

HIS MAJESTY'S CUP HOCKEY FINAL POSTPONED

Rains and bad weather played spoilsport as the much-awaited final of the 52nd His Majesty's Cup Hockey Championship between Ahli-Sidab and Al Nasr, scheduled to be played at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex on Tuesday evening was called off. **>A8**



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HM SENDS CONDOLENCES TO PRESIDENT OF USA

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to President Joe Biden of the United States of America on victims of the blizzard which hit several US states. In the cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere sympathies to President Biden, families of the victims and the people of the USA, wishing the injured a speedy recovery. **-ONA**



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TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN BHA workshop for qualifiers concludes

1 The Bilarab Bin Haitham Award for Architectural Design (BHA) on Tuesday completed the technical workshop that it organised for the 30 teams that qualified to contest the next stage of the award, after the first sorting. The concluding ceremony was held at Assayida Fatma Bint Ali Mosque in the Wilayat of Seeb. **>A2**



WORLD Indian PM holds talks with Zelenskyy

2 In a telephonic talk with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Indian Premier Narendra Modi strongly reiterated his call for an immediate cessation of hostilities, and called for the two sides to revert to dialogue and diplomacy. **>A6**

MARKET Oman, Japan ink pact in energy field

3 The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, and Japan, represented by its Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, signed an MoU in the field of hydrogen, fuel ammonia and carbon recycling that includes Methanation. **>B1**

HM GIVES AUDIENCE

HM receives written message from Japan's PM

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik received a written message from Fumio Kishida, Prime Minister of Japan. The message deals with the advanced relations between the two countries and matters of common interest.

It was handed over to His Majesty the Sultan by Nishimura Yasutoshi, Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, when his Majesty gave him an audience at Al Barakah Palace on Tuesday. The minister conveyed greetings and best wishes of the Japanese Prime Minister to His Majesty the Sultan and the Omani people.

In his turn, His Majesty asked the Minister to convey his sincere sentiments to the Prime Minister and the people of Japan. During the audience, areas of joint co-operation in various fields were reviewed.

It was attended by Eng. Salim Nasser Al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, Jota Yamamoto, Ambassador of Japan to Oman and members of the delegation accompanying the Japanese Minister. **-ONA**

More photos on >A2



EXPECT MORE RAINS IN OMAN



30 calls for help received and over 63 people rescued during Tuesday downpour, says CDAA



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Heavy rains lashed Muscat governorate bringing traffic to a standstill as reports of waterlogging and flooding led to numerous calls for assistance to the Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority (CDAA).

According to latest reports, the CDAA confirmed that there were 30 calls for help and more than 63

people were rescued.

However, there were no fatalities. The rains on Tuesday were caused by a low-pressure trough over the Arabian Sea, which is likely to affect the country's weather until Thursday.

According to an official of the Directorate General of Meteorology, rains are expected to continue till Wednesday evening. Abdullah bin Rashid Al Khadouri from the Direc-

torate General of Oman Meteorology at the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), said: "Most of the wilayats and governorates in the Sultanate of Oman witnessed rains with Muscat Governorate receiving more than the expected rainfall."

Al Khadouri added: "Weather conditions will begin to improve from Wednesday evening. With northwesterly winds blowing, temperatures are expected to dip

in all the wilayats of the Sultanate that have witnessed rains."

First Lieutenant Ali bin Saeed Al Farsi from the Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority (CDAA), said: "We received more than 30 calls for help in Muscat governorate and we rescued 63 people. There were also 12 reports of accidents with moderate and minor injuries to the passengers." **>A4**

See also >A3

CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN DATA

Oman's domestic liquidity tops OMR20mn

MUSCAT: The total foreign assets of the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) decreased by 12.8 percent, reaching OMR6,221 million by the end of October 2022 compared to OMR7,137.4 million by the end of August 2021, according to data released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The total local liquidity rose by 0.2 percent to stand at OMR20,024 million compared to OMR19,979.4 million during the corresponding period in 2021.

Narrow Money Supply

Narrow Money Supply (M1) declined by 1 percent to reach OMR5,583.6 million compared to OMR5,640.9 million during the same period in 2021.

The private sector deposits



with commercial banks and Islamic windows showed a rise by 0.2 percent by the end of October 2022, reaching OMR17,137.4 million compared to OMR17,104.6 million during the corresponding period in 2021.

Total loans and financing in

commercial banks went up by 4.1 percent to OMR28,913.9 million by October 2022 compared to OMR27,766.5 million during the same period in 2021.

The effective exchange rate index of the Omani Rial increased by 12.1 percent to 118.2 points

The effective exchange rate index of the Omani Rial increased by 12.1 percent to 118.2 points compared to 105.4 points during the corresponding period in 2021

compared to 105.4 points during the corresponding period in 2021.

The total currency issued by the end of October 2022 dropped by 5.7 percent to stand at OMR1,614.6 million compared to OMR1,712.4 million by the end of October 2021. **-ONA**

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26°
MUSCAT

HM gives audience to Japanese minister of economy and trade



EMBASSY OF OMAN IN WASHINGTON

Omani students in US, Canada safe

MUSCAT: The Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Washington confirmed that it is in constant contact with Omani students in the United States and Canada due to the snowstorm, and that they are all fine.

Oman's embassy in the US confirmed in its tweeter account that the cultural attaché at the embassy is in constant contact with Omani students in the US and Canada due to the snowstorm, urging them to follow the circulars and instructions issued in this regard, and the embassy reassures everyone that our students are fine.

The US is exposed to the worst snowstorm in the history of country. The storm has so far caused 48 deaths across America, a drop in temperature of 40 degrees Celsius below zero, the cancellation of 6,900 flights, and there are 1.6 million people without electricity, and power lines of trains have been closed by the US authorities.

BILARAB BIN HAITHAM AWARD

Bilarab Bin Award: technical workshop for 30 teams held



MUSCAT: The Bilarab Bin Haitham Award for Architectural Design (BHA) on Tuesday completed the technical workshop that it organised for the 30 teams that qualified to contest the next stage of the award, after the first sorting.

The concluding ceremony was held at Assayida Fatma Bint Ali Mosque in the Wilayat of A'Seeb. The technical workshop was aimed at providing the qualifiers with key skills that improve their chances of passing the second sorting.

Second sorting

In the second sorting, only 10 projects will qualify to the final round, where the top 3 projects will be declared winners of the BHA.

The 3rd of January 2023 is the date set for the announcement of the top 10 projects shortlisted from the 30 projects that qualified after the first sorting.

The qualifiers will be present their projects before the jury in the Wilayat of Sur later in January 2023. After the knockouts, the top 3 projects will be announced as winners of the Bilarab Bin Haitham Award for Architectural Design. — ONA



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SALALAH PORT RECEIVES CRUISE SHIP 'ARTANIA'

Salalah Port on Tuesday received the cruise ship 'Artania' with 1,394 passengers on board, out of them 927 are tourists of various nationalities. The tourist programme of 'Artania' included tours to major archaeological, tourism and historic landmarks in the Governorate of Dhofar, besides visiting beaches and traditional markets in Salalah. Moreover, the number of cruise ships arriving in Oman is increasing annually due to the country's prominent location overlooking the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea and Sea of Oman. — ONA





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COMMENTARY

Rains flood houses, damage properties in parts of Oman



Saleh Al-Shaibany

MUSCAT: Heavy rains lashed many parts of the Sultanate of Oman with the capital Muscat being hit the hardest leading to waterlogged streets and damaged private and commercial properties.

Oman Television cautioned people and advised them to stay indoors. Schools and universities asked students not to go to their respective educational institutions.

Long queues of traffic are being seen on roads and bridges while the police work hard to regulate the movement of vehicles.

“The roads and bridges are at the moment very dangerous but people are still being careless and driving fast,” a policeman who was controlling road traffic in Muscat, told *Times of Oman*.

Hospital officials say people rush to the emergency wards for serious injuries, not only from road traffic incidents but from commercial properties and even private houses.

“We are running on full capacity from six in the morning today. We cannot cope with some emergency cases. We have to transfer some of the worst cases to other hospitals for treatment,” Ilham Hajri, a nurse at the Khoula Hospital, told *Times of Oman*.

A wall of a labour camp in the Wilayat of Seeb collapsed and injured workers.

“Part of the wall of our labour camp went down when the workers were asleep. They woke up in



a panic and some slipped in the mud and hot injured.

Many of them lost their belongings including money,” the supervisor of a construction labour camp, told *Times of Oman*.

Omanis also reported damages to their houses due to heavy rains throughout the night and early hours of the morning on Tuesday.

“Our living room and part of our dining room are flooded with water coming in through the windows and door. Some of our furniture needs replacing and that will cost a lot of money,” Ali Al-Mahrrouqi in Ghubra, told *Times of Oman*.

According to the Meteorologi-

cal Department at the Civil Aviation Authority, Muscat received 72 millimetres on Tuesday morning.

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RAINS AND THUNDERSTORMS

Muscat Municipality urges people to take precautions

<FROM A1 Al Farsi added: “A few of them were caught in the vehicle while crossing wadis and low-lying areas. “We call on everyone not to swim in water pools and urge people not to venture out unless it is necessary.” Muscat Municipality also issued an advisory and said, “Muscat Governorate is witnessing rains and thunderstorms of varying intensity. We ask everyone to exercise caution and stay away from low-lying areas.” The Royal Oman Police (ROP)

also warned residents not to go out unless necessary due to the unstable weather conditions. Police has warned motorists to exercise caution as they drive on waterlogged roads. It has advised residents to take precautions in case of rain and asked people to stay away from the areas of flash floods and accumulated rainwater. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education (MoE) on Tuesday suspended classes at public and private schools in Muscat governorate due to thunderstorms. ‘Classes and examinations will

resume on Wednesday,’ MoE stated. Also, the Royal Oman Police on Tuesday closed the Amerat-Bausher mountain road due to the damages caused to it by heavy rains. “The road has been closed until further notice and road users are advised to use alternative roads,” ROP stated. **CAA issues alert** On Tuesday, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) issued Alert No (1), in which the latest weather maps and analysis of the National Center for Early Warning of Multiple Hazards, (NCEWMH),

said the Sultanate’s airspace will continue to be affected by an air groove during the day, that is, Tuesday, December 27, 2022, and it will continue until Thursday morning. The report continued: “On Wednesday and Thursday morning, December 28-29, 2022, the impact of the air groove will continue to affect the northern governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, with chances of sporadic rains of varying intensity, sometimes thundery, leading to the flow in reefs and valleys in the governorates of Musandam, North Al Bati-

nah, South Al Batinah, Al Buraimi, Al Dakhiliyah, Muscat and Al Dhahirah and South and North Al Sharqiyah, and the weather will begin to weaken gradually, starting from Wednesday night, with the continuation of scattered rains until Thursday morning, December 29, 2022.” A revised bulletin is expected to be issued on Wednesday. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, three wilayats in the Muscat governorate recorded the highest amount of rains in the Sultanate of Oman from Monday to

Tuesday morning (10am). Muttrah received rainfall measuring 154 mm, followed by Muscat with 113 mm and Seeb with 77 mm. Barka and Al Mussanah in Al Batinah South governorate recorded rainfall of 49 mm and 28 mm, respectively. On the other hand, the wilayats of Shinas (6mm), Al Suwaiq (5mm), Sohar (3mm) and Al Khamburah (2mm) in the Al Batinah North governorate recorded lesser rainfall, while the wilayat of Madha in Al Buraimi governorate, recorded the least amount of rainfall with just 1 mm.



MUTTRAH FORT, STANDING



According to the Ministry of Tourism, “Muttrah Fort stands tall facing the sea and inhaling the winds that waft the fragrant memory of ships gone by, ships that once sailed these azure waters.” “The fort seems as if it were the only passage connecting Muttrah and Muscat,” added the Ministry. “Currently, it consists of three circular towers: a huge one sitting on the summit and the remaining smaller two located, one at the first point in the West, and the other, which still houses one of the old cannons, to the north of the fort near the large tower.” Perched atop the crenellations of the Muttrah Fort that overlooked the Corniche, Oman’s rulers of yesteryear were able to cast their eye over a view that stretched all the way to the horizon. While such a vantage point did help spot trade galleons that pulled into port from far-flung, exotic lands, laden with exquisite cargo that had travelled across the high seas to reach Arabia, it also helped keep an eye on fishing vessels that unloaded their daily catch at the wharves, before they were bought at the fishmonger’s to sate many an empty belly.





