

HM RECEIVES THANKS CABLE FROM EMPEROR OF JAPAN

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from Emperor Naruhito of Japan in reply to His Majesty's greetings cable on the occasion of his Birthday Anniversary. In the cable, Emperor Naruhito expressed his sincere appreciation for His Majesty's heartfelt sentiments, wishing His Majesty good health and happiness. He also wished the Omani people further progress and growth. **-ONA**



HM RECEIVES THANKS CABLE FROM KSA

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) in reply to His Majesty's condolences cable on the death of Princess Lolwah bint Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. In the cable, King Salman expressed his sincere appreciation for His Majesty's heartfelt sentiments and prayers. He also prayed for Allah the Almighty to rest the deceased's soul in peace in paradise and to protect His Majesty against all harm. **-ONA**



Founded 1975 · Volume 47 No. 47 | 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

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CABLE

HM condoles President of Cuba

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to President Miguel Díaz-Canel of the Republic of Cuba on the death of victims of the explosion at a hotel in Havana, the capital city of Cuba. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sympathies to President Miguel Díaz-Canel, families of the deceased and the people of Cuba, wishing the injured a speedy recovery. **- ONA**

ZAMBIA

HM receives thanks cable

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from President Hakainde Hichilema of the Republic of Zambia in reply to His Majesty's condolences cable on the death of the former Zambian president, Rupiah Banda.

In the cable, President Hichilema expressed his sincere appreciation for His Majesty's heartfelt sympathies, wishing His Majesty continuous good health. He also wished the Omani people further development and growth. **- ONA**

HUNGARY

HM receives thanks cable

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from President Katalin Novák of the Republic of Hungary in reply to His Majesty's congratulations cable on the occasion of being elected as her country's president.

In the cable, President Novák expressed her sincere appreciation for His Majesty's heartfelt sentiments and best wishes. She also affirmed her keenness in developing the relations that serve the mutual interests of the two countries. **- ONA**

BILATERAL TRADE

Non-oil exports to India jumped 172%: Qais Al Yousef

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Non-oil exports from Oman to India increased by an impressive 172 percent between 2020 and 2021, said Qais Al Yousef, the country's Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

Speaking ahead of a planned trip to New Delhi to take part in the 10th Oman-India Joint Commission Meeting, an annual gathering that takes place to develop trade and investment links between the two countries, the minister said, "Non-oil exports to India, a key



Qais Al Yousef, Oman's Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion

priority of the Omani government and business community, reached \$1.2 billion in 2021, a jump of 172 percent over 2020, while imports from India hit \$2 billion, a 94 percent increase over 2020."

The official programme of high-level meetings and events will commence with Minister Al Yousef addressing an Oman-India B2B networking session on 11 May at the Leela Palace Hotel in New Delhi. Accompanying the delegation are senior representatives from Oman Investment Authority, Public Authority for Special Economic Zones & Free Zones and

Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry as well as Omani companies from the construction, manufacturing, retail, automotive, renewable energy, pharmaceutical and tourism sectors.

Ahead of his departure, he emphasised the importance of trade and investment missions such as this in promoting Oman's world-class goods and services in global markets as well as the investment opportunities open to foreign investors in Oman. He continued: "On this visit we look forward, in particular, to sharing the potential of pro-business and investment

environment in Oman under the guidance of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and the possibilities that have already opened up in the Sultanate as a result of Oman Vision 2040, our framework for development and growth." Noting that this year marks India's 75 years of independence, during which the country has become a global business leader and a \$3 trillion plus economy, the minister expressed his delight at visiting New Delhi to congratulate the Indian people in person and to engage with government and business captains on growing trade ties. **>A2**



Parents must teach their children about the risks of using technology excessively

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Children should be taught how to identify and stand up to cyberbullies by both parents and teachers, say mental health professionals and tech

experts in Oman.

Their advice comes in the wake of instructions to parents on how they can help their child recognise and avoid blackmailers online, by the Gulf Health Council (GHC), a body of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) that deals with spreading awareness about physical and mental health.

Oman is one of the six members of the GCC. The other five are the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait.

How to find out if your child is being blackmailed
"If you wish to find out whether your child is being blackmailed, sit and talk to them in a nice manner," advised the Gulf

Health Council (GHC). "Listen to them intently and review what has happened to them so that they do not repeat their actions in future.

"Do not get nervous and try to not make the child feel guilty...do not threaten them either," added the body. "Report the incident of blackmail to the cybercrime unit in your country and make a note of the platform that was used to blackmail the child."

In this context, Dr Nuhaila Al Rawahi, an educational psychologist in Oman, said that with technology now an ever-present and growing part of children's lives, parents need to understand the risks of exposing them to too much technology too soon.

"Parents need to keep (them-

selves) abreast of preventative and protective strategies," she said. "Cyber safety should be taught in schools to children, as cyber bullying and blackmail can jeopardise a young person's mental health and well-being and have negative consequences on their learning and behaviours. Adults need to be observant of changes in temperament and behaviour of children as this is usually a sign that something is wrong."

Anuya Phule, a clinical psychotherapist at Hatat Polyclinic, said a child exposed to blackmail could suffer from a range of problems, including post-traumatic stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia and even suicidal thoughts. **>A3**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Diana Awards launched in Oman

1 The Diana Awards for innovation, humanity and mental health that seeks to honour young people who work to improve the lives of others has been introduced for the first time in the Sultanate of Oman. **>A3**

WORLD Nepali scales Mt Everest for 26th time

2 Kami Rita, an experienced Nepalese Sherpa guide, has broken his own record for the most climbs of Mount Everest, reaching the 8,849-metre-high summit on Saturday before returning safely to lower camps. **>A7**

MARKET Commercial logistics pact signed for Sezad



3 In pursuance of the close strategic bilateral relations and strong historical ties of friendship between the Oman and India, a commercial agreement was signed at the Port of Duqm Company headquarters in Duqm. **>B1**



TRAVEL

Over 35,000 Omanis went abroad for the Eid holidays

SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

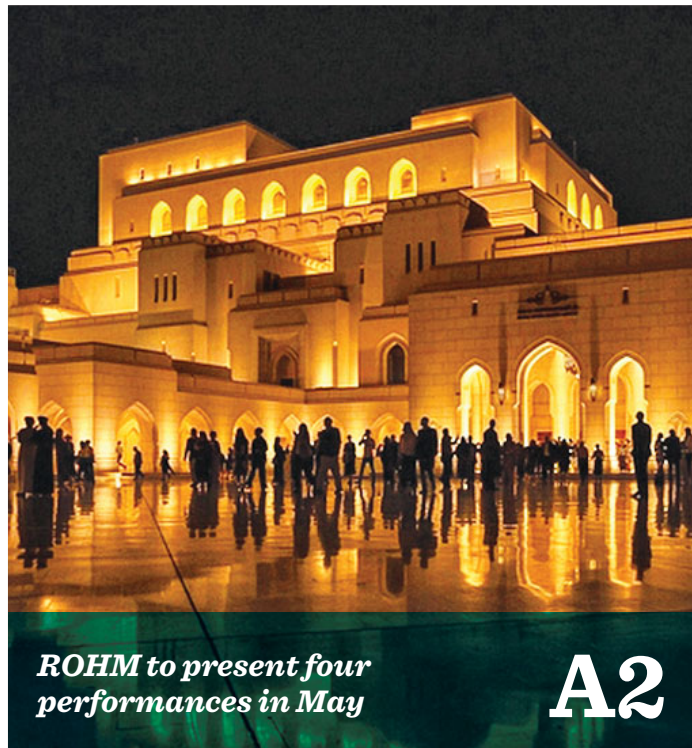
MUSCAT: Over 35,000 Omanis and their families spent their Eid holidays abroad taking advantage of a nine-day break, according to the statistics at Muscat Airport and the boarder crossing.

The most popular destinations were the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Thailand, Tanzania, the United Kingdom and India. It was also a huge boost for the two Oman's national airlines, Oman Air and Salam Air, with flights near full capacity during the holiday period. The border crossing was also extremely busy with hol-

iday makers driving to the neighbouring Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

"It was a good break for my family and I in Tanzania. Not often we have nine days off for the Eid holiday. We took advantage of it. We came back on the weekend feeling fresh and thankful we could afford a break," Ali Al-Mahrooki, who works as a civil engineer at the Ministry of Defence, told *Times of Oman*. But the second reason of the Eid holiday demand was fuelled by the lull of the pandemic when many countries imposed travel restrictions for the fear of the coronavirus spread. "I did not travel since 2020. It

has been two years and with the coronavirus restrictions lifted by many countries, we had a lot of choice of destinations. We chose to spend our Eid holidays in Istanbul since there are no restrictions there now," Ibrahim Al-Jawhari, a 53-year old Omani engineer, told *Times of Oman*. Those who drove to Dubai had to endure a long traffic queue at the border but they say the delay was worth it. "There was a long line at the border-crossing with cars queuing up but we did not mind at all. It took us an hours to go through but after that it was very smooth," said Salah Al-Jabri, a Ministry of Manpower officer.



ROHM to present four performances in May

A2

ROHM to present four performances in May

May opens with a concert of musical excellence featuring the young virtuoso pianist, Alexander Malofeev, playing alongside the celebrated Tatarstan National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Alexander Sladkovsky



MUSCAT: The Royal Opera House Muscat (ROHM) closes its season this month with four significant productions demonstrating the notable strengths of the opera house to enhance global collaboration and cultural enrichment across nations and generations.

May opens with a concert of musical excellence featuring the young virtuoso pianist, Alexander Malofeev, playing alongside the celebrated Tatarstan National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Alexander Sladkovsky. The concert presents a programme of the classical composers: Liszt, Rachmaninoff and Borodin, to be staged on 12 May.

During the same weekend on 14 May, the opera house presents the resounding annual Pipe Organ Concert. Each year this concert gives centre stage to the most magnificent instrument in the world, the majestic pipe organ.

Traditionally, the concert is presented with the finest organists of the world playing classical pipe organ music swelling the auditorium with incredible sound.

This year the opera house presents a crowning concert: with participation from the Münchner Knabenchor, a German boys' choir renowned for excellence through-

out the world; Hansjörg Albrecht, conductor; composer, and world-famous organist; Rashid Salim Al Rashidi, Oman's celebrated organist; and, the Royal Oman Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Alessandro Cadario.

The programme includes a world premiere of the piece, The Dreaming Lion, composed by Marcus Tutino, written for Oman and for the pipe organ at the Royal Opera House Muscat. In the 10th anniversary season of ROHM, this is a landmark concert.

Following on from a concert offering a genre based in European heritage, the opera house welcomes Melhem Zain, whose repertoire is deeply rooted in the heritage of Arab music.

He is an acclaimed singer with a voice that has been described as dazzling and 'mountainous'. He sings in a style inspired by the great Arab artists Wadiah El Safi, Mohammed Abdel Wahab and Nazem Al Ghazali. Enjoy a concert celebrating classics of the Arabic music world on 19 and 20 May.



Finishing the month and the season with a family show on 26-27 May which draws popular sports and elite competition into performing arts, don't miss the show Play, presented by the Kataklo Athletic Dance Theatre. Ethereal, athletic, and balletic, Play is a mesmerising show capturing the talent, emotion and

tension of elite sport while also acknowledging the beauty and heritage of athletic endeavours.

All performances will take place under the guidelines issued by the COVID-19 Supreme Committee. Safety measures are in place throughout the opera house to ensure everyone's comfort and safety. — **ONA**

THROUGH THE ELECTRONIC SYSTEM



Hajj e-registrations to open from Monday

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs has announced that the e-registration of citizens and residents for Hajj 1443 AH will open from May 9 to May 14, 2022. Registration can be made through the electronic system (www.hajj.om).

The ministry added that the registration can be through the ID number or ID card or mobile number.

As for the conditions and controls for Hajj registration through the electronic system, the ministry added that the applicant must be at least 18 years

old and under 65 years old.

The ministry pointed out that the applicant must meet the conditions and controls of the target group for Hajj, and who has completed taking the doses of approved vaccines for coronavirus (Covid-19), with a certificate endorsed by the health authorities in the Sultanate of Oman, and submitting a negative PCR result taken within (72) hours prior to travel time to Saudi Arabia.

