

**PACT FOR FELLOWSHIP
PROGRAMMES SIGNED**

Oman Medical Speciality Board (OMSB) and Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) signed yesterday an agreement of cooperation to start fellowship programmes in various medical specialities. **>A5**



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**STEPS TAKEN TO INCULCATE CULTURE OF
TRADITIONAL CRAFTS IN OMANI YOUTH**

The Craft Training Centre of the Royal Court Affairs in the Wilayat of Salalah, Dhofar Governorate, has been set up as an institution that spreads awareness about traditional crafts. The craft industries here are peculiar to the governorate and trains instructors to transfer knowledge about making such artefacts to future generations. **>B6**



Founded 1975 · Volume 46 No. 242 | 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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TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN
**Over 6,000 cases, 14
COVID deaths in 3 days**

1 Over 6,000 people tested positive for COVID-19, and 14 lost their lives to the disease between February 3 and 5. Figures released by the Ministry of Health show that 2,524 people tested positive on Thursday, 1,538 tested positive on Friday, and 2,084 tested positive on Saturday. **>A5**

WORLD
**Morocco mourns
death of young boy**

2 Morocco was in mourning on Sunday after rescue workers extracted the body of a 5-year-old boy who had been trapped in an underground well in northern Morocco. Many had hoped that the child, called Rayan, had managed to survive the last five days despite low temperatures. **>A6**

MARKET
**Samail Industrial City
localises 19 projects**

3 Samail Industrial City witnessed dynamic investment activity in 2021 as 19 projects were localised on a total leased area of 122,549 square metres. More than 300 direct employment opportunities will be created by these upcoming projects in the coming period. **>B1**

MEASURES TO BOOST PRODUCTIVITY ROLLED OUT



These initiatives
are enshrined in the
guide to the 2022
State General Budget

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A number of key measures have been listed by the government which would help increase productivity and efficiency in the implementation of projects and initiatives, as also improve fiscal performance. Enshrined in the guide to the 2022 State General Budget, the

measures can be broadly divided into two categories, namely, government projects and initiatives and fiscal performance improvement measures. There are 12 initiatives listed under the former.

Government projects and initiatives

The government initiatives include Digital Transformation Project to be carried out by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MTCIT).

This four-step programme includes launching of a unified guide for government services, launching of the first phase of e-services on a unified government platform, bringing out a national platform to receive suggestions and complaints and initiatives and activities for space exploration.

Ministry of Economy projects include the Governorate Development Programme and regular follow-ups on the implementation of strategic projects.

Ejadah

Other key government initiatives include the Ministry of Labour's system to measure individual employee's performance and individual proficiency. Called "Ejadah" (Arabic for 'excel'), the new system has already been rolled out in some government departments.

"Ejadah, which will be implemented in January 2022, aims to develop human resources by linking incentives and rewards with the level of productivity," said the budget report.

The Ministry of Health was among the first to adopt this new

system when it rolled it out on Sunday, 2 January.

Several steps are to be taken to support SMEs. These include the drafting of an SME law, introducing regulations for funding, Riyada cards and Sanad centres, announcing regulations relating to incubators, launching group financing platforms and supporting craft industries and single-person entities.

Fiscal performance improvement measures

The government's fiscal performance improvement measures include the revision of laws concerning finance as well as introducing new measures to balance public spending.

A key step listed is the revision of the Financial Law and Executive Bylaws.

The budget report said: "In light of modernising laws and revising the regulations pertaining to economic and financial aspects, alongside the restructuring of the State's administrative apparatus, the Financial Law and its Executive Bylaws are under revision in order to address the recent changes and to regulate the financial systems developed by the Ministry of Finance."

"Some of the systems include Programme Based Budget, GFMS and Treasury Single Account."

Another important measure is the Public Debt Law, which aims to manage funding the government obtains as loan from banks, financial institutions and individuals, to finance its public expenditures.

>A4

FASCINATING TECHNOLOGY

Look up to spot space station over Muscat

Times News Service

MUSCAT: People in Oman who are fascinated by engineering, astronomy and space have a great opportunity to spot the International Space Station (ISS) over the next few days, as it passes over Muscat.

The ISS has been passing over Oman since the evening of Friday, 4 February, and will continue to be visible for a few minutes every day through telescopes until about 7pm on Tuesday, 8 February.

On Tuesday evening, the ISS will appear over Muscat for a full five minutes, from 7:07pm. According to NASA, the station will



appear 10 degrees above west-north-west and disappear 10 degrees above the southeast.

The station will return to the skies above Muscat at 6:07am on Monday, 14 February, for another

five minutes. It will be positioned to the south, ten degrees above the horizon, before exiting the skies over the Omani capital, travelling in an east-northeast direction.

It will return again for a very

brief period – just a minute – on Tuesday, at 5:21am, arriving 10 degrees above southeast, and depart ten degrees above east-northeast.

Viewing

The ISS can be viewed for a longer period on Wednesday, 16 February, when it stays above Oman for a full seven minutes, starting at 6:06am.

It will enter the skies above Muscat 10 degrees above south-west, before departing the skies 10 degrees above northeast. The International Space Station can also be viewed from Thursday, 17 February to Saturday the 19th for varying periods. **>A4**



**Golden era of music ends
with Lata Mangeshkar**

B5



**25th
MUSCAT**



CIVIL SERVICE AND AMBULANCE AUTHORITY

Home ambulance service launched for critical patients

Times News Service

MUSCAT: To provide aid to people in critical condition and shift them to the nearest hospital, a home ambulance service has been launched by Oman's Civil Service and Ambulance Authority (CDAA).

As part of the first stage of implementation, the ambulance service will be rolled out across governorates with lesser population density before being expanded to other areas under an already agreed upon timetable.

On call

People who require emergency medical assistance can call the Royal Oman Police emergency hotline number (9999) or the CDAA's operations centre (2434-6666), following which



a team of paramedics will be dispatched to provide urgent medical assistance.

The paramedics are also capable of dealing with medical conditions of an advanced nature.

Some of the most common

conditions the home ambulance service is expected to tackle are critical respiratory diseases, heart conditions, severe injuries, fractures, sudden loss of consciousness, sudden general and partial paralysis, severe bleeding

and pain, ailments related to the nervous system, severe electric shocks, poisoning, mental disorders, drowning, childbirth (including those involving complications) and severe burns.

The setting up of the home ambulance service comes in the wake of Royal Decree No. 39/2021, said Col. Dr. Hamad bin Abdullah Al Hamadi, the Director General of Ambulance Services.

Important addition

"This is among the new services provided by the authority," he said. "We consider it to be an important addition and an effective, supportive and complementary contribution to the health sector in Oman in terms of providing emergency medical care to patients before they are transferred to healthcare centres. **>A4**

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ABA OMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Teenagers hold walkathon to raise cancer awareness

Times News Service

MUSCAT: In an effort to raise awareness about cancer, teenagers from ABA Oman International School organised a walkathon on February 3.

The 'walk for a cause' was organised by student-led charity Teens Giving Back (TGB) and also marked the World Cancer Day which falls on February 4.

The TGB initiative began in 2011 with the intention to improve the welfare of the community.

TGB aims to support the Oman Cancer Association (OCA) and the Paul Uche Foundation through bake sales, fundraisers, spirit days, festivals, and the sale of handmade cards.

This year, the walkathon was organised in honour of Paul Uche, an ABA graduate from the class of 2009, who was diagnosed with Myeloid Leukaemia and died in 2014.

After his passing, Paul's family started a foundation in his name in Nigeria for the treatment of cancer patients. Autobiographical anecdotes of Paul's brave battle with cancer is published in his book titled 'Switching Lanes: And Other Stories'.

Muhammad Ahsan Kalam, the senior student leader of Teens



Giving Back expressed, "We as global citizens in an international school, feel that it is our duty to give back to society and help the local community in whatever way we can.

TGB's efforts have helped us learn and grow to be caring and compassionate individuals and serve a purpose in life through our various fund raising activities for a good cause."

"The TGB team at ABA is dedicated to helping the Omani and International community by giving back through our hard work that will certainly continue for years to come. A little step goes a long way in making a big difference and we hope to set an example through our actions to

inspire all to do the same," stated Dr. Bina Philip, high school faculty and supervisor for TGB at ABA. ABA Oman International School is a not-for-profit IB Continuum School in Muscat, Oman providing international education of the highest quality in an intercultural environment.

With over 930 K-12 students, the diverse and inclusive ABA community is represented by a highly experienced faculty, staff and families from over 70 different nationalities.

ABA Oman International School will open the doors to its new campus at Madinat Al Irfan in March this year. Visit www.abaoman.org to discover The ABA Way.

قسم أمراض الجهاز الهضمي
DEPARTMENT OF
GASTROENTEROLOGY

د. شيفابراساد
بونافيتيل
أخصائي أمراض الجهاز الهضمي

DR. SIVAPRASAD
PUNNAVEETIL
SPECIALIST GASTROENTEROLOGIST

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 - Polyps of the Gastrointestinal Tract
 - Gallbladder Diseases
- Endoscopic Diagnosis and Treatment
- Diagnostic and Therapeutic Endoscopy for
 - Peptic Ulcers
 - Bleeding GI Tract
 - Cirrhosis of Liver
 - Polyps of GI Tract
 - Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy Insertion
 - Screening Colonoscopy for Prevention of Colorectal Cancer
- Holistic Management of IBS and Other Functional Gastrointestinal Diseases

التخصصات

- تشخيص وتقييم وعلاج اضطرابات الجهاز الهضمي
 - ارتجاع المريء
 - مرض القرحة الهضمية
 - التهاب البنكرياس
 - أمراض التهاب الأمعاء
 - الاورام الحميدة في الجهاز الهضمي
 - أمراض المرارة
- التشخيص والعلاج بالمنظار
- التنظير التشخيصي والعلاجي ل
 - القرحة الهضمية
 - نزيف الجهاز الهضمي
 - ثقب الكبد
 - الاورام الحميدة في الجهاز الهضمي
- إدخال المعدة بالمنظار عن طريق الجلد
- فحص تنظير القولون
- الوقاية من سرطان القولون والمستقيم

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ADVERTORIAL

Bayan College is British Council's IELTS registration, examination centre

MUSCAT: Bayan College and British Council on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for setting up an IELTS registration and examination centre in the western region of Muscat on Wednesday. As per the MoU, Bayan College became an official IELTS registration and examination centre of the British Council in the western region of Muscat.



