Al-Balushi and Lebanon's Alain Nawfal. There are also national entries from Abdullah Al-Toqi, Musab Soomar and Salim Al-Toqi. The former will be partnered by a famous Austrian female co-driver from the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC): Ilka Minor has partnered drivers of the calibre of Manfred Stohl and Henning Solberg to eight podiums and 25 stage wins in the WRC since she made her WRC debut with Achim Mörthl in Corsica in 1997. Her best results were a pair of second-placed finishes with Stohl at the 2005 Cyprus Rally and Wales Rally GB in 2006. The 2023 Oman International Rally gets underway with a ceremonial start and a timed super special stage on Thursday, January 26.

DAY 2

Table tennis championship sees favourites emerge as focus shifts to doubles competition



MUSCAT: The second day of the World Veteran Table Tennis Championships Muscat 2023 at the Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre (OCEC) saw the highest ranked players begin their campaigns in singles, doubles and mixed double competition. Several players made an impressive start to the championship by winning all three of their Group matches. Tay Kee (MAS), Manfred Nieswand (GER), Michael Stadtmüller (GER), Leonid Segal (UKR), Craig Campbell (AUS), Boguslaw Madej (POL), Jin Liang Yang (CHN), Peter Desouz (IND), Jayanta Bhattachandra Kulkarni (IND) and Hock Gee Tan (SIN) are among those still with a hundred per cent record. Competition then shifted to Men's and Women's Doubles and Mixed Doubles today with players ranging from 40 to 91 years of age proving that table tennis is a sport for all ages, and the competitive spark is very much alive at Muscat 2023. Pawel Stopinski of Poland, competing in the 45+ age category, said, "Today we played in the Doubles competition. We were ready to play, and we want to win – everybody wants to win! This is the first time for us in Oman, it is a very nice country." Partner Wojciech Tebocio added, "I have played in Championships all around the world, and the



organisation here is very good." The pair triumphed 3-0 in both of their matches today, firstly beating the pair of Vitho Neikha of India and Mazen Mazen of Palestine, and then over the Belgian duo of Kris Boogers and Jurgen Michielsens.

Mounir Bessah of Algeria said, "Oman is very welcoming; I like the people of Oman. Everyone is very happy here, with the hospitality and the venue. We have even met some friends who we hadn't been able to see or play with in

several years. I was ITTF Competition Manager before and organised the first international competition here seven years ago or so, and since then we have spoken about bringing a bigger tournament here – and here we are. The



Players will be able to enjoy a rest day with the opportunity to explore Muscat and enjoy Omani culture offered by the organising committee. Also on the agenda are tours of Nizwa and Wadi Shab.

competition is very good, and fortunately we have good conditions for all of the players. We are very happy to compete here and see our friends again." Mounir and partner Mikael Andersson of Sweden did not fare so well, narrowly losing both of their ties today. The Indian pair of Satyanarayana Kandula and Dr Manoj Songara claimed victory in Round 1 and Mohammad Naeini and Farzin Tavakolian of Iran emerged victorious in Round 2. Mohammed Al Jassasi, Board Member and Head of the Umpiring Committee said that all the umpires are fully prepared to start officiating the World Veteran Table Tennis Championships Muscat 2023. He commented, "This is a really great occasion for all the local referees to be part of this world-class event in Muscat. Moreover, it is a big step for the new umpires to gain valuable experience from this championship. There

are about 85 Omani umpires and most of them are certified as international umpires. Prior to the event we had more than five workshops to help prepare them for this championship." Players will be able to enjoy a rest day tomorrow with the opportunity to explore Muscat and enjoy Omani culture offered by the organising committee. Also on the agenda are tours of Nizwa and Wadi Shab. The World Veteran Table Tennis Championships 2023 is organised by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, the Oman Table Tennis Association and the International Table Tennis Federation, with support from Oman Fiber Optic, STAG Sports, Omantel and Belltel. More information about the World Veteran Table Tennis Championships 2023 and a full list of results can be found on the official event website, <https://wvc2023.ittf.com/>.

