

**OCCI MAKING EFFORTS TO
BOOST OMAN-TANZANIA TIES**

The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry is making efforts to strengthen economic relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the United Republic of Tanzania by encouraging investments. **>A2**



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OMR3.2 BILLION IN 2021**

Oman LNG's revenues by the end of 2021 recorded an increase by 31% to reach USD 3.278 billion compared to 2020. The rise is driven by the global economic revival during 2021 and increasing global energy prices. **>B1**



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TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

**Oman, Tanzania to
tap the ancient links**

1 Omani and Tanzanian diaspora are looking to improve age old ties. **>A2**

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OMAN, TANZANIA WORKING TO MEET PEOPLE'S ASPIRATIONS



His Majesty the Sultan, Tanzania President exchanged views on various matters of common interest

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik held an official session of talks with President Samia Suluhu Hassan of the United Republic of Tanzania at Al Alam Palace on Sunday afternoon.

The talks explored the strong bilateral relations binding the two countries and ways of elevating them towards broader horizons to realise the aspirations of the Omani and Tanzanian peoples. The two leaders also exchanged views on various matters of common interest.

HM the Sultan hosts dinner in honour of Tanzanian President >A3

HM the Sultan welcomes President of Tanzania >A4

The official session of talks was attended from the Omani side by His Highness Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister, His Highness Sayyid Asa'ad

bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs, Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan, His Highness Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal Al Busaidi, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, Gen. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nu'mani, Minister of the Royal Office, Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal Al Busaidi, Minister of Interior, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign

Minister, Sultan bin Salim Al Habsi, Minister of Finance, Dr. Madiha bint Ahmed Al Shaibani, Minister of Education, Salim bin Mohammed Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage and Tourism, Abdulsalam bin Mohammed Al Murshidi, Chairman of Oman Investment Authority (OIA), Dr. Rahma bint Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (Head of the Mission of Honour) and Saud bin Hilal Al Shidhani, Ambassador of the Sultanate to Tanzania. **>A5**

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Oman, Tanzania look to tap into ancient linkages

The visit of Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania to Oman is something more than just investment and trade

SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

MUSCAT: Both Omanis and the Tanzanian diaspora are looking to improve centuries-old ties between the two countries following the visit of President Samia Suluhu Hassan to Oman. The President is currently in

Oman on a three-day visit but for Omanis and Tanzanians her visit will open a new chapter in strengthening personal bonds between them in different fields.

Many of them have families living in both countries.

"I still have many relatives living in Tanzania and we are working to import cashew nuts and also start a packaging company there. It is family connection that works well in business between the two countries," Khalfan Al Subhi, an importer based in Muscat, told *Times of Oman*.

But for some, the visit of President Hassan is something more than just investment and trade. It is the cultural link between the two communities that has culminated into her visit to Oman.

"It is a history that has endured for many centuries and stood the test of time. Both Omanis and Tanzanians are proud of the link. There have been intermarriages between the two people that go

back to ages. So President Hassan's visit is really a celebration of the memorable ties," Abdulla Al Harthy, an Omani who was born in Tanzania, told *Times of Oman*.

The Tanzanian diaspora in Oman number over 30,000 and is engaged in different sectors, including teaching, information technology, engineering and oil and gas.

Collaborating

The two countries are now collaborating to build tourism resorts through Omran and set up joint industries as part of the advanced negotiations between the two governments. Oman and Tanzania officials also are engaged in discussions to establish joint offshore oil and gas explorations.

According to statistics, about 25,000 Omanis travel to Tanzania every year for holiday or for visiting relatives in different parts of the country.

INITIATIVES

OCCI making efforts to boost Oman-Tanzania trade ties

MUSCAT: Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) has been making necessary efforts to further strengthen the economic relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the United Republic of Tanzania.

These efforts included encouraging investments and showcasing the available investment opportunities, holding seminars and organising economic forums to encourage contact and interaction between Omani businessmen and their Tanzanian counterparts among other things.

Redha bin Jumah Al Saleh, Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) said that the current official visit of President Samya Suluhu Hassan of the United Republic of Tanzania to the Sultanate reflected the keenness of the leaderships of both the countries for further development of the strong historic relations between the two countries in light of the cooperation in the various spheres established during the past decades.

He said in a statement to Oman News Agency that the total bilateral capital investment stood at OMR8.320 million of which OMR1.899 million represented the contribution of the Tanzanian side.



He also called for further efforts to expand the cooperation between the two countries to cover other sectors including the logistics services sector at the time Oman aspires to benefit from the geographic location of Tanzania to become an access to the markets of countries in Africa and beyond.

This cooperation would make Tanzania the gateway for transit of African products to the emerging markets in the GCC States apart from East Asian countries, he said.

Oman Vision 2040 encompasses advantages and enablers to a number of sectors in the private sector including the sectors of in-

dustry, agriculture, fisheries, mining, tourism, education, renewable energy and information technology, which together and individually represent opportunities for expanding cooperation between the private sectors of the two countries, he said adding that the visit would drive cooperation for achievement of the joint interests of the two countries.

The deep-rooted relations and the history of trade between the two countries are factors for making more efforts towards enhancement of exchange of trade and investment between the two countries, he said. -ONA



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HM HOSTS DINNER IN HONOUR OF TANZANIAN PRESIDENT

HM, Tanzanian President exchanged commemorative gifts on the occasion

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik hosted an official dinner at Al Alam Palace guest house on Sunday evening in honour of President Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania. Prior to the dinner, His Majesty the Sultan and the Tanzanian President exchanged commemorative gifts on the occasion of the Tanzanian President's visit to Oman. The dinner was attended by members of the Royal Family, ministers, chairmen of the State Council and Shura Council, commanders of the Sultan's Armed Forces and the Royal Oman Police, as well as ambassadors of Arab and friendly countries, members of the State Council and Shura Council, under-secretaries and some ambassadors at the Foreign Ministry. -ONA



Careers at Khimji Ramdas

Khimji Ramdas (KR) is one of the most respected and admired business conglomerates in Oman. Headquartered in Muscat, it partners with some iconic global brands, across FMCG-Retail, Lifestyle, F&B, Construction & Engineering, Shipping & Logistics, and various other business verticals. As an employer of choice, Khimji Ramdas fosters excellence and individual initiative. Experience a fulfilling career, and be a part of the KR workforce.

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HM welcomes President of Tanzania



His Majesty the Sultan met the guest at the foot of the ramp, welcoming her and wishing her and the official delegation accompanying her a pleasant stay in Oman

MUSCAT: President Samia Suluhu Hassan of the United Republic of Tanzania arrived on Sunday in the Sultanate of Oman on an official visit lasting for three days.

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik led the welcoming party for the Tanzanian President. When the jet of President Samia touched ground at the Royal Airport, His

Majesty the Sultan met the guest at the foot of the ramp, welcoming her and wishing her and the official delegation accompanying her a pleasant stay in Oman.

Along with His Majesty the Sultan, the Tanzanian President was received by His Highness Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Af-

fairs, Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal Al Busaidi, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, Gen. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nu'mani, Minister of the Royal Office, Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal Al Busaidi, Minister of Interior, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, Dr. Rahma bint Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (Head of the Mission of Honour), Saud bin Hilal Al Shidhani, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Republic of Tanzania, Abdallah Abasi Kilima, Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania to the Sultanate of Oman and members of the Mission of Honour.

Then, His Majesty the Sultan and the Tanzanian President headed to the reception hall, passing through two rows of the guard

of honour of the Royal Guard of Oman (RGO).

After a short stay, the motorcade of His Majesty the Sultan and his guest, President Samia Suluhu Hassan, left the Royal Airport heading to Al Alam Palace for an official reception ceremony.

Before the arrival of the main vehicle of the motorcade at Al Alam Palace, a squadron of cavalry lined the two sides of the road heading to the gate of the palace.

Upon the arrival of the motorcade of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and President Samia Suluhu Hassan at the entrance of Al Alam Palace, the RGO band played a welcoming tune, to the accompaniment of trumpets, as the motorcade entered the courtyard of Al Alam Palace.

His Majesty the Sultan accom-

panied the President of Tanzania to the Dais of Honour where the Royal Anthem of the United Republic of Tanzania was played, while the artillery fired a 21-gun salute for the guest.

Then, His Majesty the Sultan shook hands with members of the official delegation accompanying the President of Tanzania, wishing them a pleasant stay. In her turn, the guest shook hands with some members of the Royal Family, Chairmen of the State Council and Shura Council, ministers, commanders of the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) and the Royal Oman Police (ROP).

After that, His Majesty the Sultan and the guest proceeded to the hall where they took Arabian coffee.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan is accompanied during her visit to

the Sultanate of Oman by an official delegation comprising January Yusuf Makamba, Minister of Energy, Dr. Pindi Chana, Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism, Dr. Khalid Salum Mohamed, Minister of Works, Transport and Communications, Ambassador Mbarouk Nassoro Mbarouk, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Fatma Rajab, Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Abdallah Abasi Kilima, Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania to the Sultanate of Oman and some Tanzanian officials.

During the visit, the two sides will exchange points of view about ways to realize the aspirations of the two countries and elevate joint cooperation towards broader horizons. -OMA





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OFFICIAL SESSION

Oman, Turkey hold talks to enhance cooperation in records and archives

MUSCAT: An official session of talks between the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Turkey was held at the National Records and Archives Authority (NRAA) on Sunday.