The quota of the Sultanate of Oman in 2022 is 6,338 pilgrims, reducing the number by 45 percent due to the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic. — **ONA**

TRADE PARTNERSHIPS

<FROM A1> Oman-India trade to grow further

He continued: "Holding this Joint Commission Meeting at this time presents a real opportunity to support and strengthen the long-standing trade partnerships that connect us – helping both sides fully embrace the opportunities on offer. I fully expect to see further growth in Oman-India trade as both countries emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic."

From an investment perspective, Al Yousef commented: "India is already a large inward investor in Oman, but there are significant opportunities to increase this even further. In fact, there are great complementarities between India's needs and Oman's offer, particularly in logistics, mining, tourism, manufacturing and renewables. These are all areas ripe for Oman-India collaboration."

Like many economies around the world, India was also impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but now looks set to be one of the best emerging market recovery

stories of 2022 with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry predicting GDP growth at 7.4 percent for the financial year 2022-23.

Oman's growth trajectory

The Omani economy is also on an optimistic growth trajectory with S&P Global revising the Sultanate's rating in April to BB+ with a stable outlook, the first upgrade since 2015. The IMF World Economic Outlook Report projects 5.6 percent GDP growth for Oman in 2022, making it the third fastest growing economy in the GCC.

"The benefits of improved Oman-India trade and investment relations cannot be denied, bringing with it increased people-to-people ties, innovation, entrepreneurship, job creation and greater prosperity for both countries. We look forward to more of Oman in India and more of India in the Sultanate of Oman," concluded Al Yousef.

30,000 KM SOLO MOTORBIKE JOURNEY

Indian conservationist to visit Oman as part of global effort to save soil

Times News Service

MUSCAT: An Indian conservationist will visit Oman in May as part of the Save Soil initiative, a global movement that aims to conserve soil and preserve it for future generations.

As part of the campaign, Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev set off on a 30,000 km solo motorbike journey from the United Kingdom to India on 21 March, visiting dozens of countries on the way, to raise awareness and participation in soil protection efforts.

"The Embassy of India is happy to confirm that internationally known Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev will be visiting Oman on 25-26 May 2022 to raise awareness about the Save Soil initiative," said a statement from the Indian embassy in Muscat.

His visit to Muscat is part of a broader trip across the Middle East, also featuring stops planned in several cities, including Amman, Riyadh, Manama and Dubai.

"Without reversing soil degradation, there is simply no way to

reconcile the rapid decline in food production with the exponential growth in population size," Sadhguru said adding "this is our greatest generational prerogative and most valuable legacy."

His round-the-world trip is part of the Save Soil movement led by conservation organisation, Conscious Planet, with the ambitious aim of securing the support of more than 3.5 billion people to ensure talks around ecology and focus on soil conservation. The 64-year-old motorbike enthusiast and yogi, who counts Jane Goodall, Deepak Chopra and will.i.am among his supporters, is being joined by celebrities, including the Colombian singer-songwriter Maluma, England rugby player Jonny Wilkinson and German footballer Michael Ballack at public events in cities, including Amsterdam, Berlin and Geneva.

In the run-up to the trip, he has been interviewed on radio and TV programmes, including The Daily Show in the US with Trevor Noah, ITV's This Morning and Chris Evans' radio breakfast show.



"We're using both motorcycles and music to connect with people so that 3.5 billion citizens understand that we must address this problem right now in order to make a significant turnaround within the next 10 to 15 years," he said.

So far, 14 countries, including Barbados, Guyana and Dominica, have signed a memorandum of understanding to work collaboratively to secure soil health

globally. He hopes that more of the UN's 193 member-states will come on board.

Extent of soil degradation

According to the World Bank, soil degradation affects more than 50 percent of agricultural land. The ramifications of soil degradation could have lasting negative effects.

"The loss of potential and existing agricultural land to droughts, floods and land degradation af-

fects vast swathes of the world's poor, many of whom depend on agriculture for their livelihood and nourishment. Restoring land and soil helps keep land degradation in check," said the World Bank's Paola Agostini, a lead natural resources management specialist for Europe and Central Asia and Mahyar Eshragh Tabary, a statistical officer, in a report from the World Bank, focused on the UN Sustainable Development goals.

Even as early as 2016, soil degradation affected 52 percent of agricultural areas and arable land was being lost at 30 to 35 times its historical rate. Furthermore, the authors noted that drought and desertification led to losses of 12 million hectares, on which 20 million tonnes of grain could have been grown.

Scientifically speaking, if organic content in soil is more than three to six percent, that soil is considered healthy and whatever we plant in it will grow well. As the organic content in soil decreases, it becomes degraded soil which is not conducive to farming. Adding

organic content to even dry soil will improve its health and enable life to thrive.

This is not the first time Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev has attempted to secure large-scale support for ecological efforts: His Rally for Rivers initiative in 2017 found support from an amazing 162 million people around the world. It was also included as part of the UN Climate Action Compendum of Nature-based Solutions...a testament to its scientific soundness.

Concern for soil conservation was also echoed by Executive Secretary Ibrahim Thiaw of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, on World Soil Day 2020.

"Every five seconds, the equivalent of one soccer field of soil is eroded," he said in a statement. "It can take up to a thousand years to produce just two to three centimeters of soil. Over 33 percent of Earth's soils are already degraded and 90 per cent could become degraded by 2050. Currently, one fifth of the global population lives and works on degraded agricultural land."



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Humanity and mental health awards launched



TOGETHER FOR A GOOD CAUSE: The event was held at the National Museum in Muscat in the presence of Her Highness Sayyida Basma Al Said, an advocate of mental health, clinical counsellor and founder of Not Alone Campaign for mental health.



The Sultanate of Oman is one of the first countries to introduce the Diana Awards

MADIHA ASIF
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MUSCAT: The Diana Awards for innovation, humanity and mental health that honours young people who work to improve the lives of others has been introduced for the first time in the Sultanate of Oman. Held at the National Museum in Muscat yesterday in the presence of Her Highness Sayyida Basma Al Said, an advocate of mental health, clinical counsellor and founder of Not Alone Campaign for mental health, the event aimed to provide Omani youth with the opportunity to learn

about the Diana Awards besides meeting the two keynote speakers - Tessy Ojo, CEO of Diana Award Charity and Dr. Yvonne Thompson, founder and President of WinTrade Global Women and Author of 7 Traits of Highly Successful Women on Boards. "Today [Sunday] we had the introduction of the Diana Awards and it is basically for humanity and that is what is very important about it. Also, we are very fortunate to be one of the first countries to introduce the Diana Awards, so, I am very happy and I feel very blessed today," said Al Said while talking to *Times of Oman*. It may be noted that this award was named after Diana, the Princess of Wales, in 1999 by a board chair member Gordon Brown who dedicated it to the youth between 9 and 25 years old. On the importance of such prestigious awards coming to Oman, Al Said said: "It is very important for every youth all around the world and I think it will empower them to work more for humanity, think about giving back to the society as well as bringing back kindness and all those things that we were taught

about as children, but somehow lost them in the journey." "Also, this will provide the youth a platform to focus on their mental health which is a very big thing for me." The day also saw the re-launching of the Not Alone campaign logo that was first launched eight years ago. "We are re-launching the Not Alone logo that has been running for eight years in Oman. We always try to be innovative and to bring something new, and as I said earlier that when you dare to be different, it is more challenging, but it is always a joy. I hope that mental health can be introduced in a different and more inspiring way," Al Said said. Running for eight years in the country, the campaign's aim is to educate the public on the importance of mental health and the available resources that are offered to help those in need support. "This year the team will be working with Oman Post to launch the first-ever post card in the Arab world, previously done only in the USA, UK and Canada, that will highlight mental health awareness," she added.

CHILD PROTECTION

<FROM A1> Keep an eye on children when they are online

"If the child shows distress or a change in behaviour and spends a lot of time in his room, it is okay for parents to check their online activity," she explained. "Establish ground rules at home so that you can stay connected with your child even when they are online. Keep the doors to their room open so that you have an idea of what's going on inside. Encourage them to share what they do online."

Through which platforms can children face electronic blackmail?
The Gulf Health Council noted that electronic blackmailers may be lurking in many parts of the cyber world, reaching out to unsuspecting children through video games and social media platforms. Blackmail may also take many forms: Emotional blackmail, coercing the child to share compromising photos and videos of them or their family, forcing them to perform unethical tasks or attempting to extract personal information from him. Blackmailers use these incriminating materials as currency against the child, and exploit them by manipulating their feelings, controlling them, extorting mate-

rial goods from them or forcing them to cough up money for not exposing them publicly. The GHC added that while children might be targeted online, the blackmailers themselves may not be over the age of 18. "It is easier, faster and more convenient for blackmailers to disguise their true intentions as offers put up in games and on social platforms," said Tariq Al Barwani, founder of Knowledge Oman, a tech education and research company. "You can pose as anyone and claim to be from anywhere, so long as you are connected to the web. These days, there are a plethora of tech applications available to both blackmailers and victims." "We had a seminar conducted pre-COVID-19, on cyberbullying, which was a great success, as we saw attendance from teaching faculty, government and law enforcement officials," he added. "We aim to have another awareness event in 2022."

How to protect your child from blackmail
Parents would do well to check up on their children's activities and look up the age ratings of the games they play, explained the GHC. Parental control features

on devices used by children are also highly recommended, as is educating them about the devices they handle. It is also advised to limit the amount of time children spend online, but parents must explain to them that these caps are being set for their own good.

Children must not share personal photos or videos
Children must not share personal photos or videos, and those of an indecent nature, irrespective of whom they are communicating with. Furthermore, no sensitive data of people at home is to be revealed online. "As part of their education and awareness sessions, schools need to ensure they define what the important terms mean, and also what they do not mean," added Dr Nuhaila Al Rawahi, the educational psychologist. "Children need explicit examples of how to respond to situations and also how to avoid such situations. "The use of interactive methods such as role play can be a very effective way to ensure that they don't only know what to do, but how to do," she said. "These campaigns can also be extended to parents as they play an important role in their child's safety."

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Visitors explore the waters of Wadi Shab
PHOTO PURUSHOTHAMAN K.

AFTER TWO YEARS OF PANDEMIC, SPIRIT OF EID RETURNS IN FULL SWING

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Locals and expatriates in Oman celebrated Eid Al Fitr with plenty of zeal and verve, after being unable to do so, owing to measures relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

People flocked to public parks and beaches to while away the hours during the nine-day Eid holidays with their family and friends, while worshippers congregated at mosques, filled with fervour and devotion to perform their daily prayers.

After unfortunately being suspended for two years, Eid habta souqs were also back, and proved a treat to both adults and children alike, who took the opportunity to

celebrate with glee alongside relatives, neighbours and friends.

During the Eid holidays, it was not uncommon to see people spend the entire day outdoors to find release from the hustle and bustle of daily life. Whether it was flocking in the waves, going for a picnic on the fresh-cut green grass in a garden, or chartering a boat and following the paths left by dolphins leaping off the coast of Oman, many turned to nature to recharge, refresh and rejuvenate them before they returned to daily lives.

While some took trips abroad, others chose to travel within Oman: Salalah and Masirah Islands, where temperatures are cooler than what it is in the capital

and northern regions of the country, were the first choice.

"It is a tradition of ours to go to Salalah every year – normally, we do so during the Khareef, but this time, we decided to advance our trip," said Ali, a Jordanian national. "The temperatures are not as cool as they are during the Khareef proper, but it was still nice to explore a place that is familiar to us and, after a gap of two years."

Mohammed, a Pakistani national who went to Khasab in the northern region of Musandam, added: "We rented a four wheel drive and explored the mountains of the region. Going there and seeing the stark contrasts of nature really showed us the amazing natural beauty of this country.

It was amazing to go out to sea in a boat, away from the hubbub of daily life."

Parks and beaches were packed with people during the Eid holidays, with many families choosing to bond with their friends and relatives over a relaxing picnic in many of Oman's public gardens.