IN-PICTURES



UN envoy urges Yemen's warring parties to use lull for dialogue
UN Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg briefs the Security Council meeting via video link at the UN headquarters in New York. *Xinhua*



Bell ringers' pageant held in Drazice, Croatia
People in costumes take part in the bell ringers' pageant during the carnival time in Drazice, Croatia. The event is a Croatian tradition to drive out evil spirits over the winter months. *Xinhua*

People enjoy festive atmosphere in Indonesia
People shop for the upcoming Chinese Lunar New Year at street stalls in Glodok Chinatown of Jakarta, Indonesia. *Xinhua*



Highlights of Milan Men's Fashion Week
A model presents a creation for SHANGHAI TANG during Milan Men's Fashion Week in Milan, Italy. *Xinhua*



Activities held to honour Martin Luther King Jr. in US
Students from the University of Southern California march along the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, in Los Angeles, California, the United States. The parade was held to honour the civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. *Xinhua*



City view of Luanda, Angola
This picture shows the cityscape of Luanda, capital of Angola. *Xinhua*



More rain, snow hit US California as storm continues
This picture shows a flooded area in Byron, Contra Costa County, California, the United States. *Xinhua*

ROUND-UP

ahlibank launches new Digital Wealth System

This new system allows customers to view online investment profiles, trade mutual funds online, create systematic investment plans online, analyse portfolio's asset allocation vs model portfolio, as well as other services

MUSCAT: Cementing its position as an industry leader in private banking and wealth management services, ahlibank launches its new Digital Wealth System. Aimed at its Wealth Management customers, this new system allows customers to view online investment profiles, trade mutual funds online, create systematic investment plans online, analyse portfolio's asset allocation vs model portfolio, as well as other services.



The launch of this state-of-the-art system comes in line with the bank's digitalisation efforts, and its vision to become an excellence hub to provide its customers with an extensive suite of products and services. Commenting on the launch of the Digital Wealth System, Najla Murtadha Al Lawati, AGM, Head of Private Banking and Wealth Management at ahlibank said, "We at ahlibank take pride in our customer-centric approach in all our operations. At its core, the bank works with a mission to meet the ever-changing needs of its customer base and is always looking to introduce tailored prod-

ucts and services to ensure all our stakeholders are well taken care of. ahlibank's Private Banking and Wealth Management offer its customers top-tier service that fit the dynamic lifestyles they lead, and serve as a hub for investment value-added solutions, investment solutions for fixed income securities, mutual funds, real estate funds, and much more." It is worth mentioning that the newly introduced Digital Wealth System allows users to view their investment Portfolio to easily manage their, bonds, mutual funds and exchange-traded funds, and other financial assets in one dashboard. The service

supports buying and selling of mutual funds online, placement of thorough systematic investment plans, as well as analysis of portfolio asset allocation vs an existing model portfolio. The Digital Wealth System redefines how private wealth is digitally managed and provides systematic and clear updates, reports, fund analytics, and track performances. "Fitting right in with ahlibank's digitalisation outlook, this newly introduced Digital Wealth System offers a new wealth management experience to make investing easier; it is not only a dashboard, but also a strategic financial adviser, and a digital wealth management guide. Taking the lead in its private banking and wealth management efforts, ahlibank's Digital Wealth Programme serves as an excellence hub for global-standard services that meet and exceed our customers' expectations," adds Najla Al Lawati. In addition to the Digital Wealth System, ahlibank is committed to contributing to the country's digitalisation efforts and Oman Vision 2040 by introducing world-class digital services. As digital technologies evolve and global economies grow, the bank's digitally-enabled steps keep it at a competitive advantage, and allow it to continuously enhance the quality of its suite of products and services, while the future of banking is now dictated by digital innovations, ahlibank has successfully adapted through its digital and customer-driven technologies.

'BUY MORE WIN MORE' PROMOTION



Oman Oasis picks final set of winners

MUSCAT: The highly successful 'Buy More Win More' promotion, run by Oman Oasis, came to a close on 31 December 2022. The offer, which gave customers the chance to win exciting prizes by purchasing Oman Oasis, Sifr or Mai Alkaline drinking water from participating retailers, received an overwhelming response from the market. By participating in the offer, customers could win prizes like iPhone 13s, gold coins, laptops, and fuel coupons. After the first set of 130 winners was announced on November 3, the second draw took place on December 5 and an additional 139 customers were declared as lucky winners. The third and final set of 131 winners was announced on January 4, 2023. The winners of the iPhone 13s are Hilal Alhinai, Asaad bin Salem Marhoon Al-Jabri, Sudesh Kutti Poojary, Md Masud, Abdulaziz Abdallah, and MoidinAshique. Lenovo laptops were won by Marcelino Calde-

