



TREASURY BILLS WORTH OMR47.3MN ISSUED

The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) raised OMR47.3 million by way of allotting treasury bills on Monday. The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR30 million, for a maturity period of 28 days. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 5.34464 per cent and 5.36665 per cent, respectively. **>B1**



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SAYYID THEYAZIN TO PRESIDE OVER PASSING OUT OF ROYAL ARMY OF OMAN CADETS, UNIVERSITY OFFICERS

The Royal Army of Oman (RAO) will today celebrate the passing out of a new batch of officer cadets, university officers and limited service officers. The ceremony will be presided over by HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth. During the celebration, the batch will perform a military parade on the military parade grounds of Al Murtafaa Garrison (MAM) that will portray the skill they gained at the RAO under the patronage of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander. The RAO band will also present a variety of musical performances on the occasion. — **ONA**

SYMPOSIUM

Sayyid Shihab presides over seminar on national readiness to deal with advanced technologies

MUSCAT: HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs yesterday presided over the conclusion of a symposium titled “Strengthening national readiness to deal with advanced technologies”.

The symposium was organised by the Academy of Strategic and Defence Studies at the Al Shafaq Club of the Sultan's Forces. Armed (SAF). It aimed at raising the Sultanate of Oman's competitiveness and innovation indicators, assisting in initiating employment opportunities in domains of future technologies, enhancing environmental sustainability, cutting down greenhouse gas emissions,



augmenting the efficiency of related institutions and accelerating digital transition plans.

The symposium, which saw the participation of government and

private sector establishments, discussed means of building flexible government policies and effective systems to realise the country's objectives.

Sayyid Shihab and the attendees toured an exhibition held on the sidelines of the symposium which showcased models of Omani projects and companies operating in the field of advanced technologies.

He also listened to a briefing on the technologies and innovations presented at the exhibition. The closing ceremony of the symposium was attended by ministers, SAF commanders and other military and security departments. It was attended by members of the State Council, and top officials of government departments and specialists in the field of modern technology. — **ONA**

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEES TO STUDY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

The two-day meeting recommended upgrading Municipal Councils' performance to meet the domestic demand

Times News Service

MUSCAT: With the aim of realising the vision of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and to empower the Municipal Councils so that they could carry out their development and social welfare role within their respective governorates, a number of recommendations were made at a symposium which concluded on Monday.

The two-day Municipal Councils Symposium aimed at upgrading their performance in a manner that responds to the needs of the forthcoming stage of domestic development.



The symposium recommended the implementation of provisions of the Municipal Councils Law and the integration of efforts between municipal councils, government departments and the private sector establishments. The closing ceremony was held under the auspices of Sayyid Hamoud Faisal Al Busaidi, Minister of the Interior. The symposium underscored the

significance of municipal councils' awareness about updates brought about by Oman Vision 2040.

It focused on linking the councils' legally defined functions with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040. In this context, special emphasis was laid on devising annual plans to secure sustained high performance.

The symposium called for

espousing clear-cut criteria to measure the performance of municipal councils, bearing in mind demographic and geographical differences between the governorates. The symposium recommended a review of the formation of municipal affairs committees in the wilayats to offer better opportunities to study development needs. **>A5**



ROHM cancels all concerts of season due to current events in the region

A5

SULTAN QABOOS UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Omani researcher studies prevalence of delirium cases among elderly people

Times News Service

MUSCAT: An Omani researcher has worked on the prevalence of delirium cases among elderly people living in Oman.

The research project was aimed to assess the prevalence of delirium among elderly people hospitalised at Sultan Qaboos University Hospital as well as assessing the risk factors that may increase the likelihood of its occurrence and evaluating its short and long-term impact on health.

According to Dr. Rajaa Saleh Al Farsi, Internal Medicine Resident from Oman Medical Speciality Board, delirium is defined as a sudden and fluctuating disturbance in mental function, characterised by an inability to pay attention, disorientation, and inability to think clearly.

It is the result of an organic disease, in addition to the presence of risk factors that increase the



chance of having delirium.