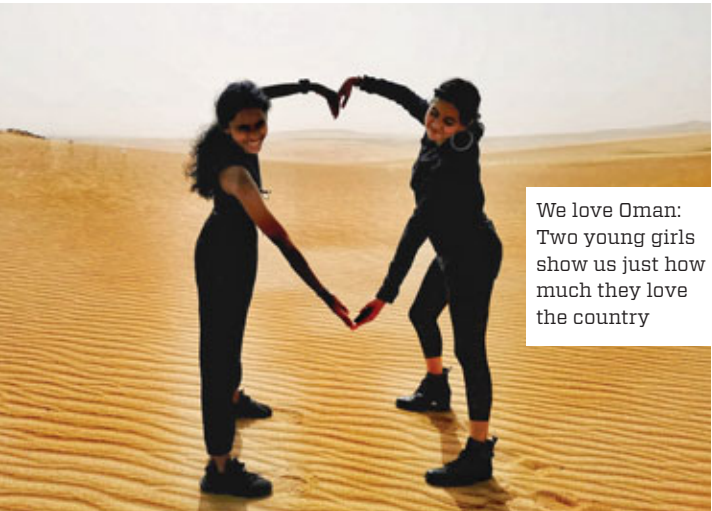
Sreejith, an Indian expatriate, said: "We are planning to travel in the summer anyway, so we decided to make the most of our time at home this Eid holiday. We made it a point, however, to explore a different part of Muscat every day and meet up with our friends. It was really good to catch up with friends after so long, when we met at Qurum Park for a picnic. The time just flew by!"



Trekking through the dunes of Oman is a joy on any given day



Wadi Shab's natural beauty attracted people from all over Oman
PHOTO PURUSHOTHAMAN K.



We love Oman: Two young girls show us just how much they love the country



The Muttrah Corniche was crowded throughout the nine-day Eid break
PHOTO PURUSHOTHAMAN K.



A boy practices archery at Atana Stay Al Ashkara

Ornamental plants donated to Central Plant Nursery

Ambassador Ameer Ajwad was hosted a tour around the Central Plant Nursery of Royal Gardens and Farms by Engineer Saleh Al-Jahdhami, Director of the Department of Plant Nurseries of the Royal Gardens and Farms of the Sultanate of Oman.

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WORLD



MPE STUDY

Astronomers discover trails of over 1,000 unknown asteroids

MUNICH: Astronomers at the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics (MPE) have discovered more than 1,000 trails that probably originate from previously unknown asteroids.

They searched through archive data from the Hubble Space Telescope from the past 20 years, as the institute in Garching near the southern German city of Munich announced. The findings could provide insights into the conditions in the early solar system.

Data was analysed that is otherwise filtered out as noise or interference in most observations. “One astronomer’s trash can be another astronomer’s treasure,” said Sandor Kruk, head of the asteroid study.

The detective work combined human and artificial intelligence: First, some 11,500 volunteer lay scientists helped identify clues to asteroids in the more than 37,000 composite images. The astronomers used this to train a machine-learning algorithm that continued to search through the remaining archival data.

The final dataset contained 1,701 trails, according to MPE. A good third was assigned to known asteroids, leaving 1,031 unidentified trails that are now being investigated in more detail.

The objects were probably



smaller than typical asteroids detected from the ground, it said. But they had a similar speed and distribution in the sky to those in the so-called asteroid belt, it said.

“The asteroids are remnants from the formation of our solar system, which means that we can learn more about the conditions

when our planets were born,” said study leader Kruk.

By 10 December, 2021, more than 1.1 million comets and asteroids in our solar system had been listed by the Minor Planet Centre, according to the study authors. It collects such discoveries made worldwide. — **DNA**

MOST CLIMBS

Expert Nepali sherpa scales Mt Everest for record 26th time



KATHMANDU: Kami Rita, an experienced Nepalese Sherpa guide, has broken his own record for the most climbs of Mount Everest, reaching the 8,849-metre-high (29,032-foot-high) summit on Saturday before returning safely to lower camps, a government official said.

“Kami Rita has broken his own record and established a new world record in climbing,” said Taranath Adhikari, the director-general of the Department of Tourism in the Nepalese capital of Kathmandu. It was Rita’s 26th climb of the peak.

Who is Rita?

Rita, 52, first scaled Everest in 1994. Since then, he has climbed the mountain nearly every year, already setting several world records for the highest number of ascents.

In 2019, he said he wanted to make 25 ascents of Everest before retiring from high mountain climbing.

Rita works as one of the many highly skilled Sherpa guides who assist foreign climbers who come to Nepal wanting to reach the top of the mountain, a feat that has been achieved 10,657 times.

He led a 10-strong group of other Sherpa guides on his recent climb of the peak. He took the southeast ridge route used by Sherpa Tenzing Norgay and New Zealander Sir Edmund Hillary for the first-ever scaling of the summit in 1953.

Rita has scaled several other of the world’s highest mountains, including K-2, Cho-Oyu, Manaslu and Lhotse.

Busy mountain

Altogether, 311 people have lost their lives in the attempt to climb Mt. Everest, according to the Himalayan database.

This year Nepal has issued 316 permits to climb Everest in the peak season, which runs through May, as the month offers the best weather conditions. Last year saw a record number of 408 permits issued.

The Himalayan nation has faced criticism for allowing overcrowding, which is considered to have been a factor in several climber deaths on the mountains in 2019.

Climbing expeditions contribute hundreds of millions of dollars to the Nepalese economy each year. **DW**

JAZEERA STEEL



حديد الجزيرة

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT - 31 MARCH 2022

On behalf of the Board of Directors, enclosed herewith are the Financial Statements for the three months ending March 31, 2022.

Highlights of the performance for the three months can be summarized as follows:

Particulars	Group			Parent		
	Q1 2022	Q1 2021	Growth %	Q1 2022	Q1 2021	Growth %
Production in MT	97,251	101,472	(4%)	97,251	101,472	(4%)
Sales in MT	102,328	97,802	5%	100,181	99,112	1%
Sales Value in RO	40,688,729	30,176,239	35%	40,191,456	30,354,930	32%
Net Profit in RO	1,710,589	1,987,275	(14%)	1,576,382	1,933,479	(18%)

The year started on a positive note on the Covid front. We introduced monitoring in line with the guidelines issued by the Supreme Committee and kept operations going on smoothly. In this regard, we would like to thank the Department of Health Officials in Oman for their constant support and guidance during this critical time.

One of the major highlights of the Q1 was going live with SAP from 1st January 2022. The SAP go live followed the implementation of the Production Automation System (PAS) in our mills. It is important to note that we implemented all modules related to Production, Sales, Finance, Procurement & HR all at the same time, along with a fairly complicated PAS. This in a manufacturing environment was a challenge, but the team rose up to the challenge.

Despite the expected initial teething issues after the implementation of SAP, the team was able to make up and we could close the quarter ahead of our internal budgets. We are hopeful that implementation of state-of-the-art PAS & ERP in our factory should bring to fore better efficiencies.

The beginning of the year saw strong oil prices with the demand for energy starting to revive around the world. Along with the control on Covid cases, there was optimism of unlocking of projects within the GCC. However, the recent events in Ukraine caused a sharp volatility in the market. The immediate impact was seen from the severity of disruption in the commodity market and supply chains, especially freight rates. As per IMF, the events raises financial stability risks for the world. This along with inflationary pressures and expected interest-rate hikes have led to a notable tightening in advanced economies in the weeks following the conflict in Ukraine.

Nonetheless, some of the regions are still reporting healthy demand. We capitalized on the opportunities afforded by the market, and we are happy to report our first break bulk shipment of MBM products to MENA region. Additionally, we are beginning to implement upgrades as planned of our MBM and Tube Mills. Furthermore, we are trying for additional certifications and incremental production expansion of MBM. We feel that these incremental measures, will give us a wider range of options to improve our geographical footprint as well as help us address different customer segments.

Going forward, managing volatility and supply chain disruptions would be key. While we could capitalize on rising prices during the first quarter, towards the end of the quarter we have seen prices stagnating & in fact softening. The way the events unfold in Europe and how the world economy reacts to that will hold the key for the rest of the year. But as a company, we are hopeful that with the diverse market mix we operate, we are in a reasonably good position to handle the vagaries of the market. The company continues with measures to improve mill efficiency along with proactive planning and forecasting to mitigate risk and manage volatility.

The Company, as a corporate policy, continuously invests in human resources and provides training to its employees to develop their skills at various levels. Local employment is encouraged, and we have achieved 43% Omanisation in our workforce.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Company and the Board of Directors, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq for the encouragement and support given by his government to the industrial development in Oman. Also, I take this opportunity to thank all our stakeholders and very importantly our employees and the management team for the support and co-operation extended, which in turn reflects the confidence placed in the Company.

On Behalf of the Board

Amal Suhail Salim Bahwan
Chairperson of the Board of Directors
28 April 2022

Consolidated and separate condensed interim statement of financial position as at 31 March 2022 (Expressed in Omani Rial)

	Group		Parent Company	
	31 March 2022 (Un-audited)	31 Dec. 2021 (audited)	31 March 2022 (Un-audited)	31 Dec. 2021 (audited)
ASSETS				
Non-current assets				
Property, plant and equipment	14,697,516	14,776,487	14,677,699	14,756,747
Right-of-use assets	821,877	859,866	745,522	777,635
Intangible assets	329,410	-	329,410	-
Investment in a subsidiary	-	-	258,244	258,244
Deferred tax assets	387,855	387,855	387,855	387,855
Total non-current assets	16,236,658	16,024,208	16,398,730	16,180,481
Current assets				
Inventories	23,759,468	23,035,143	22,866,450	21,782,909
Trade and other receivables	54,942,778	50,129,726	54,764,402	50,640,083
Cash and bank balances	2,214,522	7,223,448	2,079,474	6,908,796
Total current assets	80,916,768	80,388,317	79,710,326	79,331,788
Total assets	97,153,426	96,412,525	96,109,056	95,512,269
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES				
Capital and reserves				
Share capital	12,489,796	12,489,796	12,489,796	12,489,796
Share premium	13,856,484	13,856,484	13,856,484	13,856,484
Legal reserve	4,166,344	4,166,344	4,163,266	4,163,266
Retained earnings	17,599,739	19,885,885	16,902,715	19,323,068
Total capital and reserves	48,112,363	50,398,509	47,412,261	49,832,614
Non-current liabilities				
Employees' benefit liabilities	1,650,229	1,646,637	1,630,977	1,617,949
Lease liabilities - non-current portion	905,875	938,772	847,437	872,654
Total non-current liabilities	2,556,104	2,585,409	2,478,414	2,490,603
Current liabilities				
Trade and other payables	20,697,798	17,639,740	20,471,172	17,450,398
Bank borrowings	23,279,242	23,598,796	23,279,242	23,598,796
Lease liabilities - current portion	158,728	168,651	128,010	137,933
Income tax payable	2,349,191	2,021,420	2,339,957	2,001,925
Total current liabilities	46,484,959	43,428,607	46,218,381	43,189,052
Total liabilities	49,041,063	46,014,016	48,696,795	45,679,655
Total equity and liabilities	97,153,426	96,412,525	96,109,056	95,512,269
Net assets per share	0.385	0.404	0.380	0.399

Consolidated and separate condensed interim statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the three-month period ended 31 March 2022 (Expressed in Omani Rial)

	Period from 1 Jan 2022 to 31 March 2022 (Un-audited)	Period from 1 Jan 2022 to 31 March 2021 (Un-audited)	Period from 1 Jan 2022 to 31 March 2022 (Un-audited)	Period from 1 Jan 2022 to 31 March 2021 (Un-audited)
Revenue	40,688,729	30,176,239	40,191,456	30,354,930
Cost of sales	(34,122,095)	(25,018,642)	(33,881,725)	(25,313,378)
Gross profit	6,566,634	5,157,597	6,309,731	5,041,552
Other income	608,871	1,692	608,871	421
	7,175,505	5,159,289	6,918,602	5,041,973
Expenses				
Selling and distribution expenses	(3,643,767)	(1,586,897)	(3,632,083)	(1,579,425)
General and administrative expenses	(1,114,522)	(807,028)	(1,042,537)	(755,527)
Other operating expenses	(8,009)	(9,529)	(8,009)	(9,529)
Loss allowance on trade receivables	(79,583)	(135,008)	(75,328)	(140,700)
	(4,845,881)	(2,538,462)	(4,757,957)	(2,485,181)
Operating profit for the period	2,329,624	2,620,827	2,160,645	2,556,792
Finance costs (net of finance income)	(259,640)	(103,714)	(246,231)	(95,322)
Net profit before tax for the period	2,069,984	2,517,113	1,914,414	2,461,470
Income tax expense	(359,395)	(529,838)	(338,032)	(527,991)
Net profit after tax and total comprehensive income for the period	1,710,589	1,987,275	1,576,382	1,933,479
Net profit attributable to the Parent Company	1,710,589	1,987,275		
Earnings per share - basic and diluted	0.014	0.016	0.013	0.015

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هاتف: ٢٦٧٥١٧٦٣/٤/٥، فاكس: ٢٦٧٥١٧٦٨،
بريد الكتروني: contact@jazeerasteel.com



Pakistan School Seeb

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ANNUAL TENDER

PS Seeb intends to offer Annual Contract for the year 2022 – 2023. The contractors with relevant experiences are invited for following bidding:

Tender No.	Tender's Name	Tender Collection Date	Submission Date
2022/001	Running of School Canteens	May 10 to May 12, 2022 08:00 AM to 02:00 PM Working Days/Hours	Before and Until May 15, 2022

Experience contractor(s) having relevant experience of at least 3 years of similar nature jobs preferably in Oman, who wishes to participate in the bidding may collect the documents after payment of RO. 20,000 (non-refundable) per Job.

