

COVID CASES IN ICU TOUCH A NEW HIGH

With as many as 3,544 new cases of coronavirus registered during the last three days, for the first time the Sultanate recorded more than 730 hospitalisations in a span of three days. **>A5**



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MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE LAUNCHED

MUSCAT: A ceremony was held on Sunday to mark the launch of Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX), a closed joint stock company reporting to Oman Investment Authority (OIA) as stated in Royal Decree No. 5/2021 promulgating the bourse. **>B1**



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WRITTEN MESSAGE

Her Highness Honourable Lady receives message from spouse of Turkish President

MUSCAT: Her Highness the Honourable Lady Assayida Spouse of His Majesty the Sultan has received a written message from spouse of the Turkish President Emine Erdogan.

The message was handed over by Ayse Sozen Usluer, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the Sultanate of Oman when HH the Honourable Lady received her at Al Barakah Palace yesterday.

The ambassador conveyed greetings of the spouse of the Turkish President along with best wishes of continuous health, happiness and a long life to HH the Honourable Lady. The Turkish President's spouse also wished further progress and prosperity for the Omani people.

HH the Honourable Lady Assayida Spouse of His Majesty the Sultan asked the ambassador to convey her greetings and best wishes for permanent health and wellbeing for the spouse of the Turkish President. HH the Honourable Lady also wished further progress and welfare for the brotherly people of Turkey. **-ONA**



IMF FORECASTS

Oman's economy to grow 7.4% in 2022

WASHINGTON: Oman's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to grow by 7.4 per cent in 2022 against 1.8 per cent in 2021, according to outlook of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

IMF report on prospects of World Economy Outlook (WEO) predicted that inflation in the Sultanate to retreat to 2.4 per cent in 2022 compared to 3.8 per cent in 2021.

Global prospects remain highly uncertain one year into the pandemic. New virus mutations and the accumulating human toll raise concerns, even as growing vaccine coverage lifts sentiment.

Economic recoveries are diverging across countries and sectors, reflecting variation in pandemic-induced disruptions and the extent of policy support.

Virus and vaccines

The outlook depends not just on the outcome of the battle between the virus and vaccines—it also hinges on how effectively economic policies deployed under high uncertainty can limit lasting damage



from this unprecedented crisis.

Global growth is projected at six per cent in 2021, moderating to 4.4 percent in 2022. The projections for 2021 and 2022 are stronger than in the October 2020 WEO.

The upward revision reflects additional fiscal support in a few large economies, the anticipated vaccine-powered recovery in the second half of 2021, and continued adaptation of economic activity to subdued mobility.

High uncertainty surrounds this outlook, related to the path of the pandemic, the effectiveness of policy support to provide a bridge to vaccine-powered normalisation, and the evolution of financial conditions. **- ONA**

ESSENTIAL FOODSTUFFS IN OMAN TO ATTRACT ZERO PER CENT VAT



Generous exemption basket to help support decent standard of living in Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Items such as vegetables, food grains, fruits, poultry, and dairy will be subject to zero per cent Value Added Tax (VAT) once it comes into effect on 16 April.

Some 488 essential items have been listed by the Ministry of Fi-

nance as those which will not be taxed under VAT.

They include garlic, potatoes (fresh and frozen), carrots, dates, avocados, mangoes, oranges, lemons, grapes, pineapple, varieties of fish, wheat, and rice.

Also on the list are mineral water, sugar, salt, meats, poultry,

dairy products, fresh eggs, vegetables, fruits, coffee beans, tea, cardamom, grains, olive oil, baby food products, and bread. Other items included on the list are medicines and medical equipment and life-saving drugs.

VAT, once it comes to Oman, will make the country the fourth in the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council to implement the tax. The others are Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain.

Value Added Tax is governed by Royal Decree No. 121/2020, which covers the laws concerning the tax, and Decision No. 53/2021 of the Tax Authority, which brought

into law the executive regulations concerning VAT.

"These are items we use on a daily basis, and adding VAT to them will make our everyday lives more expensive, particularly for those with large families," said Haitham Al Hinai, an Omani national from Sohar. "Excluding these from VAT will help us maintain our current standards of living."

Sohan Thomas, an Indian expat, added: "There are many blue-collar workers who might be priced out of buying their essentials if VAT is imposed on them. Excluding them from the list of items taxed is a good decision that will enable

them to meet their daily needs."

Electricity and fuel

As part of efforts to reduce the impact of VAT on certain sections of society, all related charges stemming from electricity consumption for citizens who have up to two residential category subscriptions will be paid by the government. This includes families that were previously eligible for government support for the two connections.

The amount of subsidised fuel that people who have signed up for Fuel Support Cards can buy at reduced prices has also been hiked from 200 to 400 litres per month.

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

How much gold can you carry back to India?

1 Indians travelling back home can carry up to 40 gm of gold jewellery without paying any customs on arrival. Male passengers can carry up to 20 grams worth INR50,000 (about OMR257.5), while the upper limit for women is double that amount. **>A3**

WORLD

WHO laments COVID vaccine imbalance

2 World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has said that there is a "shocking imbalance" in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines for poorer countries. Out of 220 countries and economies, 194 have now started vaccination, he said. **>A7**

OMAN

Dar Al Atta'a launches project for needy

3 Dar Al Atta'a Association launched, 'My Home; My Shelter' Programme worth OMR509,815 yesterday for the construction of 11 houses and maintenance of 40 others during 2021 for the needy families in the various governorates of the Sultanate. **>A5**

AGRICULTURE

Bumper wheat harvest brings cheers to farmers in Sultanate

Times News Service

MUSCAT: This year's wheat harvest season has brought joy to farmers, owing to an excellent yield, which will bring them better economic returns.

Considered a crop of critical importance in the country, because of its vital role towards food security, wheat in Oman is harvested by modern methods. Strains of wheat that are harvested include those that have been specially adapted to the arid and harsh desert climate found in some areas.

The result of using more resistant varieties of crops is a manifold increase in wheat productivity over the past few years. While young wheat plants are characteristically green, they are ready for harvesting when they turn golden-brown.

Wheat is primarily turned into

flour, which can be used to make breads, pasta, biscuits, and other foods essential to a human diet.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources has devoted special attention towards wheat, both in terms of assigning priority towards food security, and engaging with specialists who conduct research on developing more heat and drought resistant versions of the grain.

Farmers' opinions are often sought while selecting new species of wheat, so as to understand the problems they face with current variants.

One of the places wheat is abundantly harvested is the Governorate of Al Dakhiliyah, where farmers in Nizwa and other areas have begun gathering this year's crop. Rainfall experienced previously has also led to an abundance of water, which has allowed for more



Photo by Abdullah bin Khamis bin Saleem Al Abri

land to be used for agricultural activity. Farmers stop irrigating their grain about three weeks before the harvest process begins. The stalks are then cut off from the rest of the plant, and allowed to dry and tied together in bundles.

A practice locally called 'trampling', this used to be done by hand, although it has now been mechanised, after the ministry provided wheat growers with the right equipment.

Omani wheat is considered one of the finest in the region, since it underwent modification to suit the climatic and growing conditions in the Middle East.

Wheat production averages at about one and a half tonnes per feddan (approximately the same as an acre of land), and allows farmers to make a profit, after being sold at between 400 to 600 baisas per kg.

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How much gold can you carry back to India?

Male passengers can carry up to 20 grams of yellow metal worth INR50,000, while for women it is double that limit

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Indian nationals travelling home from Oman can carry up to 40 grams of gold jewellery without paying any customs charges on arrival. Male passengers can carry up to 20 grams each worth INR50,000 (about OMR257.5), while the upper limit for women has been set at 40 grams, provided the value of gold carried does not exceed INR100,000 (about OMR515). "A passenger residing abroad for more than one year, on return to India, shall be allowed clearance



free of duty in his bona fide baggage of jewellery up to a weight, of twenty grams with a value cap of fifty thousand rupees if brought by a passenger, or forty grams with a value cap of one lakh rupees if brought by a lady passenger," say baggage rules introduced by the Department of Revenue of the Indian Ministry of Finance. The limit on bringing in gold and other precious metals is only related to ornaments. Precious metals brought into the country in other forms will be subject to customs duty. "Most of the customs duties imposed by the Indian government are on electronics and precious

metals," said an official from the Embassy of India in Muscat. "As far as currency goes, passengers flying into the country with foreign cash worth more than \$5,000 in value have to mention this in the declaration form provided, and hand this over at customs." The following items are subject to customs duties at Indian airports: Firearms, ammunition in excess of 50 cartridges, cigarettes, if their quantity exceeds 100 sticks, cigars, if they exceed 25 units, or tobacco, if brought in at quantities above 125gms. Alcoholic beverages in excess of two litres, gold or silver in any non-ornamental form, and LCD, LED

and flat screen plasma TVs are all subject to customs. Precious stones are also subject to duty. According to customs tariffs introduced by the Indian government, gems such as sapphires, emeralds, rubies, moonstones, garnets, and natural and cultured pearls – both worked and unworked – are subject to 10 per cent of their value. Precious metals, including gold, silver, and platinum, and ordinary metals coated in precious metals, are subject to rates of 12.5 per cent. This also includes scrap metal made from or containing these elements. Jewellery sold in shops, as well as those that have been worked on in the form of filigree, or are set with gems, will be otherwise subject to customs rates of 20 per cent. These rules also apply to air crew who are bringing into India goods for their personal use. These duties have to be paid once they go off duty. However, items such as chocolates, cheese, nuts, toys, and other goods that are intended for personal use by crew members, or as gifts for others, are exempt from such duties.

Medical visa for Omanis, others to India on offer again

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Medical visas enabling Omanis and other foreign nationals to travel to India for medical treatment can be applied for immediately, after the country resumed applications for short-term visits to the country. A number of e-visa services for people who wish to visit the country for medical treatments, business, conferences, and as an attendant to those undergoing treatment, were reopened by India's Ministry of Home Affairs. Tourist visas, however, remain suspended. "These visa services have been resumed with immediate effect," said a spokesperson of the Embassy of India in Muscat. "There are few restrictions for Omani nationals and they can get a visa very easily. Once they apply, they should receive their visas within a matter of just two or three days." "Normally, there is also no need for people coming to India for medical treatment to first enter quarantine, but each state

does have its own rules, so passengers are requested to check the requirements of the destination to which they are flying," he added. Passengers have also been advised to only travel and stay in those cities that have direct flight access from Oman, under the ongoing air bubble agreement between the two countries. Flights from Oman are available to Bangalore, Mumbai, Kochi, New Delhi, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Thiruvananthapuram. Operations to Kozhikode, Goa, Lucknow, and Jaipur are scheduled to begin in the coming weeks and months. "I would not advise travelling between one state and the next right now, because each state has its own rules regarding quarantine during the pandemic," added the embassy spokesperson. "Some states require you to take a PCR test if you are travelling between states." Nationals from 156 countries around the world are eligible to apply for an e-visa for the aforementioned purposes.