The session dealt with areas related to records, archives, historical studies and cultural spheres.

During the session, the Omani side was represented by Dr. Hamad Mohammed Al Dhawyani, Chairman of the NRAA, while the Turkish side was represented by Prof. Uğur Ünal, Director of the State Archives of the Presidency.

— ONA



OMAN - TANZANIA

FROM A1 Bilateral meeting

It was also attended from the Tanzanian side by January Yusuf Makamba, Minister of Energy, Dr. Pindi Chana, Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism, Dr. Khalid Salum Mohamed, Minister of Works, Transport and Communications, Ambassador Mbarouk Nassoro Mbarouk, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Fatma Rajab, Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Abdallah Abasi Kilima, Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania to the Sultanate of Oman and some Tanzanian officials. - ONA

MUSCAT ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY

Electricity tariff reduction announced

MUSCAT: A reduction in electricity tariffs by 15 per cent has been announced, and will be applicable on bills from 1 May to 31 August, Muscat Electricity Distribution Company announced.

IN OMAN

Over 48,000 apply for IKEA jobs

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Swedish home furnishings giant IKEA is contributing to the local Omani economy by creating numerous job opportunities for the opening of its first store in the Sultanate of Oman.

The retailer received over 48,000 applications to fill various roles across different departments and positions with a focus on equal opportunities to bring balance into the workplace.

IKEA's focus on Omani hires aligns with the country's vision 2040 which aims to diversify and build a sustainable economy to enable growth; integrating roles and creating equal work opportunities for men and women.

To support the vision, IKEA has launched several training and development programmes for its co-workers locally including its resident programme, Valkommen.

These programmes will provide all co-workers access to best practices regionally and across

the global IKEA network to support the upskilling and reskilling of the nation's talent.

The resident programme is an introduction to the IKEA concept and includes several levels of on-boarding programme that instils and builds the IKEA culture and value system across the workforce.

IKEA also offers role-based development, which allows the co-workers to develop in their current role to offer the right support and advice to customers in-store on their home furnishing journey.

Additionally, IKEA will invest in the personal development of its co-workers, with each co-worker being given a detailed plan on how they can further strengthen their skills.

Vinod Jayan, Managing Director - Al-Futtaim IKEA Oman, UAE, Egypt and Qatar said, "As outlined in vision 2040, Oman's private sector is a key contributor towards the country's economic expansion and social development."

"The recent hiring of Omani nationals for IKEA's first store in the country is another step towards this vision. With a strong focus on equal employment, diversification and inclusion is at the heart of our corporate policy. For example, the first ever female fork-lift operator across our territories is hired for this store. By hiring the right mix of talent, we are opening doors to a wide range of ideas, skills, resources and energies, giving the business a competitive edge," he added.

Al-Futtaim IKEA uses multiple professionals development platforms to contribute to the growth of its co-workers. For the opening, the Swedish retailer spent 55,000 hours training the co-workers and preparing them to successfully face challenges on the floor. All co-workers can qualify for any of these programmes based on their assessment by their managers. For the opening, the Swedish retailer spent 55,000 hours training the co-workers and preparing for the challenges on the floor.

MINISTRY STATEMENT

Falajs restored

MUSCAT: More than 75 falajs, affected by tropical condition Shaheen have been rehabilitated and are being maintained in a number of wilayats of the governorate by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources in North Al Batinah Governorate. Work is currently also underway to maintain and rehabilitate 20 more falajs

— Times News Service

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Ministry of Interior

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01/2022 (22817)	Consulting services for the construction of two multi-purpose halls in the wilayats of Haima and Dima Wai Tayeen	First	26/06/2022	20/07/2022	RO 25/-
02/2022 (22770)	Maintenance of the office building of the Deputy Wali of Sur in Ras Al Hadd and the Hospitality Building	Third	26/06/2022	20/07/2022	RO 25/-

Interested companies specialized in the above-mentioned works and having valid registration certificates from the Tender Board may obtain the tender documents of terms and specifications from the following website:

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Mass protests held across US cities to condemn gun violence

The demonstration followed shootings that left 19 schoolchildren and two teachers dead

WASHINGTON: Amid increased incidents of mass shootings in the United States, protestors gathered in Washington DC as well in cities across the country on Saturday to demonstrate against gun violence, reported local media.

The protest organized by “March for Our Lives” comes as a reprise of student-sponsored demonstrations that drew hundreds of thousands of people in 2018, after a 19-year-old gunman opened fire at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, killing 17 and wounding 17 others, according to New York Times report. The demonstration followed shootings last month that left 10 Black people dead in a Buffalo supermarket and killed 19 schoolchildren and two teachers at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas.

“No more,” David Hogg, a March for Our Lives co-founder and a survivor of the Parkland shooting, said on Twitter.

“It’s time democrats, republicans, gun owners and non-gun owners come together” and start focusing on what they can agree on, he stated continuing the thread, *New York Times* reported.

The Saturday protests unfolded



PROTESTS: The protest organised by “March for Our Lives” comes as a reprise of student-sponsored demonstrations that drew hundreds of thousands of people in 2018.

in hundreds of cities across the country as at a smattering of locations in Europe. At the main protest site, the Washington Monument in the nation’s capital, survivors of mass shootings, teachers’ representatives, civil rights advocates and elected officials addressed the crowd.

Meanwhile, bipartisan negotiations on legislation regarding mass shootings are underway in the Senate, but Republicans who have blocked such laws for years continue to say that the murders are the result of other problems, such as mental illness or flaws in school security, not the weapons themselves. The Senate talks are said to focus on those claims, as well as on background checks for weapons purchases.

A small group of Republican and Democratic senators have begun an uphill effort to strike a bipartisan gun deal after continuous massacres in New York and Texas. The involvement of Senator John Cornyn of Texas, who has a top rating from the National Rifle Association, means that any possible agreement is likely to include incremental steps, said *New York Times*.

After parents of victims and survivors of mass shootings made wrenching appeals for Congress to act on gun violence in a hearing on June 8, the House voted nearly along party lines to ban the sale of semiautomatic weapons to people under the age of 21 and of large-capacity magazines. Though the bill passed 223 to 204, it stands no

chance of passing in the evenly divided Senate.

However, states are rushing towards new gun restrictions in a hope that Congress will be able to take swift action against gun violence.

At a meeting of the United States Conference of Mayors, Republican and Democratic leaders from over 170 cities across the country voiced their common frustration at the lack of action on gun control.

President Joe Biden last week called for banning semi-automatic, assault-style rifles and high-capacity magazines and raising the minimum age to buy those weapons from 18 to 21 amid an increase in mass shooting incidents in the US. **ANI**



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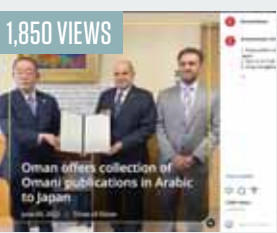
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Maghrib Minute news wrap

The Maghrib Minute news wrap had 1,850 views and 51 likes on Instagram.

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION

EU special envoys meet as human rights situation in Afghanistan deteriorates

KABUL: Amid the deteriorating human rights situation due to the Taliban regime, Special Envoy of the European Union for Afghanistan Tomas Niklasson hosted Special Representatives and Envoys for Afghanistan from the EU Member States in Brussels on Saturday.

Taking to Twitter, the envoy said, “Concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation, notably for women, girls and ethnic groups, the lack of political inclusivity, and the inability of the Taliban to adopt and implement coherent policies in line with commitments to the Afghan people,” Khaama Press reported. “In addition to the delegates, “external specialists” on human rights and economics attended the event, he further wrote on his Twitter handle as he condemned the Taliban’s enforced stringent policies on women.

He wrote about the meeting’s



detail which concentrated on recent issues involving women and girls, the “deteriorating human rights situation”, the absence of policy and public engagement, and the difficulty to implement coherent policies compliant with the international universal principles that also serve the people of Afghanistan.

The meeting was held in Brussels, and the representatives of EU

member states have been reminded of their continued support and commitment to the Afghan people, Khaama Press reported.

Moreover, this comes at a time when the Human Rights Watch has accused the Taliban of war crimes in Panjshir and has called on the international community to impose a travel ban on senior Taliban officials in a separate report. **ANI**

HELICOPTER CRASH

Seven bodies found at helicopter crash site in Italy

MILAN: Italian rescuers on Saturday located the bodies of seven people killed in a helicopter crash, authorities said, two days after the aircraft disappeared from radar screens in a mountainous area.

“The rescuers have found dead the seven passengers from the helicopter, four of Turkish and two of Lebanese nationality, who were on a business trip to Italy. As well as the Italian pilot,” the prefect’s office in the city of Modena said in a statement.

The helicopter took off on Thursday morning from Lucca in Tuscany. It was heading towards the northern city of Treviso when it got caught up in a storm over a remote area before flight systems lost track of the chopper.

Runner's tip-off helps locate crash site

Colonel Alfonso Cipriano, who heads the air force operation in charge of the search, said rescuers went to the crash site after a mountain runner reported seeing what he thought was a part of the



helicopter during an excursion on Mount Cusna on Saturday morning. Air crews confirmed the site and searchers initially found five corpses before later discovering two more, Cipriano said. The location was in a hard-to-reach, heavily forested valley.