ron, Ameer Abdul Salam, and ManirHossen. 8 Gram gold coins were won by Nada bint Rashid bin Saed Al Abreyah, Habib bin Salem bin Hamad Al Fakhri, and Raad bin Mahmoud bin Ramadan Al Zadjali, whereas 4 gm gold coins were won by Safia Salem Abdullah Al-Quraini, Muhammed Rafeek, and Guddu Kumar. In addition to this, Fuel Coupons worth OMR 5 each was won by 115 winners from across Oman. NSS Subramaniam, COO said: "Congratulations to all the winners of our 'Buy More Win More' promotion! We are thrilled that so many of our customers were able to enjoy this offer and win valuable prizes. We appreciate your support and look forward to continuing to provide you with the highest quality products and exceptional offers in the future. We would like to thank all the participants for their valuable support and loyalty toward our brand. We hope you continue your participation in our future promotions."

FIA WEC TITLE

Toyota Gazoo Racing shines at 2022 World Endurance Championship

MUSCAT: Toyota celebrated a spectacular finish to the 2022 World Endurance Championship (WEC) season recently with a one-two victory at 8 Hours of Bahrain that saw the Toyota Gazoo Racing team achieve a clean sweep of this year's FIA WEC titles. Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and José María López claimed their second win of the season in the No. 7 GR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercar, enabling Toyota to be crowned as Hypercar Manufacturers' World Champions. Teammates Sébastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Ryo Hirakawa finished second to become Drivers' World Champions, adding to their 2022 24 Hours of Le Mans win. Buemi and Hartley write their names in the record books as the first drivers to win three titles in the top WEC category and its predecessor, the World Sports car Championship. Hirakawa also capped a remarkable rookie season by becoming Japan's third WEC champion. A perfect result in Bahrain was a fitting end to a highly successful season for Toyota Gazoo Racing, which now has a fifth world title double from 10 years of WEC competition, adding to achievements in 2022 that include a fifth-consecutive Le Mans win and eighth victory at Fuji Speedway. Success in the WEC ensured the team won every available title in the three FIA series it participated in this season; the World Endurance, World Rally, and World Rally Raid Championships. The race began under bright sunshine, with air temperatures of 35°C and equally hot on-track action. Buemi led from pole position in the No. 7 GR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercar, while López began the race in third place in the No. 8



GR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercar. Just six seconds separated the top three cars when the opening pit stops arrived, during which López leapfrogged into second place. After two hours, both GR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercars swapped drivers with Hartley taking over the No. 8 and Conway getting behind the wheel of the No. 7. The two Hypercars battled throughout this period of the race, separated by less than a second until Conway took the lead early in the fourth hour as the sun set over Bahrain International Circuit. He continued to push hard to build a gap and at half distance led by a few seconds going into the next pit stops, when Kobayashi took the wheel. Kobayashi gradually extended the No. 7 GR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercar's advantage to 15 seconds by the end of the fifth hour, before López and Buemi returned to their respective cockpits with less than two hours remaining. Further driver changes with 45 minutes to go left Conway to take the chequered flag in the No.

7 GR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercar, finishing 45.471 secs clear of Hartley in the No. 8 GR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercar. This triggered title celebrations to bring the curtain down on an exciting Hypercar season after 58 hours of competition covering 10,620 km since the first race in Sebring eight months ago. Akio Toyoda, President of Toyota Motor Corporation and TGR Team Founder, commented, "On the weekend that we had two world championship events for Toyota Gazoo Racing, there are so many things I would like to say. First of all, we were able to achieve five World Championship titles so it was a great season for us. Séb, Brendon, Ryo, and the whole No. 8 team, congratulations on the title! Kamui, Mike, José, and the No. 7 team, congratulations on your win in the final round! Kamui and I have been communicating with each other. I am truly grateful to him for his efforts as team principal, as a driver, and for his help for the future of motorsports."

CULTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Oman Cables launches Global Sustainability Academy

MUSCAT: Oman Cables Industry, a leading company in the energy cable systems industry, part of Prysmian Group, launched the Global Sustainability Academy involving 29,000 employees in over 50 countries. The initiative aims to spread the culture of sustainability within the entire corporate population worldwide and further strengthen the group's commitment to the implementation of its climate & social ambitions, with reference to the parameters related to employees' engagement and their up-skilling. Energy and fibre optic cable technology is a key aspect in energy, digital and electrification transition processes and the Sustainability Academy will enable the entire group to strengthen the culture and skills of sustainability that represent a strategic driver of business competitiveness. The Sustainability Academy training programme will also involve the most influential business schools at the international level. The inauguration of the Global Sustainability Academy was done in Muscat in Oman; headquarters of Oman Cables Industry and Prysmian Group of MEAT region, in the presence of Federica Favi, the Italian Ambassador in Oman, Cinzia Farisè CEO of Oman Cables and CEO of Prysmian MEAT Region and Maria Cristina Bifulco Prysmian Chief Sustainability Officer and Group IR VP. The course structure, which will include lessons throughout 2023, is divided into five modules - Awareness, Knowledge, Impact, Leadership and KPIs - differentiated according to the target audience. The first module, IMPACT, was held for three days with 30 managers from all over the world



discussing on the following topic: "How to innovate and spread sustainability in organisations". The modules will have a hybrid formula: some of them will be in presence (like those currently taking place in Oman), while others will be available online or via podcasts, reaching the entire company population. "With an Academy of Sustainability in Oman we want to contribute to the development of distinctive skills, creating value through positive business models based on the growth and empowerment of our human capital, to promote a diversified and inclusive system open to new perspectives and to promote the capacity to innovate by training the sustainable leaders of the future. This is in line with Oman Vision 2040 and the Sultanate's commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050," said CinziaFarisè, CEO of Oman Cables and CEO of Prysmian MEAT Region. Maria Cristina Bifulco, Chief Sustainability Officer and Group IR VP said: "As a market leader in an industry that is key in the energy transition process, we feel it is our duty to convey this sustainable culture to all our colleagues even more effectively and directly, and we need to invest in training and up-skilling our people." In 2021 Prysmian Group launched two strategic ambitions that will guide the group's actions in the medium-long term: the Climate Change Ambition and the Social Ambition. The Climate Change Ambition is a climate strategy that adopts Science Based targets aligned with the requirements of the Paris Agreement: reduction to zero of emissions of Scope 1, 2 and 3 or at least to a residual level consistent with achieving the Paris Agreement targets (1.5 °C). This means reducing the emissions produced by 90 per cent compared to 2019 and the subsequent neutralisation of any residual greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere. The group's social ambition focuses primarily on efforts to improve diversity, equality and inclusion (DE&I), digital inclusion, community empowerment, employees' engagement and their upskilling. For each of these topics, different targets for 2030 have been identified to further align the Group with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