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On HM’s directives, Royal Camel Corps to host expo on camel history

MUSCAT: In implementation of the directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Royal Camel Corps will organise a seminar and exhibition in Riyadh on Omani camel history. The events, which begin on 3 January, will continue till 7 January 2023. The seminar, held in cooperation with Oman’s embassy in Riyadh, seeks to spread awareness about Omani camels, their history, origins and their economic,

social and cultural values. It also highlights the Royal Camel Corps’ role in preserving breeds of Omani purebred camels. The seminar reflects ongoing cooperation between Oman and Saudi Arabia in all fields, including exploring opportunities in camel-related economies, scholarly and other aspects of concern to those interested in camel affairs. An exposition will be held on the sidelines of the seminar. It

will highlight four elements: the history of Omani camels, the activities of the Royal Camel Corps (including services it renders to camel rearing communities), the role of the Directorate General of Veterinary Services at the Royal Court Affairs and the heritage arts associated with camels, including songs of Bedouin people, and two photography exhibitions to be staged by the Omani Society for Fine Arts on the theme of camels. — **ONA**

ROYAL OMAN POLICE

ROP pursuing efforts to address impacts of heavy rains in Oman

MUSCAT: The Royal Oman Police (ROP) is pursuing efforts to address the impacts of heavy rains that drenched parts of the Governorate of Muscat, causing wadis to overflow. Maj. Fahd Said Al Kalbani, In-charge of the tasks of the Director General of Traffic, said that the ROP is operating regular patrols to monitor traffic flow and ensure road safety. The ROP is coordinating with the authorities concerned to facilitate the passage of vehicles after the closure of Bausher-Al Amerat hill road and organise traffic around rainwater pools that formed at roundabouts. The Directorate General of Traffic called members of the public to exercise more caution and follow up news about the wet weather. It urged drivers not to



risk crossing wadis and reminded all to stick to traffic regulations. The operations centre of the Authority for Civil Defence and Ambulance (ACDA), Governorate of Muscat, received 30 reports of people getting stranded as a result of the rains. It teams rescued 51 people. No injuries or

fatalities were reported. In this context, Ahmed Abdullah Al Balushi, a meteorology specialist at the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), told Oman News Agency (ONA) that the rains are likely to continue to fall in northern governorates of Oman, with varying degrees of intensity. — **ONA**

FIELD VISIT



Delegation from Qatari Defence College visits MSC

MUSCAT: The delegation of the college of defence of the State of Qatar, which is headed by Brigadier Rajeh Mohammed Aqeel Al Thabit, visited the Maritime Security Centre (MSC). Upon the guest’s arrival at the centre, he was greeted by Commodore Adil Hamoud Al Busaidi, Head of the MSC. The guest toured the centre’s facilities and viewed its latest equipment and technologies used in carrying out its national duties. He was also briefed on the tactical roles and tasks carried out by the centre in the safety of the maritime environment. — **ONA**



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1.	1650000020/22	MINING, CRUSHING, TRANSPORTATION & SUPPLY OF GYPSUM	RO. 105.00	10th January 2023 1700 Hours	17th January 2023 2359 Hours
2.	1650000004/22	SUPPLY OF STANDARD GRADE K/DOLIN	RO. 105.00	10th January 2023 1700 Hours	17th January 2023 2359 Hours
3.	1570000030/22	RE-TENDER, OVERHAULING & REWINDING OF 2500 KW MOTOR	RO. 52.5000	10th January 2023 1700 Hours	17th January 2023 2359 Hours

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The last date for submission of offers is on Tuesday, 2359 hours detailed date on the above table, accompanied by a bid bond issued by any local bank in Oman (equivalent to 1%) of the total tender value. The bid bond must be valid for 120 days from the last date of submission of offers and ORIGINAL bid bond must be submitted on the tender box at the reception on our Administration Building, Al Misfah West factory Site, Bausher, Muscat, Oman.

Any tenders received beyond the above closing time and date or not being supported by a tender bond will NOT be considered. This publication is part of the tender documents



Sultanate of Oman
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MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH, Muscat, hereby give notice of tenders for the following projects

TENDR. No.	PROJECT CATEGORY	LOCATION	Fees R.O	GRADE IN TENDER BOARD REGISTRATION
26/2022	Services	TENDER DOCUMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION FOR GRASSED FOOTBALL PITCH AT OF MADHA SPORTS CLUB AT MUSANDAM GOVERNATE	25/-	Excellent & First Grade
27/2022	Services	RENOVATION OF GRASSED FOOTBALL PITCH FOR ALTALEIAH SPORTS CLUB AT SOUTH SHARQIYA GOVERNATE	25/-	Excellent & First Grade
28/2022	Services	CONSTRUCTION OF SYNTHETIC TURF FOOTBALL PITCH AND FLOODLIGHT TO MADHA SPORTS CLUB AT MUSANDAM GOVERNATE	25/-	Excellent & First Grade
29/2022	Supply	SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF FLOODLIGHT TO MAIN FOOTBALL PITCH AT ALMUDHABI SPORTS CLUB NORTH SHARQIYA GOVERNORATE	25/-	Excellent & First Grade
30/2022	CONSULTING OFFICE	CONSULTANCY SERVICES (DESIGN AND SUPERVISION) SWIMMING POOL AT MADHA SPORTS CLUB MUSANDAM GOVERNORATE	25/-	First Grade
31/2022	CONSULTING OFFICE	CONSULTANCY SERVICES (DESIGN AND SUPERVISION) PLATFORM AT AL MUDHABI SPORTS CLUB NORTH SHARQIYA GOVERNORATE	25/-	First Grade

Companies, which are registered with the Tender Board and engaged in same category with experience in and same Grade as noted above, can obtain the Tender Documents at the Tender Board E-tendering digital portal link (<http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) until 11/01/2023. The last date of tender submission on above E-tendering site at 09:00am 06/02/2023

A Tender Bond equivalent to 1% of the tender sum issued from a registered bank, in the prescribed form, in Sultanate of Oman and valid for 90 days should enclosed with the tender.

Any tender without the bond will be reject and the tender committee is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender received.

INTERNAL TENDER COMMITTEE OF MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH

Any participants have doubt in adopting e-tendering can contact over the phone 24402200 or through email etenderhd@ita.gov.om

With an Omanization rate of
“above 95%”

ChampionX continues recruiting, training and promoting Omani nationals at all levels of its business in the country



The Oman Society for Petroleum Services (OPAL) recently recognized ChampionX with its 2022 Best Large Contractor in the Energy Sector award in the category of Omanization. This annual award acknowledges ChampionX’s ongoing efforts to hire, train, and promote Omani citizens at all levels of our business in the country.

Following a call for nominations from members, ChampionX successfully showcased its Omanization achievements to a panel of judges on two occasions and fielded follow-up questions. The award ceremony was held December 13 where Mohammed Al Sibani, director of Oman services, presented ChampionX’s case to all attendees and we were ultimately chosen to receive the Best Large Contractor award in the category of Omanization.

ChampionX has been serving the Oman market for more than 15 years from its Middle East, Europe, and Africa headquarters in Muscat. Championx offers a full range of production technologies and services for artificial lift, digital automation, and production chemistry. Additionally, the firm opened a one-of-a-kind coiled rod manufacturing plant in 2011 in Salalah. In 2015 ChampionX expanded its footprint in Oman with a rod pump and progressing cavity pumping system maintenance facility. Currently the company

has more than 200 employees in the country and 95% are Omani. ChampionX also invests in its local talent by partnering with institutions like the Salalah College of Technology to advance employees’ skills. ChampionX also has a technical cooperation agreement with Dhofar University to test materials.

“We are so pleased to be recognized by OPAL – particularly for our achievements in Omanization. Since our entry into the country, it’s been important to us that we help build the local economy by investing in Oman’s talented workforce and by furthering Oman’s industrial sector,” said Fouad Eid, ChampionX vice president of the Europe, Middle East, and Africa geomarket. “This award validates our contribution to Oman’s strong business community. We are excited about the future expansion of our business in the country, which will allow us to provide even greater opportunities to local talent.”

OPAL has more than 450 members from oil and gas producers, operators, contractors, and suppliers. In addition to Omanization, the organization’s yearly awards recognize companies for excellence in the areas of health and safety, impactful environmental practices, recognizable energy transition, operational excellence, high-class Omani products and services, and research and development in the energy and minerals sector.

BUS CRASH

Indian-origin man among 4 killed in Canada bus crash

OTTAWA: An Indian-origin man from Amritsar was among the four who died when their bus overturned on an icy highway in British Columbia on Christmas Eve, according to Gurpreet S Sahota, editor of Charhdi Kala and Akal Guardian Punjabi Newspapers.

Although Canadian authorities have yet to confirm the identity of the deceased, the editor of a

Punjabi newspaper in Surrey said that Karanjot Singh Sodhi, 41, of Butala, Amritsar, was among those killed in the accident.

“One of the four people killed in a bus accident on the Vancouver-Kelowna route on December 24 was Karanjot Singh Sodhi, 41... He was from Butala (Amritsar) and had only recently entered Canada on a work permit in Sept 2022,” wrote Gurpreet S Sahota, editor

of the Surrey-based newspaper Akal Guardian, on his Twitter account.

“He was employed as a chef in a restaurant of an Okanagan winery. He left his wife, a son, and a daughter behind in his Punjab village. He was travelling by bus since he believed it was secure,” he added.

Earlier, the provincial Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) confirmed the news that four

people were killed in the bus accident.

Medical teams at three area hospitals were treating at least 53 people after the crash, according to local health authority Interior Health, which said late Saturday that the incident on Highway 97C triggered a ‘Code Orange’ response – a hospital designation used for disasters or a mass casualty event, reported CNN. **ANI**



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Indian Prime Minister holds talks with Zelenskyy on Russia-Ukraine conflict

PM Modi strongly reiterated his call for an immediate cessation of hostilities, saying that both sides should revert to dialogue



NEW DELHI: In a telephonic conversation with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday exchanged views about the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

PM Modi strongly reiterated his call for an immediate cessation of hostilities, saying that both sides should revert to dialogue and diplomacy to find a lasting solution to their differences, read Prime Minister’s Office press release. He

also conveyed India’s support for any peace efforts and assured India’s commitment to continue providing humanitarian assistance for the affected civilian population, added the release.

Zelenskyy, in a phone call to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday, sought India’s help in the implementation of a peace formula with Russia.

“I had a phone call with PM

Modi & wished a successful G20 presidency. It was on this platform that I announced the peace formula and now I count on India’s participation in its implementation. I also thanked for humanitarian aid

and support in the UN,” tweeted the Ukrainian President.

Meanwhile, the President of Ukraine conveyed his best wishes for India’s Presidency of the G20.

PM Modi explained the main priorities of India’s G20 Presidency, including giving a voice to the concerns of developing nations on issues like food and energy security, added the release.

The two leaders discussed opportunities for strengthening bilateral cooperation. PM Modi requested the Ukraine authorities to facilitate arrangements for the continued education of Indian students, who had to return from Ukraine earlier this year.

Earlier on Monday, Ukraine called for Russia to be removed from the United Nations, where Moscow can veto any resolution as a permanent member of the Security Council. “Ukraine calls on the member states of the UN... to deprive the Russian Federation of its status as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and to exclude it from the UN as a whole,” the foreign ministry said in a statement.

In a related development, Rus-

sian President Vladimir Putin and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping are likely to communicate via video link his week, Russian state news agency TASS said on Monday, without giving details of the timing or format.

Both leaders are facing immense criticism worldwide due to the Ukraine-Russia war and the surge in Covid-19 cases in China.

According to Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, Putin and Xi maintain regular communication and preparations for further talks between them are underway.

“Our leaders maintain regular communication. We are actually getting ready for further talks. When and how they will take place, we will let you know in due time,” he said when asked if the leaders might hold talks before the end of this year.