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The Ministry of Health has allowed the Insurance companies operating in the private sector to reserve COVID-19 vaccines for their employees.



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Insurance companies can reserve vaccines for their employees: CMA



Story on private companies being allowed to reserve vaccines

A story on private companies can reserve vaccines reached 70,182 people and had 9,257 engagements on Facebook.

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3,800 VIEWS



Midday Update video

The Midday Update video got 3,800 views and reached 13,400 people on Facebook.

 MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

3,139 VIEWS



Morning Minute video on zero VAT on 488 food items

The Morning Minute video on zero VAT on 488 food items had 3,139 views and 147 likes on Instagram.



No institutional quarantine for single parent accompanying children

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Institutional quarantine is not required for a single expatriate parent accompanying their children to Oman, the Civil Aviation Authority has announced. "The exception includes residents coming to the Sultanate through its borders, whether by land, sea, or air, if they accompany their children who are aged 18 years or under," said an official from the CAA. "This relates to children who are accompanied by either parent: their mother or their father." The procedure is already underway at airports in the country, following the issuance of a circular by the CAA and Ministry of Health. However, all other preventive precautions must be followed by those exempt from institutional quarantine. "They must register themselves on the Tarassud app, wear the electronic bracelet, and adhere to the principles of home isolation," added the official. Omani citizens entering the country through its ports of entry continue to remain exempt from institutional quarantine. "Families coming into the Sultanate with their children aged 18 and under are exempt from institutional quarantine," said a senior representative of the Ministry of Health.

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CELEBRATING THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT

The United Nations (UN) celebrates the International Day of Human Space Flight on April 12 every year. This day is commemorated to remember the first human space flight of April 12, 1961; the start of the space era. The day also aims to promote aspirations to explore and maintain outer space for peaceful purposes. The International Day of Human Space Flight was first observed in 2011. A few days before the 50th anniversary of the first human space flight by Yuri Gagarin, this day was proclaimed at the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly on April 7, 2011.

According to the UN the International Day of Human Space Flight is “to celebrate each year at the international level the beginning of the space era for mankind, reaffirming

the important contribution of space science and technology in achieving sustainable development goals and increasing the well-being of States and peoples, as well as ensuring the realisation of their aspiration to maintain outer space for peaceful purposes.” Yuri Gagarin crewed the Vostok 1 space flight in 1961, making one orbit around the Earth over 108 minutes in the Vostok 3KA spacecraft launched by Vostok-K launch vehicle. On this day achievements in the world of space are remembered. After Yuri Gagarin on June 16, 1963 Valentina Tereshkova was the first woman to orbit the Earth. In 1969 Neil Armstrong became the first human to set foot upon the surface of the moon. On July 17, 1975 Apollo and Soyuz was the first joint US-Russian space flight. This event became the first international human mission in space.



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Dar Al Atta’a launches project for needy families

MUSCAT: Dar Al Atta’a Association launched, ‘My Home; My Shelter’ Programme worth OMR509,815 yesterday for the construction of 11 houses and maintenance of 40 others during 2021 for the needy families in the various governorates.

The launch ceremony was organised under the auspices of Laila bint Ahmed bin Awadh Al-Najar, Minister of Social Development.

Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed Al Shamsi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Development said that the initiative of ‘My Home; My Shelter’ comes within the partnership with the civil associations.

“Dar Al Atta’a Association is concerned about the demands and requirements of society,” he said pointing to that the Ministry of Social Development is working on such initiatives for the interest of society.

“There is continued cooperation between the Ministry of Social Development and the charity associations and voluntary teams,” he said, adding that

“there are 58 voluntary teams in the various governorates of the Sultanate which are affiliated to the development committees and are recognised under the umbrella of the Ministry of Social Development.”

Maryam bint Issa Al Zadjali, Chairperson of Dar Al Atta’a Association said: “Since its inception, Dar Al Atta’a has been supporting the needy families.” The family welfare programme receives due concern and attention from the association’s officials who build houses and maintain houses of the needy families, “she said.

The cases for support is subject to evaluation and consideration in accordance with the system of the Association, she added.—ONA



GREAT EFFORT: Maryam bint Issa Al Zadjali, Chairperson of Dar Al Atta’a Association said that the Association has been supporting the needy families. - ONA

Arabian leopard’s presence found in Harweeb area

MUSCAT: The Office for Conservation of Environment (OCE) at the Diwan of Royal Court conducted a scholarly study that documented the presence of Arabian leopard in the area of Harweeb in the north of Jebel Qamar, Governorate of Dhofar.

The documentation caps extensive efforts exerted for the conservation of this rare animal, which is considered a species that is seriously endangered with extinction, according to the classification of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

This detailed study covers most of the areas historically roamed by the Arabian leopard in Dhofar. The Harweeb registration of Arabian leopard is the last stage of scientific documentation of the species in Najd areas north of Jebel Qamar.

The project assumes significance in denoting the expansion of geographical area of the Arabian leopard and an indication of environmental balance and ecological variety. It also proves the success of environment conservation procedures undertaken by Oman, represented by the OCE.

—ONA



COVID-19 cases in ICU rise

Times News Service

MUSCAT: With as many as 3,544 new cases of coronavirus registered during the last three days, for the first time the Sultanate recorded more than 730 hospitalisations in a span of three days.

Among them, 229 are admitted to the intensive care units (ICUs), according to data from the Ministry of Health, pointing to a significant increase in coronavirus infections in the region.

On Sunday, statistics made available on the Tarassud, the coronavirus monitoring app launched by the Ministry, showed that the number of hospitalised patients during the past 24 hours reached 105, bringing the total number of patients admitted to health institutions to 733.

29 deaths

The Sultanate also recorded 29 deaths during the past three days bringing the total number of deaths to 1,776, according to the Ministry of Health.

The Ministry stated that the total number of registered cases in the Sultanate is 171,549, while the number of recovered patients stood at 152,784.

Speaking exclusively to the Times of Oman, Ibrahim Al Maimani, a data analyst, said: “The Sultanate for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic recorded 733 cases in hospitals, of whom 229 are in intensive care units. For the tenth day in a row, more than a thousand cases were recorded, bringing the total to 11,531 new cases, while the corresponding recovery stood at 8,145 cases.”

MUSCAT: Dr Madiha Al Shaibani, Minister of Education received in her office on Sunday Dr Abdulrahman Mohammed Al Asmi, Director General of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS).

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged experiences and expertise on education and also discussed development aspects between the member states of the Bureau.

In addition, the two sides reviewed aspects of joint cooperation between the ABEGS and education ministers in topics related to upgrading education under the challenging circumstances imposed by COVID-19.

— ONA



Women’s Association plans to train females

MUSCAT: The Omani Women’s Association aims to transform the role of women’s associations so that they can play their role in consistent with the Oman Vision 2040 by serving society in general and women in particular.

Her Highness Sayyida Aliya bin Thuwaini Al Said, Chairperson of the Omani Women’s Association, in Muscat, said that the Board of Directors of women’s association should put in place their clear strategy and goals.

She added that “under the current conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic the world is facing, precautionary measures need to be taken for the execution of programmes. “We are working on launching more interactive programmes for the benefit of women which would help attract new members,” she added.

She also reaffirmed that the Omani Women’s Association aims to solve the difficulties faced by women by giving them training for boosting their innovation and creativity. —ONA

Summit to focus on major challenges

MUSCAT: A meeting via video conferencing to prepare for the UN Food Systems Summit was organised on Sunday by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, in cooperation with Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

The summit will be held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly scheduled to be held at New York, US in September 2021.

The meeting was headed by Dr Saud Hamoud Al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources.

Al Habsi said that the summit will address the major challenges facing the reality and future of food systems in the world at large. He also stressed the importance of concerted efforts to find practical solutions for such challenges at the global, regional and local levels.

He pointed out that many food systems are fragile and on the brink of collapse as experienced currently by millions of people around the world due to COVID-19 pandemic. —ONA



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21 miners trapped in flooded Xinjiang mine

BEIJING: Rescuers were trying to reach 21 miners trapped by an underground flood in the Xinjiang region of China, a state news agency reported on Sunday.

The Fengyuan coal mine in Hutubi County in the northwest of the country flooded at around 6:10 p.m. local time (1010 GMT/UTC) on Saturday, the Xinhua News Agency said.



It added eight of the 29 miners working at the location had already been rescued.

Staff were carrying out up-grading works at the site when disaster struck.

Complex operation
Chinese state-controlled broadcaster CCTV reported that 12 miners were on one platform,

with eight more on a second platform, and the last worker is currently trapped in an escape route where water had originally entered.

“The working platform with 12 people is 1,200 meters (3,900 feet) from ground level and the underground terrain is complex, making rescue difficult,” CCTV said. **dw**



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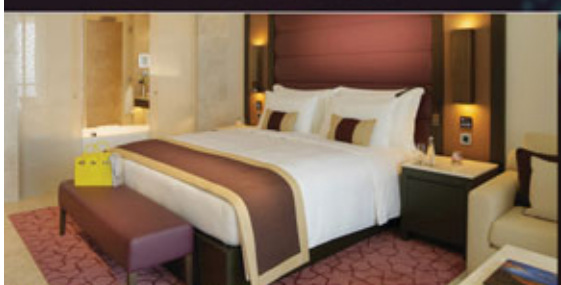
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ANTI-COUP PROTESTORS

Myanmar's security forces kill 82 in Bago

NAYPYITAW: A day-long clampdown by Myanmar's security forces killed 82 people in a town near Yangon, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners monitoring group reported on Saturday.

Reports of the violence on Friday in Bago, 65 kilometres (40 miles) northeast of Yangon, took a whole day to emerge as the violence forced residents to flee to nearby villages. The turmoil in Myanmar has intensified in recent weeks, with protesters refusing to submit despite the ongoing bloodshed following the coup that ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi in February.

Anti-coup protesters in Bago returned to the streets on Saturday, the Myanmar Now news outlet reported.