The four Turkish businessmen who perished worked for Eczacibasi Consumer Products, a subsidiary of major Turkish industrial group Eczacibasi. The company said in a statement it was with “great pain and sadness” that its director of factories, direc-

tor of hygienic papers at its Yalova province factory, director of investment projects and production director at its Manisa province factory had died and relayed their condolences. The crash site was some 10 kilometres (six miles) from where rescuers initially began searching based on the passengers’ last cell phone pings, which indicate a person’s network location. Given the difficult terrain, Cipriano said it might have taken hours more, or even days, to find the helicopter had it not been for the runner’s suggestion. **DW**

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NATIONAL DAY

HRH Crown Prince congratulates President of the Russian Federation on National Day



HIS ROYAL Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister, has sent a cable of congratulation to President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation on the anniversary of his country's National Day.

In his cable, HRH the Crown Prince wished the President constant good health and happiness and the government and people of the Russian Federation steady progress and prosperity. -SPA

THE CUSTODIAN OF THE TWO HOLY MOSQUES CHAIRS CABINET’S SESSION

The Cabinet praised the outcomes of the OIC’s fourth conference in Jeddah

At the outset of the session, the Cabinet was briefed on the recent talks and discussions that took place between Saudi officials and their counterparts in a number of countries to develop relations and push them towards further cooperation and coordination to serve common interests and contribute to establishing security and stability in the region and the world.

The Cabinet then addressed a number of reports on the developments in various arenas, reiterating Saudi Arabia’s keenness to support the United Nations’ efforts to reach a sustainable political solution to the Yemeni crisis and end the suffering of the Yemeni people to support the humanitarian, economic and development aspects so as to contribute to their security and stability.

The Cabinet reviewed the outcomes of the meeting of the 152nd session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for Arab States regarding the developments of the joint Gulf action as well as enhancing it in all fields, in addition to the developments of regional and international political issues.

In a statement to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), Acting Minister of Media Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Qasabi said that the Cabinet touched upon the outcomes of the ministerial strategic dialogue meeting between the GCC and the Russian Federation and the joint

ministerial meeting between the GCC and Ukraine, where these two meetings reflected the unified Gulf position regarding the Russian-Ukrainian crisis and its repercussions, especially with regard to food security of the affected countries and the world.

The Cabinet praised the outcomes of the Fourth Conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Mediation, which was held in Jeddah.

The Cabinet within this context referred to the great efforts exerted by Saudi Arabia, since its establishment, in mediating between countries to resolve disputes by peaceful means, in addition to supporting dialogue to achieve stability, security and prosperity, which are the core of progress and development.

The Cabinet welcomed the announcement of Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC) members, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to designate (16) names (13 individuals and 3 entities) affiliated to variety of terrorist organizations.

The Cabinet valued the fruitful cooperation between the countries of the GCC and the USA in this field and to strengthen regional capabilities in order to target activities that pose a threat to security.

The Cabinet stated that the Saudi ports’ ranking first in the 2021 Container Port Performance Index (CPPI) report, published by The World Bank and S&P Global Market Intelli-

gence, reflects the national ambitious efforts towards consolidating Saudi Arabia’s position as a global logistics hub connecting the three continents, as this also comes in light of the great interest that the government attaches to developing the transport and logistics industry in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and maximising its economic and development role.

The Cabinet considered electing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as vice chair of Governing Board of the Global Research Council an affirmation of its prominent status and its scientific institutions in the field of research and development in the Middle East and North Africa and at the global level, in addition to its influential role in enhancing progress based on science, knowledge and innovation.

The Cabinet also commended launching the Makkah Route Initiative in several countries with the aim of receiving pilgrims and completing their procedures from their countries easily, as part of what the state attaches of keenness to develop the quality of services presented to them to the highest level and to realise the targets and programs of Saudi Vision 2030.

The Cabinet was briefed on a number of issues on its agenda and issued the following decisions: First: Authorising the Minister of Energy – or a deputy – to hold talks with the Greek side regarding a draft co-operation agreement between the governments of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the

Hellenic Republic in the energy field, sign it and refer the final signed copy to proceed with formal procedures.

Second: Authorising the Minister of Environment, Water and Agriculture – or a deputy – to hold talks with the Romanian side regarding a draft memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in the agricultural field, sign it and refer the final signed copy to proceed with formal procedures.

Third: Approving the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s accession to the Artemis Accords: cooperation principles in the fields of civil exploration and using the moon, mars, comets and asteroids for peaceful purposes.

Fourth: Approving a memorandum of understanding in the field of land road between the Ministry of Transport and Logistic Services in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Ministry of Transport, Telecommunications and Information Technology in Oman.

Fifth: Authorising the Minister of Transport and Logistic Services, Chairman of the Transport General Authority – or a deputy – to hold talks with the Djiboutian side regarding a draft cooperation agreement between the governments of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Djibouti in the maritime transport field, sign it and refer the final signed copy to proceed with formal procedures. -SPA



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MINISTRY OF COMMERCE ANNOUNCES LAUNCHING NEW SERVICES FOR JOINT-STOCK, FOREIGN COMPANIES THROUGH DIGITAL BRANCH

The Ministry of Commerce has announced launching new services for joint-stock and foreign companies through the digital branch of the ministry, out of its keenness to facilitate procedures of starting commercial works and stimulate commercial environment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. »



PRINCE MAJID PARK CONTINUES PRESENTING CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AS PART OF JEDDAH SEASON EVENTS 2022

Prince Majid Park continued today its cultural activities, as part of the programs of 2022 Jeddah Season for weekly Cultures, where the “Filipino Night” was held amid a large attendance of visitors.

The participants in the artistic shows presented different colors that express the Filipino culture with a large presence on the stage of events as it also presented a

number of various entertainment and shows with which the audience interacted. Visitors enjoyed shows of Filipino culture as it performed its folklore, in addition to the services provided inside the park such as restaurants, shops, zones of shows and events that added an atmosphere of joy and happiness to the faces of visitors, families and children of different nationalities. »

EXPORTED CONTAINERS

Saudi Ports record 23.70% increase in cargo throughput volumes



THE SAUDI PORTS’ container throughput volumes reached 600,107 TEU, which is a 1.38% increase compared to numbers recorded in May 2021. The exported containers remarkably increased by 2.57% with a total of 175,958 TEU, while the imported containers hit a minor setback as it decreased by 0.64% with a total of 176,978 TEU.

Meanwhile, the initiatives launched by the Saudi Ports Authority (Mawani), in line with the National Transport and Logistics

Strategy (NTLS), which offer competitive services in throughput and operations, have raised the number of transshipment containers in Saudi ports to reach 247,172 TEU, which is 2.01% compared to numbers recorded during the same time last year.

Similarly, the cargo throughput volumes increased by 23.70% with a total of 21,041,021 tons, as the general cargo recorded a 21.86% increase with a total of 810,244 tons, the dry bulk which increased by 2.46%

with a total of 4,166,749 tons, and the liquid bulk which increased by 30.74% with a total of 15,869,634 tons, as a result of organizing the truck flow to and from the Saudi ports, which is within Mawani’s priorities, in order to enable various national industries and sectors in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Whereas the number of vessels increased by 3.03% with a total of 1,020 vessels, and the number of vehicles increased by 42.33% with a total of 81,737 vehicles, on

the other hand, the percentage of food decreased by 6.50% with a total of 1,825,579 tons compared to numbers recorded last year.

The Saudi ports recorded a 16.38% increase in the number of passengers with a total of 54,907 passengers, and unloading 459,677 heads of imported livestock, which is a 181.64% increase, as these numbers strengthen the Saudi imports and exports, along with catalyzing economic growth in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. -SPA

INVESTMENT

‘Stan Lee Super Con’ exhibition kicks off in Jeddah

The activities of the “Stan Lee Super Con 2022” exhibition were launched in Jeddah Superdome as part of the Jeddah season’s events, in the presence of a number of international Hollywood superstars, and a large turnout on its first day from fans of international comic characters and visitors to the Jeddah season.

The exhibition is part of the international events of the Jeddah season 2022 and one of the three international exhibitions hosted by the season, as the activities will continue until next Saturday.

The “Stan Lee Super Con” event is exceptional and distinguished since it allowed visitors and those interested in meeting international comic characters to participate in Stan Lee’s birthday



celebration while dressed as the superheroes from the international films featured in the exhibition. The event attracted fans of these world-famous figures, in addition to discussion meetings with celebrities and a display of costumes used in films, television shows, and performances.

The exhibition hosts international exhibitions accompanying this event, some of which are being held for the first time in the world, such as the exclusive Cinema Watches Exhibition, which features 23 watches at an estimated cost of \$3 million, and the Premiere Gallery, which gives fans an opportunity to view and read rare books. Fans of superheroes and well-known characters from movies and television shows will

be able to see the details of these characters in real life at the exhibition, which will also feature a variety of interactive experiences for people of all ages, as well as art shows and international musical performances.