Beijing said earlier that Putin and Xi maintain regular contact through various channels.

Vedomosti, a Moscow-based newspaper, reported earlier, citing a diplomatic source, that the Russian and Chinese presidents would hold talks before the New Year, where they would sum up 2022, reported TASS. **ANI**

BELARUSIAN COURT



Former Olympic swimmer, activist get 12-year sentence

MINSK: A former Olympic swimmer and a political activist were sentenced in absentia to 12 years in prison by a Belarusian court on Monday for their role in protesting Alexander Lukashenko’s authoritarian regime.

Champion swimmer Aliaksandra Herasimenia and political activist Alexander Opeykin were found guilty of actions aimed at “causing harm to the national security of Belarus,” according to the state-run BelTA news agency.

“From August, 2020 to May 20, 2022, through the media and the Internet, they disseminated deliberately false information and fabrications about the events that took place on the territory of Belarus, about the course and results of the election campaign 2020,” BelTA reported.

Both of the activists have escaped the country.

Three-time Olympic medalist Herasimenia and Opeykin founded the Belarusian Sport Solidarity Foundation, which brings together hundreds of Belarusian athletes in opposition to Lukashenko.

The largest international competitions scheduled to take place in Belarus in 2021 were canceled in part because of efforts of the foundation.

Court ruling condemned

It was the first verdict against dissidents that was announced in absentia, after Lukashenko signed a

law in July allowing courts to try Belarusians who had fled abroad.

Along with her prison sentence, Herasimenia’s apartment, car and \$48,000 (€45,089) in her bank accounts were seized by the court.

Belarusian opposition leader-in-exile Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, condemning the court ruling, called it “Shameful!” on Twitter.

“This is how the regime tries to punish its opponents in exile,” she said. “The regime can’t get to them, but their property in Belarus was seized, including a car & an apartment.”

Protests against Lukashenko

After the disputed reelection of Lukashenko in August 2020, which the opposition and the West criticized as a sham, Belarus was rocked by widespread demonstrations.

More than 35,000 people were detained during the crackdown on the protests, and thousands were assaulted by police.

The United Nations and many other nations have shunned Minsk because of its continued crackdown on political opponents, members of civil society, and journalists.

Over 1,300 political prisoners are held in Belarus, according to the US embassy there.

Lukashenko, a close ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin, has also allowed Russia to launch its attacks on Ukraine from Belarusian territory. **AW**

WINTER STORM

US in deep freeze as death toll from winter storm reaches close to 50

WASHINGTON: As the US continues to stay in deep freeze, the death toll has reached at least 48 as the blizzard stranded motorists, knocked electricity out for thousands of people and made it difficult for emergency crews to get residents trapped in their cars, Al Jazeera reported on Monday.

The extreme circumstances in western New York were caused by numbing cold, howling winds, and heavy “lake-effect” snow, which was picked up by freezing air flowing over warmer lake waters. During a press conference on Monday, Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz announced that at least 25 people had perished as a result of the storm, which hit the area over the Christmas holiday weekend, reported Al Jazeera.

Hardly hit, Buffalo city of western New York has been highly hit by snow storms. Numerous regions were also left without power as a result of the blizzard.

The storm capped an Arctic freeze and winter storm front that had spanned most of the United States for days, reaching all the way south to the Mexican border. Tens of thousands of homes and businesses remained without power on Monday as rescue and recovery efforts continued, according to Al Jazeera.

Citing the White House statement, The Hill reported on Monday that President Biden spoke by



phone with New York Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) and offered federal assistance as New York deals with a massive winter storm that has claimed more than two dozen lives. “The President shared that his and the First Lady’s prayers are with the people of New York and all those who lost loved ones. He expressed his gratitude to the Governor for her leadership and to the National Guard, law enforcement, and first responders for their tireless work,” the White House said in a statement.

As a consequence of the Arctic blast and the winter storm, numerous people have died and suffered weather-related road accidents or the cold.

The storm has sent temperatures well below freezing across the US and has destroyed Christmas eve for many. As it pounded regions, the storm delivered hurricane-force winds and whitout conditions.

All kinds of transportation - planes, trains, and vehicles - were disrupted due to the storm this

holiday weekend, closing hundreds of miles of road and air travel cancellations.

Total flight delays within, into or out of the US amounted to about 4,000 as of Saturday morning, according to flight tracking website FlightAware, which showed that total US flight cancellations stood at around 2,000, as per CNN.

Plummeting temperatures were predicted to bring the coldest Christmas Eve on record to several cities from Pennsylvania to Georgia. **ANI**

COVID-19

China is facing ‘new situation’ amid COVID surge: Xi Jinping

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping urged a “patriotic health campaign” in his first public remarks on the pandemic since the end of Beijing’s zero-COVID policy and the subsequent surge in coronavirus cases earlier this month.

“At present, COVID-19 prevention and control in China are facing a new situation and new tasks,” Xi said in a directive as reported by Chinese state broadcaster CCTV.

“We should launch the patriotic health campaign in a more target-

ed way... fortify a community line of defense for epidemic prevention and control, and effectively protect people’s lives, safety and health,” Xi said.

China to scrap quarantine requirement for foreigners

In further developments Monday, the country’s National Health Commission announced it would drop a COVID-19 quarantine requirement for passengers arriving from abroad beginning January 8.

Currently, arriving passengers

have to quarantine for five days at a hotel, followed by three days at home.

China’s top health authority said some foreigners would be able to enter the country, without giving details.

China’s National Health Commission on Sunday said it would stop publishing daily COVID-19 numbers, saying the task would be delegated to another department under it.

The health commission has recorded only six COVID-19 fatalities this month, bring-

ing the country’s official toll to 5,241.

The figures have been largely disputed since there are multiple reports by families of relatives dying in the country of over 1.4 billion people.

This selection of data excludes many deaths other countries would attribute to the contagious viral disease.

Experts at the World Health Organization this month called on China to release reliable figures beyond the limited data available to the world so far. **AW**



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WORLD



Nepal’s President calls next house session on January 9

CPN-Maoist Centre chairman and new Nepal Prime Minister, Pushpa Kamal Dahal has formed an eight-member cabinet



KATHMANDU: Nepal's President Bidhya Devi Bhandari on Tuesday called the next house session on January 9, 2023 on the recommendation of the newly formed cabinet.

CPN-Maoist Centre chairman and new Nepal Prime Minister, Pushpa Kamal Dahal aka Prachanda has formed an eight-member cabinet with three deputy Prime Ministers. The 44th Prime Minister

of the Himalayan Nation took the oath of office and secrecy from President Bidhya Devi Bhandari at President's residence Shital Niwas. President Bhandari also administered an oath to the eight ministers.

Bhandari administered oaths to Deputy Prime Ministers Bishnu Paudel, Narayankaji Shrestha, and Rabi Lamichhane. Along with

the Deputy Prime Minister, Paudel also took oath as Minister of Finance, Shrestha as Minister of Physical Infrastructure and Transport, and Lamichhane as Home Minister.

The other ministers include Damodar Bhandari, Rajendra Rai, Abdul Khan and Jwalakumari Shah. Dahal was appointed PM for the third time after he

secured the support of 169 members of the Parliament to form the new government.

He served as Prime Minister of Nepal from 2008 to 2009 and again from 2016 to 2017.

Prachanda approached the President for his appointment as Prime Minister on December 25, after a coalition of six parties decided to support him to form the next government. The general elections did not produce a clear winner.

The unexpected decision came after the CPN-Maoist-ruled Centre abruptly severed ties with Sher Bahadur Deuba's Nepali Congress party which had been in power along with its allies.

Former Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) is among the parties in the new ruling coalition. Prachanda and Oli have struck an agreement to govern the country on a rotational basis, with Oli agreeing to make Prachanda Prime Minister first as per the latter's demand. **ANI**

Boat adrift at sea for weeks carrying Rohingya refugees reaches Indonesia

ACEH: A boat carrying Rohingya refugees which was adrift for a month at sea has finally landed in Indonesia's Aceh, VOA news reported on Monday citing the two rights groups that have been tracking the vessel.



The boat which reached Aceh, Indonesia on Monday afternoon had over 180 ethnic Rohingya men, women and children in it. More than a dozen are reportedly dead.

Moreover, on Sunday, a boat carrying 57 Rohingya men arrived in Aceh province, on the northern tip of Sumatra in the far west of the Indonesian archipelago. Notably, more than one million Rohingya people have sought refuge in Bangladesh after fleeing persecution in neighbouring Myanmar.

According to human rights organisations, up to 20 passengers may have died throughout the journey up to that time. As on Monday, they were unable to confirm the death toll.

Some of the rescued passengers appear weary and gaunt in the videos which were obtained by VOA news. Last week, a Rohingya

activist in the refugee camps told VOA that the captain of the boat had called him and said they were "starving to death."

On Thursday, the UN-appointed independent human rights expert, Tom Andrews, issued a statement urging governments to "immediately and urgently coordinate search and rescue for this boat and ensure safe disembarkation of those aboard before any further loss of life occurs".

"While many in the world are preparing to enjoy a holiday season and ring in a new year, boats bearing desperate Rohingya men, women and young children, are setting off on perilous journeys in unseaworthy vessels", said the UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar. **ANI**

Sarah Al-Amiri: The woman leading UAE's Mars mission



DUBAI: Over the past five years, the United Arab Emirates has sought to push the boundaries of science and technology.

In 2017, they announced the world's first Minister of Artificial Intelligence to spearhead the Gulf state's efforts in machine learning and other cutting-edge technologies.

That year, they also tapped a young Emirati engineer, Sarah al-Amiri, to lead the country's efforts into space at a time when the region was paying little attention to what is often described as the final frontier.

"We're a new country that is late to the competition in the global perspective," al-Amiri told the British scientific journal Nature earlier this month. "It's natural for people to think this was crazy," she added, referring to the UAE's Mars mission, which launched July 20.

Although al-Amiri initially started work as a computer engineer, she later moved into the field of space technology at the Emirates Institution for Advanced Science and Technology, where she worked on the UAE's first satellites. For her, it was a dream come true.

"As a young woman, at 12 years old, I saw an image of the Andromeda Galaxy, the closest galaxy to our Milky Way," al-Amiri said during a 2017 TEDx Talk in Dubai, adding that the image pushed her to learn as much as she could about space. "They had told me that they were working in the space sector, and I had a dream, so check."

From there, she was appointed the head of the Emirates Science Council in 2016 and a year later, the government tapped her to lead the new ministerial role for developing advanced sciences. Today at age 33, she is deputy

project manager and science lead of the Mars mission, dubbed Amal — Arabic for hope.

"The mission is called 'hope' because we are contributing to the global understanding of a planet," she said. "We are going above and beyond the turmoil that is now defining our region and becoming positive contributors to science."

"The mission has also pushed societal norms. According to Nature, women make up 34% of the mission and 80% of its science team, significantly higher than the 28% represented in the Emirati workforce."

Al-Amiri is hoping to bolster those figures by widening Emirati youth engagement in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

"Science to me is the most international form of collaboration," said al-Amiri. "It is limitless, it is borderless and it is run by the passions of individuals for the benefit of human understanding."

But her portfolio isn't limited to spacefaring missions.

As minister of state for advanced sciences, al-Amiri's mandate includes "enhancing the contributions of advanced sciences to the development of UAE and its economy."

"When you talk about the UAE's economy in the next 30 years, one of its foundations is science and technology because you want to have an economy based on knowledge — knowledge of production, utilization of knowledge and creating intangible assets," al-Amiri told the official Emirates News Agency on Monday.

"That's how the most sustainable economies work around the world."



Nama Sustainability Week Concludes in Musandam

Nama Group, represented by Majan Electricity Company SAOC, has concluded Sustainability Week Initiative in Musandam Governorate which was held from December 18 to 22 with the objective of promoting community awareness on the importance of electrical safety and the optimization of power consumption by creating integrated community and institutional partnership in the Governate.

Various activities and campaigns have been carried out within the initiative, which targeted different age groups across Musandam, including beach clean-up in coordination and cooperation with The Directorate General of Education, Environment Public Authority, non-governmental organizations, charities, and several local community members.