What happened in Bago?
Local media and activists reported that security forces fired rifle grenades at anti-coup protesters. “It is like genocide,” Myanmar Now quoted a protest organizer called Ye Htut as saying. “They are shooting at every shadow.”

Security forces also refused to let rescue workers near the bodies, a resident said.

The United Nations office in Myanmar called for an immediate end to the violence on Saturday.

What do we know about the total death toll?
The assault in Bago adds to current death toll of 618 civilians killed in Myanmar since the coup, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners.

The military denies the death tolls reported by rights groups.

On Friday, junta spokesman Major General Zaw Min Tun said the military had recorded 248 civilian deaths and 16 police deaths. He added that security forces

had not used automatic weapons against protesters.

Monitoring groups have faced difficulties in verifying data on the violence. The junta has suspended internet and mobile data services, pushing most of the population into an information blackout.

What happened on Saturday?
Anti-coup protesters also clashed with security forces on Saturday in the northwestern town of Tamu, near the Myanmar-India border, media reported.

Soldiers reportedly tried to take down barricades that protesters had set up.

Two civilians were killed as soldiers started randomly shooting at protesters, a local told a news agency. **dw**



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AFTER DECADES

Thick ash covers Caribbean island after volcanic eruption

ST. VINCENT : A thick layer of ash covered large parts of St. Vincent on Saturday after the Caribbean island's only active volcano erupted after decades of inactivity.

A strong stench of sulfur swept the island on Saturday as lush towns and cities bore a gray and gloomy look. Ash covered roads and parked cars, slowly creeping its way into houses and other structures. Otherwise known for its brilliant sunshine, the sun was hard to see.

"All I'm asking of everybody is to be calm," Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves told reporters on a visit to a shelter that housed residents who had to be evacuated following the eruption.

Gonsalves said it remained un-

A strong stench of sulfur swept the island on Saturday as lush towns and cities bore a gray and gloomy look

clear how much more ash the volcano would spew but the country's air space had been closed because of the ash. The water supply had also been cut off in many areas, with nearly 3,200 people spending the night in shelters.

A massive cloud of dust was

seen moving east, causing discomfort to residents of the neighboring island of Barbados. "Barbadians have been urged to stay indoors as thick plumes of volcanic ash move through the atmosphere," the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency said.

The eastern Caribbean is a highly volcanic region with as many as 19 active volcanoes spread out across 11 islands. A 1997 eruption in Montserrat killed at least 19 people. La Soufriere is the only active volcano on St. Vincent and is the highest peak on the island at 1,234 meters (4,049 feet) tall. The volcano had previously erupted five times since 1718, with one eruption in May 1902 killing 1,680 people. **bw**



VOLCANO ERUPTION: Ash covered roads and parked cars, slowly creeping its way into houses and other structures.

CORONAVIRUS VACCINATION

WHO laments 'shocking imbalance' in COVID-19 vaccine distribution

GENEVA: World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has said that there is a "shocking imbalance" in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines for poorer countries.

Tedros, during a briefing, said that out of 220 countries and economies, 194 have now started vaccination, and 26 have not. Of those, 7 have received vaccines and could start and further 5 countries should receive their vaccines in the coming days. "That leaves 14 countries who have not yet begun vaccination, for a range of reasons. Some have not requested vaccines through COVAX, some are not yet ready, and some plan to start in the coming weeks and months," he said.

The chief further said that COVAX has delivered more than 38 million doses of vaccine to more than 100 countries and economies in the past six weeks.

"We're encouraged that almost all countries who want to start have now started. However, I emphasize the word start. Most countries do not have anywhere near enough vaccines to cover all health workers, or all at-risk groups, never mind the rest of their populations. There remains a shocking imbalance in the global distribution of vaccines," he said.

"On average in high-income countries, almost one in four people has received a vaccine. In low-income countries, it's one in more than 500. Let me repeat that: one in four versus one in



500. COVAX had been expecting to distribute almost 100 million doses by the end of March, but due to a marked reduction in supply, we have only been able to distribute 38 million doses," the WHO chief pointed out.

"We hope to be able to catch up during April and May," he said.

Tedros said that it was understandable that some countries and companies plan to do their own bilateral vaccine donations, bypassing COVAX for their own political or commercial reasons.

"These bilateral arrangements run the risk of fanning the flames of vaccine inequity. This is a time for partnership, not patronage. Scarcity of supply is driving vaccine nationalism and vaccine diplomacy," he said.

According to The Hill citing media reports, additional delays have occurred because the COVAX program relied heavily on the AstraZeneca vaccine that is

being hit with safety concerns over the formation of rare blood clots in some who have received that vaccine.

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen recently called on rich countries to donate more vaccine doses to poorer nations saying the poorer nations will face a "profound economic tragedy" without the help.

The Hill further reported that Tedros has previously asked richer countries to donate 10 million vaccine doses to the COVAX program for developing countries, but the calls have largely gone unanswered.

Many countries in the European Union have been hit by a slow vaccination rollout.

Washington has said they are focusing on vaccinating all of its citizens first then ensuring that neighbouring countries Canada and Mexico are vaccinated.

-ANI

FUNERAL

UK PM to give up seat at Prince Philip's funeral for royal family member

LONDON: United Kingdom Prime Minister Boris Johnson will not attend Prince Philip's funeral, giving up his place for a royal family member.

The Hill reported that only 30 people will be allowed to attend Philip's funeral next Saturday amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. A spokesperson from the prime minister's office said that Johnson "wanted to act in accordance with what is best for the royal household, and so to allow for as many family members as possible will not be attending the funeral," The Hill reported citing multiple reports.

Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh and husband to Queen Elizabeth II, died on Friday at the age of 99. Buckingham Palace announced that the prince died "peacefully" at Windsor Castle, where he and the queen have spent much of the last year during the pandemic.

The Prime Minister honoured Philip after the news of the Duke of Edinburgh's death, saying that he "earned the affection of generations here in Britain, across the Commonwealth and around the world."

It was reported that Johnson said that the royal family lost "not



just a much loved and highly respected public figure, but a devoted husband, a proud and loving father, grandfather, and in recent years, great grandfather."

The Conservative Party in the United Kingdom also announced that it is suspending national campaigning until Tuesday and again next Saturday, the day of Philip's funeral.

Prince Harry will travel from his home in the U.S. to attend the memorial, although his wife, Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, has been advised not to travel by her physicians due to her pregnancy, as reported by The Hill. **ANI**



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Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology



إعلان مناقصة Tender Notice

The Internal Tender Committee at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology In Al Khuwair invites for the Following Tenders:

TENDER NO	TENDER NAME	DATE OF PUBLISHING	LAST DATE TO PURCHASE TENDER DOCUMENT	SUBMISSION DATE	COMPANIES WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THIS TENDER	DOCUMENT PRICE
MOTs/HQ-5/10/2021	CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR DESIGN AND PREPARATION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS OF AL BATINA COASTAL ROAD (AL BATINA SOUTH AND NORTH GOVERNORATES)	12/04/2021	25/04/2021	24/05/2021	EXPERIENCED COMPANIES IN THE SIMILAR WORKS (FIRST CLASS)	(25/-) TWENTY FIVE OMANI RIAL NON-REFUNDABLE
MOTs/HQ-6/11/2021	CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR DESIGN OF ROADS TO JABAL SHAMS (WILAYAT AL HAMRA) (AL DAKHLIYYA GOVERNORATE)	12/04/2021	25/04/2021	24/05/2021	EXPERIENCED COMPANIES IN THE SIMILAR WORKS (FIRST CLASS)	(49/300) FORTY NINE OMANI RIAL AND THREE HUNDRED BAISA NON-REFUNDABLE

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Leeds shock Man City while Liverpool, Chelsea win in Premier League

Stuart Dallas's winning goal in injury time gave Leeds all three points after a brave second-half display

LONDON: Leeds United pulled off the surprise of the weekend with a 2-1 win away to Premier League leaders, Manchester City on Saturday.

Stuart Dallas's winning goal in injury time gave Leeds all three points after a brave second-half display with 10 men after Liam Cooper's sending off.

Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola rested several key players, such as Phil Foden and Kevin de Bruyne for the game against the side coached by his mentor Marcelo Bielsa and saw how Dallas's first goal put Leeds ahead two minutes before halftime with a shot that went in off the post.

The VAR then controversially decided Cooper's followthrough after winning the ball was worthy of a red card just before the end of the half and although Ferran Torres equalized with 15 minutes to go after waves of City pressure, Dallas won the game in injury time in a rare counterattack as City's 29 shots in the game brought no



PREMIER LEAGUE: Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola rested several key players, such as Phil Foden and Kevin de Bruyne for the game.

reward. Chelsea produced a first-half whirlwind to take a 3-0 half-time lead away to Crystal Palace with Kai Havertz putting them ahead after just eight minutes and Christian Pulisic doubling the advantage two minutes later.

Kurt Zouma added a third after 30 minutes after Mason Mount's free-kick and the defender had another header cleared off the line at the end of a dominant first-half display from Thomas Tuchel's side.

Christian Benteke pulled a goal back for Palace in the 63rd minute, but Pulisic's second of the game assured the win for Chelsea.

Trent Alexander-Arnold's injury-time goal allowed Liverpool to come back from a goal down to beat Aston Villa 2-1.

Aston Villa beat Liverpool 7-2 earlier in the season and they took the lead through Ollie Watkins two

minutes before halftime although Liverpool was unlucky to see the VAR rule out a goal moments later.

Mohamed Salah equalized in the 57th minute and the right-back sealed the win with a shot from outside of the box following a corner.

Adama Traore's late goal gave Wolves three points away to Fulham and added a further dint to the home side's survival hopes on Friday night. *Xinhua*



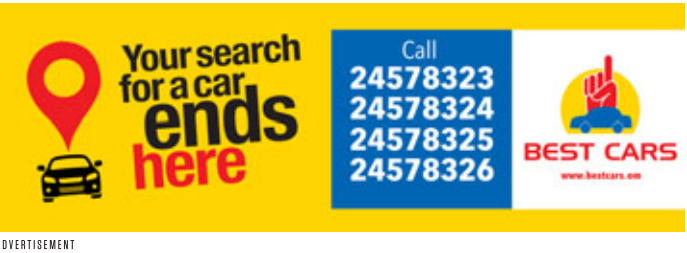
‘Our ambition lot more than second place finish’

MANCHESTER: Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is not happy with a second-place finish in the Premier League and said they want to chase table-toppers Manchester City. United are currently at the second spot with 60 points in 30 games so far. United's rivals Manchester City are leading the charts with 74 points in 32 games. United are unlikely to catch Pep Guardiola's men before the end of the season. But while it would be only their second runner-up finish in the top flight since winning the league for the last time in 2012-13, Solskjaer is adamant they must aim higher.