The opening ceremony was attended by Hollywood star Michael Rooker, who is best known for his role as Yondu Yudonta in the film “Guardians of the Galaxy” as well as his appearances in the horror TV series “The Walking Dead” from AMC Studios. Other celebrities who attended included Lauren Ridloff, who has participated in several series and films, including the movie “The Eternals,” and Mehcad Brooks, one of the heroes of the series Supergirl. -SPA

RANKING INDEX

16 Saudi Universities included in QS World University Rankings

The number of Saudi universities in the QS World University Ranking Index jumped to 16 universities for the year 2023, an increase by seven universities compared to the 2019 ranking.

The QS World University Ranking Index has seen a growth in the number of Saudi universities included in the classification system, over five consecutive years, starting from 2019 with 9 universities, and 2020 with 10 universities, while in 2021, 11 universities were included in the QS classification, constant increase for the first three years at the rate of one university for each year, up to 14 universities in 2022, and 16 universities in the 2023 ranking,

with five universities entering the classification in the last two versions of the ranking.

With this new progress, the Kingdom is 6 places away to be included in the top 100 international universities list. According to the QS World University Ranking Index, King Abdulaziz University tops the Saudi universities, followed by King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, and King Saud University. Al-Faisal and Northern Border Universities also entered the rankings for the first time in the new ranking.

The QS classification evaluates universities over several criteria, mainly the university’s reputation. -SPA

SPORTS

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England share points with Italy in lively encounter

Italy, having named just two of their starters from the XI that began their fixture against Hungary, carved out the first opportunity within three minutes of the game

WOLVERHAMPTON: England's winless start to this UEFA Nations League campaign continued following a goalless Group A3 draw against Italy in Wolverhampton on Saturday.

Italy, having named just two of their starters from the XI that began their Matchday 2 fixture against Hungary, carved out the first opportunity three minutes in. Lorenzo Pellegrini's clever pass dissected the home back-line, but Davide Frattesi side-footed agonisingly wide. England grew in stature and rattled the frame of the goal shortly afterwards, with Mason Mount curling a first-time effort that Gianluigi Donnarumma was able to tip on



to the woodwork.

Roberto Mancini's men looked a constant threat when attacking down the right flank and that play almost paid dividends midway through the first half. Giovanni Di Lorenzo's low centre picked out Sandro Tonali, but Aaron Ramsdale pulled off a smart stop to repel the strike. Ramsdale also had to be at his best just before the break to tip Matteo Pessina's looping shot over the bar.

The second period began where the first left off, with both Pessina

and stand-in home skipper Raheem Sterling firing over from close range shortly after the restart. However, the sides struggled to recreate the intensity of the opening 45 minutes, despite the hosts' introduction of Harry Kane off the bench just after the hour mark.

Italy substitute Wilfried Gnonto managed to find some space in the England area with 20 minutes remaining, but could only find the side-netting with his powerful shot. As the game wore on, the visi-

tors appeared satisfied with avoiding defeat, whilst the hosts failed to create a clear-cut opportunity to clinch all three points.

Mancini named the second-youngest starting XI of his tenure, with an average age of 25 years and 126 days (after Hungary, 25 years and 18 days). The last four meetings between these sides have all been drawn.

England have won just one of their last six UEFA Nations League outings, failing to score in four of those. **ANI**

Johnson's late goal earns Wales dramatic draw against Belgium

CARDIFF: Brennan Johnson bagged his first Wales goal to grab a glorious UEFA Nations League draw against the world's second ranked team Belgium on Saturday.

The young Nottingham Forest striker thought he'd been denied his dramatic 87th-minute equaliser when VAR interrupted the Red Wall celebrations. But, after a brief pause, French referee Benoit Bastien awarded the goal, sending the Cardiff City Stadium back into raptures. The game ended 1-1, which was a fair result, but for another VAR intervention, Cymru could've taken all three points. Ethan Ampadu's fifth-minute thunderbolt was cancelled out by the video referee after Joe Rodon's foot was adjudged to be inches offside.



in the Nations League; the last time they failed to find the net was against France in the 2018 World Cup semi-finals. While, Wales have lost only one of their last seven matches against Belgium (W2 D4).

This precious point keeps Cymru alive in Nations League Group A4, with trips to Netherlands and Belgium to come, before finishing off with what could be a crunch clash against Poland in Cardiff, in September.

But Rob Page's men were made to work hard, especially either side of halftime, as Belgium's talisman and captain Kevin De Bruyne caused chaos with some sublime work before Youri Tielemans finished a wonderful move on 50 minutes.

But, less than a week on from their glorious World Cup qualification, this courageous Cymru team weren't to be denied and snatched a draw from Roberto Martinez' Red Devils, courtesy of Johnson's cool finish which followed some sensational work from substitute Aaron Ramsey on the edge of the Belgian box.

Now Cymru head to the Netherlands on Tuesday full of confidence as they look to avenge this week's disappointing defeat against the Dutch and aim to end this wonderful week on another massive high.

But Poland's 2-2 draw in Amsterdam means Cymru currently sit bottom of the group, with just one point from three games and look like they need a result in Rotterdam.

Belgium have scored in 47 consecutive international matches, including their last 15

Hungary, Germany share points

Zsolt Nagy and Jonas Hofmann traded early goals as Hungary and Germany shared the points in a compelling encounter in UEFA Nations League Group A3 on Saturday.

Hungary had stunned Germany with an early goal when these teams met at UEFA EURO 2020, and the hosts needed only six minutes to go ahead in Budapest, Nagy rifling ruthlessly beyond Manuel Neuer after the goalkeeper had beaten Roland Sallai's header into his path. An open, attacking start from both sides invited ambition in the middle of the pitch. When Nico Schlotterbeck's perceptive pass found Hofmann inside the penalty area, the Borussia Monchengladbach midfielder beat the advancing Peter Gulacsi to the delivery, poked the ball past the goalkeeper and calmly slotted in to ensure Germany's deficit was wiped out within four minutes.

Neuer produced an improvised save to thwart adventurous full-back Attila Fiola's strike shortly before the break, but the second half offered far less action in either penalty area. Hofmann could not locate Timo Werner with the Hungary goal gaping, and substitute Martin Adam directed a close-range header in to Neuer's arms. **ANI**

TENNIS

Riske, Maia to clash in Nottingham Open final

NOTTINGHAM: The No. 6 seed Alison Riske reached her 13th career singles final with a victory over Viktorija Golubic at the Nottingham Open.

Riske will face No. 7 seed Beatriz Haddad Maia after the Brazilian advanced to the final over an injured Tereza Martincova. Former Top 20 player Riske reached the 13th WTA Tour final of her career with a 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 win over Viktorija Golubic of Switzerland.

Riske took 2 hours and 22 minutes of play to garner the victory, while also withstanding a rain delay of over an hour at the start of the third set. Riske is now a win



away from her fourth career singles title.

"[Golubic] is extremely tough to play out here, especially in these conditions," Riske said afterward,

as per wtatennis.com. "It was a really challenging day, and honestly it was a huge win for me just personally, because it really took a lot from me to get over the hump today. I'm extremely proud of my effort," she added.

Earlier, Haddad Maia made a WTA singles final for the first time since 2017 by advancing past an ailing Tereza Martincova, 6-3, 4-1, ret. Martincova of the Czech Republic retired due to a right knee injury.

World No.48 Haddad Maia will attempt to claim her first WTA singles title on Sunday. In her lone previous WTA singles final,

Haddad Maia finished as runner-up to Jelena Ostapenko at 2017 Seoul. Haddad Maia has exhibited excellent form in recent weeks as she sits at her career-high ranking.

"I think I have a game that I can adapt from the clay to the grass," Haddad Maia said. "One of my qualities is that I'm very resilient, and I think on grass, you cannot think about the past, it's only the next point, and I was trying to push myself every point," she added.

Haddad Maia is the second Brazilian woman to reach a WTA singles final this season, following Laura Pigossi, who reached the final in Bogota on clay in April. **ANI**

FORMULA ONE

Ferrari's Charles storms to pole position in Azerbaijan GP



BAKU: Ferrari's Charles Leclerc stormed to pole position for the 2022 Azerbaijan GP, beating the Red Bulls of second-placed Sergio Perez and third-placed Max Verstappen by three-tenths of a second to take his fourth consecutive pole and his sixth of the season so far.

The Ferrari driver made a small mistake on his opening run of the final Q3 top-10 shootout at the Baku City Circuit to lie second ahead of the final runs, but on his last lap the Monegasque put in a superlative display to eclipse his first lap by almost half and to claim pole with a 0.282 margin to Perez who beat team-mate Verstappen by five-hundredths of a second.

Ferrari's Carlos Sainz, quickest after the first run of Q3, brushed

the walls of the street circuit on his final run and had to settle for fourth place on the grid.

"It feels good, this one. Obviously, all pole positions, feels good, but this one I probably did not expect it, because I thought Red Bull were stronger, especially in Q1 and Q2, I really struggled to see that we were faster, but then in the last lap, everything came together and I managed to do a good lap, so extremely happy... I'm really excited for tomorrow," Charles Leclerc, Ferrari said after qualification on Saturday.

George Russell rounded out the top five for Mercedes, Pierre Gasly sharing the third row with him with a solid showing for AlphaTauri. Unhappy throughout qualifying, Lewis Hamilton took seventh and will share row four

with AlphaTauri's Yuki Tsunoda.

Sebastian Vettel took P9 for Aston Martin with Alpine's Fernando Alonso rounding out the top 10.