"Strategic partnership to benefit students from Maabella, Halban and Barka region"

Account Relationship Officer Ruzeika Abdeen, British Council, said, "This collaboration has a great future and we can start our first batch of IELTS examination probably in the middle of March, 2022."

She also supplemented that IELTS is the world's most popular and recognized English language test for higher education and global migration.

Thousands of organizations around the world rely on IELTS. The goal is to help graduate students from the western region of Muscat to fulfill their needs to serve the country, in addition to the importance of the test as a prerequisite for studying abroad.

The event was also attended by Dr. Abhishek Singh, Head of the Department, Media Studies; Dr. Fadhil Mohsin, Media Studies; Mr. Atta Kadum, Marketing Coordinator; and Melanie Crasta, Media Department, Bayan College.

Bayan College (operated under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education since 2006), is a pioneer media college in Oman.

Bayan College is one of the premier academic institutions with many academic award to its credit and is accredited nationally and internationally with Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education (OAAAQA) and: American International Accreditation Association of Schools and Colleges, American Educational Consulting Associates & Accreditation Service for International Colleges (ASIC), UK based accreditation agency with Premier status.

at a very fast pace to become an educational hub. Our collaboration with the British Council to deliver IELTS testing centre will be a great alliance; one that reinforces our commitment to the advancement and improvement of Oman society."

The key benefits of the MoU to the community include:
Students from Bayan College and neighbouring colleges can register for the IELTS and attend the IELTS test at Bayan College.

The community around Maabella, Halban and Barka can have their IELTS registration and examination in Halban instead of travelling to Muscat.

Given the fact that all higher education institutions in Oman require IELTS certifications in English for an entry to academic programs, it will be a boon to the students in Maabella, Halban and Barka region.

Speaking on how such a partnership will support greater employment opportunities and English-language-based growth, Mohammed Musa, Marketing Manager, British Council said, "We need to plan for the marketing strategy and more intense work should be done towards the social media promotion and seek support from the Bayan College marketing team."

Mohammed pointed out that Bayan College is very rich in terms of infrastructure, and certainly has one of the best campuses in western Muscat, and this collaboration will definitely add value to both sides.



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BEAUTIFULLY MANICURED LANDSCAPE OF

AL SAHWA PUBLIC GARDEN



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Located in Mabela, Al Sahwa Public Garden is a great location for the entire family, and reminds us in many ways of our childhood.

Vast expanses of freshly-mown green grass provide ample opportunity for children to play to their heart's content, while the beautifully manicured land-

scape is sure to be appreciated by the adults.

Covering an area of nearly 300,000 square metres, and located next to the Burj A'Sahwa roundabout and the Sahwa clock tower, the park also features a plethora of play areas, picnic spots, gazebos and running paths. Six gardens that have been created in the Islamic style are the centrepiece of the park.



REPORT < FROM A1 Accurate, timely financial information

"The law also aims to regulate and manage public debt operations, diversify the sources of funding, monitor the level of indebtedness and associated risks and improve cash flow management mechanisms," the report read.

To manage public finances, the government aims to introduce a modern financial system to plan, implement, control and report on the State's budget.

Called "Maliyah" (Arabic for 'finance'), the new platform will provide accurate, reliable, timely and consistent financial information that supports financial and economic decision makers to achieve economic diversification and financial sustainability.

It will also develop a modern financial accounting and report system and new budget classifications in line with government financial statistics and enable better cash management and effective utilisation of public funds.

Programme-based budget

Another plan highlighted in the budget is the Programme Based Budget (PBB), which identifies public spending priorities and links spending to objectives and activities.

PBB is to have several advantages, including the linking of the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 and Five Year Development Plans with

annual programmes and activities, organising and integrating government programmes, providing flexibility in allocation of resources, raising financial and administrative efficiency, connecting financial planning with public policies, providing authentic data about public performance, linking objectives and outcome with spending and reflecting public policies and objectives within the budget.

National register of assets

Plans have also been drawn up to create a National Register of Government Assets.

"The register aims to register and determine the actual value of government assets, generate more financial resources, centralise government asset management and enhance efficiency, secure more financial resources for the State Budget and identify government assets for privatisation and public-private partnerships," said the budget report.

Pricing of services

The government will also go ahead with implementing a fee setting policy handbook to standardise pricing of government services.

"In its first phase, the handbook was applied to the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and In-

vestment Promotion (MOCIIP) and the municipalities sector," explained the report.

The rollout resulted in the reduction or cancellation of 548 service fees, the merging of some municipal licences resulting in similar business activities no longer requiring separate licences. As part of this effort, 88 per cent of services provided by MOCIIP are to be transferred to the Invest Easy platform.

Pension funds

Another step to be taken is the merger of pension funds to create comprehensive social protection coverage, a unified methodology for investment management and enhance investment capacity and efficiency.

The merger of pension funds comes in line with Royal Decree 33/2021 and will create two funds: the Social Security Fund for public and private sectors and the Military and Security Services Retirement Fund for military and security personnel.

Contracts and procurement system

Efforts to modernise standard contracts are also to be undertaken in 2022, making it easier to update contract clauses as per international norms, obtain copies of contracts from the Ministry of

Finance, draft single contracts in Arabic and English and fill in details electronically.

A new central government procurement system is also to be adopted. This unit will control government procurement processes, negotiate quotations from suppliers, establish direct link with service providers, monitor government inventory, reduce public expenditure and staff numbers in procurement departments, build close relations with suppliers and migrate to e-businesses for key processes, including tenders, contracts and payments.

Other plans in the pipeline are a supply chain financing scheme to provide simple and effective financial solutions to government suppliers, launching the "Tafakur" platform to promote exchange of ideas between public bodies and societies to help improve financial management and achieve fiscal sustainability and opening a treasury single account to unify government bank accounts and deal with government revenue and expenditure on a daily basis, thereby enabling optimal use of public sector cash resources.

"Oman has achieved positive outcomes and indicators in 2021 as a result of government measures and efforts towards achieving national objectives," explained the report.

ISS < FROM A1 International Space station over Oman

On Thursday, space enthusiasts have full six minutes to spot the ISS above Oman, as it enters Muscat's airspace at 5:19am, 15 degrees above south-southwest, before exiting 10 degrees above northeast. On Friday, it's only going to be present for two minutes, starting at 4:34am. It will, however, be back in the skies at 6:07am for another five minutes, entering 10 degrees above the west and departing 10 degrees above the northern direction of

the horizon. The ISS will also be over Oman for three minutes on Saturday at 5:22am. It will enter Muscat's airspace 36 degrees above north-northwest, before leaving 10 degrees above north-northeast.

"All sightings will occur within a few hours before or after sunrise or sunset," explained NASA. "This is the optimum viewing period as the sun reflects off the space station and contrasts against the darker sky."

HEALTHCARE < FROM A1 Service to critically injured patients

"This service provides critically injured patients as well as others the required emergency care before transferring them to a healthcare centre while following the necessary protocols," he added.

Medicines

"These practices are approved by the medical governance system. We also have the medicines that are required during emergencies."

The ambulance services are to

be initially made available across six governorates: Musandam, Al Buraimi, Al Dhahirah, Al Wusta, South Al Sharqiyah and North Al Sharqiyah through the existing medical centres. This service will be expanded in accordance with an approved plan.

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MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Dar Al Atta’a signs MoU for helping women, children

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Social Development signed with Dar Al Atta'a Association a memorandum of understanding (MoU) yesterday on cooperation in a number of fields serving the family, woman and childhood affairs.

Sayyida Ma'ani bint Abdullah Al Busaidi, Director General for Family Development at the Ministry of Social Development signed the MoU on behalf of the Ministry, while from the side of Dar Al Atta'a Association, it was signed by Maryam bint Issa Al Zadjali, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Dar Al Atta'a Association.

The memorandum of understanding covered a number of fields, mainly development of the abilities and skills of the women through activation of participation in the programme on legal empowerment of women, boosting skills for female members of the civil society associations, enhancement of the use of information technology and communications to further empower women and to improve employment opportunities for women.

The MoU also included family protection with the provision of decent housing for youth under the patronage of the Ministry of



Social Development and within the available capabilities of Dar Al Atta'a.

The MoU covered provision of support for the cases benefiting from Dar Al Wifaq Centre affiliated to the Ministry of Social Development.

Empowerment

It also covered the field of social and economic empowerment of families through support of some projects aimed at economic empowerment of families and individuals under the umbrella of social security and families with limited income.,

It also aims at organising marketing and promotional exhibitions and creation of marketing outlets for products of families, organising joint training programmes, coordination on providing financial support for cases discharged from Dar Al Wifaq such as hiring of houses and provision of living supplies for them, cooperation between the Ministry of Social Development and Dar Al Atta'a in the field of protection and support of guests of Dar Al Wifaq and provision of their cost of treatment at the private health establishments among others. -ONA

COVID-19

Oman records over 6,000 COVID cases

Times News Service

MUSCAT: More than 6,000 people tested positive for COVID-19, and 14 lost their lives to the disease between Thursday, 3 February, and Saturday the 5th.