“You cannot say that is an achievement. Our ambition is a lot more than second place. I said that when I was not at the club - you can never be happy with that and we are not,” Goal.com quoted Solskjaer as saying.

“Do not get me wrong, our ambition is to catch the team in front of us. At the moment [City] have had a fantastic season, they have had three or four of them, and we know the challenge ahead of us. But we have to take it on. If you do not, then you are in the wrong place because that is what I am going for.

“Players have to really take that on with the sacrifices they have to make and the work they have to do. Blood, sweat and tears have to be put down because this is the best league in the world - and the most difficult,” he added. United will play against seventh-placed Tottenham Hotspur in the Premier League on Sunday. *ANI*



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HOCKEY

India fight back to beat Olympic champions Argentina 3-2

BUENOS AIRES: Experienced goalkeeper PR Sreejesh held the fort in the shootout while Harmanpreet Singh starred in India's 3-2 win with a double (21' and 60') in the FIH Hockey Pro League encounter against Argentina on Saturday.

A penalty corner earned by India skipper Manpreet Singh with just 25 seconds left for the final hooter changed the course of a tense battle against the Olympic Champions Argentina who were poised for victory with a 2-1 lead. Harmanpreet scored his double in the 60th minute with an electrifying drag-kick that fetched India a 2-2 equaliser pushing the match into a penalty shootout. It was India's Lalit Upadhyay, Rupinder Pal Singh and Dilpreet Singh who scored in the penalty shootout while India's experienced custodian PR Sreejesh came up with impressive saves to fetch India a bonus point.

Earlier in the contest, it was India who drew the first blood after a stalemate first quarter with a penalty corner in the 21st minute. India vice-captain Harmanpreet picked up a fine injection to fierce-



FIH HOCKEY PRO LEAGUE A penalty corner earned by India skipper Manpreet Singh with just 25 seconds left for the final hooter changed the course of a tense battle.

ly strike the ball to the left of the Argentine goalkeeper fetching India a much-needed 1-0 lead.

Argentina bounced back as they put Indian defence under real pressure with potential circle penetrations in the following minutes. Their efforts paid off with India conceding a penalty corner in the 28th minute. Home team's Martin Ferreira was impeccable in his execution to score an equaliser. He was also responsible for Argentina's second goal through yet another penalty corner in the 30th minute, ending the second quarter with a comfortable 2-1 lead.

At half-time, stats projected Argentina's dominance as they had better ball possession in comparison to India and also had 10 shots on goal while the visitors had made eight attempts on goal. The third quarter was goalless with both teams keeping the pressure up against each other and living up to the billing. Though both sides had traded penalty corners in this quarter, neither could muster a goal.

With the scoreboard reading 2-1 at the start of the deciding quarter, the contest went down to the wire with both teams stepping on the gas. Desperate for a win after losing to Germany in the double-header last week, the Olympic Champions Argentina were resolute in their efforts while India worked the yards vying for an elusive goal.

In the opening minute of the fourth quarter, Harmanpreet slapped the ball from the top of the circle towards the goal but Lalit Upadhyay could not get his stick on the ball for a deflection. Pressure mounted on India in the dying minutes of the match with two of their key players Varun Kumar and Mandeep Singh sitting out of the game with a yellow card. But skipper Manpreet Singh's valiant effort in the final moments ensured a successful outing for the visitors.

“I think the biggest takeaway from this match is our fighting spirit. We didn't lose hope until the last minute and we fought back really hard to earn this result,” stated an elated Harmanpreet whose equaliser set up an exciting shootout. *ANI*

LA LIGA

Real Madrid move to top in La Liga

MADRID: Real Madrid moved to the top of La Liga on Saturday night after a dramatic 2-1 win at home to FC Barcelona on a rainswept night in Valdebebas.

First half goals from Karim Benzema and Toni Kroos gave Madrid the win and although Oscar Mingueza pulled a second half goal back for Barca, it was not enough on a game that had alternatives until the final whistle.

Benzema opened the scoring with a backheel after Lucas Vazquez's cross in the 13th minute and Kroos doubled Madrid's lead with a deflected free kick in the 27th minute in a chaotic game played under a pouring rainstorm.

Messi hit the post with a corner and in the second half Oscar Mingueza got Barca back into the game, but it was not enough even though Ilaix Moriba was desperately unlucky to see his shot bounce back of Madrid bar in vir-

tually the last action of the game.

A terrible mix-up between Getafe midfielder, Timor and goalkeeper David Soria, led to Timor putting the ball into his own net to give Cadiz a 1-0 win away to Getafe on Saturday lunchtime. The win means Cadiz are almost completely safe from relegation, while Getafe still has work to do to avoid the drop.

New Alaves coach Javier Calleja can thank goalkeeper Pacheco for three fine saves to earn his side a 0-0 draw away to Athletic Club Bilbao.

Pacheco saved from Sancet in the first half and then denied Unai Nunez and Alex Berenguer, who was clean through on goal in the 89th minute to give Alaves a valuable point. That point sees Alaves climb above Eibar, who drop to the bottom of the table after Jorge de Frutos's goal in the second minute of first-half injury time. *ANI*

PAKISTAN VS SOUTH AFRICA

Rizwan, Ashraf script Pakistan's highest successful chase in T20Is

JOHANNESBURG: Mohammad Rizwan continued his excellent form against the Proteas by recording yet another half-century as Pakistan scripted their highest-ever T20I run-chase to take a 1-0 lead in their four-match series with a four-wicket win in Johannesburg on Saturday.

The right-hander crafted an unbeaten 74 off 50 balls (9 fours, 2 sixes) to help the tourists chase down a testing 189-run target with one delivery to spare. Stand-in captain Heinrich Klaasen and Aiden Markram had earlier struck half-centuries in a strong batting display by South Africa - the former striking an aggressive 50 off 28 balls (2 fours, 4 sixes) and the latter a slightly slower 51 off 32 balls (8 fours, 1 six).

Beuran Hendricks then grabbed three for 32 and Tabraiz Shamsi two for 29 to put the home side on



the front foot during the chase, but destructive late hitting by Faheem Ashraf (30 off 14 balls) coupled with some sloppy fielding helped the visitors get over the line.

They now have the advantage in the series ahead of the second match on Monday.

The Asian side, who also won the ODIs 2-1, again played smart

cricket to get over the line, with Rizwan at the forefront. He now has a century, two half-centuries, and a 42 from his last four innings against the Proteas.

Before that, however, it was the inexperienced home side that shone at the Imperial Wanderers Stadium.

Coach Mark Boucher handed

debut to three players - Lizaad Williams, Sisanda Magala and Wihan Lubbe - but it was Markram and Janneman Malan who initially shone.

Malan hit 24 upfront, but quickly fell followed by Lubbe (4). Markram and Klaasen then added 62 for the third wicket, before Pite van Biljon (24) continued the upward trajectory for the hosts. (ANI)

Andile Phehlukwayo and Magala (both 9) added some late runs to set the Pakistanis a tough target.

Rizwan and the in-form Fakhar Zaman (27) then fired upfront, before Shamsi and Hendricks pegged back the visitors with some timely strikes that left them struggling on 132 for five in the 16th over.

But Faheem provided some critical boundaries to take Pakistan close, with Rizwan then taking them over the line. *ANI*

INVESTMENT DEAL INKED
Aramco has signed a deal with a consortium led by EIG Global Energy Partners, one of the world's leading energy infrastructure investors, to optimise its assets through a lease-and-lease-back agreement involving its stabilised crude oil pipeline network.

MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSM INDEX ENDS HIGHER
The MSM index closed at 3,720.07 points, up 0.30 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up 0.95 per cent at 534.48 points. Voltamp Energy, up 8.70 per cent, was the top gainer while Muscat Finance, down 6.52 per cent, was the top loser.

KASPERSKY REPORTS

Threat seen from malware hiding within users' devices

Times News Service

MUSCAT: In 2020, 34 per cent of Kaspersky private users and 24 per cent of all corporate users in Oman were attacked by malware hiding within their devices.

Web attacks, in comparison, affected only 10 per cent and 4 per cent, respectively, Kaspersky experts said.

"There is a common misconception that the most dangerous threats on the modern users' digital journeys are encountered during Internet surfing. The reality however, based on the most recent analysis of cyberattacks in Oman in 2020 is that users are in fact more likely to face attacks from malware hidden within their devices," the report said.

Unfortunately, there has been an increase in the sophistication of such threats – which may be hiding on the user's device within a seemingly legitimate file for a while, to fly under the radar, and only strike later.

Cyber threat

"The cyber threat landscape across Oman is constantly evolving," says Denis Parinov, a cybersecurity expert at Kaspersky.

"A few years ago there were many more drive-by attacks – when different malicious software is downloaded and run while the user simply browses the Internet. Nowadays, most of the web threats 'stays in browser': they specialise in content replacement, browser locking or clickjacking,



online-skimming, cookie stuffing, etc," he added.

"Now the situation when the user could download a malicious file directly is not too frequent. It's more common for a malware to

be disguised as something else to hide from the security solutions, remaining an unseen threat to users," he said. "The good news however is that modern security solutions are too advanced for such

malware to fly below radar – it is more likely to be blocked either during the initial scan of the file by a security solution that happens by default, or within the very moment such programs attempt to launch," he added.

To protect against cyber threats including malware, Kaspersky recommends adhering to guidelines like, do not follow dubious links from letters, messages in instant messengers or SMS, regularly install updates for the operating system and applications.

It further says that users should install applications only from official stores, use complex and different passwords for accounts, regularly copy important data from your device to the cloud, to a USB flash drive or hard drive.

Also access should not be given to those functions that do not need and install a reliable security solution such as Kaspersky Internet Security.

In addition, companies are encouraged to provide training to improve cyber literacy among their employees. For example, the automated platform Kaspersky ASAP helps to develop safe behaviour skills and form sustainable cyber-security habits.

The solution allows the company to assess the current knowledge of an employee in the field of cybersecurity, and in accordance with this, determine the set of skills that the employee needs, depending on job duties and risk profile, and build a timetable for the programme.