Among the many innovative research projects of the 10th National Research Award organised by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, ‘Delirium in Medically Hospitalised

Patients: Prevalence, Recognition and Risk Factors: A Prospective Cohort Study’ by Dr. Rajaa Saleh Al Farsi, won in the Health and Social Services field in the Young Researcher's category.

She said that this is the first

study in the Sultanate of Oman that talks about delirium in elderly people hospitalised in internal medicine wards and one of the few studies done in the Middle East on this topic.

For the methodology, Dr. Rajaa and her team included 327 patients aged 65 years or older, admitted in the medical wards at Sultan Qaboos University.

Patients were screened for delirium using the 3-Minute Diagnostic Confusion Assessment (3D-CAM). Risk factors and clinical outcomes were assessed by interviewing patients, reviewing their medical records, and following up by phone calls 90 days and 1 year after hospital discharge.

Dr. Rajaa stated that the study showed prevalence of delirium among elderly patients admitted to medical wards was more than 55 percent, with hypoactive delirium being the most common type. **>A5**

OMAN

Review of private sector role in GCC



1 A seminar hosted by the Ministry of Economy kicked off to explore economic and development integration in the GCC. The seminar is titled “The Role of the Private Sector in Economic Diversification in GCC States”. The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Dhafir Awad Al Shanfari, Chairman of the Economic and Financial Committee at the State Council. **>A3**

WORLD

70 dead in Maghazi refugee camp strike

2 An Israeli airstrike hit the Maghazi refugee camp in central Gaza, killing at least 70 people, according to the Health Ministry. The ministry spokesperson Ashraf Al-Qidra said the death toll is likely to rise. Israel's military said that it was looking into the report. **>A7**

SPORTS

Chelsea head coach rues missed chances

3 Chelsea head coach Mauricio Pochettino “blamed themselves” for their 2-1 defeat against Wolverhampton Wanderers in the Premier League. Chelsea's miserable run continued as they once again found themselves on the losing side following Wolves' win over the Blues. **>A8**

PRAYER
TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....	12:12pm
Asr.....	3:13pm
Maghrib.....	5:33pm
Isha.....	6:48pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	5:26am

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LAB OF DEVELOPING SERVICES

Review of services for people with disabilities

MUSCAT: The National Committee for the Welfare of People with Disabilities on Monday held a meeting under the chairmanship of Dr. Laila Ahmed Al Najar, Minister of Social Development.

The meeting reviewed the progress made of the lab of developing services and programmes for people with disabilities.

Further, the meeting highlighted the strategic approach and the executive position of the lab's activities. It also showcased the list of projects and initiatives resulting from the lab's works.

The lab for developing services and programmes for persons with disabilities will continue until the end of December. -OMA

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DBBS

People urged to donate O positive blood



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Department of Blood Banks Services (DBBS) has urged people with O+ blood group to donate blood at the Central Blood Bank in Bausher.

DBBS said in a statement: "The Central Blood Bank in Bausher is facing a major challenge during this period, and is witnessing a noticeable decline in blood stock, especially for the O+ blood group. Let us all unite at this time and contribute to saving a human life."

"The blood donation hours at the Central Blood Bank in Bausher, from Saturday to Thursday, are from 8am to 8pm and on Friday from 8am to 1.30pm."

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A number of specialists concerned with agriculture reaffirmed the attention and care accorded by Omani citizens for environment items regulating their activities, mainly the agricultural patterns and other organisational matters and affairs. The falajs (afaj) represents an integrated social system, the contents of which include the falaj water finance, which is a non-profit finance system, the revenue of which is used in the periodical maintenance of the falaj, which ensure sustainability of and smooth flow of the falaj’s water, and hence agricultural development. The falaj water finance is a deep-rooted heritage and is held through open auction (locally known as munadat). This public auction is held weekly or annually depending on the size of the falaj. Currently several wilayats are interested in shifting to online (electronic) fixing of water qualities and timing for the falajs. The new process saves time and efforts of farers. Dr. Abdullah bin Saif Al Ghafri, professors of the Unesco Chair for falajs’ studies at the University of Nizwa said the falaj water finance is a unique system in the Sultanate of Oman which ensures financial adequacy and independent administration of the falaj. The falaj qa’ad or finance system managed, through history, to make available the funds necessary for maintenance and removal of harmful herbs at the falaj, he added. The benefits of the falaj qa’ad finance system are not restricted to maintenance of falajs but include social security such as for orphans, financing of schools and entertainment such as offering Omani Halwa after Taraweeh prayers during the Holy Month of Ramadan in some villages in the wilayat of Nizwa, he said. - ONA