Figures released by the Ministry of Health show that 2,524 people tested positive on Thursday, 1,538 tested positive on Friday, and 2,084 tested positive on Saturday, leading to a total of 6,146 positive infections reported over these three days.

However, more people recovered from the disease – 6,640 – than tested positive over this time frame. Since the start of the pandemic in Oman, 352,187 people have tested positive, and 325,680 people have recovered from the disease. However, 4,172 people have lost the battle against COVID-19.

Oman's recovery rate continues to remain high, at 92.5 percent. There are currently 373 people currently admitted to healthcare centres in the country. Of them, 87 were admitted in the last 24 hours, while 60 are in intensive care.

The Ministry of Health continues to remind people to get vaccinated against the coronavirus at the earliest.

PILLARS OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Programme to sharpen skills of staff launched



MUSCAT: The third parallel programme themed “Pillars of National Security” was launched at the National Defence College (NDC) on Sunday.

The programme, running till 10 February 2022, targets honing the skills and leadership abilities of undersecretaries, as well as senior officers from the Sultan's Armed

Forces (SAF) and other military and security departments.

The programme addresses the pillars of Omani national security and developing the standards of joint action in tackling challenges. It also covers the policies of comprehensive macroeconomics, as well as enhancing the skills of the participants. -ONA

MEDICAL SPECIALTIES

Pact for fellowship programmes signed

MUSCAT: Oman Medical Speciality Board (OMSB) and Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) signed yesterday an agreement of cooperation to start fellowship programmes in various medical specialties.

The agreement was signed by Dr. Hilal Ali Al Sabti, CEO of OMSB and His Highness Sayyid Dr. Fahad Al Julanda Al Said, Vice Chancellor of SQU.

The fellowship programmes will be developed at the SQU Hospital based on specific standards set by the OMSB.

This cooperation aims to strengthen and develop cooperation in the field of training Omani physicians and grooming their skills. SQU Hospital is one of the most important training centres approved by the OMSB to provide advanced medical training.

OMSB started subspecialty training programmes (fellowships) for specialized physicians as part of its endeavors in developing and expanding advanced medical education.

Moreover, the OMSB offered its first fellowship programmes in 2016 in the fields of adult general cardiology, medical genetics, otology and pediatrics hematology oncology. -ONA





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Story on the health benefits of weight loss reached 27,384 people and had 858 engagements on Facebook.



MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

7,000 VIEWS



The Morning Minute video had 7,000 views and reached 25,000 people on Facebook.



MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

958 VIEWS



The Morning Minute video on vaccination resumes in Muscat had 958 views and 39 likes on Instagram.



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إعلان مناقصة

Tender Notice

The Internal Tender Committee at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology
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TENDER NO	TENDER NAME	DATE OF PUBLISHING	LAST DATE TO PURCHASE TENDER DOCUMENT	SUBMISSION DATE	COMPANIES WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THIS TENDER	DOCUMENT PRICE
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Interested Companies registered with the Secretariat General of Tender Board may obtain Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document. Tenders should be submitted online on given website. The Tenderer should enclose scan copy of Bank Guarantee issued by local bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of (1%) of the Tender value validity for (90) days, online on given website.

CORRESPONDANCE:

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Morocco mourns death of young boy trapped in underground well

The king expressed his condolences to Rayan's parents in a statement from the palace

RABAT: Morocco was in mourning on Sunday after rescue workers extracted the body of a 5-year-old boy who had been trapped in an underground well in northern Morocco.

Many had hoped that the child, called Rayan, had managed to survive the last five days despite low temperatures. He had fallen down a narrow 32-metre (100-foot) deep well in the village of Ighran in the country's Chefchaouen province on Tuesday and his body was retrieved on Saturday.

The multiday rescue effort had brought international focus.

His death was confirmed by state news channel 2M who also tweeted a statement from King Mohammed VI, along with a tribute to Rayan which read: "In God's protection... We belong to God and to Him we shall return."

The king expressed his condolences to Rayan's parents in a statement from the palace.

Earlier, rescue workers said it was difficult to ascertain Rayan's condition, and many had hoped that it would be possible to preserve the child's life.

Lead rescuer Abdelhadi Tamrani told state television, "we hope we will rescue him alive."

Thousands took to social media to express their solidarity for the



MULTI-DAY RESCUE: The boy had fallen down a 32-metre deep well in the village of Ighran in the country's Chefchaouen province on Tuesday and his body was retrieved on Saturday.

boy and his family, with the Arabic hashtag #SaveRayan trending for hours in Morocco and North Africa.

Paris-Saint Germain player and Moroccan national soccer player Achraf Hakimi shared a drawing of Rayan on his Instagram page with the caption "To God, we belong and to God, we return" in Arabic.

Several European soccer clubs also shared their condolences on their Arabic social media pages, including Sevilla FC, Barcelona FC, and Manchester United.

Moroccan newspapers also expressed sympathy. "The fall of a child who reminded the whole world of the values of humanity," read one Moroccan newspaper headline, while others lamented the "tragic epilogue" that had brought "sadness and shock."

The rescue effort

The well narrows as it descends from a 45 centimetre diameter at the top. Rescuers were not able to go down themselves to retrieve the child because of the limited space.

A massive trench had to be cut in the hill next to the well.

By Saturday morning, rescuers were digging horizontally toward the well and installing PVC tubes to protect against landslides and get the boy out.

Moroccan media reported on Thursday that rescuers had managed to get water and oxygen delivered to the bottom of the well.

"I keep up hope that my child will get out of the well alive. I thank everyone involved and those supporting us in Morocco and elsewhere," Rayan's father told state

broadcaster 2M on Friday evening.

How did Rayan get trapped?

Rayan's mother told the media that he had been playing nearby before disappearing on Tuesday evening. "The whole family went out to look for him then we realized that he'd fallen down the well," she said.

According to a male relative the family heard muffled crying coming from the well. They managed to lower a phone with its light and camera switched on. Speaking on Friday, the relative said: "He was crying 'lift me up.'"

The incident attracted crowds of supporters to the village, where they set up camp. Police were sent to the area, and authorities called upon the masses to let the rescuers do their job. **■**

Times OF OMAN

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



Founder: Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali
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CIRCULATION: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24818270, E-mail: circulation@timesofoman.com

DEAD FISH

Probe ordered after photos of dead fish in France emerge

PARIS: An investigation has been launched by France and the European Union after masses of dead fish were found floating in the Bay of Biscay. Environmental group Sea Shepherd, which works to protect marine life, posted images of tens of thousands of dead fish on the surface of the sea near southwest France.

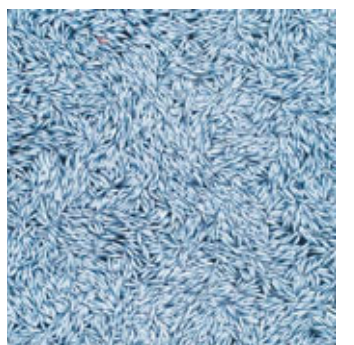
On Thursday the group posted images of the incident on Twitter saying: "This is what is happening right now in the Bay of Biscay off La Rochelle. Four factory ships operate in the area, including the Margiris, the second largest trawler in the world (banned in Australia)."

EU reacting 'immediately'

France's Maritime Minister Annick Girardin expressed shock after seeing the images and ordered the National Center for Fishing Surveillance to investigate the matter.

The EU's commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus Sinkevicius, said the bloc was reacting "immediately" to the "massive discards of fish."

"We are launching an inquiry to national authorities of the fishing area and presumed flag state of the vessel, to get exhaustive information and evidence about the



case," Sinkevicius said in a Tweet.

'Tear in net' to blame

The Pelagic Freezer-Trawler Association represents the Lithuanian flagged trawler called FV Margiris. In a statement issued on Friday, the association said the fish were "involuntarily released into the sea" due to a tear in one of the trawlers nets.

"Such an accident is a rare occurrence, and in this case was caused by the unexpectedly large size of the fish caught," the association explained. It went on to say that the matter had been logged and reported to the appropriate authority.

However, Sea Shepherd said it suspected it was a deliberate act to discharge a type of fish that it did not want to process. **■**

CYCLONE BATSIRAI

Six dead as Cyclone Batsirai makes landfall in Madagascar

ANTANANARIVO: At least six people were killed after Cyclone Batsirai made landfall on Madagascar's coast, the disaster management agency said Sunday.

Packing winds of 235 km/h (155mph), the cyclone struck the Mananjary district, more than 530 kilometres (310 miles) southeast of the capital Antananarivo on Saturday evening.

"The winds are terrible. I've never experienced this. Mananjary has never experienced such a situation. The waves are very high," Hanitra Raharisoa told the Reuters news agency.

Residents of Mananjary, the nearby towns of Manakara and Nosy Varika said the cyclone has caused widespread damage by blowing the roofs off homes, knocking down trees and utility poles.

"The city of Nosy Varika is almost 95% destroyed. The solid houses saw their roofs torn off by the wind. The wooden huts have,



for the most part, been destroyed," Willy Raharijaona, technical advisor to the vice president of Madagascar's Senate, told Reuters.

Nirina Rahaingosoa, a resident in the town of Fianarantsoa, said: "We saw only desolation: uprooted trees, fallen electric poles, roofs torn off by the wind, the city completely underwater."

Most land and sea transport was suspended for several hours.

The country's disaster management agency said nearly 48,000

people were moved to emergency accommodation.

In the eastern coastal town of Vatomantry, more than 200 people were crammed in one room in a Chinese-owned concrete building.