MSX expected to meet investors' expectations

The establishment of the Muscat Stock Exchange constitutes a leap in Oman's securities market, ushers in a new stage in the money market and opens inroads for the national economy



CLOSED JOINT STOCK COMPANY: The ceremony was held under the auspices of Abdullah Salim Al-Salmi, CEO of the Capital Market Authority. - ONA

MUSCAT: A ceremony was held to mark the launch of Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX), a closed joint stock company reporting to Oman Investment Authority (OIA) as stated in Royal Decree No. 5/2021 promulgating the bourse.

The ceremony was held under the auspices of Abdullah Salim Al Salmi, CEO of the Capital Market Authority (CMA).

The establishment of the MSX constitutes a quantum leap in the Sultanate's securities market, ushers in a new stage in the money market and opens inroads for the national economy.

In a statement to Oman News Agency (ONA), Al Salmi said that he looks forward to seeing MSX undertaking its deserved role in financing economic development projects in the Sultanate. He expressed the hope that Oman Investment Authority, which owns



government firms, will float some companies for public subscription and list them on MSX to provide liquidity and products meeting the expectations of investors from the Sultanate and abroad.

Speaking about the roles of



CMA, Al Salmi pointed out that it undertakes monitoring and legislative roles. The CMA issued license for MSX and will oversee its operations, he added.

Meanwhile, Dr Hatim Bakhit Al Shanfari, staff member of the Col-

lege of Economy and Political Sciences at Sultan Qaboos University, board member of MSX, said the launch of the stock exchange in its new outlook will boost the securities market and diversify the economic stimulation programme.

Al Shanfari told ONA that Oman Investment Authority, the largest investment arena in the Sultanate, boasts a large variety of government-owned companies and a clear-cut vision for listing some companies that are ready to assist in providing new investment instruments for the bourse.

The Oman Investment Authority deals with a network of global institutions, which plays a great role in attracting investments and building confidence. - ONA

DIGITISATION

IFS to strengthen digital transformation goals of Sohar Port and Freezone



Abdullah Al-Kindi, Oman Country Manager at IFS



Bader Al Ghaithi, IT Manager, Sohar Port and Freezone

Times News Service

DUBAI: IFS, the global enterprise applications company announced that Sohar Port and Freezone, in the Sultanate of Oman, one of the fastest-growing port and free zone developments globally, has selected IFS Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), service management and project management to fully digitise, automate and centralise the finance, supply chain and HCM departments into one platform.

As a major contributor to trade in Oman, it is important that Sohar Port and Freezone makes adequate investments to ensure that they are future-ready to adapt and meet the emerging business requirements of the ports industry.

Commenting on the signing of the contract, Bader Al Ghaithi, IT Manager, Sohar Port and Free-

zone, said, "With multiple solution requirements, the need to have them operating on a unified platform that is fully integrated and to work with an organization that has relevant industry experience were two of the main reasons that we chose IFS. We are confident that the combination of the solution's unique features, ease of use and quick implementation will help us meet our future digital transformation requirements."

Abdullah Al-Kindi, Oman Country Manager at IFS, said, "In addition to providing Sohar Port and Freezone with a modern experience and the flexibility that they need, our team of industry experts was aware of their stringent data security requirements and have ensured that the current solution implementation complies with the local requirements."

EY GLOBAL CAPITAL CONFIDENCE BAROMETER

81% of executives expect Middle East to be preferred investment destination

Times News Service

DUBAI: According to the latest edition of the EY Global Capital Confidence Barometer (CCB), 81 per cent of business executives surveyed in the Mena region expect the Middle East to be a preferred investment destination, which will generate the most growth and opportunities for their company in the next three years.

Though 90 per cent of Mena respondents experienced a decline in revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most companies feel satisfied with their performance during the crisis.

Besides, 71 per cent of those surveyed expect to see revenues return to pre-pandemic levels by 2022 or earlier, while 69 per cent anticipate a return to normalised profitability within the same timeframe.

Prompted by the pandemic, almost all executives (98 per cent) conducted a comprehensive strategy and portfolio review, and they plan to focus on investing in customer-centric digital and technology capabilities.

Mergers and acquisitions (M&A)



Matthew Benson, EY Mena Strategy and Transactions Leader

will be the preferred strategic option as companies look to accelerate growth in the post-pandemic world, with 37 per cent of Mena companies planning to actively acquire in the next 12 months.

Matthew Benson, EY Mena Strategy and Transactions Leader, says, "The reduced travel, social distancing, remote-working, and low oil prices of the past year have had a disproportionate impact on corporate earnings. Yet Mena corporates remain nimble and resilient with executives finding that the current circumstances present a unique time for M&A, with several sectors ripe for consolidation."

"In 2020, M&A activity was largely led by government-related entities and the transformation of national oil companies Aramco and Adnoc, as well as the investment strategies of ADQ and PIF. This is in line with the general trend toward increase privatisation related to key infrastructure assets such as electricity, aviation, and housing. However, there is also a strong pipeline of interesting mid-market opportunities, largely driven by sellers' needs to raise capital."

Corporate strategies focus on resilience and accelerating digital transformation

The CCB report found that 87 per cent of Mena companies are

undertaking substantial business and technology transformations to stay relevant and accelerate growth. The application of technology due to the impact of COVID-19 on workplace protocols has made Mena corporates more productive, triggering the beginning of a widespread digital makeover across many sectors.

Mena respondents cited a specific focus on accelerated digitisation of customer journeys and business processes as their most important strategic action for growth. Furthermore, they are looking for digital solutions that can help them increase customer interactions and technology and automation that can reduce labour costs and increase scalability to drive increased profit margins.

To support their transformations, 76 per cent of Mena companies plan to increase investments in technology and digital, while 64 per cent will focus more on innovation.

Growth plans rely on bolt-on acquisitions and domestic assets

When asked about their primary

planned M&A activity, 84 per cent of Mena respondents said they plan to invest in bolt-on acquisitions – smaller acquisitions in the same sector that will increase market share. In addition, 55 per cent of those who plan to acquire are looking for assets domestically rather than internationally. With that said, the CCB reports that 94 per cent of executives expect greater competition for assets, with much of the competition expected to be from private capital in the Mena region.

The top five investment destinations in the Mena region, including both domestic and cross-border M&A activities, are the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and Oman, with Egypt listed as the fifth destination.

The segments most likely to actively pursue acquisitions in the next 12 months are automotive and transportation (45 per cent), advanced manufacturing (41 per cent), financial services (39 per cent), real estate and construction (36 per cent), and oil and gas (28 per cent).

Anil Menon, EY Mena M&A and

Equity Capital Markets Leader, says, "The vast majority of Mena respondents shared that the pandemic led to a reassessment of their M&A strategy and rebalancing of their portfolio. Moreover, when surveying a target for acquisition, companies are not only considering overall resilience but digital strategy and technology alignment. Many corporations have accepted the pandemic fallout as an opportunity to grow market share and increase speed to market to meet the fluid and dynamic business environment."

"Deal drivers such as attaining technology, production capabilities, and securing the supply chain are underpinning M&A intentions and executive investments for the next 12 months through the upturn – a clear indication that transactions can be the fastest route to transformation and recovery."

Mena governments are making the region more attractive for FDI. To encourage economic activity, governments in the region are enacting regulations that are more friendly to FDIs, both on a corporate level and a citizen level.

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Monthly Rent: 375/- to 650/-

Fully Furnished Apartment And Transport For Office Also Available

Contact: 99657906 or 24781446

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Email_hrsalalah2021@gmail.com

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Wanted lady dentist in Ruwi. Contact 99357612

Wanted a Indian GP doctor, urgently with/without MOH licence for a running clinic in the capital area. Contact 93807107
Email_syedyakub71@gmail.com

ACCOUNTS/FINANCE

Sr Accountant, Semi qualified CMA US, MBA finance, 18 years exp, seeks suitable placement. Contact 92539813

Indian male 29 yrs with 7+ yrs experience working in finance expertise in MIS,accounting,finalization,budgeting,VAT,advance excel & handling audits. Contact 94028831.
Email_financervd@gmail.com

Indian male fresh MBA graduate in finance seeking entry level placement as accountant/admin. D/L available. Contact 91209360
Email: amxrasad@gmail.com

Finance / Accounts - Male M.com, CFA Level One, DTM with 24 Years of experience in Oman. Accounting, Finance, Banking, Insurance, Logistics, Taxation, ERP. Join shortly by release. Contact 99668649,
Email_pac_3rd@yahoo.com

Indian Male, B.Com, MBA, 10 Yrs experience in accounts & export coordination with Focus, Oracle & Tally seeks suitable placement. NOC, D/L available. Mob : 98747867

Senior Accountant Sri Lankan 20+years Oman experience.Looking for suitable placement. Contact 99630192

Indian Male, MBA Finance*, 10+yrs. Exp (Oman & India) in Accounts. Good command over Tally & VAT. Contact 94775716,
Email_abm815@gmail.com

Indian MBA finance with 3 yrs Oman experience in accounting.NOC available. Contact 79396446.
Email_sheroofsabu@gmail.com

Indian accounts & finance professional with 15+yrs of experience in Oman as Accounts Manager, Chief acct. Contact 78039524

Indian Male Accountant, M.Com 14 years experience in Oman with D/L & NOC seeks suitable placement. Contact 99757409

Accountant with 3 years Oman experience (6 years total Experience), MBA Finance, well versed in VAT, NOC Available. Contact 92862265

Indian male, 2 yrs accountant experience in Oman with NOC and 2 yrs admin assistant 2yrs accountant experience in India. Looking for appropriate placement in accountant, admin, clerical jobs. Master in commerce and PGDCA. Contact: +96891746925, +919744304725
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CAD Draughtsman looking for a job. Release available Contact 95157045

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ADMIN/HR

Indian female looking for office assistant or accountant job. 97947214

Indian Male, 12 years experience in Oman seeks job for Admin/Secretary or any suitable post. Holding Oman D/L & NOC. Contact vinrai99@gmail.com, M: 79734085

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Email_ffrancis7@gmail.com

Indian female MBA (HR), PGDBA, BE, 7 yrs of experience in HR & administration (5 yrs in Oman) with Omani D/L. Looking for suitable placement. Contact 92474376

Indian male (25) BBA., LLB (hons) / experience in administration and operations seeking for suitable job. Contact: 79896282, 78265859
Email: harisuneethan96@gmail.com

Indian Lady Lawyer with 3 years of corporate in house practice in Oman looking for new opportunity. Contact 92640225