Q2 saw both McLarens and both Alfa Romeos eliminated: Lando Norris 11th and Daniel Ricciardo 12th; Zhou Guanyu 14th and Valtteri Bottas 15th. Between those orange and red pairs was the blue Alpine driver, Esteban Ocon.

Haas's Kevin Magnussen was left in Q1, taking a provisional P16 on the grid, Williams drivers Alex Albon 17th and Nicholas Latifi 18th.

Aston Martin driver Lance Stroll crashed out of Q1 and will start a provisional P19 on the grid ahead of Haas's Mick Schumacher, 20th. **ANI**

SRI LANKA VS AUSTRALIA



Sri Lanka script history by scoring 59 runs off 17 balls against Australia

KANDY: Sri Lanka team on Saturday created history by scoring 59 runs off 17 balls in a successful run chase against Australia in the third and final T20I in Kandy.

The team scored 59 runs in the last 17 balls to register a new record in T20 Internationals. This is the most number of runs scored in the last three overs by any team to win a T20I game. Sri Lanka captain Dasun Shanaka smashed 54 runs off just 25 balls to script a massive record and power his team to four wickets win over visitors.

Australia were measured in their reaction to Dasun Shanaka's almost single-handed effort to score the 59 runs Sri Lanka required from the final three overs of the third T20I. Dasun's knock of unbeaten 54 runs was decorated with five fours and four sixes.

The right-handed batter completely hammered Josh Hazle-

wood for 20 runs off 4 balls in the 18th over of the game and it was the miraculous turning point for Sri Lanka. Along with Shanaka, Chamika Karunaratne also remained unbeaten on 14 off 10 balls.

Talking about the match, Australia batted first and put a total of 176/5 in 20 overs all thanks to the crucial knocks of David Warner (39), Steven Smith (37*) and Marcus Stoinis (38).

Chasing 177, Sri Lanka was struggling to bat till the skipper Dasun came out to bat and smashed Australian bowlers all around the ground. Dasun led from the front and the whole Stadium burst in joy once the thrilling victory shot was hit.

However, Australia clinched the T20I series by 2-1. Both teams will square off in the five-match ODI series, beginning Tuesday in Pallekele. **ANI**

FIFAE NATIONS CUP

India qualify for FIFAE Nations Cup for first time

NEW DELHI: India created history on Saturday as they qualified for the FIFAE Nations Cup 2022.

This is the first time that India will play at the esports showpiece event, which is set to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark this year, from July 27 to July 30, 2022. India defeated Korea Republic and Malaysia in the FIFAE Nations Series 2022 Playoffs to seal their qualification for the showpiece event. The journey for the Indian efootball team kicked-off in January 2021 when AIFF signed the participation agreement with FIFA for the FIFAE Nations Series 2021. India was among 60 countries to participate and was placed in the Middle East and Africa Zone. India finished 3rd in its zone, narrowly missing out on a place in the FIFAE Nations Playoffs 2021.

India ended the season with a global ranking of 22 and finished above heavyweights such as Italy, Argentina and Spain in the 2021 rankings.

For the 2022 season, India was moved to Asia/Oceania region and was awarded a spot in the Play-Ins, which would provide direct qualification to the Playoffs (the last stage before the Nations Cup). During the play-ins, India played 32 games across 4 Match Weeks with 12 wins, 11 losses and 9 draws. Throughout the 4 Match Weeks, India retained their place in Division 1.

With this, India successfully qualified to the Playoffs by finishing second in the Consistency Points chart, moving one step closer to the FIFAE Nations Cup 2022. **ANI**



MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,125.81 points, down by 0.21 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.49 per cent at 459.45 points. Oman Arab Bank, up 6.78 per cent, was the top gainer while, Takaful Oman, down 6.67 per cent, was the top loser.

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EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

ECB pledges interest rate rise in July as inflation bites

BRUSSELS: The European Central Bank (ECB) announced that while the interest rate would remain unchanged for the next month, there would be a hike in July, the first in over a decade.

The ECB also announced that it will end its bond buying stimulus program, sometimes also called quantitative easing, amid concern over the growing pace of inflation in the eurozone. This program essentially involves pumping more money into the economy, fueling inflation.

Spiraling energy prices

Prices for goods and services in the eurozone have reached record highs amid spiraling energy prices caused partly by the conflict in Ukraine.

"In May, inflation again rose significantly, mainly because of surging energy and food prices, including due to the impact of the war. But inflation pressures have broadened and intensified, with prices for many goods and services increasing strongly. Eurosystem staff have revised their baseline inflation projections up significantly," ECB President Christine Lagarde said during a press conference.

In a tweet, the ECB said it expected inflation to remain high for some time before coming down to the 2 per cent target.

Lagarde also spoke about Russia's war in Ukraine and said it was having global ramifications.

"Russia's unjustified aggression towards Ukraine continues to weigh on the economy in Europe and beyond. It is disrupting trade, is leading to shortages of materials, and is contributing to high energy and commodity prices," Lagarde said. — **OW**

FOREIGN EXCHANGE

India's forex reserves slide by \$306mn to \$601bn

MUMBAI: India's foreign exchange (forex) reserves fell by \$306 million to \$601.057 billion for the week ended June 3 dragged by a sharp decline in the value of foreign currency assets, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data showed.

The forex reserves have declined after two consecutive weeks of increase. The country's forex reserves had increased by \$3.854 billion during the week ended May 27 and \$4.23 billion in the previous week. According to the Reserve Bank of India's weekly statistical supplement, India's foreign currency assets, which are the biggest component of the forex reserves, fell by \$208 million to \$536.779 billion for the week ended June 3. The foreign currency assets had jumped by \$3.610 billion in the previous week.

Expressed in US dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-dollar currencies like Euro, UK's Pound Sterling and Japanese Yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. The value of gold reserves fell by \$74 million to \$40.843 billion during the week under review. The value of gold reserves had increased in the previous two weeks. — **ANI**

Oman LNG reports over \$3 billion revenue in 2021

The company's annual report shows that its net income at the end of 2021, after-tax deduction, increased by 34 per cent to reach \$886 million, compared to \$663 million at the end of 2020



GOVERNMENT REVENUES: The report indicated that the liquefied natural gas (LNG) sector provided government revenues of about OMR2.87 billion in the past year. — **File photo**

MUSCAT: Oman LNG's revenues by the end of 2021 recorded an increase by 31 per cent to reach \$3.278 billion compared to 2020. The rise is driven by the global economic revival during 2021 and increasing global energy prices.

The company's Net Income After Tax (NIAT) marked an increase by 34 per cent, reaching \$886 million in 2021 compared to \$663 million in 2020 as indicated by the company's recently published Annual Report.

Furthermore, the LNG sector in Oman supported the national revenues from gas by \$2,873 million in 2021. Throughout 2021, the company continued to be a pioneer in corporate social responsibility by dedicating a total of \$37 million to different social investment programmes, initiatives and contribution to relief efforts in areas affected by the tropical cyclone Shaheen and severe weather conditions in the Governorate of South A'Sharqiyah.

Moreover, the company financed the development, establishment and inauguration of various pivotal projects including the Fatah Al Khair Centre in Sur and the provision of solar panels in 32 different buildings of the Omani Women's Associations.

The company also funded equipping health centres in the governorates of North A'Sharqiyah and South A'Sharqiyah, as well as the Royal Hospital in the Governorate of

Muscat with high-end medical tools and equipment. Oman LNG also supported the refurbishment of various laboratories in different higher education institutions in the Sultanate of Oman.

Talal Al Awfi, Chairman of Oman LNG's Board of Directors said that Oman LNG has shown due diligence and ability to cope with different challenges it faced throughout the year. The company has also successfully surpassed these challenges and continued

marking success stories across all levels. He underscored Oman LNG's keenness to reach remarkable levels of success during 2021 as shown by its revenues and NIAT which reached levels near what was recorded before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the various challenges it faced during 2021, Oman LNG looks ahead to enhance its cooperation and collaboration with its stakeholders to further develop the energy sector. — **ONA**

LARGE CAPACITY AGREEMENT

Omantel signs pact for connectivity between Sultanate and major telecom hubs in Europe

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Telecommunications Company (Omantel), Oman's first and leading integrated telecommunications services provider and SUBCO have recently entered into a large capacity agreement for connectivity between Oman and various key telecom hubs in Europe through Omantel's extensive subsea network.

Through this arrangement, Omantel will be providing ultra-high capacity connectivity from Muscat to SUBCO's new PoP's in London, Milan and Marseille effectively extending the Oman Australia Cable (OAC), due to be RFS in Q3, 2022, from Australia to Oman and Europe.

Talal Said Al Mamari - Omantel Chief Executive Officer said, "We



are proud to have been the landing partner for the successfully landed OAC, achieving another key addition in our vision for Oman to be the leading gateway to the region and beyond. Our motto in Omantel's Wholesale is Reach Further which is something we truly live,

and today we see yet another demonstration of fulfilling this mission by enabling our partners in SUBCO to reach further through Omantel's extensive network."

"OAC is going to contribute to changing the landscape of the Wholesale industry and take our col-

laboration to the next level. Omantel was the Wholesale partner of choice for OAC and has attracted more and more international partners like SUBCO to work and collaborate with us," Al Mamari further added.