Accounts Office
Pakistan School Seeb
P.O. Box 903, Building 356, Way 5889, Al Sharadi, Al Seeb, Oman
In case of any query you may contact (968) 24464345- (968) 24468990
Email: Principal.seeb@pakistanschool.edu.om,
memberfinancesmcseeb@pakistanschool.edu.om

The tenders shall be submitted in Original and complete with all relevant documents. Tenders not in compliance with tender's requirements shall not be considered.

Tender Documents shall be submitted in sealed envelope with clearly mentioned Tender Number/name, Company Name and POC's Number/name. The sealed envelope shall be dropped in the Tender Box available at Admin Office on or before the date mentioned above and addressed to:

Pakistan School Seeb
(PS Seeb is not bound to accept the lowest Tender or any Tender)

Advantage City as Spurs hold Liverpool, Brighton thrash Manchester Utd

Liverpool are in first place on goal difference but Man City will now be looking to take full advantage of the Reds' setback



LONDON: Liverpool battled back to earn a point and return to the top of the table, but their 1-1 draw with Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday has handed Manchester City the opportunity to strengthen their position in the Premier League title race. Luis Diaz brought Liverpool level with a 74th-minute strike

after Son Heung-min's 20th goal of the season had threatened to earn Spurs a surprise away victory. Liverpool are in first place on goal difference but Man City will now be looking to take full advantage of the Reds' setback by overcoming Newcastle United on Sunday and moving three points clear at the top with three matches remaining.

Leandro Trossard scored one goal and created two others as Brighton & Hove Albion beat Manchester United 4-0 for their first home win of the year and ended their opponents' slim top-four hopes. Brighton went ahead on 15 minutes through Moises Caicedo's first Premier League goal. Marc

Cucurella doubled Brighton's lead on 49 minutes when he hammered in Trossard's pass for his maiden PL goal as well. Trossard then teed up Pascal Gross to slot home Brighton's third eight minutes later. The Belgian added his name to the scoresheet three minutes later, bundling in the ball on the hour-mark. At Stamford Bridge, Conor Coady's late header helped Wolverhampton Wanderers fight back from two goals down to snatch a dramatic draw. Romelu Lukaku had put Chelsea ahead on 56 minutes with a penalty, after he had been fouled by Romain Saiss. The Belgian scored his second two minutes later, curling in from Christian Pulisic's pass. Wolves pulled one back on 79 minutes with a brilliant goal from substitute Trincao after he had been set up by Chiquinho. And seven minutes into stoppage time Coady headed in Chiquinho's cross to stun Chelsea, who are without a win in three. **ANI**

COMMENTARY

Chahal, magician with the ball

ANIS SAJAN, VICE CHAIRMAN, DANUBE GROUP



Yuzvendra Chahal once again proved in the game against Punjab Kings why he is the number one spinner of team India by picking three crucial wickets which helped his side Rajasthan Royals to another win. At one time it looked Punjab Kings would cross 200 plus score when Jonny Bairstow and Bhanuka Rajapaksa was going strong but he picked up both their wickets as well as skipper Mayank Agarwal's wicket to halt their progress and ended with match figures of 3/28 in his four overs. Yuzvendra Chahal's impact is so impactful that he has been the leading wicket taker in this IPL and so far take 22 wickets at an average of 14.5 and has been the purple cap holder since the beginning and his closest compatriot is Kuldeep Yadav with 18 wickets. In the match against KKR, Yuzvendra Chahal had single handedly swung the game in his favor by tak-

ing a hat trick and made Rajasthan Royals win from a losing position. In the game against Lucknow Super Giants, he would have got another hat trick had Karun Nair not dropped an easy catch. Chahal was unlucky not to have been picked in the last T20 World cup and it would be no surprise if he is on the plan to Australia this world cup in October. Leg Spinners are match winners and Yuzvendra Chahal has time and again proved that with his guile that he is India's number one champion spinner.

EXCITING FINAL

Ayan International win cricket tournament



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The final of Pran Frooto Cricket Tournament was held on 28 April 2022. In an exciting final, Ayan International defeated Friendly Stars by 43 runs and won the Pran Frooto Ramadan Cricket Tournament organised by Al Hail Cricket Team. In the match, Ayan XI captain Z Haider won the toss and elected to bat first. Ayan XI went on to score 85 runs in the stipulated eight overs for the loss of 4 wickets. Haider

top scored with 31 runs with other useful contributions came from Nasir Siddiq 27 runs and Shafeeq 9 runs. For Friendly Stars, Bilal took 3 wickets giving away 22 runs. In reply, Friendly Stars could score only 42 runs in 8 overs losing 2 wickets. Bilal was the top scorer with 20 runs while Irfan from Ayan XI was the pick of the bowlers. Zulgarnain Haider of Ayan International was declared man of the tournament as well as the best batsman.

OMAN'S ROYAL CAVALRY HORSE WINS FIRST PLACE

Horse Safu of the Royal Cavalry led by jockey Garry Sanchez, secured the first place in the competitions of the seventh round of the horse race organised for Arabian thoroughbred horses for 1,400 metres. The race was organised at French Dax racecourse. — **ONA**



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*T&C APPLY



MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,153.86 points, down by 0.11 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.11 per cent at 479.12 points. Oman Qatar Insurance, up 3.81 per cent, was the top gainer while, Al Anwar Ceramics, down 3.15 per cent, was the top loser.

Commercial logistics pact signed for Sezad



The agreement will allow the Indian government to invest in logistics in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad)



MUSCAT: In pursuance of the close strategic bilateral relations and strong historical ties of friendship between the Sultanate of

Oman and the Republic of India, a commercial agreement was signed at the Port of Duqm Company headquarters in Duqm between Emdad Logistics Company and

the Indian government. The agreement will allow the Indian government to invest in logistics in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad).

The agreement will deepen the existing close relations between both countries and contribute to the realization of their shared vision of a prosperous region. -ONA

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION



FOOD PRICES: The small decrease in the index is a welcome relief, particularly for low-income food-deficit countries, said Máximo Torero Cullen, FAO Chief Economist. -WAM

Small decrease in world food prices in April 'a welcome relief'

ROME: After reaching an all-time high in March amid repercussions from the war in Ukraine, world food prices decreased last month, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said.

The FAO Food Price Index averaged 158.2 points in April, down 0.8 per cent from the surge in March, but remained nearly 30 per cent higher than in April 2021.

The Index tracks monthly changes in the international prices of a basket of food commodities, and the decrease was led by a slight decline in the prices of vegetable oils and cereals.

"The small decrease in the index is a welcome relief, particularly for low-income food-deficit countries, but still food prices remain close to their recent highs, reflecting persistent market tightness and posing a challenge to global food security for the most vulnerable," said Máximo Torero Cullen, FAO Chief Economist.

The Vegetable Oil Price Index registered a 5.7 per cent drop in April, shedding almost a third of the increase in March.

Demand rationing pushed down the prices for palm, sunflower, and soy oils, FAO said, while uncertainties surrounding export availabilities from Indonesia - the world's leading exporter of palm oil - contained further declines in prices on the international market.

The FAO Cereal Price Index declined by 0.7 points in April, due to a 3.0 per cent decline in world maize prices.

Wheat prices rose 0.2 per cent, strongly affected by the continued blockage of ports in Ukraine. The country, together with Russia, accounts for some 30 per cent of global wheat exports.

Other factors behind the increase included concerns over crop conditions in the United States, though tempered by larger shipments from India and higher-than-expected exports from Russia.

Meanwhile, international rice prices increased by 2.3 per cent, bolstered by strong demand from China and the Near East.

FAO also released updated forecasts for world cereal supply and demand which indicate that although stocks are rising, trade is likely to decline this year.

Global wheat production is predicted to grow to 782 million tonnes, which incorporates an expected 20 per cent decline in harvested area in Ukraine as well as declines due to drought in Morocco.

FAO said the Sugar Price Index rose 3.3 per cent in April, mainly due to higher ethanol prices and concerns over the slow start of the 2022 harvest in Brazil, the world's largest sugar exporter.

The FAO Meat Price Index reached a new record high last month, increasing by 2.2 per cent as prices rose for poultry and bovine meat. Poultry costs were affected by disruptions to exports from Ukraine and rising avian influenza outbreaks in the northern hemisphere. The Dairy Price Index also jumped by 0.9 per cent, driven by what FAO described as "persistent global supply tightness", with milk output in Western Europe and Oceania continuing to track below seasonal levels.

The agency reported that world butter prices rose the most, influenced by rising demand associated with the current shortage of sunflower oil and margarine. -WAM

TAKEOVER

Musk's \$44 billion Twitter buyout challenged in shareholder lawsuit

ORLANDO: Elon Musk and Twitter Inc were sued by a Florida pension fund seeking to stop Musk from completing his \$44 billion takeover of the social media company before 2025.

In a proposed class action filed in Delaware Chancery Court, the Orlando Police Pension Fund said Delaware law forbade a quick merger because Musk had agreements with other big Twitter shareholders, including his financial adviser Morgan Stanley and Twitter founder Jack Dorsey, to support the buyout.

The fund said those agreements made Musk, who owns 9.6 per cent of Twitter, the effective "owner" of more than 15 per cent of the company's shares, Reuters reports.

It said that required delaying the merger by three years unless two-thirds of shares not "owned" by him granted approval.

Morgan Stanley owns about 8.8 per cent of Twitter shares and Dorsey owns 2.4 per cent.

Musk hopes to complete his \$54.20 per share Twitter takeover this year, in one of the world's largest leveraged buyouts.

He also runs the electric car company Tesla Inc (TSLA.O), leads The Boring Co and SpaceX, and is the world's richest person according to Forbes magazine.

Twitter and its board, including Dorsey and Chief Executive Parag Agrawal, were also named as defendants.

Twitter declined to comment. Lawyers for Musk and the Florida



fund did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The lawsuit also seeks to declare that Twitter directors breached their fiduciary duties, and recoup legal fees and costs. It did not make clear how shareholders believed they might be harmed if the merger closed on schedule.

On Thursday, Musk said he had raised around \$7 billion, including from sovereign wealth funds and friends in Silicon Valley, to help fund a takeover.

Musk had no financing lined up when he announced plans to buy Twitter last month.

Some of the new investors appear to share interests with Musk, a self-described free speech absolutist who could change how the San Francisco-based company moderates content.

In a proposed class action filed in Delaware Chancery Court, the Orlando Police Pension Fund said Delaware law forbade a quick merger because Musk had agreements with other big Twitter shareholders, including his financial adviser Morgan Stanley and Twitter founder Jack Dorsey, to support the buyout

Florida's state pension fund also invests in Twitter, and Governor Ron DeSantis said this week that it could make a \$15 million to \$20 million profit if Musk completed his buyout. In afternoon trading, Twitter shares were down 60 cents at \$49.76. -BNA

STOCK MARKET

Retail investors have become shock absorbers in Indian equities

MUMBAI: Amid recent volatility in the Indian stock markets, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said retail investors have played a key role in the markets in the last two years, especially acting as shock absorbers in difficult times.

Key role

"Indian retail investors have played a key role especially during the last two years; they have shown the world what they can do by standing up and becoming shock absorbers, unlike FPIs," Sitharaman said while addressing the silver jubilee celebration of the National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL).

Net sellers

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have emerged as net sellers in recent weeks. In the first week of May, foreign portfolio investors pulled out Rs 6,417 crore from the Indian stock markets.

The Finance Minister lauded the trust shown by the country's retail investors in the equities market.