mai

alkaline

Alkaline Ionized Drinking Water



HYDRATE SMARTLY

✓ Ultra-hydrating

✓ Revitalizing

✓ Energizing

pH 9.1 to 9.5



oman

OASIS

Toll-free

800 71 222 or

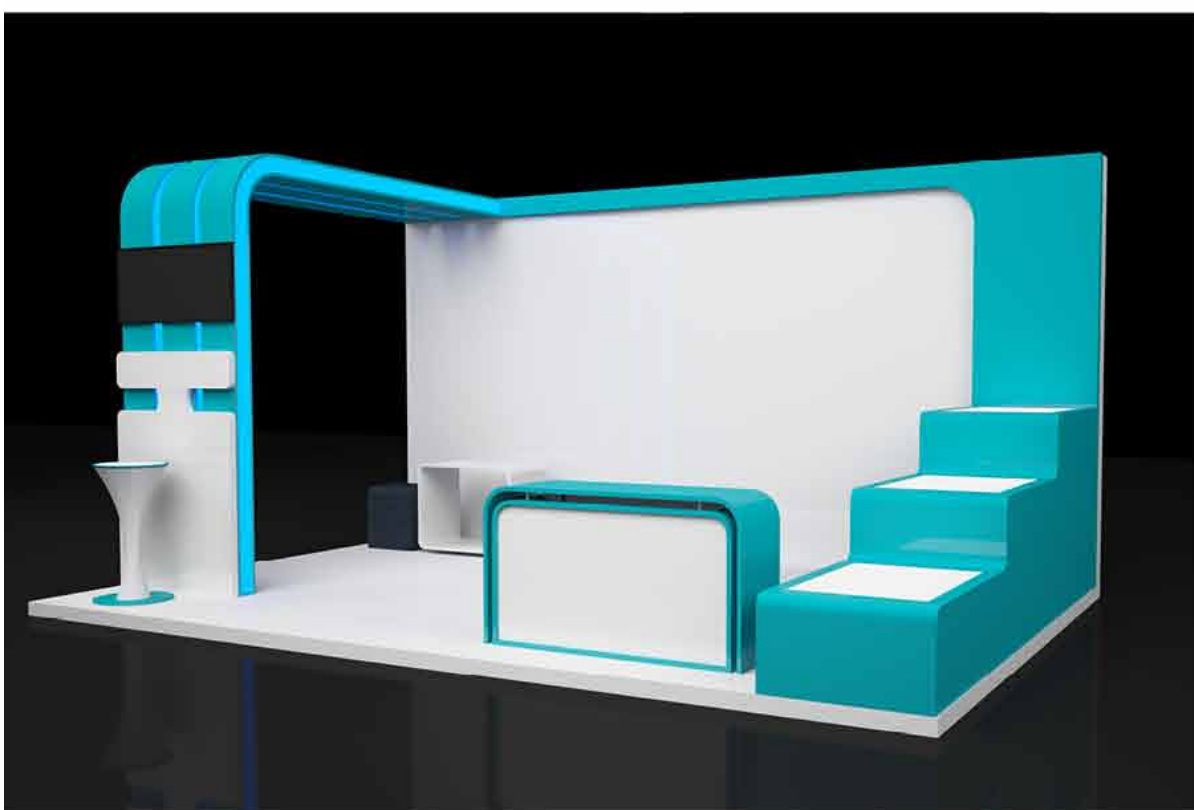
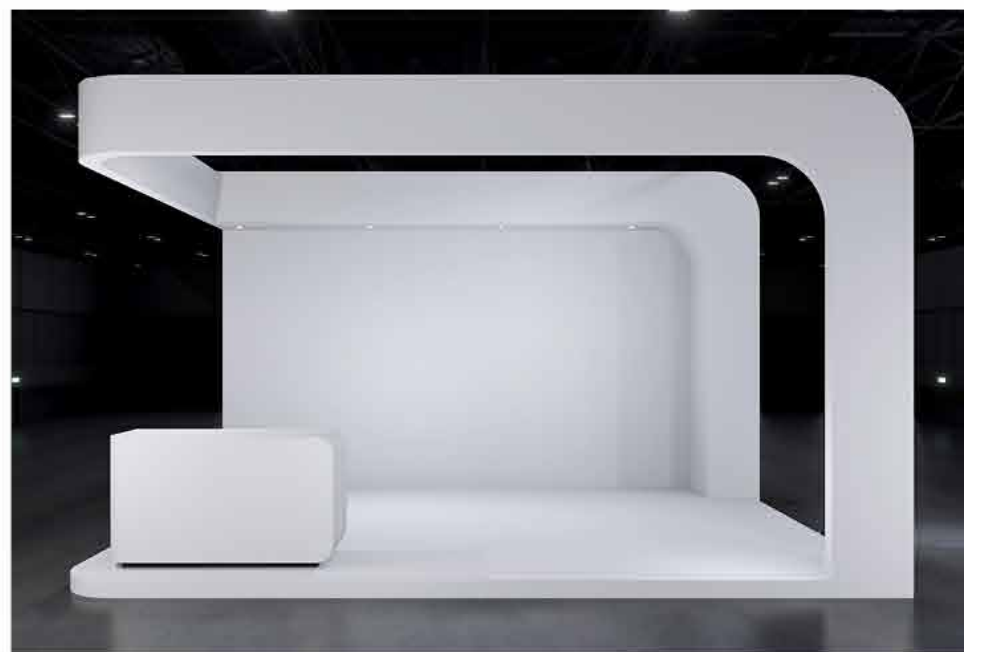
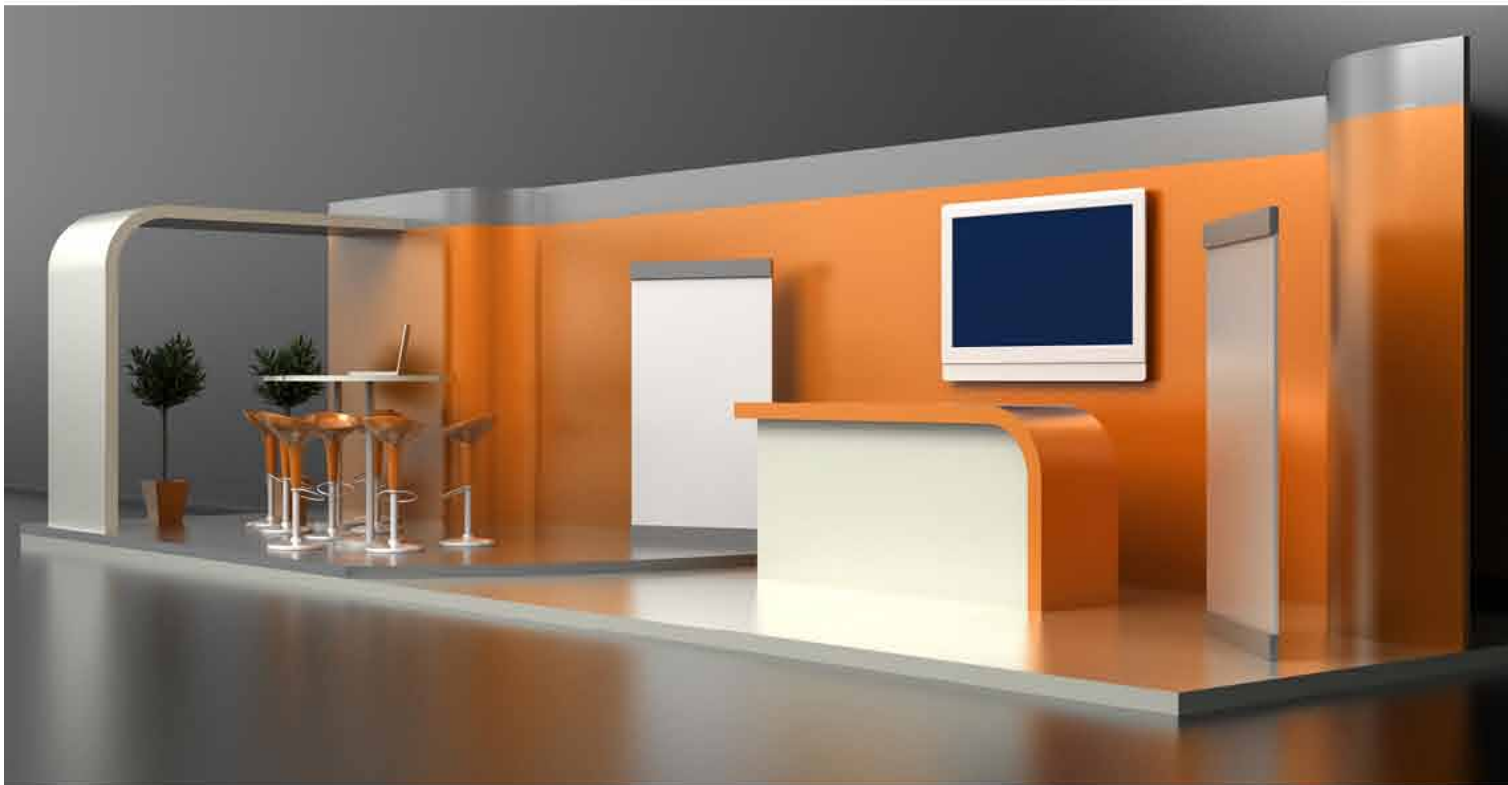
9275 5522