The initiative has cooperated with Volt National to take part in the implementation of "Naqla" program, which aims to provide electricity inspectors with training and qualification courses supervised by licensed engineers and technicians to grant them electrician licenses. Another program has been implemented during this week is "Baiti Aamin" which aims to examine the electrical wirings in different houses across Musandam and ensure its safety.

Raising community awareness of electricity conservation and electrical hazards, the Sustainability Week conducted several lectures targeting different schools and Omani Women Associations.

Ultimately, Nama Group has made substantial progress towards implementing sustainability strategies and reinforcing the positive contribution in all aspects, economic, social, and environmental across Oman since it was established in 2014. The Group takes a leading role in delivering safe and sustainable services to enhance value for Oman.





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52ND HIS MAJESTY'S CUP

His Majesty's Cup hockey final postponed due to bad weather

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Rains and bad weather played spoilsport as the much-awaited final of the 52nd His Majesty's Cup Hockey Championship between 12-time champions Ahli-Sidab and eight-time winners Al Nasr, scheduled to be played at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex on Tuesday evening was called off.

The Oman Hockey Association (OHA) confirmed on its official Twitter handle that the unstable weather conditions was the reason for the final to be postponed. The new date for the final will be announced later. The oldest



domestic tournament in Oman – His Majesty's Cup Hockey Championship – has a glorious past and has stood witness to some of the most exciting and memorable matches, clubs' rivalry, individual brilliance, foreign stars, fans' love and fury.

Ahli-Sidab won the 50th edition in March, 2021, as the event was delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic in 2020

The winner of the prestigious competition receives a glittering trophy and a cash award of OMR40,000 while the runner-up team gets OMR25,000 with the third-placed club taking home OMR15,000.

KARACHI

Strong reply by NZ openers after Salman hits maiden ton

KARACHI: A record unbroken opening wicket partnership of 165 runs between Devon Conway (82*) and Tom Latham (78*) led New Zealand's strong reply after Pakistan were bowled out for 438 in the first innings on the second day of the first Test at the National Bank Cricket Arena in Karachi on Tuesday.

During the course of the opening wicket stand, Conway became the quickest New Zealand batter to reach 1,000 Test runs (19 innings).

Earlier, Pakistan managed to put up a formidable total as Agha Salman slammed his maiden Test century.

Salman's Test century came in his sixth appearance. The No 7 batter, who was three overnight in Pakistan's 317 for five, was the last batter dismissed after scoring 103 as the home side added 121 runs on the second day.

Conway's 156-ball innings included 12 fours, while Latham's 126-ball innings was studded



with eight fours as the visitors now trail the hosts by 273 runs.

Earlier, Babar Azam failed to add to his last evening's score of 161 when he became his opposite number Tim Southee's second victim. Salman and Noman Ali then added 54 runs for the seventh wicket with the latter contributing only seven runs before becoming Neil Wagner's only wicket of the innings.

Mohammad Wasim Jr departed three runs later as Pakistan slipped to 375 for eight, but Salman took control of the proceeding and added 63 priceless runs with the last two wickets of Mir Hamza and Abrar Ahmed, whose collective contribution was seven runs.

Salman, whose first 50 runs came off 97 balls with seven fours, brought his second 50 runs from 49 balls with 10 fours. He eventually fell to Southee, who finished with figures of three for 69.

Ish Sodhi picked up the scalps of Wasim and Mir Hamza to finish with two for 87.

Brief scores: Pakistan (1st innings) (overnight 317-5) 438 all out in 130.5 overs (Babar Azam 161, Agha Salman 103, Sarfaraz Ahmed 86, Imam-ul-Haq 24, Saud Shakeel 22; Tim Southee 3-69, Michael Bracewell 2-72, Ish Sodhi 2-87, Ajaz Patel 2-112) vs New Zealand (1st innings) 165-0 in 47 overs (Devon Conway 82 not out, Tom Latham 78 not out)

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OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by February 2023 reaching \$80.62, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by \$2.04 from the price of Friday, which was \$78.58. - OMA

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) general index (30) gained 14.3 points, comprising a rise by 0.29 per cent to close at 4845.41 points, compared to the last session, which stood at 4831.15 points.

Oman, Japan sign pact in energy field



The two sides also inked the third extension of the MoU signed between the Ministry of Energy and Minerals and the Japan Organisation for Metals and Energy Security in the field of crude energy, natural gas and clean energy

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, and Japan, represented by its Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, signed a Memorandum of Understanding

(MoU) in the field of hydrogen, fuel ammonia and carbon recycling that includes methanation. The two sides also signed the third extension of the MoU signed between the Ministry of Energy

and Minerals and the Japan Organization for Metals and Energy Security in the field of crude energy, natural gas and clean energy. The MoUs were signed by Eng. Salim Nasser Al Auqi, Minister of Energy and Minerals and Yasutoshi Nishimura, Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry. The first MoU aims to accelerate the Oman-Japan energy and resources cooperation and acknowledge the continued role and contribution of the Sultanate of Oman to Japan's energy security. The MoU will support efforts within multilateral fora to accelerate cooperation, exchange information and research results and hold workshops, trade missions, site visits and working groups in the field of hydrogen, fuel ammonia and carbon recycling that in-

cludes Methanation. Moreover, the term of the third extension of the MoU is from January 9, 2023, and for three years, thus enhancing collaboration in dealing with commercial and technical issues pertaining to clean energy. This MoU was first signed on January 9, 2014, in confirmation of the two sides' mutual intention and desire to promote and develop cooperation in the field of crude oil, natural gas and clean energy development based on reciprocal benefits. Al Auqi expressed his hope that those MoUs will contribute to the exchange of expertise and striking new partnerships in the field of hydrogen, fuel ammonia and carbon recycling that includes methanation between the two countries. -OMA

BINDING SHEET AGREEMENTS



Oman LNG signs agreements with Japanese firms to sell liquified natural gas

MUSCAT: Oman LNG signed three binding sheet agreements with Japanese firms for the production and delivery of LNG starting in 2025. The total amount of LNG to be delivered is 2.35 million metric tonnes per annum (MTPA). The new agreements will see Oman LNG supplying LNG based on contracts varying from 5 to 10 years. The amount of LNG to be delivered is as follows: 0.8 MTPA to ITOCHU Corporation, 0.8 MTPA to JERA Co., Inc. and 0.75 MTPA to Mitsui and Co. Ltd. Eng. Salim Nasser Al Auqi, Minister of Energy and Minerals and Nishimura Yasutoshi, Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry were present during the signing ceremony. The agreements were signed by Hamad Al Nu'amani, CEO of Oman LNG, Tetsuya Yamada from ITOCHU Corporation, Hitoshi Nishizawa from JERA Co., Inc. and Motoyasu Nozaki from Mitsui and Co.

Such a step comes as a significant milestone for Oman LNG, as it complements the company's strive to renew its contracts with a strong interest to leverage its partnership with Japan. Al Auqi said that the agreements were signed after the end of the current contracts. The new contracts take into consideration the notes submitted to the Ministry of Energy and Minerals regarding the previous MoUs and agreements. The notes were submitted by the State Audit Institution (SAI) and the Shura Council. Al Nu'amani pointed out that this move complements Oman LNG's efforts to further grow, reach international markets and explore new opportunities. It will also leverage the enhanced production and Oman LNG's nationwide commitment towards diversifying the economy while ensuring economic growth. -OMA

BANK MUSCAT

Oryx Fund delivers highest return to investors among Mena fund peers

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat Oryx Fund has once again been recognised as the best-performing Mena equity fund by the reputed CityWire® rankings. These rankings are based on the returns generated by the fund for its investors against 20 other funds focusing on the Mena region during the 1 year that ended on October 31, 2022. The Oryx fund has delivered a 13.3 per cent return for the one year that ended October 31, 2022, as against a turn of 0.1 per cent by the S&P GCC index during the same period. Delivering double-digit returns is a remarkable achievement by Oryx Fund considering the challenging investment environment during 2022. Consistency has been the hallmark of Bank Muscat Oryx



fund in absolute as well as relative performance, across time periods, through its long track record spanning 28 years. In addition to the attractive returns, the fund has also been consistently rewarding its investors with regular income distributions

(through dividends) for the past 28 years. In 2022, the fund has distributed a dividend of 66 baisas per unit, thus maintaining its consistent and growing income distribution track record since 2016. On the back of the robust track record, the fund has witnessed

significant inflows over the years, making it the largest open-ended equity fund in Oman and one of the largest open-ended equity funds in the GCC region. Bank Muscat Oryx Fund has won several accolades for generating wealth for its investors and significant outperformance compared to peers. Many times, it has been topped by various renowned global fund reviewers such as Lipper, Mena Fund Manager and Emerging Market Finance. Oryx Fund represents an attractive investment proposition for long-term investors. The fund's strategy to follow a bottom-up approach that is focused on the selection of quality stocks has been proven over various market cycles and time periods. The fund management team's insights in the GCC region, quality

of research across industries and sectors and knowledge of investee companies' performance and future direction are the key factors that have enabled the fund to provide consistent and stable long-term returns to the investors. The Oryx Fund is an open-ended fund regulated by the Capital Market Authority, Oman. The fund offers daily liquidity, providing flexibility to invest or redeem on any business day. Investors can subscribe to the fund with a minimum subscription amount as low as OMR50. Investors may also choose to invest every month by subscribing to Systematic Investment Plan Option. The fund's NAV is published daily on the Bank Muscat website and the Muscat Stock Exchange website so that investors can track the value of their investments daily. Interested investors may contact

the fund's Investor Servicing Desk at 24768064 or through email at assetmanagement@bankmuscat.com to understand the process to subscribe to the fund. Please refer to the prospectus of Bank Muscat Oryx Fund to understand the risks involved and other details related to the investment in this fund. The prospectus of the fund is available on www.bankmuscat.com. Bank Muscat's Asset Management business has a proven track record of successful operations for almost 29 years and is today the largest asset manager in Oman and one of the leading asset managers in the GCC region, with approximately \$2.5 billion of AUM. It offers tailored investment solutions across asset classes including equity, fixed income, real estate and private equity investments.

CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN

Treasury bills worth OMR26 million issued

MUSCAT: The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) raised OMR26 million by way of allotting treasury bills on Tuesday. The treasury bills are for a maturity period of 182 days, from December 28 until June 28, 2023. The average accepted price reached OMR97.589 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR97.550 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.83517 per cent and 4.95464 per cent, respectively. The interest rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 5.00 per cent while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 5.50 per cent. The treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds. -OMA

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MARKET



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MSX index ends higher

The trading value stood at OMR5,619,262, comprising a drop of 6.5 per cent, compared to the last session, which stood at OMR6,010,956



MUSCAT: Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) general index (30) gained 14.3 points, comprising a rise of 0.29 per cent to close at 4,845.41 points, compared to the last session, which stood at 4,831.15 points.

The trading value stood at OMR5,619,262, comprising a drop of 6.5 per cent, compared to the last session, which stood at OMR6,010,956.

The report released by MSX

pointed out that the market value went up by 0.090 per cent to reach about OMR23.72 billion.