Bevan Slattery, SUBCO's Founder commented, "I am so excited to see our vision of the first truly diverse route between Asia and the Middle East and now Europe coming to fruition and our relationship with Omantel has been pivotal in helping us to reach further. With the OAC only a few months away from RFS, having this capacity in place to extend our reach into Europe is important to further enable our capability and addressable market."

Omantel and SUBCO are in the process of completing provisioning and handover of the capac-

ity in readiness for OAC service commencement. The parties are also exploring further options to expand their collaboration and to include other upcoming systems to provide further capability and diversity for OAC.

The system also leverages being extended into the Equinix MC1 facility in Oman, which is the first carrier-neutral data centre in MENA and successfully positioned Oman as the natural hosting location for major hyperscalers and tier 1 service providers in the region. This ensures open access to the OAC system and hence further increases the potential of the project. Future phases of OAC include a possible extension to the newly announced Equinix SN1 data centre in Salalah and even beyond.

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MSX index ends lower

Oman Arab Bank, up 6.78 per cent, was the top gainer while, Takaful Oman, down 6.67 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,125.81 points, down by 0.21 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.49 per cent at 459.45 points. Oman Arab Bank, up 6.78 per cent, was the top gainer while, Takaful Oman, down 6.67 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Sohar International Bank were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 283 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR2.98 million, with more than 20.43 million shares changing hands. Out of 43 traded securities, 5 advanced, 17 declined, and 21 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for OMR163,000 while foreign investors were net buyers for OMR89,000, followed by domestic investors for OMR74,000

worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 6,584.74 points, down 0.04 per cent. Prices of Oman Arab Bank, Bank Muscat, National Bank Oman, and Ahli Bank were up by 6.78 per cent, 1.49 per cent, 0.98 per cent, and 0.82 per cent respectively. Prices of Takaful Oman, Sohar International Bank, Al Omaniya Financial Services, Oman & Emirates Investment, and Muscat Finance were down by 6.67 per cent, 4.76 per cent, 3.61 per cent, 3.23 per cent, and 2.82 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,934.82 points, down 0.32 per cent. There were no gainers from the index today. Prices of Construction Materials, Galfar Engineering, Al Anwar Ceramics, Oman Fisheries, and Gulf Mushroom Products were down by 5.68 per cent, 1.89 per cent, 0.94 per cent, 0.86 per cent, and 0.71 per cent respectively. — **United Securities**

ISLAMIC BANKING

Muzn holds first Sharia Supervisory Board meeting

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Muzn, National Bank of Oman's (NBO) Islamic banking window, recently held its first Sharia Supervisory Board meeting. During the meeting, the board discussed its responsibilities, which include ensuring all products, services, activities, investments, operations and transactions are compliant with the principles of Sharia.

Board members Sheikh Saleh Al Kharusi and His Highness Al Sayyid Dr Adham bin Turki Al Said were joined by newly appointed members Sheikh Dr Muhammad Zubair Usmani and Sheikh Dr Abdul Rahman Abdullah Al Saadi.

Salima Al Marzouqi, Chief Islamic Banking Officer, said, "Our Sharia Supervisory Board



meetings ensure Muzn continues to be ready to meet the growing demand from customers for Islamic financial products and services which are aligned with their values. Adding to our highly qualified Sharia Board, our new members bring extensive experience and a deep understanding of diverse Islamic banking markets. This will be of great benefit to Muzn as we continue to increase our market share and create new investment opportunities."



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INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,149.04	4,125.81	4,125.81	4,134.56	-8.75	-0.21
FINANCIAL INDEX	6,628.86	6,584.74	6,584.74	6,587.14	-2.40	-0.04
Industry Index	5,953.64	5,934.81	5,934.81	5,953.64	-18.83	-0.32
Services Index	1,605.08	1,590.34	1,590.34	1,594.53	-4.18	-0.26
MSX Shariah Index	4,622.69	4,594.45	4,594.45	4,617.22	-2.27	-0.49
MSX TR INDEX	5,228.58	5,199.31	5,199.31	5,210.34	-11.03	-0.21
FINANCIAL TR IDX	6,930.50	6,884.37	6,884.37	6,886.88	-2.51	-0.04
SERVICES TR IDX	1,659.62	1,644.38	1,644.38	1,648.71	-4.33	-0.26
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,178.88	6,159.34	6,159.34	6,178.88	-19.54	-0.32

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
20,439,629	2,975,212	283	22,471,588,623	5	17	21	43

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 12

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST RD	LAST OFFER	PUR VALUE	MARKET CAP	
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	1,434,489	775,331	55	0.548	0.548	0.540	0.546	0.538	0.008	1.487	0.546	0.544	0.546	0.1002	049,246,398
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	518,500	105,792	17	0.204	0.206	0.204	0.206	0.204	0.002	0.980	0.206	0.206	0.206	0.100	334,944,949
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	185,032	22,819	7	0.122	0.124	0.122	0.123	0.122	0.001	0.820	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.100	239,807,868
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT. ENG.	10,000	1,040	1	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.000	0.000	0.104	0.104	0.107	0.100	14,560,000
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	160,000	57,600	4	0.360	0.360	0.360	0.360	0.360	0.000	0.000	0.360	0.360	0.370	0.100	44,963,266
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	58,400	51,158	11	0.876	0.876	0.876	0.876	0.876	0.000	0.000	0.876	0.860	0.876	0.100	657,000,000
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV. H.	44,112	3,044	6	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.000	0.000	0.069	0.063	0.069	0.100	13,800,000
OM0000003968	ODREDO	17,357	5,485	4	0.316	0.316	0.316	0.316	0.316	0.000	0.000	0.316	0.316	0.318	0.100	205,698,377
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	255,399	130,764	8	0.512	0.512	0.512	0.512	0.512	0.000	0.000	0.512	0.510	0.530	0.100	28,160,000
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	4,580	3,050	2	0.668	0.668	0.668	0.668	0.672	-0.004	-0.585	0.668	0.668	0.668	0.100	105,210,000
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST & FIN.	1,000	141	1	0.141	0.141	0.141	0.141	0.142	-0.001	-0.704	0.141	0.138	0.145	0.100	33,417,000
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	5,742	2,433	3	0.424	0.424	0.420	0.420	0.424	-0.004	-0.943	0.420	0.410	0.424	0.100	92,400,000
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INV.	40,000	3,645	5	0.092	0.092	0.091	0.091	0.092	-0.001	-1.087	0.091	0.091	0.096	0.100	8,190,000
OM0000003281	TAAQEEN FINANCE	8,000	713	3	0.091	0.091	0.088	0.088	0.089	-0.001	-1.124	0.088	0.088	0.092	0.100	22,762,238
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	8,070	2,469	2	0.306	0.306	0.306	0.306	0.310	-0.004	-1.290	0.306	0.306	0.312	0.100	204,519,820
OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FINS	810	130	1	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.166	-0.006	-3.614	0.160	0.000	0.166	0.100	45,514,182
OM0000003398	SOHAR INT. BANK	16,088,655	1,609,766	34	0.105	0.105	0.100	0.100	0.105	-0.005	-4.762	0.100	0.100	0.106	0.100	299,006,229
Total	17	18,838,146	2,775,389	164												
Parallel Market																
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	16,704	2,105	7	0.126	0.126	0.126	0.126	0.118	0.008	6.780	0.126	0.119	0.128	0.100	210,345,660
OM0000008447	OMAN RETT FUND	1,360	98	1	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.070	0.002	2.857	0.072	0.068	0.071	0.100	33,925,420	
OM0000001095	DHOFAR INSURANCE	281,975	49,775	20	0.190	0.190	0.190	0.190	0.190	0.000	0.000	0.190	0.185	0.190	0.100	19,904,789
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	279,300	24,195	16	0.087	0.087	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.000	0.000	0.086	0.086	0.091	0.100	17,000,000
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN NKR.	5,000	4,060	2	0.812	0.812	0.812	0.812	0.812	0.000	0.000	0.812	0.800	0.812	0.100	771,400,000
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	350,000	40,250	1	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.000	0.000	0.115	0.114	0.115	0.100	344,580,415
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	50,000	5,750	3	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.000	0.000	0.115	0.108	0.124	0.100	9,361,316
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	19,562	1,871	4	0.096	0.096	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.000	0.000	0.095	0.095	0.096	0.100	212,510,538
OM0000004669	SHARQIYAH DESALIN	2,000	218	1	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.000	0.000	0.109	0.100	0.109	0.100	10,660,435
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	10,300	733	3	0.078	0.078	0.071	0.071	0.071	0.000	0.000	0.071	0.070	0.071	0.100	67,774,608
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	103,300	9,530	12	0.092	0.093	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.000	0.000	0.092	0.092	0.093	0.100	16,100,000
OM0000004825	ALBATINAH POWER	8,500	408	1	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.048	0.049	0.100	32,394,597
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	13,150	658	4	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.050	0.050	0.051	0.100	73,130,073
OM0000007043	NATIONAL LIFE INS.	60,000	19,440	1	0.324	0.324	0.324	0.324	0.324	0.000	0.000	0.324	0.000	0.324	0.100	85,860,000
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM P.	29,447	8,245	3	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.282	-0.002	-0.709	0.280	0.272	0.280	0.100	11,649,476
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	98,417	11,487	5	0.116	0.116	0.115	0.115	0.116	-0.001	-0.862	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.100	20,839,015
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	630	66	2	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.106	-0.002	-1.887	0.104	0.104	0.106	0.100	21,110,590
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	70,922	3,475	5	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.050	-0.001	-2.000	0.049	0.048	0.049	0.100	35,005,911
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	500	74	1	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.152	-0.004	-2.632	0.148	0.150	0.159	0.100	12,580,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	130,896	9,152	5	0.071	0.071	0.069	0.069	0.071	-0.002	-2.817	0.069	0.069	0.072	0.100	21,193,096
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	62,513	5,719	13	0.091	0.093	0.090	0.090	0.093	-0.003	-3.226	0.090	0.090	0.092	0.100	10,968,750
OM0000001368	CONSTRUCTION M.	10,000	815	2	0.080	0.083	0.080	0.083	0.088	-0.005	-5.682	0.083	0.081	0.083	0.100	5,187,500
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	2,200	123	1	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.060	-0.004	-6.667	0.056	0.000	0.058	0.100	14,000,000
Total	23	1,587,676	198,196	113												