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SAYYID SHIHAB PRESIDES OVER SEMINAR ON READINESS TO ADDRESS ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES

HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs presided over the conclusion of a symposium titled ‘Strengthening national readiness to deal with advanced technologies’ – ONA



ROHM cancels all concerts of season due to current events in the region

Since October 16, 2023, the Royal Opera House Muscat has suspended all its shows in solidarity with the people of Palestine

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Royal Opera House Muscat (ROHM), has announced the cancellation of all concerts for its artistic season for the year 2023/2024 due to the cur-

rent events in the region. In a statement, the ROHM said: “In view of the current events in the region, the Royal Opera House Muscat would like to announce to its audience the cancellation of all concerts for its artistic season for

the year 2023/2024. The season will resume with the classical programme only.” In a tweet, the ROHM also said: “A proportion of the proceeds from the classical programme will be dedicated to Palestine in coordination with the Omani Authority for Charitable Works , in solidarity with the people of Palestine.” For more details people are requested to contact via telephone number 24403319 and/or email at boxoffice@rohmuscat.org.om. Since October 16, 2023, the ROHM has suspended all its shows in solidarity with the people of Palestine.



Risk factors increase the risk of delirium

< FROM A1 There are several risk factors that increase the risk of delirium including the presence of prior cognitive impairment, poor functional status, an increase in the number of medications the patient takes, the presence of a urinary catheter, dehydration, and electrolyte imbalance. Moreover, delirium has a significant impact on short and long-term health outcomes. It is associated with increased mortality (all-cause mortality at 90 days (25.4% vs. 8.4%) and 1 year (35.9% vs. 16%) after hospital discharge), prolonged hospital admission and increased incidence of complications acquired from the patient's presence in the hospital, including infection, bed sores, and upper gastrointestinal bleeding. Through the study, Dr. Rajaa concluded that delirium is common among elderly patients hospitalized in general medical wards and it is associated with serious clinical consequences. Early recognition, implementing effective preventive strategies for delirium, and developing geriatric wards are crucial. Further research is necessary to explore effective management strategies for delirium in general medical wards and to optimize patient care. This research project was published in the Journal of Clinical Medicine. The research team included Dr. Rajaa Saleh Al Farsi, Dr. Abdullah Mohammed Al Alawi, Mrs. Juhaina Salim Al Maqbali, Dr. Aisha Ramadhan Al Huraizi, Dr. Taif Al Saadi, Dr. Noof Al Hamadani and Dr. Khalfan Al Zeedy.

Electronic app unveiled

< FROM A1 A session titled “Media Aspects of Municipal Councils” was held on the closing day of the symposium. In addition, a discussion panel was held on ways of integrating the roles of municipal councils’ members with the roles of governors.

Two-day event The two-day event saw the launch of an electronic app called “Tanmia”, which was developed by the Ministry of Interior. The app serves as a digital interface and a meeting space for municipal councils and members of the public. The symposium was attended by Royal family members, ministers and other senior government officials and governors.

The symposium also sought to highlight the importance of integrating roles between governors and members of municipal councils to exchange experiences and develop future visions for the governorates. On its first day, the symposium witnessed the launch of the Tanmia application, which was created by the Ministry of Interior. It is considered the digital interface for municipal councils and a link between Omani society and municipal councils in the governorates, and to enhance communication, transparency and trust between individuals and institutions, which will lead to achieving sustainable development and improving municipal work.