Indian Female, MSc graduate currently in Muscat looking for suitable opportunities. Contact: 94687398.
Email: gayathrisprem21@gmail.com

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COOK

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Looking for driving job. Contact 93539260

Looking for driving job. Contact 96224920

Looking for driving job. # 99141165

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MANAGER

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Safety officer looking for job with Nebosh Certification. Contact 71961786

HSE adviser IOSH certified with 4 years experience. Contact 71721926.
mubashirosman89@gmail.com

Indian 2.6 yrs experience in fiber telecommunication as field technician, monthly salary 400. Oman license. Contact 79172708
Email_greeshgk@gmail.com

10 Years experience in Plumbing, pipe fitter & camp boss assistant. Contact 93045800

Omani National Female with have Bachelor Degree in water technology. Contact 94421774

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Contact 95092523, 92438505, 00919595872774 Wts - 00919595872774 mmohdismail1@yahoo.com

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**aminol2424@gmail.com
79417515**

HR / Admin
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Contact 99653715

Omani Information Technology Field
Omani looking for a job, Bachelor degree in IT from the United States of America, 1 year experience in IT.
**Contact: 71771213
Email: Hafes707@hotmail.com**

ENGINEER
Omani female looking for a job, BSc in Process engineering (Done four different internships in process engineering), marketing experience as well.
**Contact: 95119284
alya_alsiyabi93@outlook.com**

SR. MECHANICAL / MEP ENGINEER / MEP MANAGER
Filipino, with over 21 years of experience (airport, seaport, infra, buildings) Working as a consultant since 2010 Having Oman D/L and NOC.
**Contact: +96871180492
allirod1975@gmail.com**

Project Director / Senior Project Manager / Contracts Administrator
Indian National having 18 years of work experience, 14 years in Oman having master's in Construction Project Management & Construction Law & Dispute Resolution from UK Universities. Experienced in Handling High End Hospitality, Residential & Commercial Projects from initiation till completion. Seeks Placement as Clients or Consultants representative in Oman.
Please contact -- 78022980

PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANT
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CONTACT: 91720776

Mechanical Engineer
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**Contact 95434381
email: shuhaibusman313@gmail.com**

Indian male, bachelor's degree, Graduate (B.Com, B. Ed) looking for secretary, exec assistant, office administration jobs, 18 years experience, 7 years in Oman.
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Email: loyannavildsouza@gmail.com**

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ACCOUNTANT
A certified VAT professional having Masters degree & 10 years of GCC experience in senior positions, is available to handle accounts & VAT compliance.
Contact 71990782

CIVIL ENGINEER
B.Sc in Civil Engineering having 13 years experience in Oman. Hand on experience in Ministry of Health, MOD, ROP and RCA prestigious project. Available in Oman with NOC and Valid DL.
**Contact No. 92180869
E-mail: mamuns02@yahoo.com**

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT (SRI LANKAN)
CA, CPA, BSc. (Accountancy & Business Finance) Special with 12 years of experience (6th year in Oman) is looking for an opening. DL, NOC are available.
GSM: 78259755

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Contact 92514687 Email: hi.binu@gmail.com

JOB WANTED

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BE Civil Engineer with PMP having experience more than 21 years looking for a suitable job. NOC available. Contact 95899628, prakashrathi7707 @gmail.com
MEP Mechanical engineer with 2 year exp. Contact 79027224
Civil Engineer, 10 years in Muscat, Client Meeting, AutoCAD, Quotation, Tender, High-rise Com/Res, Villas Maintenance. Having D/L and NOC. Contact 97431611
Indian Male, Diploma in Computer Engineering, 3 years' experience Worked as a System administrator & Support Engineer looking for a suitable job. Presently on visit. Contact 94243856/93894634 rashadmuhammed20@gmail.com
Indian BE civil Engineer, 26, male, 2yrs exp in building construction with Oman D/L looking for a suitable opportunity. Contact 96512025
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Indian male 23 yrs, B.Tech (EEE) is looking for suitable job,presently on visit. Contact 95055966
24, Mechanical Engineer, currently in Oman Looking to work as back-office Sales/Purchase coordinator in any field. Contact 79121923 / 78043052
B.E Civil engineer Male, with 2 years of professional experience in municipal house construction project. Equipped with a valid D/L. Fluent in English & Arabic. Contact 96749821 Email mhassan9610@gmail.com
Civil engineer with 9 years exp in Oman. Contact 97646908
Indian female M.Tech in Electrical power system having 4+ yrs of experience in Oman seeking suitable placement. Contact 79733520, 94306164
Project engineer, B.tech-civil, India, 12yrs Oman experience in all kinds operation of civil & MEP and interior fit- out field with valued Visa and D/L, 95206259, looking placement

ENGINEER
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Construction engineer with 10 yrs experience in Oman consulting offices 7 experience in government project. Contact 96965100
Planning engineer, Indian more than 20 yrs experience in Oil & gas, pipeline building & MEP projects scheduling using primavera P6 seeks suitable job. NOC available. Contact 92651105 Email reji-mathai@hotmail.com
Electrical engineer 9 years experience in primary substations, OHL, and underground cables. With a valid D/L. Contact 98223842
Indian Male B.E Civil 6Y experience currently available in Oman. Ready for Immediate join Looking for Any job. Contact 91406778
Senior Civil Engineer with 12 years Exp in government and private construction projects. looking for a suitable position. Contact 95962450. Email: solanki.ahmed@gmail.com
B.E Mechanical engineer, 25 yrs with 2.5 yrs of experience in MEP execution & estimation is seeking suitable placement. Contact 94846765. Email akshaygopinath@gmail.com
Senior Civil Engineer (RE) with over 10 years of experience on major projects (Residential, Commercial & Industrial). # 78270396
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Indian B.tech Electrical male engineer having 14 yrs experience in construction,looking for suitable placement as Estimation Engineer/ MEP engineer/MEP Qs. NOC available. Contact 92121940 Email abyeee@gmail.com
Planning Engineer, Indian BE (Mechanical), 20 yrs experience in using primavera (P6) with NOC, D/L. Contact 79822993
Civil engineer diploma with BBA, NEBOSH IGC, valid Oman D/L, 9 yrs experience building construction, network tower erection, gas pipe line project. Contact 00971501140652, 95305786

INDIAN MALE PROCUREMENT, PURCHASE OFFICER having Bachelor degree in Mechanical engineering, 5 yrs experience in UAE in Electrical & Construction company & having UAE D/L. Looking for suitable job. Contact 98227904 Email nrangra@rediffmail.com
Indian male, 10+ yrs experience in the field of purchase,store,asset coordinatorValid D/L. Immediately available for joining. Contact 71596360. Email praveenskurup82@gmail.com
Indian male, experience of 12 Years in Oman as a Purchasing officer and store manager.D/L NOC available looking for suitable job. # 97099785, manjugcc@gmail.com
Procurement, purchase officer having master degree searching for job. 07 yrs exp in oman in a well known construction & maintenance group of companies. NOC available. Contact 92587919, 99423614. Email jahanzeb_athar@yahoo.com
Indian, purchase assistant, store keeper 9 years working experience in oman. Valid Oman D/L(light) Looking for suitable job. Contact 98615731 Email: sanalk73@gmail.com
Indian male, 16 yrs experience in a multinational freight forwarding & logistic co,worked under the capacity of Senior operation executive/senior accountant (Ocen freight,air freight, land transport, warehouse operations & finance & accounting). NOC available. Contact 93587605

SALES / MARKETING
Inventory, Sales & Accounting, Indian male 31, having 8 years experience in MNC with F&B, Customer relations and various other skills. NOC available. Contact: 96219904. Email: khanshah98@gmail.com
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34yrs Indian, MBA marketing, B.Com, 9 yrs experience (2 yrs GCC-Dubai) seeking Sales, admin, accounting job. Contact 78167383
Indian male (24) BBA, 2year experience in sales and administration. Contact 94890534 Email: jebinahmed@gmail.com
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Experience electrifying moments with Toyota’s Hybrid Electric vehicle range

In Oman, the Toyota Hybrid Electric vehicle range includes Corolla, C-HR, Camry, RAV4 and Highlander



MUSCAT: Toyota has long pioneered Hybrid Electric technology that is self-charging and doesn't compromise on powerful performance and fuel efficiency.

In Oman, the Toyota Hybrid Electric vehicle range includes Corolla, C-HR, Camry, RAV4 and Highlander. Corolla HEV is a hybrid electric model which combines two power sources consisting of a petrol engine and electric motor with a combined power of 121 hp. It is also paired with an Electrically Controlled Continuously Variable Transmission, which provides an outstanding fuel consumption value of 27.6km/L while improv-

ing the driving experience. As with any other Toyota model, safety remains a top priority for the all-new Corolla, which includes a comprehensive array of features to protect its occupants, such as SRS airbags, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), Brake Assist, Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD), Tyre Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS), among many others. The C-HR's compact crossover comes with a 1.8-litre full-hybrid powertrain delivering a total output of 121 horsepower with power sent to the wheels through an electrically controlled continuously variable automatic transmission. The C-HR is built on the Toyota New Global Architecture (TNGA) platform, which promises an in-

involved driving experience. The C-HR is equipped with an array of active and passive safety features including Vehicle Stability Control, Electronic Brakeforce Distribution and Tyre Pressure Monitoring System among others. The introduction of an electrified version of the Camry cements Toyota's continued efforts in creating ever-better cars and further reiterates Toyota's commitment to environmental sustainability. Combining two power sources consisting of a petrol engine and electric motors, the hybrid electric drivetrain on the Toyota Camry HEV produces 208 hp (combined: Motor + Engine). The drivetrain is mated to an electrically controlled Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT) that executes smooth

yet quick gear shifts. The RAV4 hybrid electric model offers the lowest fuel consumption value of 22.2km/L (as per GSO certification). A new electrified hybrid system combines two power sources consisting of a petrol engine and electric motor producing a combined power of 219 hp. It is also paired with a Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT). The Highlander's thrilling drive personality is brought to life by a new electrified hybrid system that combines two power sources. The combined power of petrol engine and electric motor is 240 hp, capable of delivering a maximum torque figure of 231 nm. The system is mated to an electronically controlled Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT).