The report added that the value of shares bought by non-Omani investors reached OMR672,000, comprising 11.96 per cent. The value of shares sold by non-Omani investors reached OMR627,000, comprising 11.15 per cent. The net non-Omani investment increased by 0.80 per cent to OMR45,000. — **ONA**

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

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INDICES							
Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%	
MSX 30 INDEX	4,845.41	4,831.15	4,845.41	4,831.15	14.25	0.29	
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,863.44	7,817.97	7,860.85	7,817.97	42.87	0.55	
Industry Index	6,358.39	6,320.74	6,355.57	6,316.16	39.41	0.62	
Services Index	1,620.68	1,608.60	1,610.73	1,615.83	-5.11	-0.32	
MSX Shariah Index	499.14	498.27	499.13	498.68	0.46	0.09	
MSX TR INDEX	6,115.79	6,097.80	6,115.79	6,097.80	17.99	0.29	
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,228.21	8,180.64	8,225.50	8,180.64	44.86	0.55	
SERVICES TR IDX	1,712.92	1,700.15	1,702.40	1,707.80	-5.40	-0.32	
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,619.87	6,580.67	6,616.94	6,575.91	41.03	0.62	
Trading Summary							
Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
23,250,689	5,619,262	781	23,723,291,444	18	10	20	48

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27

	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST HD	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	1,495,582	254,193	8	0.168	0.171	0.168	0.171	0.166	0.005	3.012	0.171	0.167	0.171	0.100	333,391,427
OM0000002077	AL OMANIA FINS.	25,000	3,600	2	0.144	0.144	0.144	0.144	0.141	0.003	2.128	0.144	0.137	0.144	0.100	43,662,764
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	18,000	5,474	2	0.304	0.308	0.304	0.308	0.302	0.006	1.987	0.308	0.304	0.308	0.100	101,908,795
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	63,582	13,988	7	0.220	0.220	0.220	0.220	0.216	0.004	1.852	0.220	0.216	0.235	0.100	27,477,551
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV. H.	12,000	660	1	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.054	0.001	1.852	0.055	0.052	0.058	0.100	11,000,000
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	390,192	168,405	43	0.428	0.434	0.428	0.434	0.428	0.006	1.402	0.434	0.434	0.434	0.100	282,509,796
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSUR.	115,000	33,925	6	0.295	0.295	0.295	0.295	0.295	0.000	0.000	0.295	0.295	0.295	0.100	28,500,000
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT. ENG.	202,777	22,756	19	0.112	0.113	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.000	0.000	0.112	0.112	0.113	0.100	15,680,000
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	158,878	46,075	15	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.000	0.000	0.290	0.285	0.290	0.100	471,524,443
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	45,000	18,900	4	0.420	0.420	0.420	0.420	0.420	0.000	0.000	0.420	0.420	0.420	0.100	280,713,479
OM0000002440	AL SHARGIA INV.	5,000	395	1	0.079	0.079	0.079	0.079	0.079	0.000	0.000	0.079	0.078	0.079	0.100	7,110,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	11,351,708	3,178,048	199	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.000	0.000	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.100	2,101,791,177
OM0000003000	ALMAHA PETROLEUM	8,000	7,200	4	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.000	0.000	0.900	0.888	0.900	0.100	62,100,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	40,478	37,563	18	0.928	0.928	0.920	0.928	0.928	0.000	0.000	0.928	0.920	0.928	0.100	696,000,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INT. BANK	501,973	53,711	6	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.000	0.000	0.107	0.106	0.110	0.100	491,138,665
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	435	191	1	0.440	0.440	0.440	0.440	0.440	0.000	0.000	0.440	0.000	0.440	0.100	24,200,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SER.	634,511	294,740	93	0.468	0.472	0.458	0.468	0.464	-0.006	-1.293	0.458	0.458	0.460	0.100	108,275,780
Total	17	15,068,116	4,139,825	429												
Parallel Market																
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	817,039	36,859	62	0.043	0.046	0.043	0.046	0.042	0.004	9.524	0.046	0.045	0.046	0.100	9,183,238
OM0000006979	OMAN QATAR INSUR.	107,100	20,598	10	0.189	0.200	0.189	0.200	0.190	0.010	5.263	0.200	0.191	0.200	0.100	20,000,000
OM0000002804	ASAFIA FOODS	15,300	3,518	7	0.230	0.234	0.230	0.234	0.224	0.010	4.464	0.234	0.223	0.233	0.100	28,080,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	615,800	40,625	48	0.064	0.068	0.064	0.066	0.064	0.002	3.125	0.066	0.066	0.067	0.100	20,271,657
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	41,500	4,310	6	0.103	0.106	0.103	0.104	0.102	0.002	1.961	0.104	0.104	0.106	0.100	18,938,153
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	20,000	3,452	6	0.171	0.174	0.171	0.174	0.171	0.003	1.754	0.174	0.169	0.174	0.100	35,319,642
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	240,000	28,320	6	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.116	0.116	0.002	1.724	0.118	0.117	0.117	0.100	50,112,885
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	10,000	1,270	1	0.127	0.127	0.127	0.127	0.125	0.002	1.600	0.127	0.120	0.131	0.100	212,015,070
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	2,678,795	176,894	34	0.066	0.067	0.066	0.065	0.065	0.001	1.538	0.066	0.066	0.067	0.100	23,043,331
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	325,610	27,662	26	0.084	0.086	0.084	0.085	0.084	0.001	1.190	0.085	0.083	0.086	0.100	17,000,000
OM0000001517	HSCB BANK OMAN	1,026,842	169,379	9	0.164	0.165	0.164	0.165	0.164	0.001	0.610	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.100	330,051,610
OM0000007043	NATIONAL LIFE INS.	7,000	2,380	2	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.338	0.002	0.582	0.340	0.000	0.340	0.100	138,447,276
OM0000001100	NATIONAL GAS	21,000	2,197	4	0.107	0.107	0.104	0.105	0.105	0.000	0.000	0.105	0.106	0.110	0.100	8,925,000
OM0000001301	DHOAF FOODS AND INVESTMENT	20,502	1,476	2	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.000	0.000	0.072	0.070	0.075	0.100	5,821,200
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	762,890	121,969	38	0.162	0.170	0.157	0.158	0.158	0.000	0.000	0.158	0.158	0.160	0.100	31,600,000
OM0000002341	OMAN CHLORINE	4,160	2,196	2	0.528	0.528	0.528	0.528	0.528	0.000	0.000	0.528	0.528	0.528	0.100	35,958,732
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	125,791	12,255	2	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.000	0.000	0.099	0.098	0.100	0.100	221,458,350
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	60,000	5,330	5	0.089	0.089	0.088	0.089	0.089	0.000	0.000	0.089	0.088	0.094	0.100	15,575,000
OM0000004825	ALBATTINAH POWER	58,600	1,754	6	0.029	0.030	0.029	0.030	0.030	0.000	0.000	0.030	0.029	0.030	0.100	20,246,623
OM0000003670	BANKA DESALINATION	25,148	3,370	2	0.134	0.134	0.134	0.134	0.134	0.000	0.000	0.134	0.132	0.134	0.100	10,119,948
OM0000002549	BANK DHOAF	50,000	8,550	1	0.171	0.171	0.171	0.171	0.172	-0.001	-0.581	0.171	0.171	0.177	0.100	512,376,096
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	97,056	7,279	12	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.076	-0.001	-1.318	0.075	0.072	0.077	0.100	9,140,625
OM0000004735	SEMBORP SALLAH	85,000	5,465	4	0.065	0.065	0.064	0.064	0.065	-0.001	-1.538	0.064	0.064	0.066	0.100	61,062,605
OM0000002987	GULF MUSHROOM P.	467	111	2	0.238	0.241	0.238	0.241	0.245	-0.004	-1.633	0.241	0.234	0.240	0.100	10,024,870
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	1,000	43	1	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.044	-0.001	-2.273	0.043	0.041	0.043	0.100	62,891,863
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	418,282	37,644	37	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.093	-0.003	-3.226	0.090	0.089	0.090	0.100	7,326,248
OM0000004953	AL SUWADI POWER	69,000	1,515	13	0.028	0.029	0.028	0.029	0.030	-0.001	-3.333	0.029	0.029	0.030	0.100	20,717,794
Total	37	7,698,862	726,640	341												

SECOND PHASE

Pact signed to develop 'Intaj Suhar' advanced industries company



MUSCAT: Industrial Innovation Academy signed a partnership agreement with Sohar University to develop 'Intaj Suhar' advanced industries' company.

The agreement was signed by Dr Ayman Abdullah Al Fudhaili, CEO of Industrial Innovation Academy, and Dr Hamdan Sulaiman Al Fazari, Vice-Chancellor of Sohar University.

The ceremony was held under

the auspices of Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

The agreement, which lends support to the sector of converting industries and innovation, seeks to promote advanced industries, which serves as one of the basic pillars of economic diversification and a step forward in realising Oman Vision 2040.

'Intaj Suhar' constitutes the second phase of a project that was undertaken as part of a cooperation between the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit and Sohar University.

The first phase was an experimental stage in manufacturing moulds and establishing an advanced research centre. — **ONA**

DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM PROJECT

Asyad Group launches 'Data Lake' to promote data-driven competitiveness

MUSCAT: Asyad Group launched Data Lake as its latest digital ecosystem project that falls within its strategy to equip Asyad with empirical insights on current and future operational, markets and customer trends.

On this project, Asyad Group partnered with Rihal, an Omani data and migration services company, to develop its big-data management and analytics capabilities, support cloud-based applications and utilise Oman's new in-country cloud infrastructure, accelerating the deployment of cutting-edge technologies.

Big data analytics and forward-looking business intelligence are the key enablers of Asyad's group technological strategy aimed at achieving growth and global competitiveness. The solutions — developed in partnership with Rihal — will serve the present and forecast the future. The proactive features will deliver an ideal cus-



tommer experience, provide competitive services to acquire global customers and predict future market trends to support Asyad's strategy and growth.

The analytics of the amassed data from across the group's operations and assets will serve as a critical tool to optimise operational efficiencies, this includes,

for example, preventive maintenance that minimises breakdowns and downtime of ships and maritime assets and reduces fuel consumption and emissions from shipping. This helps Asyad Group's operational performance and quality improve, its profitability increase, and its business development. — **ONA**



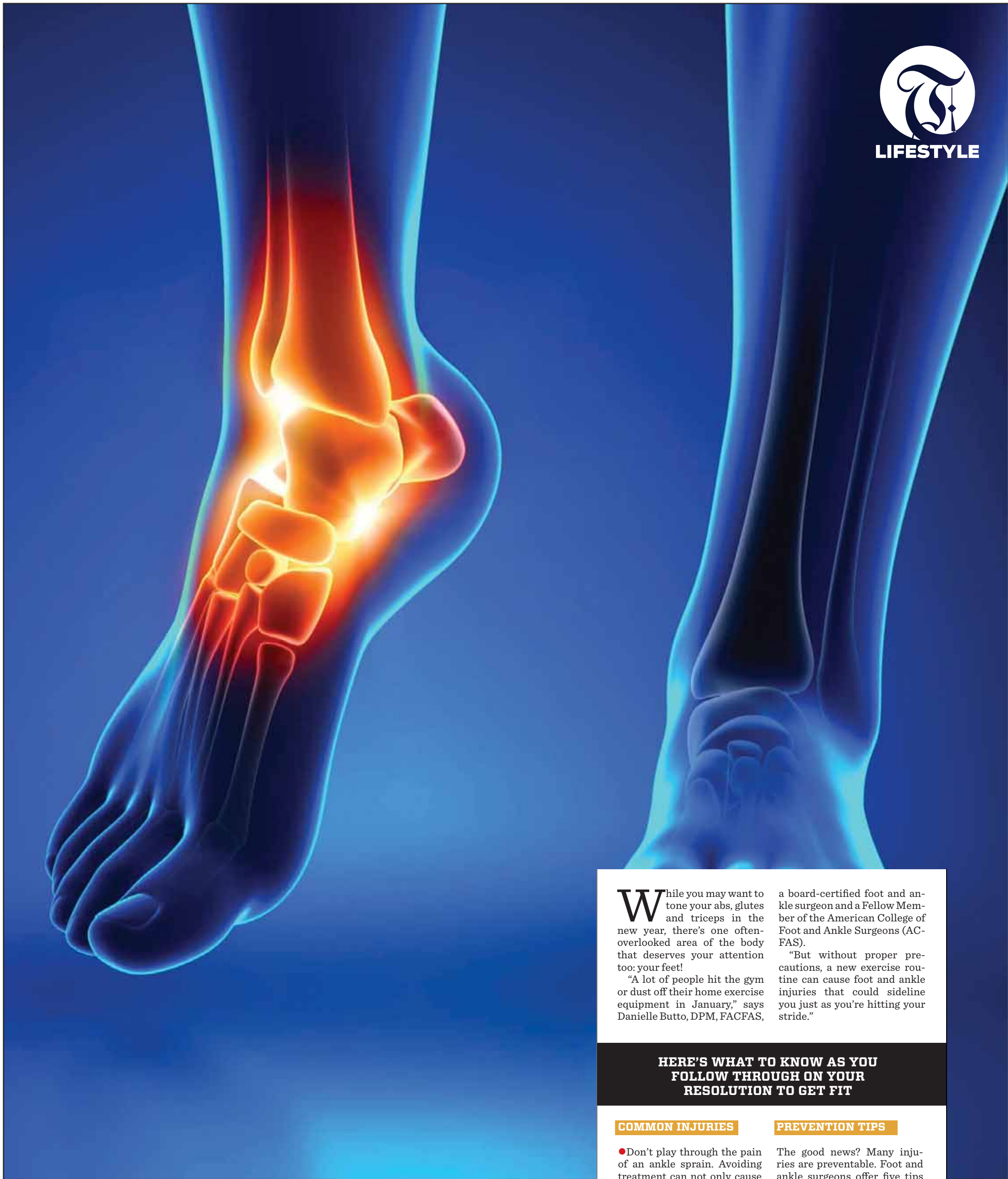
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When you exercise, your feet and ankles do a ton of work holding you up and absorbing the shock of each step you take. So, as you kick off your new fitness routine, don't forget to protect them.