Community leader Thierry Louison Leaby lamented the lack of clean water after the water utility company turned off supplies ahead of the cyclone.

"People are cooking with dirty water," he said, amid fears of a diarrhea outbreak. **■**

QUEEN CONSORT

Wife of Prince Charles set to become 'Queen Camilla'

LONDON: Britain's Queen Elizabeth II has said that she wants daughter-in-law Camilla to hold the role of "Queen Consort" when Prince Charles becomes king.

The move, announced Saturday on the eve of her platinum jubilee marking 70 years on the throne, cements a remarkable journey to public acceptance for Camilla, after being vilified for her role in the break-up of Charles' marriage to Princess Diana.

Throughout British history, the wife of a king typically is given the title "Queen Consort." But at the time of Charles and Camilla's wedding, it was decided that Camilla would use the title "Princess Consort" if Charles were to become king.

Queen plans smooth succession

The latest announcement shows that the 95-year-old UK monarch is planning for the future after her



death. The Queen said she hoped Charles and Camilla would receive the same support as she has during her reign.

"When, in the fullness of time, my son Charles becomes king, I know you will give him and his wife Camilla the same support that you have given me," the monarch wrote. "And it is my sincere wish that, when that time comes, Camilla will be known as Queen Consort as she continues her own loyal service."

Charles and Camilla, through a spokesperson, said they were

"touched and honored by Her Majesty's words." Charles later added the jubilee was an opportunity for the country to unite and celebrate Queen Elizabeth's service to the nation.

The message ties up a loose end that has hung over the House of Windsor since Charles' divorce from Princess Diana.

It took years for many in Britain to forgive Charles, the man whose admitted infidelity brought such pain to "the people's princess" before she died in a Paris car crash in 1997. **■**

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4	Netherlands	1	1	0	2
5	Australia	1	0	1	2
5	Japan	1	0	1	2
5	Slovenia	1	0	1	2
8	PR China	1	0	0	1
12	New Zealand	1	0	0	1
10	Italy	0	2	0	2
10	USA	0	2	0	2
12	Austria	0	1	1	2
12	Canada	0	1	1	2
14	France	0	1	0	1
14	Germany	0	1	0	1
16	Finland	0	0	1	1
16	Hungary	0	0	1	1
16	Poland	0	0	1	1

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MIXED TEAM RELAY

Chinese skaters win mixed team relay’s Olympic debut

BEIJING: China won its first gold medal at the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games in the 2,000m mixed team relay of short track speed skating on Saturday, while Norway pocketed two of six gold medals on offer on the first competition day after the opening ceremony.

China, with a team of Fan Kexin, Qu Chunyu, Wu Dajing and Ren Ziwei, withstood late challenges from Italy to finish first in two minutes and 37.348 seconds in the event’s debut at the Games.

Italy took the silver by 0.016 seconds. The bronze medal belonged to Hungary, who clocked two minutes and 40.900 seconds.

China finished third in the semifinals before the United States was disqualified after receiving a penalty, thus letting

China march into the final.

In the women’s 7.5km+7.5km skiathlon held at the National Cross-Country Skiing Center in Zhangjiakou, Norway’s Therese Johaug, winner in the 4x5km relay at Vancouver 2010, claimed the very first gold medal of Beijing 2022 by finishing in 44:13.7.

After missing the PyeongChang 2018 due to a doping ban, the reigning world champion won her first individual Olympic gold medal with a margin of 30.2 seconds.

“I’ve never had an [individual] Olympic gold medal, it’s my first one. I’m so happy,” said Johaug.

Natalia Nepryaeva from the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) took the silver in 44:43.9, while Teresa Stadlober of Austria won the bronze in 44:44.2. *Xinhua*

SNOWBOARD SLOPESTYLE

Synnott wins first Olympic gold for New Zealand

CHONGLI: FIS first seed Zoi Sadowski-Synnott won the first Winter Olympic gold medal for New Zealand with a high 92.88 points in the women’s snowboard slopestyle final at the Beijing Winter Olympics here on Sunday.

Julia Marino from the United States won the silver medal and Australian Tess Coady came the third.

Sadowski-Synnott notched 84.51 points in the first run. No participant surpassed her until Marino managed to finish a frontside double cork 1080 in her last trick of the second run to win her a total score of 87.68.

Facing pressure from Marino, Sadowski-Synnott failed to refresh the ranking table after slipping in the second run.

However, the 20-year-old ultimately demonstrated her prowess again. *Xinhua*

SKIATHLON

Russian Alexander Bolshunov wins Olympic gold in 30km skiathlon

ZHANGJIAKOU: Russian athlete Alexander Bolshunov pulled away from the pack early and won the first men’s cross-country skiing gold medal at the Beijing Olympics in the 30-kilometre skiathlon.

Bolshunov, the World Cup leader in distance races, grabbed a Russian Olympic Committee flag in the final stretch and waved it in the air as he crossed the finish line in 1 hour, 16 minutes, 9.8 seconds.

Bolshunov and Iivo Niskanen of Finland led the race through the

first four classic ski laps but Russian athlete Denis Spitsov passed Niskanen on the freestyle legs. Spitsov stayed out front and secured the silver, 1:11 behind Bolshunov. Niskanen held on for the bronze, 2:00 behind.

The first Norwegian to cross the line was Hans Christer Holund in fourth. He won the bronze medal at the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympics. Norwegian teammate Paal Golberg was fifth, the Associated Press (AP) news reported. *Xinhua*





Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Health

ANNOUCEMENT FOR TENDER

The directorate general of royal hospital invite specialized companies to submit tender

Tender Ref	Description	Last date for Collection of tender Document	Bid Submission Closing Date on/ Before 08:00 am Wednesday	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
MOH/HQ-11/2022	Supply of Surgical Consumables Items	17/February/2022	09/March/2022	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board	R.O 25.000 Per set
MOH/HQ-12/2022	Supply of Surgical Items (Neuroplastic)	17/ February /2022	02/March/2022		
MOH/HQ-15/2022	Supply of Surgical Items (Dental)		09/March/2022		
MOH/HQ-16/2022	Supply of Surgical Items (Cardiac Anesthesia) for The Royal Hospital		02/March/2022		
MOH/HQ-17/2022	Supply of Total Parenteral Nutrition Consumables with Compounder for Khoula Hospital				
MOH/HQ-19/2022	Upgrading of Medical Gas System at Sohar Hospital Expansion in North Al Batinah Governorate	13/ February /2022	23/ February /2022		

- Tenders should be submitted on line on <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> enclose Electronic Bank Guarantee issued by a Local bank for not less than One percent (1%) for the Tender value validity for (90) days from the Tender Submission date, addressed to The Chairman of the Tender Committee.
- Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any tender.

For any Clarification, you may contact via Telephone: 24402200 ,
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Chahal, Rohit Sharma star as India beat West Indies in ODI

Chasing 177, India got off to a great start as the side reached 67 without losing a wicket in the first 10 overs

AHMEDABAD: Spinner Yuzvendra Chahal picked four wickets before skipper Rohit Sharma hit a fifty as India defeated West Indies in the first ODI here at the Naren-

dra Modi Stadium on Sunday. With this win, India took a 1-0 lead in the three-match ODI series. India folded West Indies for a paltry 176 and then chased down the target in 28 overs to beat visitors by six wickets. Chasing 177, India got off to a great start as the side reached 67 without losing a wicket in the first 10 overs. However, Alzarri Joseph struck in quick successions as Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli departed as India reached close to 100. India were right on track but Akeal Hosein dismissed Ishan Kishan in the 17th over before Joseph removed Rishabh Pant by running him out as hosts got reduced to 116/4. However, the asking rate was so low that Suryakumar Yadav (34) and Deepak Hooda (26) took India

over the line quite comfortably. Earlier opting to bowl first, India struck early in the third over of the match as opener Shai Hope played on an incoming deliver of pacer Mohammed Siraj for 8 as West Indies lost their first wicket for 13. Captain Rohit Sharma introduced spin in the eighth over as off-break bowler Washington Sundar rolled his arms. The visitors managed to score 39 runs for the loss of one wicket at the end of the first 10 overs of the powerplay. After Sundar and Chahal's show, West Indies reached the 150-run mark in 36.1 overs. Jason Holder notched up his half-century as he along with Allen brought some respectability to the proceedings. The 78-run partnership be-

tween Holder and Allen was finally broken as Sundar dismissed Fabian Allen caught and bowled for 29 of 43 balls as visitors lost their eighth wicket for 157. Prasidh Krishna got the prized scalp of Holder dismissing him out caught behind by keeper Pant for 57 of 71 balls. Krishna got his second wicket of the match while Pant took his third catch of the match. Chahal wrapped up the West Indies team for 176 in 43.5 overs dismissing Alzarri Joseph for 13 caught in the long-on for 13. Chahal finished with figures of 4 for 49. Brief Scores: West Indies 176/10 (Holder 57; Yuzvendra Chahal 4-49, Washington Sundar 3-30) vs India 178/4 (Rohit Sharma 60, Suryakumar Yadav 34; Alzarri Joseph 2-1) **ANI**