"From an average of 4 lakh new demat accounts opened every month in 2019-20, it tripled to 12 lakh per month in 2020-21 and has further increased to around 26 lakh per month in 2021-22," the minister said. -ANI

LABOUR SHORTAGE

Less immigrant labour in US contributes to price hikes

RIO GRANDE: Just 10 miles from the Rio Grande, Mike Helle's farm is so short of immigrant workers that he's replaced 450 acres of labour-intensive leafy greens with crops that can be harvested by machinery.

In Houston, Al Flores increased the price of his BBQ restaurant's brisket plate because the cost of the cut doubled due to meatpacking plants' inability to fully staff immigrant-heavy production lines, AP reports.

In the Dallas area, Joshua Correa raised prices on the homes his company builds by \$150,000 to cover increased costs stemming partly from a lack of immigrant labour.

After immigration to the United States tapered off during the Trump administration - then ground to a near-complete halt for 18 months during the coronavirus pandemic - the country is waking up to a labour shortage partly fuelled by that slowdown.

The US has, by some estimates, 2 million fewer immigrants than it would have if the pace had stayed the same, helping power a desperate scramble for workers in many sectors, from meatpacking to homebuilding that is also contributing to supply shortages and price increases.

"These 2 million missing immigrants are part of the reason

we have a labour shortage," said Giovanni Peri, an economist at the University of California at Davis, who calculated the shortfall. "In the short run, we are going to adjust to these shortages in the labour market through an increase in wages and prices."

The labour issues are among several contributors to the highest inflation in 40 years in the United States - from supply chains mangled by the pandemic to a surge in energy and commodity prices following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Steve Camarota, a researcher at the Center for Immigration Studies, which advocates for less immigration, believes a spike in illegal immigration under President Joe Biden will make up whatever shortfall lingers from the pandemic. He also contends wage increases in low-paying sectors like agriculture are minor contributors to inflation.

"I don't think wages going up is bad for the poor, and I think mathematically it is not possible to drive down inflation by limiting wages at the bottom," Camarota told The Associated Press.

Immigration is rapidly returning to its pre-pandemic levels, researchers say, but the US would need a significant acceleration to make up its deficit. Given a sharp decline in births in the United



States over the past two decades, some economists forecast the overall pool of potential workers will start shrinking by 2025.

The immigrant worker shortage comes as the US political system is showing less of an appetite for increasing immigration.

Democrats - who control all branches of the federal government and more recently have been the party more friendly to immigration - haven't tried to advance major legislation permitting more new residents to the country.

A recent Gallup poll showed worries about illegal immigration at a two-decade high. With a tough

election for their party looming in November, Democrats are increasingly divided about the Biden administration's attempt to end pandemic-related restrictions on seeking asylum.

"At some point, we either decide to become older and smaller or we change our immigration policy," said Douglas Holtz-Eakin, an economist and former official in President George W. Bush's administration who is president of the centre-right American Action Forum. He acknowledged a change in immigration policy is unlikely: "The bases of both parties are so locked in."

That is certainly the case in Re-

publican-dominated Texas, which includes the longest and busiest stretch of the southern border. The Legislature in 2017 forced cities to comply with federal immigration agents seeking people who are in the US illegally. Gov. Greg Abbott sent the Texas National Guard to patrol the border and recently created traffic snarls by ordering more inspections at border ports.

The turn against immigration distresses some Texas business owners. "Immigration is very important for our workforce in the United States," said Correa. "We just need it."

He is seeing delays of two to three months on his projects as he and his subcontractors - from drywallers to plumbers to electricians - struggle to field crews. Correa has raised the standard price of his houses from \$500,000 to about \$650,000.

"We're feeling it and, if we're feeling it at the end of the day as builders and developers, the consumer pays the price," said Correa, who spoke from Pensacola, Florida, where he brought a construction crew as a favour to a client whose has not been able to find labourers to fix a beach house damaged by Hurricane Sally in 2020.

The share of the US population born in another country - 13.5% in

the latest census - is the highest it has been since the 19th century.

But even before Donald Trump won the 2016 presidential election vowing to cut immigration, migration to the United States was slowing. The Great Recession dried up many jobs that drew workers to the country, legally or illegally. Rising standards of living in Latin America have prodded more people to stay put - or to return from the United States.

Flores, who runs a chain of Mexican restaurants as well as his barbecue restaurant, said while the COVID-19 pandemic was a bigger shock to his industry, the immigration slowdown has hit it hard - and not just for meatpackers that supply his restaurant's brisket. "You've got a lot of positions that aren't being filled," he said.

He's steadily raised pay, up to \$15 an hour recently. "This is a culmination of years and years," said Flores, who's president of the Greater Houston Restaurant Association.

Helle, who raises onion, cabbage, melons and kale just outside the border town of McAllen, Texas, is also paying more to his workers, who are almost exclusively immigrants. People born in the U.S., he says, won't work the fields regardless of the pay. -BNA



MARKET



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MSX index ends lower



Oman Qatar Insurance, up 3.81 per cent, was the top gainer while, Al Anwar Ceramics, down 3.15 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,153.86 points, down by 0.11 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.11 per cent at 479.12 points. Oman Qatar Insurance, up 3.81 per cent, was the top gainer while, Al Anwar Ceramics, down 3.15 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Galfar Engineering were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover. A total number of 353 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR0.99 million, with more than 6.81 million shares changing hands. Out of 35 traded securities, 14 advanced, 3 declined, and 18 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net sellers of OMR21,000 while foreign investors were net buyers of OMR3,000 worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 6,606.64 points, up 0.09 per cent.

Prices of Oman Qatar Insurance, Global Financial Investments, Muscat Finance, Al Shargia Investment and Al Anwar Investment were up by 3.81 per cent, 2.7 per cent, 2.7 per cent, 2.15 per cent and 1.21 per cent respectively. Oman & Emirates Investment was the only loser down by 1.15 per cent. Industrial Index closed at 6,117.47 points, up 0.08 per cent. Prices of Galfar Engineering, Oman Fisheries and National Aluminium were up by 3.77 per cent, 2.66 per cent and 2.3 per cent respectively. Al Anwar Ceramics was the only loser down by 3.15 per cent. Services Index was down by 0 per cent before closing at 1,636.91 points. Prices of Sohar Power, National Gas and Renaissance Services were up by 2.27 per cent, 1.41 per cent and 0.45 per cent respectively. Oman Telecom was the only loser down by 0.92 per cent. — **United Securities**

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

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INDICES							
Index.....	High.....	Low.....	Value.....	Prev. Value.....	Diff.....	Diff%	
MSX 30 INDEX.....	4,159.91	4,152.03	4,153.86	4,158.37	-4.52	-0.11	
FINANCIAL INDEX.....	6,606.64	6,595.27	6,606.64	6,600.62	6.02	0.09	
Industry Index.....	6,134.40	6,112.76	6,117.47	6,112.88	4.59	0.08	
Services Index.....	1,641.93	1,636.91	1,636.91	1,636.96	-0.05	0.00	
MSX Shariah Index.....	479.12	478.62	479.12	478.61	0.51	0.11	
MSX TR INDEX.....	5,240.16	5,230.24	5,232.54	5,238.23	-5.69	-0.11	
FINANCIAL TR IDX.....	6,907.26	6,895.38	6,907.26	6,900.97	6.30	0.09	
SERVICES TR IDX.....	1,691.95	1,686.78	1,686.78	1,686.83	-0.05	0.00	
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX.....	6,366.48	6,344.02	6,348.90	6,344.14	4.76	0.08	
Trading Summary							
Volume.....	Turnover.....	Trades.....	Market Cap.....	Up.....	Down.....	Equal.....	Sec. Traded
6,817,712	992,164	353	22,252,931,550	14	3	18	35

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, MAY 8

	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PD	LAST BD	LAST OFFER	PUB VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM00000001590.....	MUSCAT FINANCE.....	1,600,712	122,093	62	0.075	0.077	0.075	0.076	0.074	0.002	2.703	0.077	0.075	0.077	0.100	23,343,121
OM00000002440.....	AL SHARGIA INV.....	120,992	11,493	8	0.094	0.095	0.094	0.095	0.093	0.002	2.151	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.100	8,550,000
OM00000001160.....	NATIONAL GAS.....	15,890	2,296	5	0.142	0.145	0.142	0.144	0.142	0.002	1.408	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.100	12,240,000
OM00000001772.....	ALANWAR INVESTMENT.....	35,000	2,939	2	0.083	0.084	0.083	0.084	0.083	0.001	1.205	0.084	0.084	0.085	0.100	16,800,000
OM00000003224.....	RENAISSANCE SER.....	18,000	8,109	4	0.452	0.452	0.450	0.450	0.448	0.002	0.446	0.450	0.450	0.460	0.100	106,384,500
OM00000002796.....	BANK MUSCAT.....	338,463	178,472	28	0.524	0.530	0.524	0.528	0.526	0.002	0.380	0.530	0.530	0.540	0.100	198,688,824
OM00000001400.....	OMAN FLOUR MILLS.....	1,000	672	1	0.672	0.672	0.672	0.672	0.672	0.000	0.000	0.672	0.672	0.700	0.100	105,640,000
OM00000001418.....	RAYSUT CEMENT.....	520	85	1	0.163	0.163	0.163	0.162	0.162	0.000	0.000	0.163	0.160	0.170	0.100	32,400,000
OM00000001525.....	OMAN INVST& FIN.....	20,000	2,960	1	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.000	0.000	0.148	0.145	0.152	0.100	35,076,000
OM00000001533.....	OMINVEST.....	1,250	388	2	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.314	0.314	0.000	0.000	0.310	0.310	0.330	0.100	209,868,744
OM00000001749.....	OMAN CEMENT.....	1,500	366	1	0.244	0.244	0.244	0.255	0.255	0.000	0.000	0.244	0.244	0.255	0.100	84,372,541
OM00000003968.....	OOREDOO.....	1,000	330	1	0.330	0.330	0.330	0.334	0.334	0.000	0.000	0.330	0.334	0.340	0.100	217,415,373
OM00000005005.....	ALMAHA CERAMICS.....	4,900	2,524	3	0.510	0.520	0.510	0.520	0.520	0.000	0.000	0.520	0.520	0.524	0.100	28,600,000
OM00000003026.....	OMAN TELECOM.....	202,423	173,739	20	0.860	0.860	0.856	0.860	0.868	-0.008	-0.922	0.860	0.860	0.872	0.100	645,000,000
OM00000002168.....	AL ANWAR CERAMIC.....	82,750	35,629	8	0.432	0.440	0.430	0.430	0.444	-0.014	-3.153	0.440	0.434	0.440	0.100	94,600,000
Total.....	15	2,444,400	542,095	147												
Parallel Market																
OM00000006979.....	OMAN QATAR INSUR.....	10,000	2,180	1	0.218	0.218	0.218	0.218	0.210	0.008	3.810	0.218	0.000	0.230	0.100	21,800,000
OM00000003521.....	GULFAR ENGINEER.....	3,078,579	337,443	92	0.106	0.112	0.106	0.110	0.106	0.004	3.774	0.111	0.111	0.112	0.100	22,328,509
OM00000003125.....	GLOBAL INV. H.....	153,757	11,711	9	0.075	0.077	0.075	0.076	0.074	0.002	2.703	0.076	0.076	0.077	0.100	15,200,000
OM00000001566.....	OMAN FISHERIES.....	105,602	12,299	16	0.118	0.118	0.115	0.116	0.113	0.003	2.655	0.116	0.116	0.116	0.100	21,121,094
OM00000001319.....	ALUMINIUM PROD.....	26,500	2,368	5	0.088	0.090	0.088	0.089	0.087	0.002	2.299	0.090	0.090	0.089	0.100	2,987,859
OM00000003711.....	SOHAR POWER.....	62,742	2,801	12	0.045	0.045	0.044	0.045	0.044	0.001	2.273	0.044	0.043	0.044	0.100	9,945,450
OM00000004768.....	MADINA TAKAFUL.....	118,815	11,287	14	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.094	0.001	1.064	0.095	0.095	0.103	0.100	16,625,000
OM00000001152.....	OMAN NAT. ENG.....	35,400	3,810	3	0.108	0.109	0.107	0.108	0.108	0.000	0.000	0.107	0.107	0.109	0.100	15,120,000
OM00000001517.....	HSBC BANK OMAN.....	180,000	19,440	4	0.108	0.108	0.108	0.108	0.108	0.000	0.000	0.108	0.108	0.115	0.100	216,033,781
OM00000002267.....	GULF MUSHROOM P.....	37,000	7,992	8	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.000	0.000	0.216	0.210	0.216	0.100	8,986,739
OM00000003661.....	VOLTAMP ENERGY.....	94	10	1	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.000	0.000	0.102	0.096	0.102	0.100	8,303,081
OM00000004420.....	BANK NIZWA.....	54,476	5,165	7	0.095	0.095	0.094	0.095	0.095	0.000	0.000	0.095	0.094	0.095	0.100	212,510,538
OM00000004735.....	SEMBOCORP SALSALAH.....	128,000	9,628	9	0.078	0.078	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.100	71,592,866
OM00000004925.....	ALBATINAH POWER.....	300	15	1	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.050	0.048	0.050	0.100	33,744,372
OM00000004933.....	AL SUWADI POWER.....	29,000	1,444	5	0.050	0.050	0.049	0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.050	0.049	0.050	0.100	35,720,317
OM00000005963.....	PHOENIX POWER.....	40,000	1,960	3	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.000	0.000	0.049	0.049	0.052	0.100	71,667,472
OM00000007084.....	MCT DESALINATE.....	10,000	1,191	2	0.120	0.120	0.119	0.119	0.119	0.000	0.000	0.119	0.120	0.121	0.100	18,510,498
OM00000001681.....	OMAN EMIRATES HO.....	17,000	1,462	2	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.087	-0.001	-1.149	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.100	10,481,250
Total.....	18	4,087,265	432,203	194												