— With ONA inputs



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Ministry of Heritage and Tourism

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Fees of Tender Documents For SME	10 O.R		
Fees of Tender Documents	50 O.R		
Tender Document Sales End Date	14/1/2024		
Last Date for Bid Submission	5/2/2024		
Grade	Excellent , First		
E-Tendering Portal	https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om		
Interested Companies registered with Tender Board (in the mentioned Grade) may obtain Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om , against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document.			
The Tenderers must acknowledge commitment to the bid.			
The Ministry shall not be obligated to accept the lowest or any other bids			
The bid submission period starts after the end of the inquiry period shown in the e-tendering system, until the last date for submitting bids before (10:00 am, Oman time).			
Support and inquiries	For more information, related to the tender, kindly communicate through the website of the e-tendering system: https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om For inquiries related to the technical support for the e-tendering system, kindly communicate through etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om or 24402200		
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YOUTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Majlis Al Shura discusses draft law proposals

MUSCAT: The Youth and Human Resources Committee of Majlis Al Shura on Monday discussed the proposal of the draft law of the private entities operating in the field of sports and the proposal on the draft law of the Sports, Cultural and Youth Activities Support Fund within the plan of the committee for the first annual convening.

The draft law of the private en-

tities operating in the sports field targets issuance of a regulation organising registration with the civil teams, the civil teams govern-ance and identifying their systems along with issuance of the Articles of Association of the civil teams similar to that of the sports clubs.

The discussion on the draft law of the Sports, Cultural and Youth Activities Support Fund aimed

to support the efforts of Oman in achievement of sustainable goals in the sports, cultural and youth sector.

The discussion was held at the premises of Majlis Al Shura during the fourth meeting of the first annual convening (2023-2024) of the tenth term (2023-2027).

It was chaired by Younis bin Ali Al Manthari, chairman of the

committee in the presence of the members.

The committee met with a number of national owners of vehicles at one of the sites affected with construction of a government project. The members of the committee also listened to the claims of some citizens working within the ‘One Million Working Hours’ (Part Time Contract) . — Times News Service

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IN NGOS

OCHA concerned about economic situation of Afghan working women

KABUL: The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said in a report that the ban on women working in NGOs in Afghanistan has had a major impact on the country's economy, according to media report.

As per the report, the economy of Afghanistan, “a country that relies on humanitarian aid,” is currently deteriorating due to the ban on women's work.

Economic expert

An Afghan economic expert, Mohammad Nabi, said: “In the future, we must build a good economy in cooperation with women, and the Taliban must build a proper mechanism and provide work for women in government offices so that women can serve in society.”

December 24 is the one-year anniversary of the prohibition of women from working in non-governmental organisations.

Working opportunities

A number of women want the Taliban to provide working opportunities in various sectors.

Rozita, 40, the only breadwinner of her 6-member family who used to work in non-governmen-

tal organisations and is now unemployed, is busy preparing Afghan food in Kabul.

She called on the Taliban to provide women with the opportunity to work in the country.

“I am the breadwinner of my own house. There are six of us in the family, I came here because of the poor economy, and we opened a restaurant here,” Rozita said, as per TOLO News.

But the Taliban said that women are working where they are needed.

Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said: “About 150,000 of our sisters are busy working in the health sector; our sisters work in education, in higher education, in the police, in Tazkira authorities and in other sectors where they are needed, such as airfields. In parts where our sisters cannot work, their wages are paid at home.”

On December 24, 2022, the Taliban-appointed Ministry of Economy in a letter ordered domestic and foreign non-governmental organisations to suspend the duties of female employees until further notice, which has been accompanied by domestic and foreign reactions.

— ANI

In countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Mali and the Central African Republic, the UN troops have had little success

NEW YORK: United Nations peacekeeping missions have struggled in 2023 to protect civilians and bring stability to the countries they operate in, especially in Africa.

In countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Sudan, Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR), the UN troops have had little success.

According to some analysts, the UN missions that operate under strict guidelines have been overwhelmed in some of these countries. “A clear case in point is Mali, [the security situation] has not been resolved because day by day



the violence seems to be worsening,” Adib Saani, director of the Jaticay Centre for Human Security and Peace Building, told DW. “It looks almost like the [UN] mission is helpless.”

For analysts like Saani, recent poor performances of UN missions in parts of Africa are disappointing.

“They have failed consistently to deal with the cycle of violence in those countries and the very reason for which they were brought in in the first place,” Saani said.

UN missions have clear cut operational mandates that restrict their activities. For example, UN peacekeeping operations are not considered tools of enforcement.