CRICKET

FOOTBALL

UAE defeat Oman, clinch ODI series

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The United Arab Emirates beat Oman by 4 wickets to clinch the 3 match ODI series at the Oman Cricket Academy Ground on Sunday. Although the margin of victory was the same as in the first game, this one was a far more dominant performance from the visitors. For the second time in a row, they won the toss and put Oman to bat. Jatinder Singh continued where he left off on Saturday and looked ominous in the initial overs but was dismissed for 17. Khawar Ali and Kashyap Prajapati showed glimpses of steel and flair respectively, but Oman found themselves placed precariously at 60/3 after 20 overs. Luckily for the hosts, Shoaib Khan and Ayaan Khan applied

themselves in the middle much better than their predecessors and navigated the middle overs smartly. The duo stitched together a priceless 98 run partnership that reinvigorated Oman's hopes of posting a big total. Shoaib's aggression and feet movement against spin was particularly notable, as the pair rotated strike effectively in between boundaries to keep the pressure on the UAE fielders. Their double dismissal in successive overs was a blow Oman could not recover from. With Basil Hameed in the form of his life with the ball, the 'Red Brigade' proceeded to lose their final five wickets for 35 runs and were bundled out for 195. The UAE run chase was a far more routine affair this time. Muhammad Waseem was sent



packing early, but Chirag Suri and Chundangapoyil Rizwan managed to consolidate the chase with a 72-run stand. Oman's efforts

with the ball and on the field were certainly a level above the game on Saturday. But although one titanic partnership did not take the game away from Oman, a collection of smaller ones did. Vrittya Aravind made a 45 ball 34, Muhammad Usman a 13 ball 18. All while Rizwan made one end of the wicket his own. He finished the game on an unbeaten 76 and watched proudly as Kashif Daud clinched the series for the visitors with a single in the 46th over. Ultimately, barring a collapse from the UAE, Oman's first innings score was never going to be enough to give them a genuine chance of winning against a batting line up that had chased down a 300 plus total in the previous game. The visitors managed to

manoeuvre their way past Oman's initial aggression prudently and played the game on autopilot for the final 30 overs. This win also means that the UAE now find themselves occupying fourth place in Group B of the ICC CWC League two. With 11 points from 9 games, they are within touching distance of the United States, who have 14 points having played 7 games more. Oman still lead the pack with 29 points from 22 games, but with second placed Scotland on 16 points from 12 games, their lead certainly isn't an unassailable one. All eyes now turn to the Oman Cricket Academy Ground on Tuesday, where the hosts will look to win, and win handsomely, avoiding the ignominy of a 3-0 series clean sweep at home in the process.

Bale's journey to nowhere

MADRID: Gareth Bale did not feature in the Copa del Rey defeat to Athletic Club in midweek, nor did he even warm up, in a sign that his Real Madrid days are fading away. While the Welshman was not the only attacker not to feature, with Eden Hazard nor Luka Jovic getting on the pitch with Madrid looking for a goal, Bale's case is unique. Bale has a legendary status at Madrid, having won four Champions Leagues and contributing massively in two of those finals, but he has fallen from grace as his contract comes to an end. This season he has had three injuries and a positive test result for COVID-19, which has reduced his playing time with Madrid to just 193 minutes spread over three games. **-DNA**



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MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER
The MSX index closed at 4,132.16 points, up by 0.11 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.49 per cent at 503.83 points. Oman & Emirates Holding, up 9.09 per cent, was the top gainer while, Sembcorp Salalah, down 2.74 per cent, was the top loser.

Samail Industrial City localises 19 projects in 2021



JOB OPPORTUNITIES: Over 300 direct job opportunities will be provided by these projects in the coming period. - File picture

The 19 localised projects specialise in mining and natural resources industries, including metal products, doors and windows, tubes for ammunition, firefighting tools and equipment, marble and cement, and food industries, in addition to medical and carton industries

MUSCAT: Samail Industrial City witnessed dynamic investment activity in 2021 as 19 projects were localised on a total leased area of 122,549 sqm. Over 300 direct job opportunities will be provided by these projects in the coming period. These localised projects are

specialised in mining and natural resources industries including metal products, doors and windows, tubes for ammunition, firefighting tools and equipment, marble and cement, and food industries such as meat products, dairy products, poultry, dates, in addition to medical

and carton industries. Madayn is currently executing the design and implementation of an infrastructure complementary project in Samail Industrial City. This includes a dual-lane road spanning 1.4 km from the roundabout at the main entrance of Samail Industrial City to the roundabout near the Al Sharqiyah expressway. The project also includes designing and executing sewage pipe linking phase 3 with phase 1 of Samail Industrial City. The completion rate of the project has reached 48 per cent and is expected to be completed in April 2022. It should be noted that Samail Industrial City is divided into several sectors, including the food industry, plastic materials industry, steel industry, marble industry, building materials industry, in addition to other industries such as furniture, petrochemicals, and supporting services sector (e.g. warehouses). - ONA

Tender Notice

Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI), announces following E-Tenders for 2022:

Tender Number	Tender Name	Deadline for Specifications Request	Deadline for tender bids	Tender Price
04/2022	Renewal of F5 Devices Subscription and Support for One year	17 Feb 2022	03 Mar 2022	25 RO
05/2022	Supply of Computers Equipment with Accessories	17 Feb 2022	03 Mar 2022	25 RO

Interested companies registered with Tender Board may obtain Tender document from the E-Tendering website: <http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>. The Vendors must provide **Electronic Bank Guarantee** issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of (2%) of the Tender value valid for (120) days on website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> and addressed to Public Authority for Social Insurance.

CORRESPONDANCE:

1. Tender inquiry : All correspondence pertaining to the TENDER Inquiry must be online at E-Tendering system (<http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)
2. E-Tendering system inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the e-tendering system technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number: Tel : +968 24402200 , E-mail : etenderhd@ita.gov.om

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FRESH PRESSURE

Myanmar: How EU could cripple military junta

BRUSSELS: The European Union on Friday faced fresh pressure to cut off Myanmar's natural gas revenues after the first anniversary of the military coup passed this week without new penalties from Brussels. Phil Robertson, deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch (HRW) told DW that the EU urgently needed to impose "targeted sanctions that would cut off the oil and gas revenues that serve as the biggest source of foreign funds entering the Myanmar junta's coffers." The country's military rulers are expected to earn \$1.5 billion from offshore and gas pipeline projects in 2021-2022 — about 50 per cent of Myanmar's foreign currency, according to a government forecast. HRW said Brussels could devise a way to ensure that payments to the state-run Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise could not be made in euros, while a coordinated approach with Washington would ensure US dollar transactions would also be barred. The rights group noted last month that the West is "in a key position to impose sanctions since payments for gas operations are made in US dollars and involve multinational banks that fall under the jurisdiction of EU and US law." Kyaw Win, executive director of Burma Human Rights Network, told DW that the oil and gas sector is "the jewel in the bloody crown of the military junta." "Targeting this sector will show the junta how very serious the EU is in helping us resolve this crisis as quickly as possible," he said, adding that the junta is "financing genocide, crimes against humanity and general violence" with the gas revenues. -DW

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MARKET

MSX index ends higher

Oman & Emirates Holding, up 9.09 per cent, was the top gainer while, Sembcorp Salalah, down 2.74 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,132.16 points, up by 0.11 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.49 per cent at 503.83 points. Oman & Emirates Holding, up 9.09 per cent, was the top gainer while, Sembcorp Salalah, down 2.74 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of the National bank of Oman were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 344 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR5.05 million, with more than 24.54 million shares changing hands. Out of 41 traded securities, 12 advanced, 11 declined and 18 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net buy-

ers for OMR216,000 while GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for OMR130,000 followed by foreign investors for OMR86,000 worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 6,583.4 points, up 0.09 per cent. Prices of Oman & Emirates Investment, Vision Insurance, Al Anwar Investment, Ahli Bank, and Bank Muscat were up by 9.09 per cent, 3.53 per cent, 3.49 per cent, 1.67 per cent, and 0.76 per cent respectively. Prices of Om-invest, Muscat Finance, United Finance, and Bank Nizwa were down by 1.91 per cent, 1.67 per cent, 1.52 per cent, and 1.01 per cent respectively. Industrial Index closed at 5,766.16 points, up 0.24 per cent. Services Index was up by 0.24 per cent before closing at 1,605.69 points. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index.....	High.....	Low.....	Value.....	Prev. Value.....	Diff.....	Diff %.....
MSX 30 INDEX	4,137.65	4,127.52	4,132.16	4,127.52	4.64	0.11
FINANCIAL INDEX	6,603.08	6,582.05	6,583.40	6,577.35	6.05	0.09
Industry Index	5,766.16	5,731.32	5,766.16	5,752.35	13.81	0.24
Services Index	1,605.69	1,599.61	1,605.69	1,601.91	3.78	0.24
MSX Shariah Index	503.84	501.39	503.83	501.39	2.45	0.49
MSX TR INDEX	4,980.68	4,968.50	4,974.08	4,968.50	5.59	0.11

Trading Summary

Volume.....	Turnover.....	Trades.....	Market Cap.....	Up.....	Down.....	Equal.....	Sec. Traded.....
24,546,175	5,049,055	344	22,292,189,552	12	11	18	41