RESOLVING TO GET IN SHAPE IN 2023? DON'T FORGET YOUR FEET

While you may want to tone your abs, glutes and triceps in the new year, there's one often-overlooked area of the body that deserves your attention too: your feet!

"A lot of people hit the gym or dust off their home exercise equipment in January," says Danielle Butto, DPM, FACFAS,

a board-certified foot and ankle surgeon and a Fellow Member of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS).

"But without proper precautions, a new exercise routine can cause foot and ankle injuries that could sideline you just as you're hitting your stride."

HERE'S WHAT TO KNOW AS YOU FOLLOW THROUGH ON YOUR RESOLUTION TO GET FIT

COMMON INJURIES

- Don't play through the pain of an ankle sprain. Avoiding treatment can not only cause further damage to the ligaments which may take much longer to heal or possibly require surgery, but you may be overlooking a more serious injury — a stress fracture.
- A stress fracture may feel like an ankle sprain at first, but you'll notice additional warning signs, such as swelling without bruising, and pain even during normal activities or when touching the area. If you have any of these symptoms, have your foot and ankle evaluated by a foot and ankle surgeon as soon as possible.
- Pain or swelling around your Achilles tendon after a workout could be indications of Achilles tendonitis. Untreated, a stretched or strained Achilles tendon may worsen over time, leading to stiffness and fatigue in your injured leg. Worse yet, untreated Achilles tendonitis could result in a ruptured tendon requiring surgery and a rehabilitation of several months.
- Heel pain that lasts for more than a day or two, or worsens when you stand after sitting for an extended amount of time, may be plantar fasciitis. This common condition is a result of inflammation of the tissue extending from your heel to your toes. If caught early, your foot and ankle surgeon can recommend at-home conditioning. In late stages, plantar fasciitis is harder to treat and takes longer to resolve.

PREVENTION TIPS

- The good news? Many injuries are preventable. Foot and ankle surgeons offer five tips to help you keep your feet and ankles healthy:
- 1. Be smart.** Consider consulting a personal trainer at first to ensure you're practicing good form, and to increase the duration and intensity of your workouts gradually and safely.
 - 2. Stretch.** Incorporate mobility and stretching into your fitness regimen, particularly before and after workouts.
 - 3. Be footwear aware.** Wear properly-fitting athletic shoes that support the arch of the foot, provide heel cushioning and are designed for the exercise in which you're engaged. These measures can help you avoid plantar fasciitis and neuromas. Wear cotton or nonslip socks to help prevent painful blisters, which can become infected and cause more serious issues, especially if you have diabetes.
 - 4. Guard against bacteria.** Sweaty shoes, public showers, exercise equipment and the pool deck are breeding grounds for fungus, viruses and bacteria. Wear water shoes in public areas, and after workouts, and get your feet clean and dry quickly.
 - 5. Book an appointment.** Foot and ankle pain isn't normal. It signals a problem that needs to be evaluated, diagnosed and treated by a specialist who fully understands this part of the body. -Statepoint

Arsenal fight back to defeat West Ham 3-1

With the win, Arsenal have a total of 40 points to extend lead at the top having won 13 of their 15 games, losing only one and drawing the other

LONDON: Arsenal made a stunning comeback in the second half to extend their lead in the Premier League standings to seven points following a 3-1 win over West Ham on the very night which saw the former Gunners boss Arsene Wenger return to the Emirates Stadium for the first time since his departure in 2018.

Now, Arsenal has a total of 40 points to their name, having won 13 of their 15 games, losing only one and drawing the other one.

In 16 matches, West Ham has won only four, lost 10, and drawn two. They are in the 16th position in the table with a total of 14 points.



After William Saliba brought Jarrod Bowen inside the box, West Ham got a chance at the goal.

Said Benrahma wasted no time in converting the penalty into a goal to give their side a 1-0 lead in the 27th minute.

At half-time, the scoreline read 1-0 in favour of the visitors.

back on Wenger's face.

In the 69th minute of the match, Eddie Nketiah, rounded off a brilliant night with a superb goal, tripling the lead which lasted till the end of the game.

Mikel Arteta, the club's current manager, thanked Wenger for coming.

"It's a special day. Thank you so much for him coming and hopefully walking through the building he is going to feel everything that everybody thinks of him, everything that he left here, but also his presence is something that has to be very attached to this football club.

"So, thank you for doing that because it means a lot to everybody at the club," Arteta was quoted as saying by Sky Sports.

Arteta also expressed happiness with his team's performance saying that the home crowd generated a lot of belief and energy for his team, which showed "a lot of composure and real quality, but also real clarity to understand what the game demanded, and they executed that really well."

On his team's title ambitions, the manager said, "What I tell the players is we have to focus on us.

Arsenal will be playing Brighton on New Year's Eve while West Ham will host Brentford on Friday. - ANI

4TH MEETING

OOC reviews plan and budget for 2023 in meeting



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The board of directors of Oman Olympic Committee (OOC) held the 4th meeting for this year on Monday, headed by Khalid bin Muhammad Al Zubair, OOC Chairman, in the presence of members.

During the meeting, the minutes of the 3rd meeting held on August 23 were reviewed and approved, and the decisions issued by it were implemented, as well as the minutes of the 3rd and 4th executive office meetings held on July 17 and November 2.

OOC's plan and budget for 2023 was also reviewed and approved, which also included the budget for international participations, and then reviewed the financial statement until the end of last November 2022.

The board reviewed the draft regulations and controls that will be implemented during the coming period, as the board approved the project of the Technical Office for Sports Studies and Development, which aims to create a technical umbrella that brings together a number of experts with expertise and knowledge, specialised academics and the like, and to be a participatory work team that provides technical support as well as to advice to the board of directors, the sub-committees and the interested sports bodies in particular on technical and other advice related to the tasks that will be assigned to the office.

The attendees also reviewed the work regulations of sub-committees, and the controls for international participation. It was agreed to make some amendments to them and to implement them directly. They also reviewed the implemented projects related to the axes for the next stage.

The attendees reviewed the amended draft of the regulations of Oman Athletes Committee, and after reviewing its provisions and the additions it contained, they were instructed to refer it to Oman Athletes Committee for review and coordination with specialists regarding the notes that were written and to be presented to the Executive Office for approval. The new OOC formation for Disputes and Sports Arbitration Committee, as well as Oman Sports for a Sustainable Environment Committee, has also been approved. Before the end of the meeting, there were several issues that the board of directors reviewed in the last items of the agenda prepared and took the necessary decisions regarding them.

SECOND TEST

Nortje hit by spidercam while fielding

MELBOURNE: Proteas pacer Anrich Nortje was knocked over by a fast-moving spider camera on Day 2 at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) on Tuesday.

However, according to the ESPNcricinfo, Cricket Australia's host-television broadcaster Fox Sports has apologised to Anrich Nortje. Nortje confirmed after the day's play that he was fine, despite

being hit on his left shoulder and elbow. CA said that Fox Sports had admitted it was an error by the operator. "I didn't know what hit me, to be honest. So far so good. It just knocked the [left] shoulder and the [left] elbow. The elbow is a bit sore but otherwise seems to be okay. I'll just monitor it and see how it goes with the [doctor]," Nortje said as quoted by ESPNcricinfo.

After being hit, he was able to bowl at a high pace. He was in the outfield shortly after lunch when he was knocked to the ground by a mobile camera zipping by at head height.

"I saw cables and then I turned around or moved my head and then I saw the camera, but I was a little bit too late. It was quite quick. It didn't really change my mindset

or anything. I tried to stay focused. I think the one thing we've spoken about earlier is how low it is and it probably shouldn't be unless [it needs to be] for certain interviews or something. But I don't think it should be travelling at head height. That's just my opinion. And then for Marco [Jansen] as well, they must take him into consideration [for his height]," he added. - ANI

AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA

Warner's double ton puts Australia in driver's seat

MELBOURNE : David Warner's double hundred propelled Australia to 386/3 against South Africa putting them in command at the end of the second day of the Boxing Day Test here at Melbourne.

David Warner had an anticlimactic end to his superb day at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) as he retired hurt after having suffered a hamstring cramp during his double-hundred celebration.

The southpaw fell to the hot weather conditions at MCG after piling misery on the Protea bowlers as he shattered records en route to his knock of 200* runs.

Australia resumed their inning at 45/1 with David Warner 32* and Marnus Labuschagne 5* at the crease.

The duo could add only 30 runs to the scoreboard before the right-hander was run out for 14 runs.

Steve Smith walked into bat at number four and stitched a marathon partnership with Warner to put the hosts ahead in the game. The duo shared a 239-run stand



for the third wicket to render the visitors hopeless as they looked for the elusive wicket.

Warner played the role of the aggressor as Smith played second fiddle in the partnership.

The pair was brilliant between the wickets and kept the Protea bowlers at bay.

Smith missed out on a well-de-

served century and was dismissed by pacer Anrich Nortje for 85 runs.

Left-hander Travis Head walked in at number five and played a quick-fire inning, taking the aggressive route from the beginning. He was partnered with Cameron Green initially but a blow to the all-rounder's finger saw him retire hurt and Alex Carey partnered him

till the end of the day.

Head remained unbeaten at 48 (48) while Carey scored 9*(22) at the end of the day. Australia ended the day with 386/3 with a sizeable lead of 197 runs.

A five-wicket haul from all-rounder Cameron Green put Australia in a position of comfort at the end of the first day's play, with

the scoreboard reading 45/1 for the hosts at the end of day's play.

Brief scores: Australia (first innings): 386/3 (David Warner 200* retd hurt, Steven Smith 85; Anrich Nortje 1-50) against South Africa (first innings): 189 (Marco Jansen 59, Kyle Verreynne 52, Cameron Green 5/27).

WTA 50: JUST STARTING

WTA signals historic 50th anniversary

FLORIDA: The Women's Tennis Association (WTA) on Tuesday announced season-long plans to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2023, under the campaign banner WTA 50: Just Starting.

The WTA was founded at a meeting of players called by Billie Jean King on June 21, 1973, on the eve of the Wimbledon Championships. Frustrated by sexism in the sport and an establishment that split the talent pool with competing circuits, King recognized the need for women to formally join forces to take control of their destiny.

With Dutch player Betty Stove standing guard at the conference room at London's Gloucester Hotel, King who had won nine of her 12 Grand Slam singles titles by that time was determined no one would leave until a definitive agreement had been reached as read in a statement released by WTA. - ANI

OMAN CRICKET LEAGUE

RSTS trounce Safara International, Ahli Bank beat OCT Al Amerat B

Times News Service

MUSCAT: RSTS FCC thumped Safara International by 88 runs in the D Division and Ahli Bank beat OCT Al Amerat B in the G Division of the Oman Cricket League Season 2022-23.

In the match between RSTS FCC and Safara International, RSTS FCC won the toss and elected to bat first.

RSTS FCC got off to a shaky start with their 1st wicket falling in just the 2nd over of the match.