They are not allowed to use lethal force except in self-defense or defense of their given mandate.

Some experts blame the “weak” mandate for the peacekeeping struggles.

“I wouldn't say that the UN missions in Africa are all failing, but rather it is the nature of their mandate that limits their efficacy or effectiveness in the areas they are meant to operate,” Fidel Amakye Owusu, an expert on conflict resolution, told DW.

He stressed that the limit to the operations of UN missions sometimes puts them in an awkward position where citizens consider them counterproductive to stabilising volatile situations.

In Mali, citizens turned against the UN peacekeeping mission (MINUSMA) this year, and in June, the junta-led government demanded the mission's withdrawal, which was granted.

The mission was deployed a decade ago to quell separatist and insurgencies in northern Mali, but the military government accused the forces of escalating tensions.

In October, the UN said the mission is on track to leave the West African country by December 31 and “is fully committed to respecting this time frame.”

The last German Bundeswehr soldiers deployed to Mali as part of the UN's MINUSMA peacekeeping mission there have already departed. They left Mali this month.

Germany deployed a total of 20,000 soldiers over the course of the peacekeeping mission — representing the second-largest foreign deployment of Bundeswehr troops behind the US-led invasion of Afghanistan.

Owusu said the governments, such as the one in Mali, are also to blame for jeopardising the operation of missions.

“In the case of Mali, you would realize that in recent times, because of the coming in of Wagner, the UN mission in general was limited as to what it could do.”

The Wagner Group, a private military firm often described as a Russian mercenary force, is preferred by Mali's military rulers to help them deal with the rebel threats there. — DW

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Israel-Hamas war: Dozens killed in Maghazi refugee camp strike

Fighting in Gaza continued on Christmas Day with officials in the enclave reporting new Israeli airstrikes on Monday



GAZA STRIP: An Israeli airstrike hit the Maghazi refugee camp in central Gaza, killing at least 70 people, according to the Health Ministry.

The ministry spokesperson Ashraf al-Qidra said the death toll is likely to rise. Israel's military spokesperson's office told the Reuters news agency that it was looking into the report.

Authorities in Gaza report that over 20,000 people have been killed by Israeli military since the start of the conflict, which began after Hamas carried out an attack on southern Israel on October 7, killing over 1,100 people. Fighting in Gaza continued on Christmas

Day with officials in the enclave reporting new Israeli airstrikes on Monday.

The AFP news agency reported that there had been 50 strikes in central areas of the Palestinian territory, citing authorities there.

The Reuters news agency also reported that Israel had stepped up air and ground shelling in Al Bureij in central Gaza.

Egyptian truce proposal

Israel's war cabinet may discuss on Monday a proposal presented by Cairo for a truce to end the war, Israeli media reported, citing unnamed government officials.

The proposal puts forward three

phases leading to a possible end of the conflict. The first phase would involve a two-week ceasefire, subject to extension, which would see the release of 40 Israeli hostages, namely women, children and elderly men, in exchange for some 120 Palestinian prisoners.

The second phase would center around Cairo-hosted talks to end the division between the Palestinian factions Fatah — which runs the West Bank. Talks are then supposed to lead to the formation of a technocratic government to oversee humanitarian aid and Gaza reconstruction efforts, and eventually pave the way for elections.

The third phase would focus on

a full cease-fire and comprehensive deal to release Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners along with a full Israeli military withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. Under the deal, those internally displaced by the war would be allowed to go back to their homes.

The United Nations reports that close to 2 million people have been displaced in Gaza and around 40% of all housing has been destroyed by Israeli bombardment.

Leaders of Hamas have visited Egypt during the past few days. Cairo has been involved in mediation since the start of the war alongside Qatar.

Palestinian president expresses hope for immediate end of conflict

GAZA/RAMALLAH: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas expressed on Sunday his hope that the coming Christmas day would be a date for an end of conflict in Gaza and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory.

"None of our people were spared from this offensive, the attempts at forced displacement, and the destruction of thousands of homes," Abbas said in a speech on the occasion of Christmas.

"The river of blood, huge sacrifices, suffering, and heroic steadfastness of the Palestinian people on their land is the path toward freedom and dignity," he stressed.