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

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

REGULAR MARKET

OM0000006920	VISION INSURANCE	15,000	1,320	2	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.085	0.003	3.529	0.088	0.086	0.092	0.100	8,800,000
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	889,048	79,567	57	0.087	0.092	0.086	0.089	0.086	0.003	3.488	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.100	17,800,000
OM0000002188	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	434,694	192,471	24	0.440	0.444	0.440	0.442	0.438	0.002	2.791	0.440	0.444	0.444	0.100	97,240,000
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	156,550	48,151	17	0.310	0.314	0.302	0.308	0.300	0.008	2.667	0.312	0.306	0.312	0.100	18,850,916
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	6,542	3,062	4	0.458	0.470	0.458	0.468	0.458	0.010	2.183	0.470	0.464	0.480	0.100	25,740,000
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	167,500	20,430	7	0.122	0.122	0.120	0.122	0.120	0.002	1.667	0.122	0.120	0.122	0.100	237,858,211
OM0000003968	QOREDOO	22,042	7,883	6	0.354	0.362	0.354	0.358	0.354	0.004	1.130	0.362	0.354	0.362	0.100	233,038,034
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	1,823,818	962,972	9	0.528	0.528	0.526	0.528	0.524	0.004	0.763	0.526	0.524	0.526	0.100	1,001,887,322,690
OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FIN.	318,437	41,397	11	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.000	0.130	0.130	0.133	0.100	37,951,572
OM0000002440	AL SHARJIA INV.	4,225	188	2	0.094	0.094	0.092	0.093	0.093	0.000	0.000	0.092	0.092	0.093	0.100	8,370,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SER	135,976	59,829	11	0.440	0.440	0.440	0.440	0.440	0.000	0.000	0.440	0.410	0.444	0.100	1,104,020,400
OM0000003398	SOHAR INT BANK	14,000	1,554	1	0.111	0.111	0.111	0.111	0.111	0.000	0.000	0.111	0.115	0.111	0.100	331,896,914
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	144,977	57,065	14	0.384	0.384	0.382	0.384	0.386	-0.002	-0.505	0.384	0.390	0.386	0.100	49,209,796
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST& FIN	135,251	20,964	6	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.156	-0.001	-0.641	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.100	38,735,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	5,700	4,560	4	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.808	-0.008	-0.960	0.800	0.788	0.800	0.100	600,000,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	10,000	590	2	0.059	0.059	0.059	0.059	0.060	-0.001	-1.667	0.059	0.059	0.060	0.100	18,121,633
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	5,421	1,670	1	0.308	0.308	0.308	0.308	0.314	-0.006	-1.911	0.308	0.302	0.308	0.100	205,856,551
OM0000001418	RAISUT CEMENT	27,984	5,189	9	0.184	0.188	0.184	0.185	0.189	-0.004	-2.116	0.188	0.181	0.192	0.100	37,000,000
Total	18	4,317,165	1,509,064	187												

Parallel Market

OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	979,924	70,555	16	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.066	0.006	9.091	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.100	8,775,000
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	6,000	294	2	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.047	0.002	4.255	0.049	0.048	0.049	0.100	71,667,472
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	8,500	706	2	0.084	0.084	0.082	0.083	0.082	0.001	1.220	0.082	0.082	0.085	0.100	39,108,470
OM0000003601	VOLTAMP ENERGY	21,100	1,699	5	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.089	0.001	1.124	0.090	0.089	0.090	0.100	7,236,248
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	17,000,000	3,196,000	2	0.188	0.188	0.188	0.188	0.188	0.000	0.000	0.188	0.188	0.200	0.100	305,677,915
OM0000001517	HSEC BANK OMAN	438,770	42,999	11	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.000	0.000	0.098	0.095	0.098	0.100	196,030,653
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	4,000	220	1	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.000	0.000	0.055	0.050	0.059	0.100	6,875,000
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INV.	140	7	1	0.052	0.052	0.052	0.053	0.053	0.000	0.000	0.052	0.050	0.055	0.100	3,710,000
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV. H	15,000	1,000	3	0.071	0.071	0.071	0.071	0.071	0.000	0.000	0.071	0.070	0.078	0.100	10,240,000
OM0000003281	TAGEER FINANCE	19,215	1,556	4	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.000	0.000	0.081	0.078	0.085	0.100	100,540,790
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	13,600	993	3	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.000	0.000	0.073	0.073	0.076	0.100	14,818,011
OM0000003711	SOHAR POWER	110	5	1	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.000	0.000	0.042	0.040	0.042	0.100	2,882,420
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	10,324	1,002	2	0.098	0.098	0.097	0.097	0.097	0.000	0.000	0.097	0.096	0.098	0.100	10,167,000
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	11,000	770	1	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.000	0.000	0.070	0.068	0.070	0.100	7,000,000
OM0000004925	ALBATHINAH POWER	15,075	724	3	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.048	0.052	0.100	32,394,597
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	10,200	500	2	0.050	0.050	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.000	0.000	0.049	0.048	0.049	0.100	35,005,911
OM0000007084	MCT DESALINATE	4,096	570	2	0.090	0.091	0.090	0.091	0.091	0.000	0.000	0.091	0.087	0.100	0.100	14,155,086
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT. ENG.	363,300	43,546	29	0.120	0.120	0.119	0.120	0.121	-0.001	-0.826	0.119	0.119	0.122	0.100	15,600,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	206,415	20,245	10	0.099	0.099	0.098	0.098	0.099	-0.001	-1.010	0.098	0.098	0.099	0.100	219,221,397
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	917,389	60,001	49	0.065	0.066	0.065	0.065	0.066	-0.001	-1.515	0.065	0.065	0.066	0.100	22,694,387
OM0000001319	ALMINILUM PROD.	85,000	9,037	8	0.109	0.109	0.108	0.109	0.112	-0.003	-2.679	0.108	0.108	0.109	0.100	3,659,288
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	15,452	1,097	1	0.071	0.071	0.071	0.071	0.073	-0.002	-2.740	0.071	0.071	0.077	0.100	67,774,608
Total	22	20,142,610	3,453,591	156												

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CHIP SUPPLY CONSTRAINTS

Ford to suspend or cut output at 8 of its factories due to chip shortage

SAN FRANCISCO: Ford Motor (F.N) plans to suspend or cut production at eight of its factories in the United States, Mexico and Canada throughout next week because of chip supply constraints, a spokeswoman told Reuters.

The changes come a day after the Detroit automaker warned a chip shortage would lead to a decline to vehicle volume in the current quarter.

Production at factories in Michigan, Chicago and in Cuautitlan, Mexico will be suspended. In Kansas City, production of its F-150 pickup trucks will be idled while one shift will run for production of its Transit vans.

The Detroit automaker will also run a single shift or a reduced schedule at its factories in Dearborn, Kentucky and Louisville, while removing overtime at its Oakville factory in Canada. All changes will be in place for the week beginning February 7. -BNA

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Mercedes-Benz fined \$16.87 million over emission rigging

SEOUL: South Korea's anti-trust regulator said Sunday it has decided to fine Mercedes-Benz 20.2 billion won (\$16.87 million) for falsified information on gas emissions of its diesel cars and ordered it to take corrective actions. Mercedes-Benz was found to have tampered with pollution mitigation devices by installing illegal software in its cars, which made them perform at lower levels in ordinary driving conditions than during certification tests, according to the Fair Trade Commission (FTC), South Korean News Agency (Yonhap) reported. The rigging means that the vehicles failed to meet permissible emission levels, but the German automaker falsified related facts in signs attached to its cars between April 2012 and November 2018, according to the commission. The Korean unit also advertised that the vehicles' nitrogen oxide emissions remained at a minimum level and they fully met the Euro 6 emission standards. Such false ads were on a total of 15 models, and they had run on its catalogue, magazines and press releases between August 2013 and December 2016, according to the commission. -BNA

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LIFESTYLE

GOLDEN ERA OF MUSIC ENDS



LATA MANGESHKAR

passed away on Sunday at the age of 92. She had been admitted to Mumbai's Breach Candy Hospital on January 8, after she was diagnosed with Covid and pneumonia.

Known as 'Suron ki Devi', Lata had an illustrious career spanning over seven decades, starting from her first break in the 1948 film, 'Majboor', with the song 'Dil Mera Toda, Mujhe Kahin Ka Na Chhora', with lyrics by Nazim Panipati. She was discovered by music director, Ghulam Haider, whom she has referred to as her Godfather. One of her first major hits was the song 'Aega Aega' from the mystery film, 'Mahal' (1951), starring Madhubala and Ashok Kumar.

After that, her career skyrocketed with her giving back-to-back hits, for several decades, with every possible singer, of every decade, from Talat Mehmood, Hemant Kumar, Kishore Kumar, Mohammed Rafi, Mukesh and Manna Dey, to S.P. Balasubrahmanyam, Yesudas, Udit Narayan, Kumar Sanu and Sonu Nigam.

She has sung for every leading lady, from Madhubala and Waheeda Rehman to Madhuri Dixit and Kajol, which is an unspoken indicator that her voice was absolutely ageless. From Anil Kapoor to Akshay Kumar, several members from the film industry paid tribute to the legendary singer.

Taking to Twitter, Akshay wrote, "Meri Awaaz Hi Pehchaan Hain, Gar Yaad Rahe...and how can one forget such a voice! Deeply saddened by the passing away of Lata Mangeshkar ji, my sincere condolences and prayers. Om Shanti."

Anil Kapoor feels blessed to have known Lata Mangeshkar. "Heartbroken, but blessed to have known; loved this incredible soul...Lataji holds a place in our hearts that will never be taken by anyone else. That's how profoundly she has impacted our lives with her music. May she rest in peace; light up the heavens with her brightness," he tweeted.

According to Manoj Bajpayee, with Lata Mangeshkar's demise, "golden era of music" has also ended.

"A golden era of the music world has truly ended!! Lata Ji you will be missed by millions of us & the generations coming after us!! Rest in peace!! #RIPLATAJI," he grieved.

Sharing a picture of Lata Mangeshkar, Zoya Akhtar described the singer as "immortal."

Actor Kangana Ranaut, too, mourned the demise of Lata Mangeshkar. "What a loss. India's most beautiful voice is gone," she wrote on Instagram Story.

Music maestro AR Rahman took to his Instagram handle and shared a photo of him with Lata ji. In her remembrance, he captioned the photo as, "Love, respect and prayers."

Popular playback singer Shaan also shared an Insta post which had a couple of photos of him with the late legend and wrote, "She was Heaven Sent to us so we would know what the Voice of God sounds like .. voice of Maa Saraswati .. Voice of Divinity .. Thanks to my Father, I've had the good fortune of getting her affections and blessings through all these years .."