Josephin Joseph and Shahid Afridi took the responsibility and steadily built a partnership of 78 runs.

Death over finesse from Rueben Kumar scoring 47 of 24 balls with 4 boundaries and a maximum and Shahid Afridi's chanceless 73 of 53 balls took RSTS FCC to 190 runs in 20 overs.

In response, Safara International could not capitalise with only 3 of their batsmen reaching double digits falling to brilliant bowling spells from the young Omidu Medagoda picking 4 wickets, Anzil Nazumudeen picking 3 wickets and Rueben Kumar picking 2 wickets.

Brief scores: RSTS FCC 190/3 in 20 overs (Shahid Afridi 73 (53) 9x4, Rueben Kumar 47 (24) 4x4, 1x6; Wasim Raje 34(1) beat Safara International 102/10 in 15 overs (Amol Dhotre 30 (24) 2x4, 1x6; Omidu Medagoda 16/4, Anzil Nazumudeen 5/3, Rueben Kumar 14/2) by 88 runs.

In the match between Ahli Bank and OCT Al Amerat B, Ahli Bank won the toss and elected to bat first.

Ahli Bank's openers made the most of the call and thrashed OCT Al Amerat's bowling with the opening pair of Ittecheria K



From left: Anzil N, Shahid Afridi, Rueben Kumar, Omidu M of RSTS FCC

and Tawsif Tambe stitching a 144 run partnership and Mohammed Zain's flourishing touches scoring quickfire in the death overs to take them to a record highest score this year with 221 runs on the board.

Abdullah Al Balushi picked 2 wickets in the innings for OCT Al Amerat B.

In response, OCT Al Amerat B could just notch 137 runs losing 7 wickets, falling short by 84 runs,



Ahli Bank recorded highest score in G Division this year

although, Abdullah Al Balushi kept fighting for his team scoring 55 of 53 balls with 8 boundaries.

Ahli Bank registered their 4th win of the league in 6 games.

Brief scores: Ahli Bank 221/4

in 20 overs (Ittecheria K 91 (50) 14x4, 1x6, Tawsif Tambe 67 (45) 10x4; Abdullah Al Balushi 43(2) beat OCT Al Amerat B 137/7 in 20 overs (Abdullah Al Balushi 55 (53) 8x4; Narayan Jayaraman 35(2).



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IN-PICTURES



Wintering whooper swans seen at Yellow River in NW China's Qinghai
Wintering whooper swans are seen at the Yellow River in Hualong Hui Autonomous County of Haidong City, northwest China's Qinghai Province. *Xinhua*



Salman Khan greets during his 57th birthday party celebration
Bollywood actor Salman Khan greets during his 57th birthday party celebration hosted by his sister Arpita Khan Sharma, at her residence, in Mumbai. *ANI Photo*



Traditional horse race in Indonesia
A jockey rides his horse during a traditional horse race at Gayo Plateau in Bener Meriah, Aceh Province, Indonesia. *Xinhua*



Christmas swimming competition held in Prague, Czech Republic
Swimmers participate in the traditional Christmas swimming competition in the Vltava River in Prague, the Czech Republic. *Xinhua*



Boxing Day sales in London, Britain
People are seen outside a store during Boxing Day sales in London, Britain. *Xinhua*



People enjoy shopping in Kuala Lumpur
People visit a shopping mall in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. *Xinhua*

ROUND-UP



Ahli Islamic rewards its credit card holders at Shell Oman service stations

Until the end of the year 2022, all Ahli Islamic credit cardholders will get a 20 per cent cashback when fuelling at Shell Service stations or shopping at Shell Select stores

MUSCAT: As part of its continuous efforts to provide exclusive benefits under its credit card profiles, Ahli Islamic has extended its collaboration with Shell Oman Marketing to offer exciting cash rewards to its credit card holders. Up until the end of the year 2022, all ahli islamic credit cardholders will get a 20 per cent cashback when fuelling at Shell Service stations or shopping at Shell Select stores.

Yousuf Al Rawahi, Deputy General Manager and Head of Ahli Islamic said, "We recognise the importance of meeting customers' needs and providing them with Sharia-compliant banking solutions consistent with their evolving lifestyle. Hence, ahli islamic has always strived to create products and services that help all our customers achieve their goals and earn value-added benefits."

The cashback offer for the Ahli Islamic credit card holders, who can access a range of services and benefits provided by our third-party partners from across different sectors. It is also indicative of our digital transformation journey and encouraging cashless transactions across the country, as part of Oman 2040 objectives." As part of the collaborative promotion, Ahli Islamic customers can avail of a discount of up to OMR10 at Shell Oman service stations and Select outlets. "This offer is in line with the bank's objective to keep providing excellent customer-centric services that are innovative, secure, and convenient. It also demonstrates our in-depth understanding of client's needs and our keenness to adapt these learnings to meet customer expectations and current market requirements," Al Rawahi added.

The cashback campaign represents ahli islamic's commitment to its strategy, which focuses on achieving the ideal balance of sustainable growth goals with that of meeting customer demands. At a time when the Islamic banking sector is experiencing significant growth in operations and increased customer demand; such initiatives are expected to have a more positive impact on the country's economic development. With the expansion of its product and services portfolio, Ahli Islamic has been able to enhance its retail banking offers. This confirms its commitment to the 'customer-first' approach, and the attention it attaches to customer feedback by constantly improving its offers and services. The bank provides its Sharia-compliant products and services across its digital platforms and growing branch network across the Sultanate.



SIGNATURE LUXURY 100 EVENT

Khimji Ramdas Bath Solutions wins 'Luxury Bath & Sanitaryware Solutions Brand of the Year' award

MUSCAT: A brand committed to business excellence, sustainability initiatives and customer-centricity, Khimji Ramdas Bath Solutions (KRBS) has been bringing the best of global brands to Oman. Honouring its continued efforts, the company was recently conferred the 'Luxury Bath & Sanitaryware Solutions Brand of the Year' title at the Signature Luxury 100 event, which was held at the Crowne Plaza, Qurum recently. The evening welcomed His Highness Sayyid Muadh bin Dheyab Al Said as the esteemed Chief Guest, alongside Her Highness Sayyida Dr Taghreed Turki Mahmoud Al Said, Sayidda Basma Al Said, Sheikh Issa bin Salim Al Mashani and Sheikh Dr Hamdan bin Saba Al-Saadi as the Guests of Honour. It also witnessed the presence of C-suite executives from leading brands, industry experts and key delegates. Commenting on the award, Varun Khimji, Director-Khimji Ramdas said, "KRBS, which is a part of Khimji Ramdas Group, a leading conglomerate that was established as early as 1870, mirrors the same level of dedication to quality as its parent company. This award further attests to Khimji Ramdas Bath Solutions' keen focus on revolutionising the sanitaryware market with solutions from innovative, design-oriented and sustainability-focused international brands." Ravi Dhulipala, Chief Operating Officer-KR Infrastructure Cluster said, "We are indeed delighted to have earned this prestigious award. With consumers becoming more sustainability-focused and aesthetically conscious, there



has been a rising demand for reliable, high quality and personalised bathroom solutions. With its years of expertise in the industry, KRBS has developed the ability to anticipate and evolve according to the needs of its discerning customers and offer meaningful inputs and expert advice whilst assisting in the selection of the right products and services." Meanwhile, Ranjit Ravindran, General Manager-KRBS said, "Customer satisfaction, hassle-free processes and unparalleled quality delivered through world-class products are what makes us different. Adopting a more holistic approach to business, we offer end-to-end services in an en-

deavour to assist our elite clients in every step of their journey. We match products and solutions that are customised according to our customer's expectations with exceptional services that encompass everything from installation, service and maintenance." Partnering with renowned sanitaryware brands - Roca, Jaquar and Bagno Design, KRBS has set up state-of-the-art showrooms in the Sultanate of Oman. Each showroom has a team of well-trained design consultants, sales representatives and customer service professionals who not only reserve the required knowledge of sanitaryware products but also have the inherent zeal to turn their

customer's unique bathroom concepts into a reality. As the sole distributor of these brands in Oman, KRBS caters to the key areas of construction and design for an array of sectors for the Khimji Ramdas Infrastructure cluster. With an extensive portfolio of internationally acclaimed products, KRBS pays tribute to the fine traditions of exquisite craftsmanship and precision. A pure blend of design, technology and talent that combines to create a masterpiece, the products are crafted to meet the varying demands of the customers and can either be coordinated together or offered as individual pieces.

HEALTHCARE



Construction of Oman's first dedicated women and children hospital facility in Sohar completed

MUSCAT: Aman Healthcare Services (Aman Healthcare), a private equity management vehicle of Oman Investment Corporation (OIC) in the healthcare sector, announced that it had completed the construction of Oman's first dedicated women and children hospital facility in Sohar named Saada Hospital. It has received a completion certificate from the municipality and is all set for a soft launch in the first quarter of 2023. Eng. Kalat Al Balushi, the Chairman of Aman Healthcare and the Chief Executive Officer of OIC, stated: "We are proud to complete the construction work of Saada Hospital and deliver state-of-the-art hospital facilities with high international standards within the planned timeline despite the Covid-19 pandemic. We thank our investors, lenders, and stakeholders who have shown continuing confidence in us. Saada Hospital will provide much-needed quality infrastructure and medical services to its customers and the local community in Sohar & North Batinah Governorate."

room of Saada Hospital is designed to accommodate women's and children's requirements and local cultural needs. Saada Hospital offers focused-quality medical services for women and children in the fields of maternity, surgical gynaecology, paediatrics, neonatal intensive care (NICU), fetal medicine, and infertility as well as general healthcare services such as internal medicine, ENT, Cosmetic dermatology, general surgery, and general and paediatric dentistry. With globally trained obstetricians, midwives, paediatricians, healthcare specialists, and nurses, the Saada Hospital ensures the topmost personalized care for each patient and offers normal and high-risk pregnancy care, ante-natal, and post-natal care breastfeeding support, and parenting education with its patient-centric approach. Aman Healthcare's vision is to become Oman's first regional healthcare services player by pursuing organic and inorganic opportunities in attractive healthcare sub-sectors in Oman & other GCC countries. Saada Hospital is Aman Healthcare's first healthcare project, with plans for expansion in Muscat and other GCC countries. OIC is a leading Omani Private Equity Investment company established in 2005 with a strong track record in establishing, investing in, and growing businesses. OIC focuses on investing in healthcare, logistics, real estate, power, infrastructure projects, and asset and project management services. A strong management and investment Team lead OIC with significant healthcare and infrastructure projects experience.

DISTRIBUTOR OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Suhol Al Fayha launches its new logo



MUSCAT: Suhol Al Fayha, a part of the KV Group and the largest importer, distributor and grower of fruits and vegetables in the Sultanate of Oman, launched its new logo in a glittering ceremony at the Hormuz Grand Hotel on Monday. The inauguration was done by Faisal bin Abdullah Al Rawas, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Abdul Latheef, the Expat representative of the Oman Chamber of Com-

merce and Industry was present at the ceremony. The event was presided over by the Chairman of KV Group Abdul Jabbar and Managing Director Abdul Wahid. The event was also attended by Sultan Majid Al Abri, Chairman of the Oman Agricultural Association. Many dignitaries including sponsors, officials from the municipality, banks, customers and suppliers from around Oman, media, executive directors and employees of the KV group attended the meeting.