CHINA

Logistics sector reports contraction

BELJING: China's logistics sector was less upbeat in April amid the domestic resurgence of COVID-19, data from the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing (CFLP) showed. The logistics performance index, which tracks business volume, new orders, employment, inventory turnovers and equipment utility rates in the sector, came in at 43.8 percent in April, down 4.9 percentage points from the previous month. A reading above 50 per cent indicates expansion while a reading below 50 reflects contraction. He Hui, assistant president of the CFLP, said that the short-term effects, however, will gradually weaken with the implementation of epidemic control measures and policies to facilitate logistics. — **Xinhua**

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES

India's forex reserves see 8th weekly fall, slide below \$600bn

MUMBAI: India's foreign exchange (forex) reserves have slumped below \$600 billion mark for the first time in almost a year. For the week ended April 29, the country's forex reserves dipped by \$2.695 billion to \$597.728 billion, according to the Reserve Bank of India's weekly statistical supplement. This is the eighth consecutive weekly fall in India's forex reserves. The country's forex reserves have fallen below the \$600-billion-mark for the first time in almost a year. The last time India's forex reserves were below the \$600-billion-mark was during the week ended May 28, 2021. India's forex reserves have fallen sharply after touching an all-time high of \$642.453 billion on September 3, 2021. All components of the forex reserves declined during the week ended April 29. India's foreign currency assets,



which is the biggest component of the forex reserves, dropped by \$1.11 billion to \$532.823 billion during the week under review, the RBI data showed. Expressed in US dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-dollar currencies like Euro, UK's Pound Sterling and Japanese Yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. The value of gold reserves

slumped by \$1.164 billion to \$41.604 billion during the week under review. The value of India's Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) fell by \$362 million to \$18.299 billion. India's reserve position in the IMF dropped by \$59 million to \$5.001 billion during the week ended April 29, the RBI data showed. — **ANI**

Board of Directors' Report		Unaudited statement of financial position as at 31 March 2022	
Dear Shareholders, On behalf of the Board of Directors ("the Board") of Barka Desalination Company SAOG (the "Company"), I have the pleasure to present the unaudited financial statements for the three months ended 31 March 2022. Operational Highlights The activity of the Company is to develop, finance, design, construct, own, operate and maintain a reverse osmosis desalination plant at Barka in the Sultanate of Oman with a capacity of 281,000 m3 per day. The Company commenced commercial operation on 13 June 2018. Since then, the Company has been supplying potable water to Oman Power and Water Procurement Company in accordance with the Water Purchase Agreement. The Company has supplied 18,227,016 m3 of water during Q1 2022. The average scheduled plant availability for the period was over 99%, result of a strict asset management program implemented by the Operator. The Company continues to uphold its reputation as the largest provider of potable water in the Sultanate. On March 9th and 10th, 2022, the Plant successfully completed the Annual Performance Test for the contractual year 5 (CY5). Financial Highlights Revenue has decreased by 1.0% (by RO 41K) as compared to the same period in the previous year. This is mainly due to lower demand and corresponding dispatch of water resulting into lower Water output charge and lower Electricity charge. The cost of sales has increased by 2% (by RO 43K) as compared to the same period in the previous year. This is mainly due to higher Capacity payment to operator pursuant to O&M contract. The administrative and general expenses have increased by 18% (by RO 19K) as compared to the same period in the previous year. This is mainly due to Director sitting fees payable to Board of Directors pursuant to approval by shareholders in the Annual General Meeting held on 28th March 2022. Finance expenses have decreased by 29% (by RO 313K) as compared to the same period in the previous year. This is mainly due to the impact of the decrease in outstanding loans payable to lenders and shareholders along with hedge arrangement. Current year profit before tax has increased by 65% (by RO 207K) as compared to the same period in the previous year, due to the above reasons. Current period profit before tax represents 13% of the revenue. Current period profit after tax represents 8% of the revenue. Based on the financial results, the shareholders to the AGM approved authorizing the Board of Directors' to determine and distribute cash dividends to the Company's Shareholders in April 2022 and October 2022 out of the retained earnings as per the audited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2021, provided that the aggregate amount shall not exceed 12 Baizas per share. Outlook for 2022 The Company is taking endeavor to ensure that it continues to take reasonable and prudent measures to improve its performance for FY2022, by improving the Plant's reliability and availability, without compromising on HSE matters. Acknowledgement I would like to extend my personal thanks to all personnel associated with the operation of the plant and the staff of the Company for their hard work and dedication, as well as to those others such as our contractors, whose expertise has assisted us in achieving these excellent results. Finally, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to extend our deep appreciation and gratitude to His Majesty Haitham Bin Tarik Al Said and His Government for their continued support and encouragement to the private sector by creating an environment that allows us to participate effectively in the growth of the Sultanate's economy and to dedicate our achievements to the building of a strong nation. On behalf of the Board of Directors Murtadha Ahmed Sultan Chairman of the Board		ASSETS Non-current assets Property, plant and equipment Right-of-use assets Interest rate swap used for hedging Total non-current assets Current assets Trade and other receivables Cash and cash equivalents Total current assets Total assets EQUITY AND LIABILITIES Capital and reserves Share capital Legal reserve Retained earnings Hedging reserve Shareholder loan reserve Total equity Non-current liabilities Long term loan Shareholders' loan Interest rate swap used for hedging Lease liabilities Provision for end of service benefits Provision for decommissioning obligation Deferred tax liability Total non-current liabilities Current liabilities Current portion of long-term loan Current portion of Shareholders' loan Current portion of lease liabilities Current portion of interest rate swap used for hedging Trade and other payables Total current liabilities Total liabilities Total equity and liabilities	(Audited) 31 March 2022 RO'000 31 Dec. 2021 RO'000 99,679 580 1,888 102,147 1,774 2,259 3,033 105,180 7,552 317 4,477 1,579 558 14,483 74,962 4,936 - 561 20 1,345 3,190 85,014 3,776 805 52 - 1,050 5,683 90,697 105,180
Unaudited statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the period ended 31 March 2022		31 March 2022 RO'000	31 March 2021 RO'000
Revenue Operating costs Gross profit General and administrative expenses Other income Profit from operations Finance costs Profit before tax Income tax expense Profit for the year Other comprehensive income Items that may be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss: Change in fair value of cash flow hedge Total comprehensive profit for the period Basic and diluted earnings per share Basic earnings per share (Baizas)		4,140 (2,755) 1,385 (125) 15 1,275 (751) 524 (174) 350 2,582 2,932 4.63	4,181 (2,712) 1,469 (106) 18 1,381 (1,064) 317 (193) 124 3,001 3,125 3.82



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PAST FORWARD

REVIVAL OF THE RETRO FOODS

There are multiple factors that have contributed to this phenomenon. The relief from COVID restrictions has encouraged people to boldly venture out trying out long-lost flavours.



Some things never go out of fashion. A passing fad, a fleeting vogue may distract us for a while but then the classics reclaim their throne. This is what seems to be happening in the food world with 'retro' registering a strong emerging trend. If architecture to apparel, automobiles to music, heads are turning backward to prepare for the future, can food be far behind?

There are multiple factors that have contributed to this phenomenon. The relief from COVID restrictions has encouraged people to boldly venture out trying out long-lost flavours. The lockdowns left no choice but to cook at home. Forgotten family heirloom recipes were tried to break the monotony and family lore was shared reviving strong nostalgia. Before the COVID trauma, the search for ethnic roots was largely restricted to NRIs and PIOs in the Diaspora. Now youngsters living in India are also searching for their roots and coming to terms with their multiple identities. The best way to embark on this exciting exploration is through food. The past it has been said is a foreign country but however hard we try to shake it off, it clings to us. Our contemporary identities are shaped by legacy and heritage. We are, what we eat or aspire to eat!

Before we proceed further perhaps it is necessary to have definitional clarity. In the West the terms used to describe members of different generations are Baby Boomers, Millennials, Genera-

The best way to embark on this exciting exploration is through food. The past it has been said is a foreign country but however hard we try to shake it off, it clings to us. Our contemporary identities are shaped by legacy and heritage. We are, what we eat or aspire to eat!

tion X and Z. When the return of the Retro foods is discussed it is focused on what the people ate in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and the 1990s. In the Indian context, it is far more relevant to talk of *Midnight's Children* (born in 1946-47), *Post Emergency* (1977), *Born Free in Globalised World* (1991- 2000), *Proud Patriots* post-2001), with a strong sense of entitlement and evangelical fervour to convert the world.

What is also fuelling the strong retro surge is fatigue with fusion and the failure of molecular culinary experiments. Frenchifying Indian delicacies has ceased to attract diners at home. What we are witnessing is the return of the regional, rustic and robust dishes.

Copper Chimney, an iconic eatery in Mumbai, is celebrating its Golden Jubilee this year and has come back to Delhi. Its reputation rests on its commitment to serving healthy wholesome Punjabi Fare. Its menu has interesting innovations like *karhak roomali roti* and *burra chop*, *rogan josh* and *achari murg* along with *mah di*

daal--surprisingly light and flavourful-- are what have remained perennial favourites across generations. Karan Kapur, an alumnus of Harvard Business School, is the third generation inheritor/ custodian of traction of taste.

Babo's Kitchen in the Capital does the same for Bangla Ranna. It is the brainchild of obsessive foodie sometime journalist and advertising professional Dipayan Mukhopadhyay. He has revived not one but two avatars of *kossa mangsho* Bengal's very own slow-cooked *bhuna gosht*. On offer are *galda chinghi* (large river prawn) cutlets and the famous Kolkata mutton *biryani*. The menu has exotic items like crab curry but most loyal patrons place repeat orders for *maturshuti kachuri* and *alu dom*.

Snehalata Saikia doesn't stray from the straight and narrow path when she is cooking Akhemiya food. Khaar and Tenga are enough to tickle the palate. But her retro rendering of Tea-Garden Manager's Anglo Indian classics like the Duck Roast is outstanding.

Chef Sanjay Raina owner of

Malleability on Amrita Shergill Marg makes no compromise when he is cooking ageless beauties from the Kashmiri Pandit *Wazwaan*- his *kabargah*, *rogan josh* and *alu dom* are to die for.

The resurgence of hyper-local sub-ethnic retrospective of foods is not confined to the north. Prima Kurien has showcased many streams of Kerala cuisines in highly successful pop-ups in de lux hotels and Rajesh Raghunathan the Singing Chef from Tamil Nadu has spellbound his guests tantalising them with the sublime taste of pure vegetarian *pulihora*, *kozhambu*, *poriyals*, *pachadis* and more.

Others are also surfing on the vegetarian/satvik wave - cutting and polishing diamonds that are forever. Nishant Choubey, consulting-celebrity chef, is fond of tweaking and adding just a twist to enhance the appeal of good old home fare to draw youngsters to his table. *Roti-malai* and *Doodhiya Kebab* are two of his recreations. *Doodhiya kebab* is inspired by (now seldom encountered) the Taash Kebab in which thin *pasanda* were layered one over another like parting cards in a deck. To end the retro meal on a sweet note you can indulge in a *barfi* or *Muzaffar*.