ECONOMIC WATCH

China's logistics sector on the mend with government support

BEIJING: China's logistics sector, reeling from the protracted COVID-19 pandemic, is eyeing a stepped-up rebound as the government's supportive policies gradually take effect and more favourable policies follow.

The logistics performance index, which tracks business volume, new orders, employment, inventory turnovers, and equipment utility rates in the sector, came in at 49.3 per cent last month, up 5.5 percentage points from the previous month, data from the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing showed (CFLP).

During the period, the index tracking China's warehouse storage sector went back to the expansion range of 50.2 per cent, said the federation. E-commerce logistics activities also witnessed a business reboot in May, with the index rising 2.1 points to 104.3 points from April.

The logistics performance index, which tracks business volume, new orders, employment, inventory turnovers, and equipment utility rates in the sector, came in at 49.3 per cent last month, up 5.5 percentage points from the previous month, data from the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing showed

He Hui, assistant president of the CFLP, attributed the aforementioned upbeat signs to the country's measures to unclog the logistics and prop up businesses in difficulties, saying that the sector will witness more expansion in June.

China has rolled out a raft of pol-

icies such as removing bottlenecks in transportation and reducing the burden for logistics enterprises to buoy the flows of logistics.

Shanghai, once hit hardest by the virus, launched an action plan to speed up economic recovery last month, releasing measures in-



The kitchen is the heart of the home, it's also a space where you can waste a lot of energy if you're not careful. By making a few simple adjustments to your habits in the kitchen, you can easily cut your energy bills and do your part to help the environment.

"The appliances you select for your kitchen have effects far beyond the food you eat," says Peter Weedfald, senior vice president of Sales and Marketing at Sharp Home Electronics Company of America. "From the appliances you choose to how you use them, you can make a real difference in your energy consumption today."

5 EASY WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY IN THE KITCHEN

HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS FOR GETTING STARTED

1

KEEP IT COOL

Minimise the time you have the refrigerator door open. Cold air falls straight to the floor like water. The longer you leave the door open, the more cool air drains away and the harder your fridge has to work to replace it. Refrigerators that have pantry and freezer drawers help contain the cold air even when they are open. Keep frequently accessed items in the refrigerated pantry drawer so everyone in the family can help themselves



2

GO SMALL

Whenever possible, opt to use your small appliances. For example, the next time you're reheating food, use the microwave instead of the stove or oven.

3

WASH-UP SMART

If you find yourself running your dishwasher before it's full, it's time to consider an upgrade. Find a dishwasher that allows you to manage your load size.



4

UNPLUG

If you're like most people, you use appliances like your toaster and coffeemaker for just a few minutes each day. Unplug small appliances like these after you're done to stop "vampire energy," which is the energy consumed by items when they are plugged in but are not in use.

5

MAKE AN UPGRADE

Today's appliances are generally more energy efficient than older appliances, and there are a lot of energy efficient selections



To put a dent in your energy bills and reduce your impact on the environment, be mindful of your habits in the kitchen. Small changes can add up quickly. —Statepoint





ROUND-UP



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World Oceans Day marked in Malaysia

Divers perform during an underwater mermaid show on the occasion of World Oceans Day at Aquaria KLCC in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. **Xinhua**



Followers of Buddhism attend annual thangka displaying ritual

A monk attends an annual Buddha thangka displaying ritual at the Tsurphu Monastery in southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region. **Xinhua**



Man promotes traditional Chinese aulic handicraft

Picture shows filigree mosaic artworks made by Gu Guoqiang in southwest China's Chongqing. Filigree Mosaic craft, a traditional Chinese aulic handicraft dating back to the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476BC), uses metal such as gold and silver to fold artwork inlaid with gemstone or pearl. **Xinhua**



World Day Against Child Labour marked in Kathmandu, Nepal

Students hold a poster to mark the World Day Against Child Labour in Kathmandu, Nepal. **Xinhua**



Newly-wedded couple Nayanthara and Vignesh Sivan pose for a photo

Newly-wedded couple Nayanthara and Vignesh Sivan pose for a photo in front of the media, in Chennai. **ANI Photo**



Scenery along Mergel Gol River in Hulun Buir, Inner Mongolia

Picture shows scenery along the Mergel Gol River in Hulun Buir, north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. **Xinhua**



Americans decry gun violence, political inaction at nationwide rallies

People gather during a rally decrying rising gun violence while urging politicians to take action in Washington, DC, the United States. **Xinhua**



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ROUND-UP

Bank Muscat’s Floosi account receives excellent response from customers

Targeted at youth in the 15-17 age group, Floosi accounts are becoming very popular with both Omanis and expatriates as it helps young people get financially aware and make savings a regular habit in their lives

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat’s Floosi account, which was launched last year in line with the bank’s commitment to improving financial inclusion across the Sultanate, continues to receive excellent response from customers.

Targeted at youth in the 15-17 age group, Floosi accounts are becoming very popular with both Omanis and expatriates as it helps young people get financially aware and make savings a regular habit in their lives.

The debit card linked to the customer’s Floosi account, comes with a daily limit of RO 50 and a monthly cumulative limit of OMR200 for Point of Sale (PoS), e-commerce transactions and ATM withdrawals. To apply for a Floosi account, minors must visit their nearest branch along with their parent or legal guardian, and submit their application along with copies of important documents like their National ID card (for Omani citizens) or Resident Card and Passport (for expatriates).

The father / guardian will be the



authorised signatory and must sign the deal slip on behalf of the minor. A major advantage of the Floosi account is that young customers are not penalised for not maintaining a minimum balance. At the same time, the account has a number of benefits specifi-

cally targeted at young people like social media giveaways, gaming tournaments and exclusive offers at restaurants, cafes and entertainment venues.

To add convenience to the financial inclusion process, the Floosi account can be converted

into a Shababi account when the customer turns 18. The customer can approach the nearest branch with their father/legal guardian and submit the documentation for converting the account and releasing guardianship of the account, after which the newly converted

Shababi account may be operated independently by the customer.

Bank Muscat has been steadily working to improve financial inclusion and a good savings habit amongst people in Oman through a number of financial products and services. The Floosi account was

launched by the bank after extensive market research in response to customer feedback.

Parents are particularly happy that this new account helps their children learn the importance of personal finance management and savings for their future.

FOR GROUP COMPANIES

Ominvest holds Internal Audit Forum

Muscat: Ominvest Group recently held its Internal Audit Forum, as part of its participation in the Internal Audit Awareness Month and to provide an opportunity for the internal audit teams in the group to better understand business risks and help develop their skill set to perform more effectively as trusted advisers of the organisation.

The forum, held during the Internal Audit Awareness Month, was attended by Audit Committee Chairmen, CEOs and audit team members at Ominvest and its Group companies including Ubhar Capital, National Life & General Insurance Company, National Finance Company, Oman Arab Bank, Alizz Bank, and Takaful.

The forum’s discussion focused on further enhancing the role of internal audits within organisations as agents of change. The forum provided internal auditors with the opportunity to interact with key stakeholders across the group and to participate in roundtable discussions with executive management.



The engagement sessions helped senior management teams to be more acquainted with how risk assessment is conducted and enabled internal auditors to better understand the business environment and decision-making approaches. The forum also focused on Ominvest’s Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives in relation to an internal

audit, and on how its core values of collaboration, excellence and integrity are instrumental in driving overall success.

In his keynote speech at the forum, AbdulAziz Al Balushi, Group CEO at Ominvest said, “To cope with shifting business dynamics, internal audit teams need to take more proactive action-oriented approaches towards all kinds of risks facing the organisation. This calls for continuous vigilance, creative thinking, and acquiring new skills to remain relevant to the business. Understanding the business is a key factor for the internal audit team to contribute to the business, be an agent of change and provide a meaningful challenge to management.”

He added, “It is very reassuring to see the enthusiasm and commitment from our group companies to continuously develop the internal audit role to achieve effective outcomes. I would like to express my sincere appreciation of our internal auditors for carrying out their duties professionally and

diligently and I hope this forum will bring the auditors and business executives together in a constructive and fruitful dialogue.”