CAREER EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME

ABQ Education Group hosts Shell Oman CEO at Distinguished Speakers’ Series

MUSCAT: ABQ Education Group, the largest private school operator in Oman, officially launched the Career Experience Programme (CEP) in a live webinar with special guest Dr Mohammed Al Balushi, CEO of Shell Oman Marketing Company. The Career Experience Programme is an exciting and unique initiative that links industry professionals with ABQ staff, parents and students to bring rare insight and inspiration into what it takes to succeed in various industries throughout the Sultanate. The Career Experience Programme was developed as part of ABQ's pioneering mentorship platform, the Discovering You Programme (DYP), where mentees between Grades 3 to 12 learn and develop essential 21st-century skills (21CS). In addition, DYP provides mentees with the agency and inspiration to choose a career path that best suits their needs, wants, strengths, creativity and talents. With this in mind, the Career Experience Programme is predicated on 3 major goals, as illustrated below. The first of the Distinguished Speakers' Series hosted Dr Mohammed Mahmood Al Balushi, CEO of Shell Oman Marketing, who delivered an enriching talk on professional career development, leadership, and other important topics. The interactive session offered inside knowledge into what



it takes to prepare, succeed and lead from an inspiring leader and true professional. Humayun Kabir, CEO of ABQ Education Group said, "We were delighted to have someone of the calibre of Dr Mohammed Balushi as the first guest at our Distinguished Speakers' Series forum, which is part of the ABQ Career Experience Programme. His wisdom, insights, and nuggets of advice were a treasure trove for our mentees, their parents and our ABQ mentors. We hope that such forums will continue to help our mentees find their passion and direction in life, supported by the rich, well rounded, experience ABQ schools aim to provide." Dr Mohammed Mahmood Al Balushi, CEO of Shell Oman Marketing SAOG said, "Recently, I had the pleasure of being the first speaker in the virtual Distinguished Speakers Series as part of the ABQ Career Experience Programme. This programme aims at preparing students from a

young age to plan for their careers, understand the job market and equip them with the set of skills and awareness to face future challenges. It always brings me joy to engage with the future leaders of Oman and contribute to developing those local talents. I would like to thank the ABQ Educational Group for this wonderful opportunity, and as a parent, it makes me proud to see educational institutions in Oman leading such initiatives and programmes that will reflect positively on the future of our children and youth. On the other hand, being a practitioner, I deem it a responsibility to guide and mentor our youth and help prepare them for their careers and the different challenges they may face, and such programmes act as the foundation stone that will eventually contribute to achieving the long-term goals of Oman Vision 2040." Rayed Darwish, DYP Mentorship Director at ABQ Education Group, said, "We are excited that

ABQ is the first educational group to establish an initiative like the Career Experience Programme as part of our curriculum and syllabus. 300 participants including parents, students, teachers, and mentors attended the lively virtual distinguished speakers' session which lasted over one hour and 15 minutes. It focussed on how to find your passion in life while allowing parents and student mentees to raise relevant questions." He further added, "In addition to the Distinguished Speakers' Series (DSS), the Career Experience Programme organises work experience and career planning opportunities for students. While the speakers' series aims to provide a chance to listen, ask questions and learn from industry leaders throughout Oman, the work experience goal arranges opportunities for students in various organisations through job shadowing and internships. The third step in the Career Experience Programme goal is career planning, which offers an opportunity for parents and mentees to speak with various bodies (businesses, ministries, higher education institutions) to make better future decisions regarding higher education and joining the global workforce." ABQ Educational Group looks forward to hosting more industry leaders in the near future as part of its Distinguished Speakers' Series.

TEDxHOUHAI EVENT

HarmonyOS: Connecting to a simpler life

SHENZHEN: Dr Wang Chenglu, Huawei Consumer BG Software Engineering Dept President and AI and All-scenario Intelligence Business Unit Director, delivered a speech themed Connecting to a Simpler Life at the TEDxHouhai event Driven by Pressure. During this speech, he pointed out that the mobile Internet industry, which is centred on smartphones, has entered a transitional period. He also discussed how the rapid development of IoT will present a historical opportunity for industry transformation. In addition, Dr Wang called for collaboration between upstream and downstream players to build a prosperous new ecosystem and embrace the mobile Internet era together. "Technology has the power to change the world. When I was little, my dream was to be able to watch movies at home, and this is now possible everywhere. The rapid development of the mobile Internet has given rise to cashless payments, online shopping, and ride-hailing, all of which have profoundly changed our lives," said Dr Wang. "But it is clear that the mobile Internet industry, which is centred on mobile phones, is under pressure." Dr Wang went on to say, "Global smartphone shipments started to decline in 2018, and saw a year-on-year decrease of about 6% in 2020. In addition, the average time that consumers



spend on their mobile phones each day has remained at between four and five hours since 2018, indicating that the industry has reached a critical juncture and must be transformed." "What are the development opportunities for the next era? Our pursuit of technological innovation never ends. With users possessing more and more intelligent devices, we want to allow these devices to collaborate more efficiently instead of running in isolation, just as humans can communicate with each other. The goal is to make ubiquitous connectivity a reality and transform multiple intelligent devices into ONE smart assistant." As a next-gen OS, HarmonyOS enables various intelligent devices to connect and collaborate in one language. HarmonyOS will allow more devices to connect and collaborate than ever before, delivering a seamless, user-friendly experience across all devices.

PROMOTION



Lulu picks second draw winners of Dream Drive 2021

MUSCAT: Lulu Oman announced the lucky draw winners of its second Dream Drive 2021 promotion draw. The winners were picked through the eRaffle draw held at Lulu Hypermarket, Darsait, recently. Like the previous years, the registration and draws are completely digital and the winners are selected through the eRaffle Winner Management System under the supervision of the officials from the Ministry of Commerce. Lulu's initiative to go digital demonstrates its social responsibility towards the community and the environment. To be part of this promotion, customers need to just purchase products worth OMR10 at any of the Lulu outlets. With every single receipt of OMR10, customers become eligible to be part of lucky draws to win a brand new Nissan Patrol 4WD and a range of attractive products from Ikon. The Ikon gifts include 55" Smart

TVs, refrigerators, cooking ranges, washing machines, and freezers. The raffle coupon for valid claims is sent by email and SMS within 48 working hours. Muzna Al Balushi was the lucky winner of the second Nissan Patrol 4WD. In the current draw, five other winners also took home amazing gifts from Ikon. Shawqi Kalaf won the Ikon 55" Smart TV; Animole Thomas won the Ikon Double Door Refrigerator; Joji Varghese won the Ikon Cooking Range; Anvarsha Sulaiman took home the Ikon Washing Machine, and Sunil Kumar Rajan Kurup won the Ikon Freezer. Shabeer K. A., Regional Director – Oman, remarked, "I congratulate all the winners of the second draw of our Dream Drive Promotion. It's heartening to see the warm response to the promotion, despite the challenging environment. The Dream Drive promotion continues to be our customers' favourite and is a big draw."

CUSTOMER-CENTRIC SUV

Nissan X-Trail offers countless features to enhance city driving

MUSCAT: If you are looking for the best car for city driving, Nissan X-Trail, the highly customer-centric SUV, should be your choice. A great, practical option Nissan X-Trail is roomy, has solid capabilities, next-level technologies, and offers countless confidence-inspiring innovative safety technologies, including intelligent around view monitor, rear cross-traffic alert, and blind-spot warning technology. Making city driving easy, X-Trail delivers with best-in-class front headroom and the supreme comfort of fatigue-reducing Zero Gravity front seats. There is a second row that slides and reclines, so users can adjust for maximum legroom, more cargo space, or anywhere in between. And with available tasteful touches like Power Panoramic Moonroof and leather-appointed seats, this is one natural, relaxed, and decidedly upscale environment. Hands full after a day of shopping? Nissan Intelligent Mobility makes everything easier. With just a swing of the foot under the centre of the bumper with the intelligent key in the pocket and the liftgate will open in seconds with the help of a motion-activated liftgate. Intelligent Around View Monitor uses four cameras to give you a virtual 360° view of your surroundings. Selectable split-screen close-ups of the front, rear and kerbside make parking easier than ever. And since all obstacles aren't stationary like shopping carts, the available Moving Object Detection system can warn you about moving objects detected in your vicinity. Unlike traditional systems that only maintain a set speed, X-Trail's available intelligent cruise control



also helps maintain an adjustable set distance between you and the car in front of you. As traffic slows down or speeds up, X-Trail will respond accordingly. The intelligent emergency braking system keeps an eye on the speed and proximity to the vehicle ahead, warning if one needs to slow down. It can also apply braking if the driver fails to respond. If a collision is unavoidable, this feature will engage the brakes to help reduce the speed and severity of impact. A senior official of Nissan Oman, from the house of Suhail Bahwan Automobiles (SBA), said, "It is the ideal car for city driving. Nissan X-Trail offers space, muscular styling, solid capabilities, next-level technologies, comfort and flexibility to drive around the city." He adds, "In addition, from staying in touch and connected wherever you go to filling the cabin with a rich, beautiful sound, you will experience city outing on a whole new level with X-Trail's advanced technology. Nissan Intelligent Mobility transforms X-Trail from just

a car into your responsive partner, always looking out for you and those around you." Built for real family outings in the city and off-road, Nissan X-Trail is a popular SUV with the latest technologies, yet still has the traditional benefits of a crossover. Nissan X-Trail delivers an "Excellent" GSO rated mileage of 15.1km/litre. This mileage is obtained under laboratory test conditions conducted by GSO for the 2.5L SV variant. Nissan X-Trail has earned a stamp of approval across the globe. With its strengthened qualities and advanced technologies, the Nissan X-Trail is taking care of the diversified requirements of customers in Oman. Nissan Intelligent Mobility is the name for the brand's strategy which makes the cars more desirable by redefining how they are driven, powered and integrated into society. Powered by a range of Nissan's Intelligent Mobility technologies, the X-Trail is equipped with three new driver-friendly innovative features - Intelligent

Rear-View Mirror, Intelligent Emergency Brakes, and Intelligent Cruise Control. The goal is to make Nissan drivers feel more confident, excited, and connected, while also enhancing road and passenger safety. **New dynamism** Nissan X-Trail has always been known for its sculpted and muscular styling, with chiselled lines, high wheel arches and elegant curves on the bonnet. All of those characteristics remain and are now showcased through a distinctive and robust redesign of the front end, adding a new dynamism and more premium styling cues. When it comes to the exterior of the X-Trail, at its heart is Nissan's latest 'V-motion' grille, wider than before for a more impactful appearance on the road and echoed in the design of the bumper beneath. The redesign makes much greater use of the X-Trail's body colour, with the visible black plastic benefiting from a smart new gloss black finish. The Nissan X-Trail is a spacious five or seven-seat crossover aimed at adventure-loving families. The boot on the Nissan X-Trail is larger than before. Thanks to improved packaging, VDA capacity is up from 550 litres to 565 litres on the five-seat version with all seats in place. Nissan X-Trail has a wider range of interior door trims to distinguish the different grades, while the central armrest storage area has been redesigned. All models are equipped with the CVT XTronic automatic transmission with a restyled gear selector which features a new leather-style gaiter.