The best thing is that you don't have to dress up in flared bell-bottomed trousers, ride the old dowager Ambassador car or the naughty-looking Beetle to enjoy retro food. Maybe, plug in the earbuds and swing to the rhythm of Bollywood hits when melody was queen! -ANI



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The effects of India's heat wave, one of dozens just this year, are all-encompassing. Temperatures topping 40°C (104°F) across the country have put millions at risk for heat-related illnesses, decimated wheat crops, intensified a power crisis and interrupted schooling.

India is not alone. Neighbouring Pakistan is also battling scorching temperatures before summer has even begun. And earlier this year, central South America was the hottest place on the planet before Western Australia claimed the title.

As the climate crisis exacerbates heat waves around the world and temperatures increasingly soar unseasonably early, countries are faced with the question of how to remain livable.

It comes down to wealth and preparedness Ramping up electricity bills with air conditioning, cooling down with fans, working indoors — these options are only available to a privileged few.

“The story of climate change is one of high inequality and we’re seeing that playing out already in the poorest and hottest regions of the world,” said Tamma Carleton, assistant professor of economics at UC Santa Barbara’s Bren School of Environmental Science and Management.

Carleton co-authored a 2022 study that distilled a city’s ability to minimise deaths during extreme temperatures to two main factors: affluence and the number of hot days it experiences.

Money decides which technologies a city can afford to shield its most vulnerable. And when these adaptation costs aren’t covered by the state, the burden falls on individuals to finance their own protection, says Carleton. A situation that leaves the poorest high and dry.

But even wealthy cities can suffer if they are caught off guard without an action plan. That happened in the Pacific Northwest of the US, a wealthy region known for its temperate climate, where more than 100 people were killed in last year’s heat wave.

“We tend to see in our projections of climate change into the future that poorer places are going to be facing a really large increase in death risk and wealthier places are going to see an increase in adaptation costs,” said Carleton.

Spurring into heat action

Just how high this death risk is in developing countries became clear when Ahmedabad, a city in western India’s Gujarat state, lost more than 1,344 people as thermometers hit 47°C (116°F) in 2010.

The toll spurred the city into action. In 2013, it rolled out a plan that has prevented about 1,100 heat induced deaths each year since, according to a study.

The first heat action plan in South Asia, it includes an early warning system, community outreach to vulnerable populations and education for health staff about possible signs of heat exposure. It also organises cooling centers in buildings such as temples and malls as well as reduced or staggered working times for outdoor laborers, among other things.

As India’s temperatures consistently surpass the baseline in spring and summer months, the Ahmedabad heat plan has since served as a template for similar models in 23 of the country’s 28 states.

But as high temperatures persist, these models undergo regular updates, according to Polash Mukherjee, Lead for Air Pollution and Climate Resilience at the Natural Resources Defence Council’s India programme. The non-profit helped develop Ahmedabad’s heat action plan.

“The focus has shifted significantly in the last couple of years from merely protecting human health and mortality against extreme heat to more proactive measures,” said Mukherjee. “These include changing building by-laws so that new constructions are better insulated, and the cool roofs programme.”

A low-cost solution to reduce indoor temperatures, the cool roofs program primarily targets badly insulated houses in slums where informal workers and other vulnerable groups reside. When a roof is coated with materials like lime-based whitewash or white tarp, it becomes more reflective and absorbs less heat.

Cool pavements and green passages

Ideas like these are budding around the world. The Japanese capital Tokyo has introduced cool pavements, which work with thermal-barrier coating, for example. Medellin in Colombia has planted “green corridors,” vegetated passages that offer more shade in public spaces, while the city of Toronto, Canada, offers grants for people to install green or cool roofs.

Some cities have introduced heat officers, whose task it is to coordinate the response to rising temperatures.

Eugenia Kargbo became Africa’s first heat officer when she took the post in Freetown, Sierra Leone. A goal of hers is to provide reflective market shade covers that protect women selling produce outdoors. To make the capital more livable, she has also introduced a tree planting program, in which planters can collect micro-payments on an app.

“This is the future I envision for my children and all the children in Freetown: A safe environment not limited by the risk of extreme heat,” she told DW’s EcoAfrica.

Focus on the climate crisis

Even as some regions find ways to alleviate some of the effects of scorching heat waves, many scientists emphasise that governments shouldn’t forget the root cause of the rising temperatures: the climate crisis.

Aditi Mukherji, who co-authored the water chapter in the IPCC’s assessment on “Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability,” says the onus to come up with solutions shouldn’t be on the most affected, who historically have emitted the least amount of CO2.

“I feel that when it comes to these kinds of heat extremes, the only solution is that the high emitting countries stop emissions immediately and stop burning fossil fuels,” she said. -ww

RECORD-BREAKING HEAT WAVES SHOW THE NEED TO ADAPT TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS NOW

As the climate crisis exacerbates heat waves around the world and temperatures increasingly soar unseasonably early, countries are faced with the question of how to remain livable.





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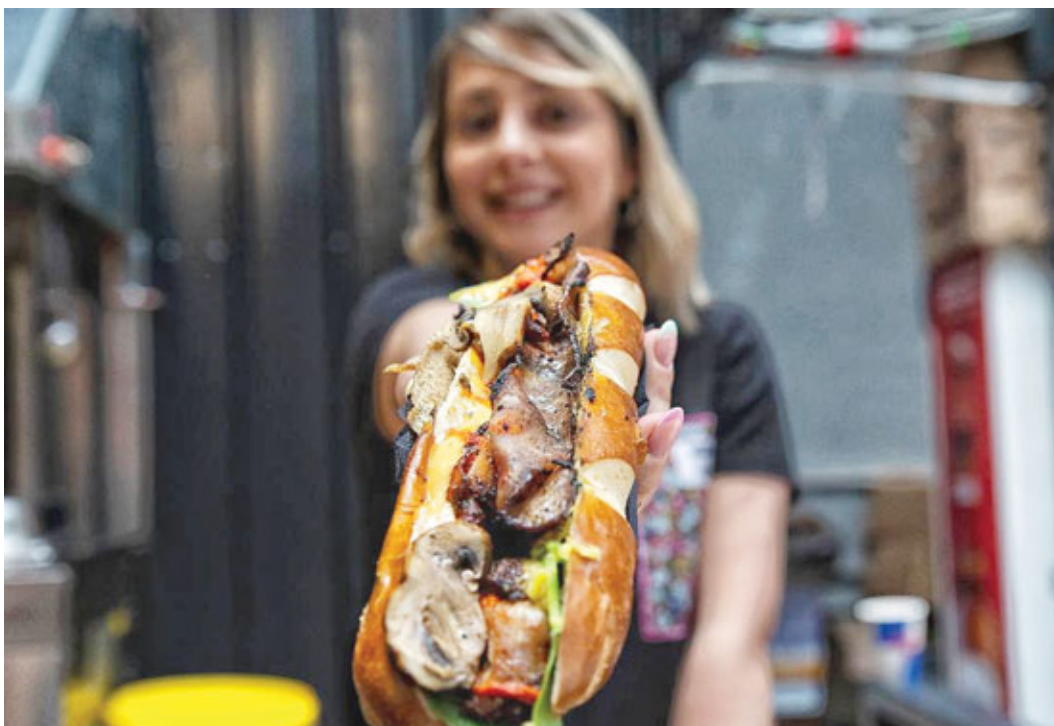
FEATURE

THE WORLD IN PICTURES



Vilnius Open Wushu Cup in Lithuania

Athletes compete at the Vilnius Open Wushu Cup in Vilnius, Lithuania. The Vilnius Open Wushu Cup opened on Saturday, drawing more than 50 students from local wushu clubs. **Xinhua**



People enjoy food at Athens Street Food Festival

People enjoy food at Athens Street Food Festival
An employee shows a sandwich at the Athens Street Food Festival in Athens, Greece. **xinhua**



Nairobi City Marathon in Kenya

Nairobi City Marathon in Kenya
Runners participate in the half marathon during the Nairobi City Marathon in Nairobi, Kenya. **xinhua**



Arshad Warsi and Chitrangada Singh at the promotion of video series 'Modern Love'

Bollywood actors Arshad Warsi and Chitrangada Singh pose for a picture at the promotion of their upcoming Amazon Prime video series 'Modern Love', in Mumbai. **ANI Photo**

IN THE US

New museum exhibit explores evolution of Kentucky Derby



KENTUCKY: A new permanent exhibit at the Kentucky Derby Museum tells the story of how the horse race evolved over the years to become an iconic event.

The 500-square-foot (46-square-metre) exhibit called This is the Kentucky Derby on the first floor of the museum in Louisville, local officials said.

The exhibit presented by Kroger explores the history, culture, spectacle, economic impact and tradition of the race, the museum said.

in a statement. It answers questions including who started the Kentucky Derby, how it became a media sensation and how traditions like the mint julep and the garland of roses became steeped in its history.

Focal points of the exhibit include a replica Twin Spires and a replica garland of roses that hang from the ceiling.

"This is the Kentucky Derby! gives visitors the space and time to explore how the Run for the Roses

became the greatest horse race in the world," said Patrick Armstrong, president and CEO of the Kentucky Derby Museum.

Kentucky Derby Museum is an American Thoroughbred horse racing museum located on the grounds of Churchill Downs in Louisville, Kentucky in the USA. Dedicated to preserving the history of the Kentucky Derby, it first opened its doors to the public in the spring of 1985.

• DNA



AL JAZEIRA SERVICES CO. SAOG

P.O. Box 2865, Ruwi, P.C 112, Sultanate of Oman
Tel.: 24706499. Fax: 24703653

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT	CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (UNAUDITED) AS AT 31 MARCH 2022				
Dear Shareholders,		Group 31.03.2022 RO	Parent Company 31.03.2022 RO	Group 31.03.2021 RO	Parent Company 31.03.2021 RO
On behalf of the Board of Directors of Al Jazeera Services Co. SAOG, I am pleased to present the unaudited financial statements for the three months ended on 31 March 2022.	ASSETS				
	Non-current assets				
	Furniture and equipment	15,080	8,163	7,391	511
	Goodwill	90,000	--	90,000	--
	Investments in subsidiaries	--	320,444	--	320,444
	Investments in associates	11,560,036	11,560,036	14,166,747	14,166,747
	Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income	9,898	9,898	9,898	9,898
	Deferred tax asset	246,594	236,409	291,922	275,962
	Total non-current assets	11,921,608	12,134,950	14,565,958	14,773,562
	Current assets				
	Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	685,251	685,251	749,035	749,035
	Inventories	244,403	--	224,040	--
	Trade receivable and other financial assets	2,799,574	12,261	2,488,140	12,041
	Dividend receivable from an associate	2,037,721	2,037,721	--	--
	Due from related parties	--	846,794	--	690,955
	Cash and bank balances	589,770	151,053	715,965	275,461
	Total current assets	6,356,719	3,733,080	4,177,180	1,727,492
	Total assets	18,278,327	15,868,029	18,743,138	16,501,054
The revenue from catering and allied services business for the three months ended on 31 March 2022 was RO 1,857,863 up by 2% compared to revenue of RO 1,824,728 for the same period last year.The operating profit for the period was RO 97,526 compared to RO 176,306 for the corresponding three months in 2021.	EQUITY AND LIABILITIES				
	Shareholders' capital and reserves				
	Share capital	11,171,717	11,171,717	11,171,717	11,171,717
	Legal reserve	3,763,884	3,735,270	3,763,884	3,735,270
	Other reserves	49,387	49,387	49,387	49,387
	Retained earnings	1,127,001	990,974	1,782,253	1,653,147
	Investment fair value reserve	(280,246)	(280,246)	(230,723)	(230,723)
	Total shareholders' capital and reserve	15,831,742	15,667,102	16,536,518	16,378,798
	Non-current liabilities				
	Employees' terminal benefits	441,882	43,658	514,547	40,835
	Total non-current liabilities	441,882	43,658	514,547	40,835
	Current liabilities				
	Trade and other payables	1,381,721	21,783	1,151,725	16,254
	Due to related parties	321,497	3,120	321,561	44,280
	Bank overdraft	111,479	111,479	--	--
	Provision for Taxation	190,005	20,887	218,787	20,887
	Total current liabilities	2,004,702	157,269	1,692,073	81,421
	Total liabilities	2,446,584	200,927	2,206,620	122,256
	Total Shareholders' capital and reserves and liabilities	18,278,327	15,868,029	18,743,138	16,501,054
	Net assets per share	0.142	0.140	0.148	0.147
	CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
	FOR THREE MONTHS ENDED 31 MARCH 2022				
		Group 31.03.2022 RO	Parent Company 31.03.2022 RO	Group 31.03.2021 RO	Parent Company 31.03.2021 RO
I am pleased to report that your company has adhered to all the applicable regulations covering corporate governance in Sultanate of Oman.	Revenue from contract with customers	1,857,863	--	1,824,728	--
	Cost of providing services	(1,567,035)	--	(1,427,254)	--
	Gross profit	290,828	--	397,474	--
On behalf of the Board of Directors, I express our sincere gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tank for his great vision and initiatives as he continues to lead the Sultanate on the path of development, peace and enduring prosperity. We also extend our sincere thanks to our Customers, Shareholders, Muscat Stock Exchange and Capital Market Authority for their continued support. My appreciation also goes to the Company's management and staff for their continued dedication and hard work.	Other income	21,890	--	6,715	--
		312,718	--	404,189	--
	Expenses				
	Employees salaries and other costs	(109,297)	(39,502)	(126,076)	(33,450)
	General and administrative expenses	(103,874)	(19,378)	(100,547)	(18,640)
	Depreciation	(2,021)	(426)	(1,260)	(66)
		(215,192)	(59,306)	(227,883)	(52,156)
	Profit / (loss) from operations	97,526	(59,306)	176,306	(52,156)
	Net Gain/(loss) from Investments	76,038	76,038	132,199	132,199
	Share of profit from investment in an associates	721,503	721,503	745,399	745,399
	Dividend from a subsidiary	--	131,551	--	192,028
	Finance costs	(1,953)	(1,419)	(639)	(345)
	Profit before tax	893,113	868,367	1,053,265	1,017,125
	Income tax expenses	(28,204)	(4,755)	(23,020)	--
	Net profit after tax	864,909	863,612	1,019,035	1,017,125
	Other comprehensive income				
	Share of fair value reserve in an associate	24,166	24,166	33,537	33,537
	Total comprehensive income for the period attributable to the parent co.	889,075	887,778	1,052,572	1,050,662
	Basic earnings per share	0.008	0.008	0.009	0.009
The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder, who request them, either in Arabic or English, within 7 days from the receipt of the request					