Paying tribute to India's nightingale, music composer Shankar Mahadevan took to Twitter and wrote, "@mangeshkarlata will remain forever ! Bless us didi." -ANI

MHD-ITICS Brand Ambassador Ahmad Al Harthy unveils Aston Martin Vantage GT3 Racing car

Ahmad Al Harthy's success on the international stage, over many years, is something of great pride to the Omani people. On behalf of all involved with the Oman Pavilion, we are delighted to have supported today's launch

DUBAI: Ahmad Al Harthy, Oman's most successful international racing driver and Brand Ambassador for MHD-ITICS, the Infrastructure, Technology, Industrial and Consumer Solutions cluster of Mohsin Haider Darwish LLC, officially unveiled the Oman Racing team's Aston Martin Vantage GT3 car to the world at the Oman Pavilion in Expo 2020, Dubai. Launched at a grand ceremony on 02 February, the new car with its magnificent livery created a buzz among those gathered right from the time it was unveiled. The event also saw Oman Racing launch its Asian Le Mans Series (ALMS) programme for 2022. Present at the event were His Excellency Sheikh Salim Al Katheeri, Chairman of the Sultanate of Oman Commercial Office in Dubai, Brigadier Jamal Al Tai, Deputy Chairman of Oman Auto-



mobile Association, Hon. Lujaina Mohsin Darwish, Chairperson of MHD-ITICS, and members of the senior management of MHD-ITICS.

Commenting on the launch His Excellency Mohsin Al Balushi, Oman's General Commissioner at Expo 2020 said, "Ahmad is a wonderful ambassador for Oman, and

it has been our absolute pleasure to facilitate the launch of his and Oman Racing's Asian Le Mans Series programme here at Expo 2020. His success on the inter-

national stage, over many years, is something of great pride to the Omani people. On behalf of all involved with the Oman Pavilion, we are delighted to have supported today's launch.

"For more than 170 years, World Expos have offered a platform to showcase the innovations which help to shape and develop the world in which we live. Being part of Expo 2020 is hugely important for Oman as we continually develop our trade, business, innovation and tourism and share our culture and traditions with the world."

As he has been doing so successfully since beginning his motor racing career well over 15 years ago, multi-time motor racing champion Al Harthy will once again challenge for top honours in the ALMS alongside British team-mates Sam De Haan and Aston Martin factory driver, Charlie Eastwood. The trio will share the No.69 Oman Racing Aston Martin Vantage GT3, which will once again be prepared and engineered by Tom Ferrier's TF Sport team, the UK-based outfit with which

Oman Racing has had a fruitful partnership since 2017.

"Ahmad Al Harthy has always been an exemplary Omani talent on the circuit and one we are proud to associate ourselves with and stand behind. He has continued to raise the Oman flag proudly wherever he races around the globe. Moreover, owing to the team's prominence on the circuit, having our brand adorn his new car will help showcase our brand values and promote MHD-ITICS on an international scale," said Hon. Lujaina Mohsin Darwish.

She added, "Ahmad and MHD-ITICS share the same values of commitment, perseverance and determination. We believe in being the best in what we do, and there is no one better than Ahmad to exemplify this."

Beginning at Dubai Autodrome, round one will take place on Saturday, 12 February, followed by round two on Sunday, 13 February. The championship will then move to Yas Marina Circuit in Abu Dhabi for round three on Saturday, 19 February, and round four on Sunday, 20 February.

Commenting on the upcoming series, Ahmad Al Harthy said, "What an amazing honour it has been to launch Oman Racing's Asian Le Mans Series programme at Expo 2020, especially at the Oman Pavilion. I must say the biggest thank you to the Head of Oman Pavilion, His Excellency Mohsin Al Balushi, and also to my incredible partners and sponsors who have made the coming season possible."

Hon. Lujaina Mohsin Darwish said, "We are thrilled to see the MHD-ITICS brand on the Oman Racing car for the first-ever time, and we are very confident that Ahmad and his team will bring glory for all of us in Oman, racing in the ALMS in Dubai and Abu Dhabi over the next few weeks."

To learn more about MHD-ITICS, please visit www.mhdoman.com.

TRADITIONAL CRAFTS

Steps taken to inculcate culture of traditional crafts in Omani youth

SALALAH: The Craft Training Center of the Royal Court Affairs in the Wilayat of Salalah, Dhofar Governorate, has been set up as an institution that spreads awareness about traditional crafts. The craft industries here are peculiar to the governorate and trains instructors to transfer knowledge about making such artifacts to future generations.

The center was established as per the royal directives of late Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimour. The Centre was established in 1985 in the area that was at the time called Al Rabat School. The Centre seeks ways to provide necessary skills to students to prepare them to practice as artisans and earn income on their own. -ONA



ROUND-UP

Bank Muscat wins Best Private Bank in Oman Award from Global Finance

The accolade adds to a number of other international awards received in the past and is yet one more feather in its cap in delivering exceptional wealth management solutions to a highly-discerning client base over the past two decades

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat Private, the Sultanate's premier banking service targeted at exclusive high net-worth individual customers, has once again won the prestigious "Best Private Bank in Oman" award from Global Finance for 2022.

The accolade adds to a number of other international awards re-

ceived in the past and is yet one more feather in its cap in delivering exceptional wealth management solutions to a highly-discerning client base over the past two decades.

Speaking on the occasion, Amjad Iqbal Al Lawati, Deputy General Manager – Customer Segments,



said: "Bank Muscat is delighted to win this prestigious award from Global Finance once again, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our valued customers for their trust and strong confidence in the bank.

"By repeatedly winning accolades, Bank Muscat has highlighted the highest standards of professionalism achieved by conforming to international norms, standards and practices. Going ahead, our customers can continue to expect outstanding customer-centric services and products that will take care of their financial and wealth management needs."

Bank Muscat Private's offerings are powered by its knowledgeable and well-trained base of Relationship Managers (RMs), who work closely with each client to offer highly customised financial and wealth management services and solutions. Private banking clients have access to a complete suite of investment options in global asset classes through its wealth management platform and tie-ups with international counterparties. The range of solutions offered to its clients includes

stocks, bonds, ETFs and mutual funds across global markets. Bank Muscat Private Banking also offers selective exposure to Private Equity Funds, Real Estate Funds and Commodity ETFs; Offshore Banking and Portfolio Management through globally reputed counterparties. Private Banking clients also receive regular research reports and briefings covering investment ideas, global macroeconomic outlook and updates on key economic and geographic events impacting the performance of various asset classes.

An exclusive Private banking VISA Infinite credit card, a VISA Platinum debit card, luxury car finance and yacht finance are available for Private banking clients along with competitive rates for deposits, loans and foreign exchange. Clients also enjoy 1% cash back rewards on all transactions made through the Private Visa

Infinite credit card. The Infinite credit card also facilitates unlimited access to 1,000+ airport lounges globally, complimentary chauffeur service to and from Muscat International Airport, special offers at over 900 luxury hotels around the world, multi-trip travel insurance and access to a Global Concierge Service. With the innumerable features and benefits on offer, Bank Muscat Private clients can look forward to a highly personalised financial journey.

Bank Muscat remains committed to further expanding its innovative services for Private banking clients and providing an exclusive and unmatched banking experience. It must be noted that earlier in 2021, Bank Muscat's Private Banking won 3 prestigious awards for being the Best Private Bank in Oman from EMEA Finance, Professional Wealth Management and Global Finance.

ADVANCED CALL CENTRE

Ahli Islamic enhances its customers' experience through 'ahliconnect'

MUSCAT: Reflecting its commitment towards providing secured and advanced banking solutions to its customers in line with the dynamic environment, Ahli Islamic announced the continued servicing of its customers through a new, technologically advanced call centre - 'ahliconnect'.

Through the new centre, Ahli Islamic aims at enriching customers' experience, upgrading the provided services, and addressing the challenges facing them.

Yousuf Salim Al Rawahi, DGM - Head of Ahli Islamic said, "At Ahli Islamic, we are keen to keep up with the requirements of our customers and provide Sharia-compliant services, characterized by efficiency and speed. Reflecting our understanding of the importance of providing solutions commensurate with the lifestyle of customers, the bank has strengthened the level of its services in the call centre under 'ahliconnect' umbrella. We take into account the adoption of advanced solutions that serve all customer segments,"

Ruqaiya Al Lawati, Head of Change Management, said, "Ahli Islamic is featured by a team dedicated to customer service, banking execution and a high degree of responsibility and professionalism.



The team is also qualified to work effectively with various variables in the sector. It is also able to address the challenges that customers may face in completing their transactions. This works through employing high-quality practices and technology that contributes to managing expectations and uplift-

ing customer service excellence. Our primary objective is to make our customer life easy."

Through 'ahliconnect', Ahli Islamic customers can request a new, lost or damaged Debit Card, increase debit/credit card limit, and update their personal information such as email address,

passport details, and residence address. They can also request a re-issue of PIN Debit/Credit Card, chequebook and many other Sharia-compliant banking services.

'ahliconnect' offers a range of services that facilitates customers with on-call access to their account with the Bank. For customers with more than one Ahli Islamic account, 'ahliconnect' enables them to request that all accounts at the bank be linked to one automated Debit Card, so they can conduct their banking transactions faster and easier.

Ahli Islamic seeks to contribute to the banking market with new Sharia-compliant products and solutions, as well as establishing standards that ensure a high level of customer satisfaction. In addition, the bank is keen to strengthen its relationship with its customers to achieve its goal of 'Partnership' with them. The growth that the bank has achieved during the past period is based on comprehensive banking solutions and integrated services that have contributed to reaching a broad customer base across Oman.