Commenting on the significance of the Internal Audit Forum, Muneer Al Mughairy, Chief Audit Officer at Ominvest, said, “Ominvest organised this event with the aim of spreading awareness of the internal audit profession. In doing so, the forum attempted to align the internal audit role with business expectations and allowed businesses to understand and appreciate the internal audit mandate and operating environment.”

Al Mughairy added, “We hope that the outcome of the forum helps business leaders, executives and internal audit teams to effectively collaborate in achieving business objectives. It was an opportunity to also share feedback with internal audit professionals on how to perform their role as trusted advisors and add value and advocate for positive change with foresight that business leaders can benefit from in their decision making.”

PARTNERSHIP



National Finance and Dar Al Atta’a inaugurates greenhouse project for people with special needs

MUSCAT: Reflecting its commitment to enhancing its contribution to the programmes and charities in Oman, National Finance in collaboration with Dar Al Atta’a Charity inaugurated the greenhouse project.

The project aims to engage people with special needs at Al Wafa Social Center in Ibra, Sharqiyah North. The ceremony was held under the auspices of Maryam Issa Al Zadjali, a member of the State Council and Chairperson of Dar Al Atta’a, in the presence of representatives from Al Wafa Center in Ibra and a number of officials from the public and private sectors, on June 6.

Resulting of the partnership between the company and the associations, this project aims to build nine greenhouses in various Al Wafa Social Centers. People with special needs will have the opportunity to acquire employment and a sustainable income source.

Lina Al Abdulsalaam, National Finance Head of Corporate Communication and Marketing said, “We are pleased to launch the Greenhouse Project in coopera-

tion with Dar Al Atta’a. We are also delighted to help and support all segments of society.

“We strongly believe that we have responsibilities not only toward our customers, employees and shareholders but also to enhance our initiatives to serve the communities in which we operate. In addition, within our CSR programme, we are keen to strengthen our partnership with various entities and sectors to achieve added value in the country and provide opportunities for the nation’s people to build a brighter future.”

Expressing her appreciation to National Finance, Maryam Al Zadjali said, “We thank National Finance for its efforts to serve the community by supporting our sustainable programs. The Greenhouse Project as part of the ‘Tamkeen’ initiative contributes to strengthening the role of job integration for people with special needs at Al Wafa Social Center. This can be succeeded by enrolling them in the production and marketing of agricultural crops with the aim of achieving an effective community partnership.”

EXCELLENCE IN INSURANCE AWARD

National Life & Insurance bags excellence award

MUSCAT: National Life & General Insurance Co. (NLGIC) Is the market leader and largest insurance company in Oman was conferred the Excellence in Insurance award at the recently concluded New Age Banking Summit held at Al Bustan Palace a Ritz Carlton Hotel recently. The event was attended by leading banks and technology companies.

NLGIC has been offering bespoke insurance in the personal lines segment and corporates with a wide range of products in Life, Medical and General Insurance for more than 25 years in the GCC. The company, headquartered in Muscat Oman has branches in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Kuwait. NLGIC has a wide network of sales and service touch points spread



across Oman with a strong network of own branches, agencies and brokers. NLGIC also has the reputation to be one of the pioneers in Bancassurance in Oman with a strong tie-up with leading banks in Oman.

“I congratulate the organisers of the New Age Banking Summit and at NLGIC, not only as leading insurers but also as a major player in the Bancassurance segment, we remain committed to our partner Banks to provide competitive in-

surance solutions, with in-house developed systems and technology for fast issuance of quotations, policy issuance, after-sales services like policy endorsements and claims management. We are thankful for this recognition which vindicates our efforts to be a trusted insurance partner with a customer-centric approach,” said S. Venkatachalam, CEO, NLGIC upon receiving the award.

The company, as part of its growth strategy, has signed the sale purchase agreement with RSA Middle East and the transaction would be completed swiftly after approvals from regulators and shareholders are obtained. The deal is expected to transform NLGIC into a leading multi-line insurance group in the region.



ROUND-UP



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Ford Taurus: Impressively spacious sedan redesigned with focus on safety

Designed and engineered for maximum experiences, the Taurus is an ideal vehicle for those in search of a little bit of everything they expect in a large sedan

MUSCAT: The Ford Taurus is an impressively spacious sedan in the Ford range.

Designed and engineered for maximum experiences, the Taurus is an ideal vehicle for those in search of a little bit of everything they expect in a large sedan.

The Ford Taurus has been redesigned with a focus on safety and practicality. The exterior of the Taurus has a shield-like, clipped trapezoidal five-bar grille is positioned prominently and flanked by slender, modern headlamps with signature daytime running lights and LED projector lamp technology. Chrome rings house supplemental LED driving lights.

In silhouette, a powerful hood profile and planted architecture give the Taurus a sense of solidity, sportiness and harmony. Designers elevated the exterior with fine details on the sides, including upswept chrome highlight trim on the doors. Polished 19-inch 10-spoke alloy wheels help to give a bold and premium stance. At the rear of the vehicle, multi-piece LED tail lights incorporate a distinctive signature appearance.

A bright chrome bar connecting the tail lights highlights the vehicle's width for a sense of understated athleticism. Integrated chrome exhaust tips complete the rear and offer another discreet hint at performance.

Sporty appearance

The Taurus has the effortless power to match its sporty appearance. The Taurus is powered by a 2.0-lit



tre EcoBoost inline four-cylinder petrol engine that produces 240 horsepower and an impressive 390Nm torque.

That represents a 10% increase in torque over the previous Taurus, all while using less fuel. The engine is mated to an eight-speed automatic transmission – a first for Ford sedans in the Middle East – which is operated by a contemporary rotary gear shifter on the centre console.

The sense of balance and har-

mony continues inside with a clean, modern cabin that makes use of smart design and strong horizontal elements for an airy, spacious feel. Above the passengers, a full panoramic sunroof allows more natural light to enter the cabin and adds to a sense of elegance and openness.

The spacious feel is justified by an exceptionally roomy cabin, which takes full advantage of the vehicle's five-metre length and 2.95-metre wheelbase for abun-

dant second-row legroom, and class-leading shoulder and hip room. Making full use of the car's interior space, designers and engineers placed more than 25 intelligent stowage spaces throughout the cabin.

Cup holders designed to securely hold different-sized bottles are just one thoughtful detail implemented to meet the needs of consumers. Reflecting the importance of second-row passengers, the rear cabin-space has been designed

with an emphasis on comfort.

The Taurus features the very latest SYNC 3 technology with embedded voice control, embedded navigation, AppLink and Apple CarPlay. There are USB ports in the centre console so that drivers can hardwire their devices to the Taurus, and Bluetooth connectivity plus wireless charging options available. For rear seat passengers, there are two more USB ports in the centre armrest.

Taurus also comes advanced

driver-assist features as standard.

Technologies like Blind Spot Information System, which uses radar to alert drivers of approaching vehicles entering their blind spot by flashing an indicator light. Other technologies include pre-collision assist with automatic emergency braking, auto high beams, a lane-keeping system and a rearview camera.

In Oman, Ford vehicles are brought to you by Arabian Car Marketing Co.

HIGHEST QUALITY OF SERVICE

Mercedes-Benz ensures vehicles are kept clean with Car Care package

MUSCAT: Making sure its customers enjoy an outstanding experience long after purchasing their car, Mercedes-Benz Oman's Car Care packages combine choice, convenience and the highest quality of service.

Starting at just OMR370 incl. VAT, drivers can leave their vehicles confidently in the hands of trusted Mercedes-Benz professionals, who will attend to any minor paintwork damage and dents, applying cutting-edge methods quickly and reliably. With three excellent value packages to choose from depending on individual requirements, customers will have the peace of mind that their Mercedes-Benz car will preserve its condition and value, with a pristine appearance all-round.

"Appropriate car care is important and necessary. Our valued Mercedes-Benz customers rightly expect us to provide reliable maintenance and service for their vehicles at reasonable prices. This is precisely why we created our Car Care Packages, which cover

scratch repairs and paintless dent removal procedures, making the service costs transparent. That way, our customers can count on first-class care and spare themselves unpleasant surprises," said Shaun Michael, Chief Executive Officer at Mercedes-Benz Oman.

Owners can choose from a variety of options starting with the Lite Package at OMR 370 incl. VAT, which is valid for one year and includes three scratch repairs and five paintless dent removals. Also available in the Classic Package for OMR 695 incl. VAT, which is valid for two years and includes six scratch repairs and ten paintless dent removals. Or, for the ultimate protection, customers can choose the OMR 970 incl. VAT three-year Premium Package, which includes 12 scratch repairs and 15 paintless dent removals. Plus, all scratch repairs include a polish. Combining next-level luxury with excellent after-sales care, it's part of Mercedes-Benz's commitment to offering a first-class experience for every journey.







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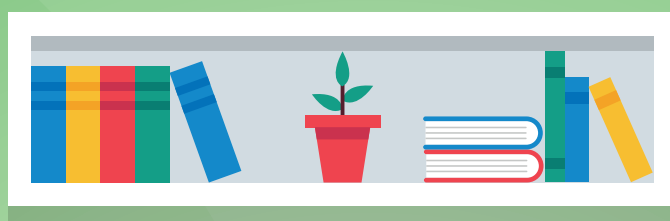


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