ROUND-UP



Mall of Muscat achieves record-breaking footfalls during Eid holidays



Mall of Muscat is emerging as the new hotspot for mall-goers and shoppers, offering visitors unique experiences and creating the right mix of shopping and entertainment to attract loyal patrons to the mall

MUSCAT: Mall of Muscat, Oman's most luxurious mall has announced record-breaking footfalls during the recently concluded Eid holidays.

More than 200,000 people visited the mall, the company said. Mall of Muscat is emerging as the new hotspot for mall-goers and shoppers, offering visitors unique experiences and creating the right mix of shopping and entertainment to attract loyal patrons to the mall.

The mall already has an ongoing sales & promotional campaign 'Mall of Muscat Festival' celebrating its 3rd Anniversary which further complemented the Eid Activities. Mall of Muscat Festival is a 2-month-long promotional campaign that started on 1 April and will conclude on 28 May.

Some of the elements of the campaign are Shop and Win activation area, Weekend activities for kids (Thursday & Friday) including indoor football for kids, face painting, a Hula hoop show, and magic shows. During Ramadan, the mall conducted a first-of-its-kind Night Bazaar which gave local businesses a platform to showcase their products offering and offered our valued guests a unique shopping experience under the distinctive night sky at the Walk Area on the 2nd Floor of the Mall.

During Eid Holidays, the Mall hosted a variety of mass entertainment and international gigs which included a scintillating acrobatic show to entertain its visitors. The Mall also hosted a blockbuster musical show performed by Jihad Al Raisi, an emerging Omani singer who received a tremendous response. Visitors were thrilled to see these live events which displayed talents from Oman and abroad and bought cheer and festivity to one and all.

"At Mall of Muscat, we've created the right mix of shopping and entertainment that not only complement each other but has also helped us increase our footfall significantly to facilitate business growth for all our retail partners," said Hussain Jamal - Head, Mall Operation, Mall of Muscat

"We design and craft events that not only increase visitor numbers but also position us as a leading destination of leisure and shopping. This Eid has been fantastic for us and our tenants and we thank our valued customers and retail partners for making Mall of Muscat the most preferred destination for shopping and entertainment in the city," added Hussain Jamal.

The mall organised several campaigns and hosted varied activities since the start of 2022 which included the Winter Festival, Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, and many others to name a few.

Regardless of the challenges imposed by COVID-19 business restrictions during the last 2 years, Mall of Muscat has remained resilient and continued on a path of business excellence resulting in not only increased footfalls but more importantly increase in customer engagement and business for its valued tenants.

Winner of Oman's Most Trusted Brand award in the Shopping Malls category in January 2022, Mall of Muscat has positioned itself as a market leader introducing many significant fashion, beauty, and F&B brands and setting industry standards. The impressive list of shops and services is continuously growing, so it is no surprise that the Mall of Muscat is considered the top-rated shopping and leisure destination in Oman.

ISLAMIC BANKING SERVICES

Maisarah Islamic continues to offer competitive finance profit rates

MUSCAT: Since the launch of its discounted profit rates on select finance products, Maisarah Islamic Banking Services has witnessed a remarkable response from customers across the Sultanate of Oman applying for auto finance, home finance and personal finance to meet their specific needs.

The discounted profit rates have attracted existing and new customers to open accounts with BankDhofar's Sharia-compliant window, according to Mohammed Ahmed Al Maashani - Head of Distribution Network at Maisarah.

"As we continue to enhance our customer-centric banking solutions with diverse offerings and attractive finance products, we are very pleased with the generated response of the campaign that attracted more new customers to open accounts with Maisarah throughout our branch network in all parts of Oman," he noted.

"These revised profit rates on auto finance, personal finance and home finance come with flexible payment plans, fast approvals and



easy documentation to make it easier for our customers to acquire financing for personal use, build or purchase the house of their dreams, and own the automobile of their choice," added Al Maashani.

As per the terms and conditions of Maisarah's finance profit rates, the starting profit rate for auto finance is 3.45 per cent and it applies to new auto finance requests, valid through 31 May 2022. Meanwhile, 4.95 per cent is the starting profit rate for home finance that is applicable for all new, additional

and take-over of home finances from other banks.

Additionally, the personal finance profit rate starts at 4.99 per cent and it is applicable for all new, additional and take-over of finances from other banks. Both home and personal finance offers are valid through December 31.

Moreover, Maisarah's customers can also utilise goods finance that covers up to 100 per cent of basic goods cost with a flexible payment plan of up to 10 years, allowing customers to furnish their homes, purchase gadgets and electronic appliances, meet their basic needs and enjoy a convenient and contemporary lifestyle of their choice. Customers can also pay for their children's education with a flexible finance period of up to 10 years via the Education Finance option that covers education fees, the cost of books, etc.

The Islamic window also offers a property finance bundle with a flexible payment tenure of up to 25 years, covering up to 80 per cent of the property value. Property Finance is available for the purchase of ready-to-use, under-construction properties, as well as the cost of property renovation. What adds exclusive value to this package is that customers can own the share in the property equal to the contribution they make on a monthly basis. Meanwhile, Maisarah also offers an exclusive Commercial Finance option for salaried Omani nationals who are looking for an additional income stream with a flexible payment plan for up to 15 years. This type of finance allows for the purchase of commercial vehicles, goods, equipment and real estate that would support customers in achieving their aspirations and contribute to their business growth and success.

For those who wish to travel for work or leisure, or even plan a Haj or Umrah trip, the exclusive travel finance solution covers all types of travelling-related expenses with a finance period of up to 3 years. This includes expenses of transportation, accommodation, sightseeing and tourism packages.

LUXURIOUS STAY



Special summer offer at Anantara Salalah

MUSCAT: Stay luxuriously local this May and June with savings on rooms and villas for citizens and residents of Oman. Indulge without the travel and choose Al Baleed Resort Salalah to experience the unrivalled hospitality and comfort of Anantara.

Dip toes in the infinity pool, or your private villa pool and relax on the soft sand beach. Celebrate the rich cultures of Oman, savour the finest dishes from the freshest local ingredients and most renowned international cuisines, and be pampered at Anantara Spa. Whether staying in a spacious Deluxe Room or the modern elegance of a Beach Pool Villa, comfort will be ensured every moment at Al Baleed Resort Salalah by Anantara.

From 8 May to 30 June, special rates for citizens and residents of Oman start at OMR 68 per night for rooms and OMR 118 for private pool villas. Every stay includes a sumptuous daily buffet breakfast and complimentary scheduled resort activities for adults and kids. Families will benefit from complimentary access to the Albaharra Kids' and Alshirae Teens' clubs.

Spa indulgence will be at the fingertips of every summer guest with a reviving treatment package at just OMR 45 per person, including a sunburn soothing 30-minute cucumber and aloe vera wrap and 30-minute targeted massage to relax and re-

energise the back, head, or feet. For complete pampering, every spa guest will save a further 20% on additional treatments enjoyed that day.

Whether slipping into the refreshing waters of the 44-metre infinity pool, relaxing and watching the world from the cabanas besides, or taking time for a cooking class, luxury is waiting in Salalah this summer.

Stay offer is valid from 8 May - 30 June for citizens and residents of Oman.

Package includes:

- Villa with private pool starting from OMR 118
- Complimentary buffet breakfast for two adults and two kids below the age of 6
- Complimentary resort activities for kids and adults based on a weekly schedule
- Complimentary access to our Albaharra Kids' and Alshirae Teens' Club

Above rates are quoted per room per night and are subject to 8% service charge, 9% applicable government tax and 5% VAT.

Summer Spa Offer is valid from 8 May - 30 June 2022

Package includes:

- 30-min Aloe Vera and Cucumber Wrap (for sunburn)
- 30-min Targeted Massage (back, head or feet), Save 20% on further Anantara Spa treatments on the same day.

PROMOTION

Toyota's 'Biggest Excitement' campaign ending soon

MUSCAT: Own a Toyota and get a chance to benefit from Toyota's Biggest Excitement Campaign before it ends on May 19.

Get service from 2 years/20,000 km up to 8 years/80,000 km (whichever is earlier), 1-year insurance or cash gift in lieu of insurance OMR125 to OMR450, grand raffle Toyota Supra. Customers also get a chance to Scratch and Win Laptop, iPhone 13, Fuel Card, and Apple Watch Series 5. Additionally, customers can get a chance to Walk-in and Win Apple Airpod 2 and Apple Watch Series 5. (Prospective buyers may be advised that the benefits vary between model variants, model year and manufacturing year. Terms & Conditions apply. Visit the showroom for exact details.)

Toyota's range in Oman is very popular and exciting. The range includes the Yaris which delivers



a dynamic driving experience. The Yaris sedan and Yaris Hatchback are equipped with a 1.5L engine. The 1.5-Litre four-cylinder engine can churn out a maximum output of 106 hp and 14.3 kg-m of torque and is mated to the CVT transmission to offer a smooth shifting experience with excellent fuel efficiency.

The Toyota Corolla - the popular choice of people around the world has been developed from

a driver and passenger's point of view first. The Corolla is also available in a Hybrid option.

The sleek and stylish Toyota Camry has been one of the best-sellers. Equipped with a range of exciting features, technology and more, the Camry is also available in 2.5L, 3.5L and Hybrid options.

The Toyota Avalon is a statement of luxury. It is equipped with a 3.5L V6 Engine, LED Headlamps

with Adaptive Cornering Lamps, Premium Leather Seat Material, 9" Navigation System with 14 JBL Speakers, Head-Up Display, Toyota Safety Sense and more.

In the SUV range, customers can choose from the C-HR. The C-HR represents a leap forward in design, manufacturing and engineering for Toyota. The C-HR offers impressive fuel economy with 23.9 Kms/L as per GSO Conformity Certificate and carries a Hybrid battery warranty of 8 Years/160,000 Kms.

The Highlander offers an impressive fuel economy of 20 Kms/L (GLE Grade) & 19.3 Kms/L (LTD Grade) as per GSO Conformity Certificate and comes with 8 Years/160,000 Kms Hybrid Battery Warranty.

The sporty and stylish RAV4 ticks all the boxes when it comes to enjoying extraordinary moments.





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