Ahli Islamic continues to offer more new banking products and services to be the preferred option for its customers.

GAC MOTOR



Enjoy all terrains with GS4 i-4WD SUV

MUSCAT: GAC Motor has introduced a special version of the GS4 i-4WD SUV that is purpose-built for Oman. Considering the vast and varied terrains of Oman, the GS4 i-4WD SUV has been engineered for impressive performance on any terrain.

The GS4 i-4WD makes a bold and eye-catching statement with its sleek profile that is enhanced with the 'Flying Dynamics' grille design. The new improved design of the headlights, taillights and alloy wheels makes its overall appeal, contemporary and elegant.

Making every journey outstanding with power-packed moments is the 1.5L, 150 HP, turbo engine. This is paired with a 6-speed automatic transmission. The result is low fuel consumption and quieter transmission power.

The new eagle-eye projector headlights with LED DRLs provide a greater light distribution, resulting in optimum visibility at night. LED DRLs create a better vision and is comparable to those offered on luxury vehicles. The LED combination taillights are inspired by the arrow fletched with a feathers-like design that makes the GS4 i-4WD easily stand out from the rest.

The interior of the GS4 i-4WD is as interesting as the exterior. A new 10.1-inch HD Touchscreen with Apple CarPlay, Bluetooth Connectivity and other vital features offers a more fun way to stay connected even on the go. The screen is linked to a wide-angle reverse camera assisted with dynamic guidelines that provide greater convenience and makes parking hassle-free.

Exclusive automatic air conditioning with a built-in air quality system with a negative ion air purifier ensures you and your loved ones breathe fresh and purified air. Dedicated rear AC vents along with USB charging ports keep the rear passengers at ease.

The GS4 i-4WD has impressive storage space that is perfect for your short or long journeys. The large 450L luggage compartment encourages you to make the most of your experiences. Besides this, there are 24 well-designed storage spaces in the car to meet multiple requirements of the passenger.

In terms of safety, the GS4 i-4WD stands out with a list of safety features. The tyre pressure monitoring system helps keep an eye on low tyre pressures and high tyre temperatures too. These assist in safer driving experiences. The electronic stability program assists the driver in safe braking in case of any untoward incidents. It also has safety features to avoid slipping/sliding while driving uphill or downhill at low speeds. The latest intelligent 4WD system maintains excellent composure on harsh terrains and lets you also negotiate off-road drives with full confidence. The Central Differential Lock when activated helps you get further by allowing you to tread on the most challenging surfaces with ease.

The GS4 i-4WD has impressive storage space that is perfect for your short or long journeys. The large 450L luggage compartment encourages you to make the most of your experiences.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

OCS Infotech organises open day for employees to promote corporate values

MUSCAT: Oman Computer Services Company, 'OCS Infotech', recently held an 'Open Day' event for its employees at Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah Hotel. The event included several recreational activities such as team building activities, competitions among employees and the honouring of the company's high-performance employees for the year 2021. The event was attended by over 80 employees.

Commenting on this event, Sharifa Said Al Houti, Human Resources and Administrative Affairs Manager of OCS Infotech said, "This event aims to enhance the institutional values of OCS Infotech staff, develop them and refine their skills through a set of activities organised during the event."



"In order to enhance the spirit of teamwork, many group competitions and entertainment also took place. Conducting this event is aligned with the framework of celebrating the results achieved by

the company during 2021 and urging all staff to achieve even more positive results during this year," she added.

In turn, the employees of OCS Infotech expressed their happi-

ness with this initiative. They showcased their appreciation of the company's role in holding such events, which aim to enhance and develop the spirit of cooperation among employees.

OCS Infotech is one of the first Omani establishments in the technical field and one of the key companies of The Zubair Corporation. It hosts over four decades of experience in developing technology solutions for data storage, virtualisation, network solutions, cybersecurity, data centre and infrastructure management, disaster recovery, business continuity and other related services. The company also provides clients with integrated consulting services for comprehensive technical transformation.



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ROUND-UP

NBO signs mortgage financing agreement with Muscat Bay

Starting at just 4.55 per cent for three years and 4.99 per cent for longer, NBO's mortgage and housing loans come with easy approvals, no maximum cap and special rates on life and property insurance

MUSCAT: National Bank of Oman (NBO) has signed a strategic partnership with Muscat Bay to provide finance facilities for buyers interested in purchasing a property within the luxury integrated development.

Starting at just 4.55 per cent for three years and 4.99 per cent for longer, NBO's mortgage and housing loans come with easy approvals, no maximum cap and special rates on life and property insurance.

Tariq Atiq, Chief Retail and Digital Banking Officer at NBO, said, "Adding to a growing number of tie-ups with leading developers and real estate marketing agencies,



we're delighted to be partnering with Muscat Bay. Offering a prime location and a range of highly sought-after properties, buyers are provided plenty of options to make their dream home a reality while accessing the unbeatable benefits that come with our home loans."

Paul Jessup, Senior Vice President at Muscat Bay, said, "We are

pleased to partner with the National Bank of Oman to facilitate attractive financing options for prospective buyers and residents looking to purchase their luxury home here at Oman's unique resort village. By offering favourable home loans to Omanis and Expats, NBO is the perfect complement to our growing sophisticated com-

munity, both from Oman, the GCC and beyond." Paul Jessup added, "Now is the perfect time to invest in Muscat Bay because the launch of our 5 Star Jumeirah beach hotel will open our offer to a global market, creating more demand for the final few units to be sold in phase 1. Muscat Bay's residential offering will also benefit from the Jumei-

rah Residents Club, which will allow the community to receive a range of luxury services and promotions from the 5 Star operator; a unique concept in the market that will help consolidate Muscat Bay's position as Oman's truly world-class integrated resort."

NBO's personal and housing loans are part of the bank's com-

mitment to delivering hassle-free, competitive financial solutions to fit all. Processed quickly and efficiently, the bank also provides borrowers with a host of benefits including flexible payment terms, additional financing, and much more. Loan rates may vary depending on salary, length of employment and loan duration.

KEY AGREEMENT

Omantel, A'Namaa Poultry sign pact to provide comprehensive ICT solutions

MUSCAT: Oman Telecommunications Company (Omantel) and A'Namaa Poultry Co, one of the subsidiaries of Oman Food Investment Holding Company (OFIC), signed a key agreement to bring world-class technology solutions that will enable A'Namaa Poultry to digitalise its processes for efficient operations and business management.

As per the agreement, which was signed by Eng. Yaqoob bin Mansoor Al Ruqaishi, CEO of Al Namma Poultry Company, and Talal bin Said Al Mamari, Omantel CEO, Omantel will provide end-to-end ICT Solutions, meeting A'Namaa Poultry project's long term goals, to include unique state-of-the-art Technology solutions that are implemented for the first time in the region, through Omantel's technology partner "SAP".

The work on the project is being built in the Al-Safa area in the Wilayat of Ibri at a total cost of OMR100 million, which is amongst the latest food security projects in the Sultanate. The project aims to contribute to achieving self-sufficiency in the poultry's industry, and it is considered to be one of the mega projects in the region aiming to produce 60,000 tonnes (per annum) of poultry meat, with the highest technical specifications and using the latest technologies.

Commenting on the signing of the agreement, Talal bin Said Al Mamari, Chief Executive Officer of Omantel, said, "We are pleased to sign this agreement today with Al Namma Poultry Co and are proud of the trust placed on us as the main provider of integrated telecommunication & ICT services



in the Sultanate. There is no doubt that a national project of this size using the latest production technologies will require specialized and cost-effective solutions that would meet the specific and customised needs of such project."

"The solutions that we will provide to this project includes new and first of its kind in this region ICT solutions for hatchery and meat management.

"At Omantel, we seek to capitalise on our experience, global and local partnerships, the latest technologies and communication

solutions to meet the needs of our customers," he added.

On his part, Eng. Yaqoob bin Mansoor Al Ruqaishi Chief Executive Officer of Al Namma Poultry Company said, "The signing of this agreement reflects a key milestone in the progress of A'Namaa Poultry project, which is nearing completion. Through this agreement, we seek to utilize the latest technologies and ERP systems to ensure efficient and reliable commercial and technical operations. We also seek to emphasise the importance of collaboration and partnerships

between Omani companies, an objective that we have always sought to achieve through all our previous agreements."

Waheed Al Hamaid, Managing Director of SAP Oman expressed his gratitude for the role played by SAP Oman in providing Omani companies with state-of-the-art technologies through its partnership with Omantel saying "We look forward at SAP Oman and Omantel to deliver tailored solutions that enhance productivity and efficiency of the daily operations of A'Namaa Poultry Company."

SEASON OF LOVE



Elevate romance this Valentine's Day at Al Bustan Palace, A Ritz-Carlton Hotel

MUSCAT: On the sand and under the stars, there's no better way to celebrate the most romantic night of the year than at Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel. On the 14th of February, the luxury resort is inviting guests for a one-of-a-kind dining experience at The Pavilion featuring a selection of specially curated dishes to celebrate the month of love. Bathed in the moonlight and accompanied by the sound of gentle waves, Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel is what Valentine's dreams are made of.

For OMR 45 net per person,

couples can enjoy a special set menu featuring an array of fresh seasonal delicacies and a complimentary glass of bubbles. Those looking to elevate the romance can also reserve a private table for two on the water's edge. For OMR 200, guests can charm their loved ones with an intimate set-up right on the beach and a lavish set menu that is completed with a cake, beverages, and flowers. From mouth-watering cuisine to unmatched surroundings, all delivered with the legendary Ritz-Carlton hospitality, it's certain to be an unforgettable Valentine's Day.

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