C.R. No.: 1365452



**FOR COST
EFFECTIVE
EXHIBITION
BOOTHS/
DISPLAY
STANDS**

**Call us on
99614066**



**Contact us on wefix@mmg.com
or call/whatsApp 99614066/ 95405033
to make customized exhibition booths**



EXCLUSIVE OFFER

CAMPAIGN PERIOD:
1ST DEC, 2022 – 29TH JAN, 2023



FUEL CARDS

(2022 DOT) RO 5 ON PURCHASE OF 4 PCR TYRES
RO 10 ON PURCHASE OF 4 UHP & 4WD TYRES

• Fuel cards of RO 5 on the purchase of 4 PCR tyres and RO 10 for the purchase of 4 UHP or 4WD tyres of 2022 DOT • Offer is applicable only at Saud Bahwan Automotive Tyre Retail Outlets and authorised dealers on cash sales / Bank Card. • Offer is valid on select sizes. • Fitting, Balancing & Other tyre services will be charged at regular price. • This offer cannot be combined with any other offer or promotion.

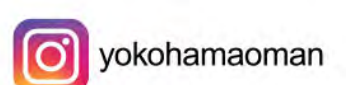
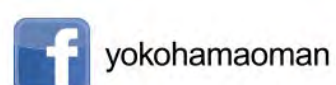
Exclusive Offer for Purchases Only at
Saud Bahwan Automotive Tyre Retail Outlets & Authorised Dealers

Email – sales.tba@sbgta.com

CLICK

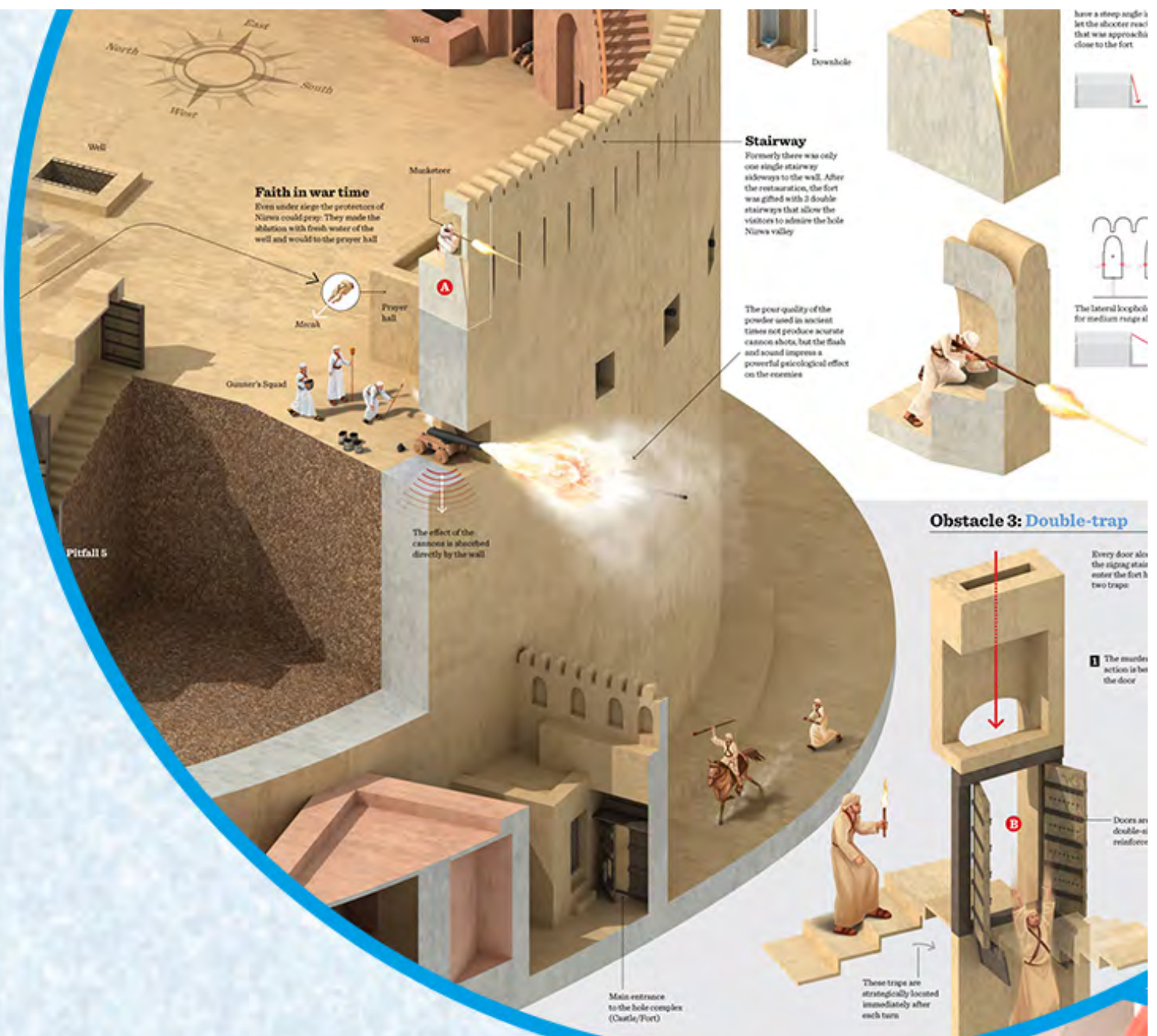


Saud Bahwan Automotive LLC
ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED C.R NO:1703412





novagram



Let Novagram tell your story

Infographics
Infomercials
TV Ads
Corporate Videos
Insta Reels
Video Editing
Multimedia & Animation
Studio Services

CALL US:
97211869

sales@novagram.om



مجموعة مسقط للإعلام
Muscat Media Group