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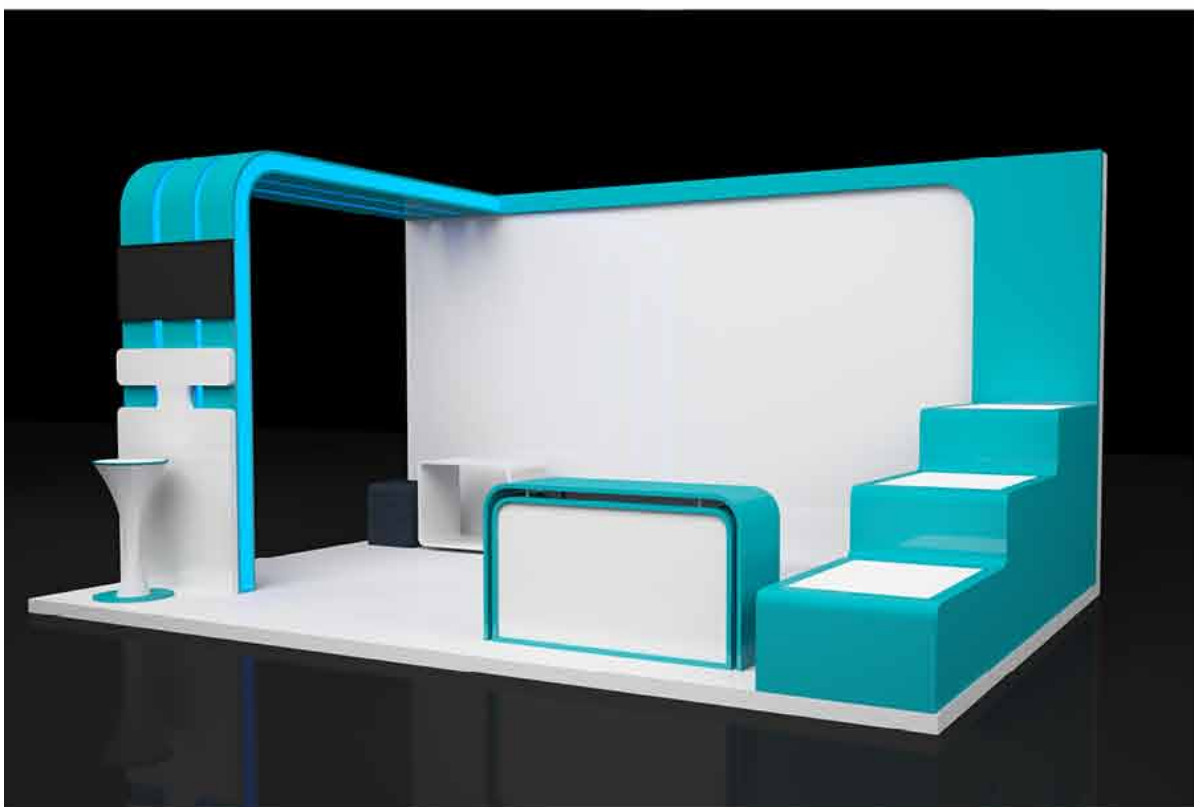
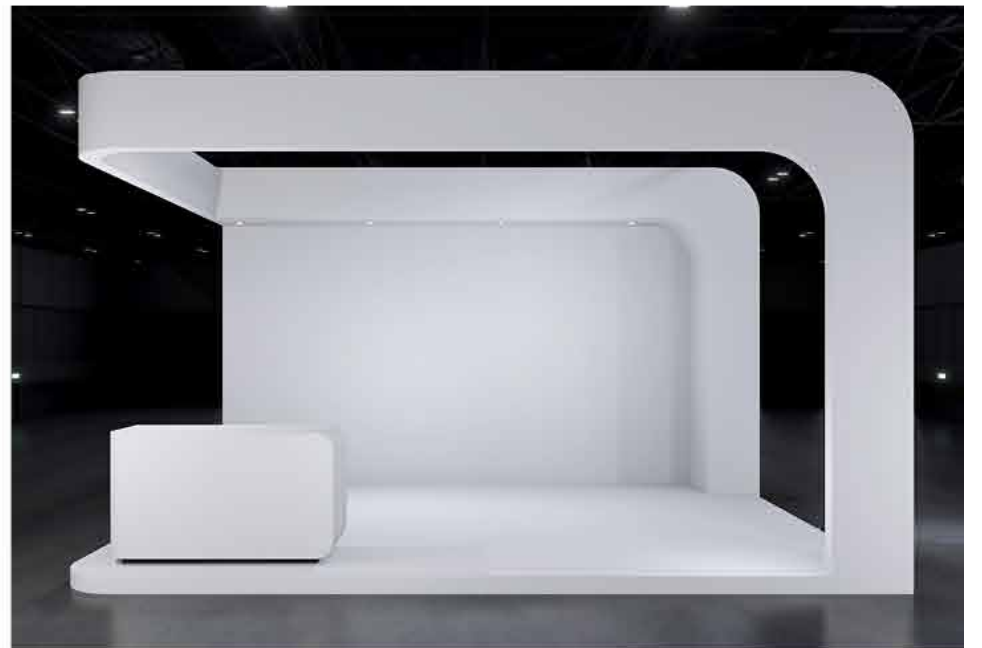
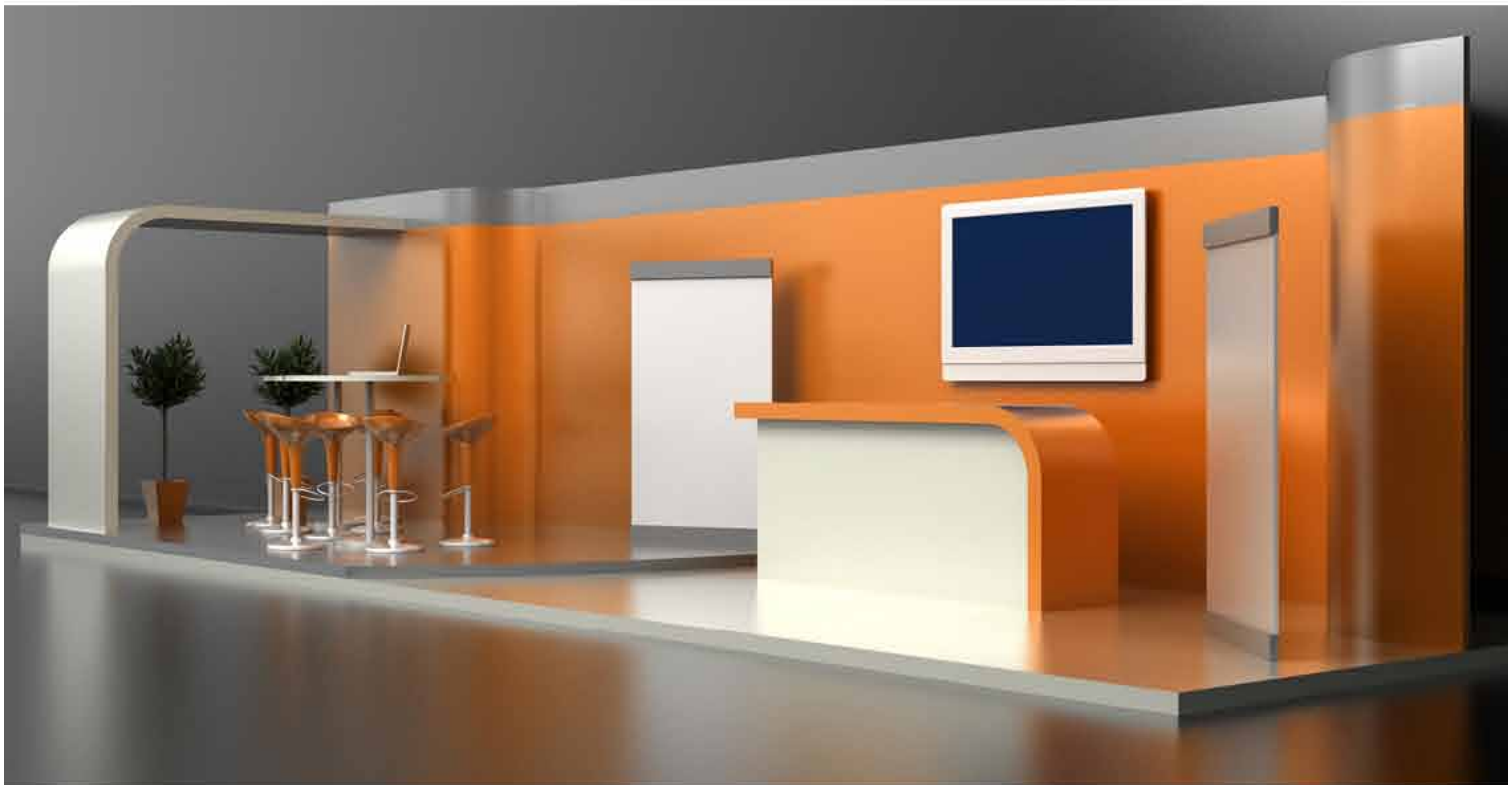
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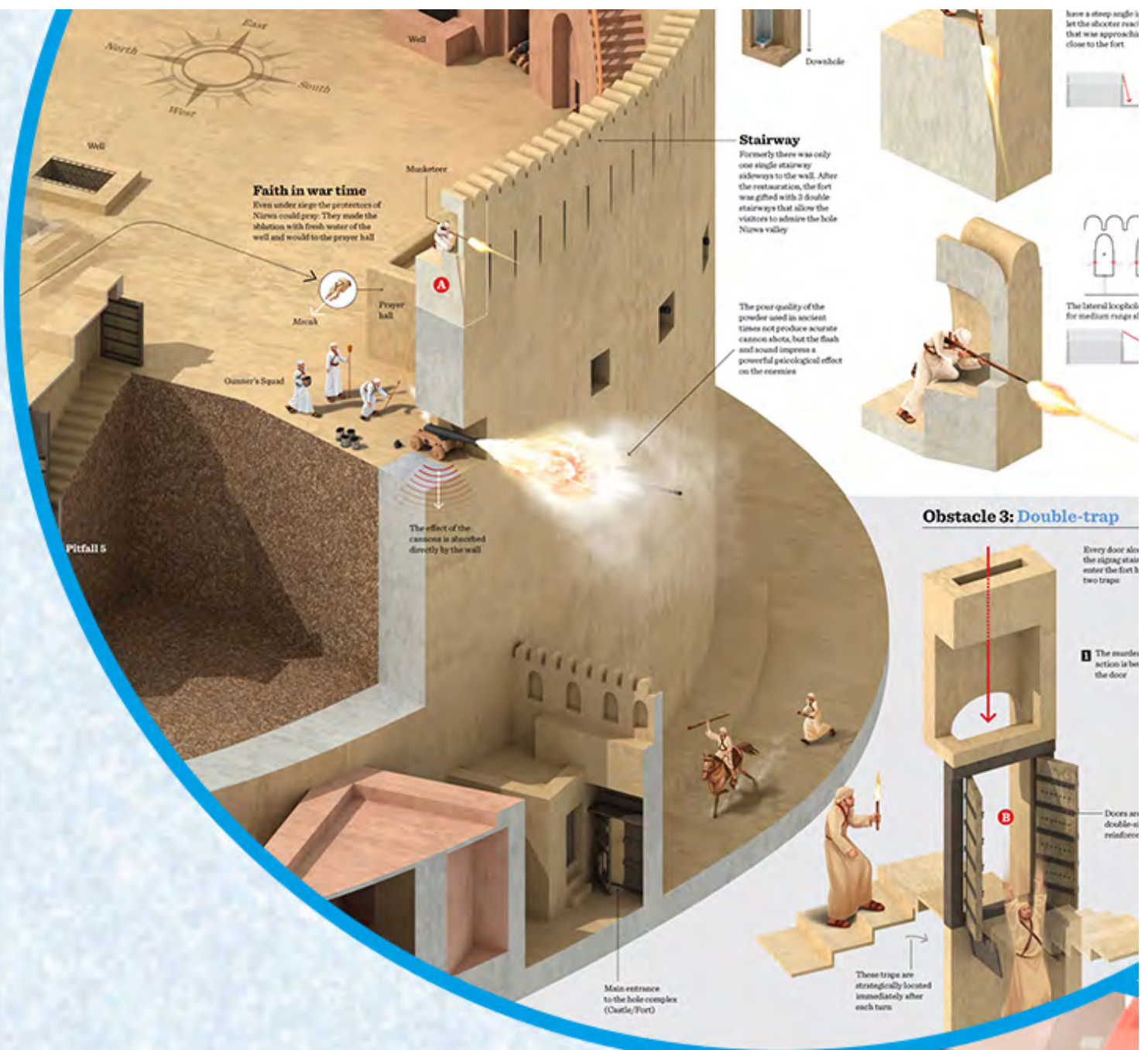
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