Mercedes offers 20% off on preventive maintenance service packages

The service partner offer, available exclusively from April 11 to May 11, is designed to specifically target those components that are prone to wear and tear

MUSCAT: Keeping commercial vehicles working at its optimum, Mercedes-Benz Oman is offering 20% off on preventive maintenance service package for its Actros trucks this Ramadan. The service partner offer, available exclusively from April 11 to May 11, is designed to specifically

target those components that are prone to wear and tear. The comprehensive and specially customised service is available for 4x2 with 6-cylinder engines for just OMR 300, 6x4 with 6-cylinder engines for OMR 354, and 6X4 with 8-cylinder engines for OMR 372, plus applicable VAT extra (post



VAT introduction). at Mercedes-Benz Service Centres in Muscat, Haima, Salalah, and Sohar. “Prevention is better than cure and our Preventive Maintenance

Service Packages are designed to maximise the operating life of components while decreasing stress on other parts,” said Gary Brown, General Manager for Commercial

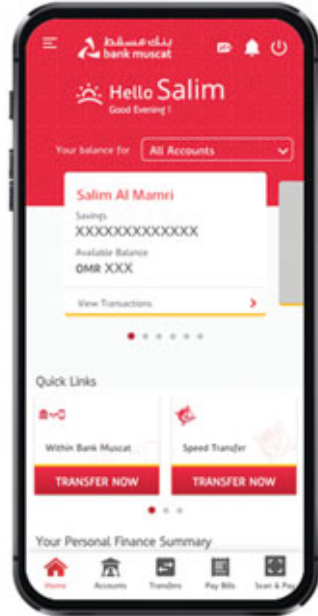
Vehicles at Mercedes-Benz Oman. “As their partners, we wanted to help companies minimize costs and downtime and keep their vehicles on the road as planned. Actros owners can rest assured that they will continue to get supreme power, reliability, safety and economy from our trucks.” The Preventive Maintenance Service Package is designed to ensure that each vehicle remains in peak mechanical health. It includes engine oil (Mobil mineral oil) and filter change, manual transmission oil change, rear axle oil change, general valve lash adjustment and replacement of valve cover gaskets, replacement of diesel filter, replacement of water separator filter, replacement of air dryer filter as well as vehicle checks

on oil leaks, fluid levels, diagnostic check-up of vehicle electrical system, engine compression test with a diagnostic tool that gives an indication on engine condition, multi-point inspection (periodic maintenance safety check), general lubrication, retightening of lug nuts on two/three axles, and vehicle washing and greasing. With a rigorous prioritisation of providing all customers with the very best customer experience, Mercedes-Benz Oman Commercial Vehicles offer an unrivalled range of tailor-made and reliable transport solutions, local service and parts supply throughout the wide national network of Mercedes-Benz branches, as well as expert technical and driver support.

NEW FACILITY

Bank Muscat invites customers to use innovative mobile banking features like Eidiya transfer

MUSCAT: In line with its vision “To serve you better, everyday” and commitment to customer-centric services, Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in Oman, has invited its customers to try out the new features that have been added to its mobile banking app. These include a single click facility for Eidiya (Eid gift) transfers, charity contributions for Zakat and Sadaqa as well as donations to the Ministry of Health (COVID-19). Customers can download the latest version of the Bank Muscat Mobile Banking app from Apple App Store, Google Play or Huawei AppGallery. Speaking on the occasion, Amjad Al Lawati, AGM - Cards and eBanking, said, “Bank Muscat is happy to share with our valued customers the opportunity to spread joy among young children by sending Eidiya through the mobile application. Customers can also use the app for Zakat, Sadaqa and Ministry of Health (COVID-19) donations. The bank is happy to continuously launch new features within the app, which adds to customer convenience, ease of use



and safety. I also take this occasion to wish Ramadan Mubarak to all our esteemed customers during this holy month.” Using the new features in the app is both easy and convenient. For example, using the single-click

option, a customer can make Eidiya transfers to up to 10 beneficiary accounts at a single time. To use the feature, a customer simply needs to click on “Transfer>Eid Gift” after logging in. The customer will be taken to a page with the options to ‘Initiate a Transfer’ and ‘Manage Your Groups’. The ‘Manage your Groups’ option allows the viewing/modification/deletion of all the groups created, while the ‘Add Groups’ option will allow new groups to be added. Group names and beneficiary details can be viewed under the details of each group. Customers can create multiple groups and select up to 10 beneficiaries in each group. The ‘Initiate Group Transfer’ feature allows the user to select a group of beneficiaries and transfer to all the accounts at a single time. The users can make multiple Group Transfers in a day. Similarly, the new facility makes it easy to transfer Zakat and Sadaqa as well as contributions to the Ministry of Health (Covid-19). All transactions are made in Omani Rials and the amount will be deb-

ited from the account chosen by the customer. The customer will get SMS notifications for the amounts transferred to each beneficiary and the process of making donations is highly intuitive thanks to the state-of-the-art technology used in the mobile banking application. Today, Bank Muscat customers extensively use the various digital options which are available to them through Mobile or Internet Banking such as bill payments, mobile top-ups, payments within Bank Muscat and Oman and international transfers. Bank Muscat is constantly innovating for the best customer experience because of which it has been consistently voted as the Best Bank in Oman by leading publications and institutions year after year. Prestigious awards won by the bank in the recent past include Best Consumer Digital Bank in Oman award from Global Finance as well as the Best Bank in Oman from The Banker, EMEA Finance and Global Finance. It has also been listed by Forbes Middle East as one of the Top 100 companies in the Middle East in 2020.

CSR INITIATIVE



Malabar Gold & Diamonds pledges over 1.1 million meals this Ramadan

MUSCAT: The holy month of Ramadan is at our doorsteps & millions of people around the world are getting ready to welcome this holy month with acts of service, charity and prayers. As in previous years, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one of the largest jewellery retailer globally strengthens its CSR activities in the GCC, Far East and the USA this Ramadan. Malabar Gold & Diamonds has planned month-long CSR activities in association with embassies, associations, and like-minded organisations to benefit the needy. The group plans to distribute food kits to deserving labourers and families who are still recovering from the economic and social consequences brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative is expected to benefit a large section of the society across all countries in which it operates. “CSR remains a core value at Malabar Gold & Diamonds since its inception in 1993. We have realigned our CSR initiatives during Ramadan to distributing food kits to affected families and individuals to help ease their current circumstances. We aim to create a difference to the community in and around our area of operations as well as to drive other organisations, both big and small to initiate such activities that will help the needy,” said Abdul Salam KP, Vice Chairman – Malabar Group. The food kits contain essential supplies, including staple, lentils, oil, and spices. Those in real need of the food kits will be identified through respective embassies, like-minded organizations and, regional associations such

as CDA, KMCC, Red Crescent, MSS, Kairali Association, Overseas Indian culture Congress etc. as well as through the references provided by customers of Malabar Gold & Diamonds. “As the initiative is spearheaded by the team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds along with embassies, like-minded organizations and associations, we are certain that together we can identify and provide support to the needy in the local communities. It gives me a lot of happiness that we continue to do what we do best: supporting each other, our partners, the authorities and offering a helping hand to communities around us. All our CSR initiatives would not be possible without the patronage of our customers and we invite them to be a part of the initiative as well,” said Shamlal Ahamed, MD – International Operations of Malabar Gold & Diamonds. Malabar Gold & Diamonds believes that the most successful companies are those which integrate responsibility and sustainability into their core business. The group is always proactive when it comes to CSR activities right from the inception. The key focus areas of the CSR initiatives of Malabar Group are in the areas of Health, Education, Women Empowerment, Housing and Environment. The organisation has kept aside 5% of its profit for the CSR activities in all the regions that they operate. The group, which currently has showrooms across GCC, India, Malaysia, Singapore & the USA undertakes several welfare activities throughout the year in the respective regions.

SPONSORSHIP CAMPAIGNS

Bank Nizwa supports education sector in Oman through strategic sponsorships

MUSCAT: Oman’s most trusted Islamic bank, Bank Nizwa has demonstrated utmost commitment in supporting the local communities through quality sponsorship campaigns. In its most recent endeavour, Bank Nizwa has extended its support to the Directorate General of Education in Al Batinah South by sponsoring various educational activities for the academic year 2020-2021. Today, under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, Oman’s 2040 vision recognises education as the cornerstone for the nation’s ever-growing developments and change for a better tomorrow. For this purpose, it outlines, “a national system that empowers human capabilities in the educational sector and nurtures scientific research, innovation, and creativity to build a knowledge-based economy and society”. Vision 2040 stresses improving educational outcomes that have become necessary to build Omanis’ confidence in their



identity and commitment to their social values. A focus on the future of this sector is only imminent, keeping in mind the ever-changing world, and the magnitude of the limitations that economies are currently going through. This requires us to shift our thinking fundamentally about the purpose of education. In line with the Sultanate’s Vision 2040, Bank Nizwa endeavours to sup-

port the Ministry of Education’s initiatives to enhance the quality of education in the South Batinah region. With over a hundred schools and 10,000 employees in the region, the bank believes that such efforts would greatly benefit the students as well as the teaching faculty in the area. “Education has been regarded as one of the most important pillars to achieve sustainable growth.

By investing in quality education today, we can prepare our youth to compete in the open international economic markets in the future,” said Khaled Al Kayed, CEO of Bank Nizwa. By investing in its education sector, we endeavour to help each Omani individual hone the skills and capabilities to deal with global challenges and pave the way as leaders of change. Our efforts to support the educational sector will encourage the local youth to not just contribute to a progressive economy, but even society at large.” Oman’s Vision 2040 stresses improving educational outcomes that have become necessary to build Omanis’ confidence in their identity and commitment to their social values. Bank Nizwa’s latest social initiatives which are geared at the education sector are aimed at enhancing the various academic activities in the South Batinah region. The bank and the Ministry of Education have shared various meaningful partnerships that have benefited the educational sector in the Sultanate.



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