At least 166 Palestinians were killed and 384 others were wounded during the past 24 hours by the ongoing Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip, said the Gaza-based Health Ministry on Sunday.

The casualties came as

intense Israeli bombardment from the air, land and sea as well as ground operations continued in most parts of the Gaza Strip, according to Palestinian security sources.

Eyewitnesses told Xinhua that the eastern outskirts of the Al-Zaytoun neighborhood and the southern outskirts of Gaza City suffered the most intense clashes over the past few hours, during which sounds of explosions were heard.

Meanwhile, the Israeli army announced a temporary tactical suspension of military activities for humanitarian purposes in the Al-Baraka neighbourhood in central Deir Al-Balah city, which will last for six hours during the day.

According to Israeli media, eight soldiers were killed and 13 others were injured during the battles in the past 24 hours.

SRI LANKA

1,000 convicts freed from jail

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe granted a Christmas amnesty to 1,004 convicts across the country on Monday, a prison official said.

Prison Commissioner Gamini Dissanayake said the freed prisoners had been jailed for not being able to pay outstanding fines.

Sri Lankan newspaper Daily News said that of the prisoners to be released, 989 were male and 15 were female inmates.

Buddhist-majority Sri Lanka also freed convicts in May to mark Vesak, the festival which celebrates Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death. — **dw**

AIRBUS A340

Plane grounded for days in France leaves for India

VATRY: A Nicaragua-bound plane carrying 303 Indian passengers left on Monday, after being detained in France over human trafficking suspicions.

The Airbus A340 was carrying 303 passengers from the United Arab Emirates, when it stopped on Thursday at the Vetry airport in eastern France to refuel. It was detained after an anonymous tip-off that its passengers included potential human trafficking victims.

The passengers included children and families.

The youngest passenger is a toddler of 21 months, and among the children are several unaccompanied minors, according



to French authorities. After the flight was grounded, its passengers were first kept on the aircraft but were then transferred to the terminal building.

Local officials, medics and volunteers installed beds, and ensured regular meals and showers for those held at the airport.

After two days of questioning the passengers, French prosecutors approved the departure of the plane on Sunday. The local prefecture said in a statement that a full

departure approval is expected on Monday. The plane is operated by Romania-based charter company Legend Airlines.

Liliana Bakayoko, a lawyer for the company, told the Associated Press news agency that they hoped the plane could head to Mumbai, India, on Monday "with as many passengers as possible."

She estimated around 280 passengers should be able to leave.

She added that the 15 crew members were released on Saturday following questioning, and that the airline denied any role in human trafficking.

Authorities said they have detained two passengers since Friday "to verify" whether their role

"may have been different than the others in this transport, and under what conditions and with what objectives."

Twelve of the passengers have requested asylum, the French AFP news agency reported citing an unnamed source close to the case. Prosecutors didn't comment on what kind of trafficking was alleged, or whether the passengers' ultimate destination was the United States.

Indian citizens were arrested 41,770 times while attempting to illegally enter the US from Mexico in the US government's budget year that ended September 30, more than double from 18,308 cases the previous year. — **dw**

EUROPE CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS AMID LINGERING SECURITY CONCERNS

Amid the festive ambiance of European cities adorned with lights and decorations, this Christmas season is underscored by heightened security measures. The recent university shooting in the Czech Republic, adding to the previous shooting and stabbing in Belgium and France, respectively, has exacerbated security concerns, casting a shadow over the holiday cheer in the continent. — **Xinhua**



Pochettino blames Chelsea's missed chances for 2-1 loss against Wolves

Chelsea's miserable season continued as they once again found themselves on the losing side following Wolves' triumph over the Blues

WOLVERHAMPTON: Chelsea head coach Mauricio Pochettino “blamed themselves” for their 2-1 defeat against Wolverhampton Wanderers in the Premier League.

Chelsea's miserable season continued as they once again found themselves on the losing side following Wolves' triumph over the Blues.

Even with all the possession, Chelsea could not get past Jose Sa throughout the 90 minutes. They had chances but failed to keep their composure to finish off the opportunities.

Raheem Sterling had the best chance in the first half when he found himself one-on-one against Jose Sa. He missed out on his



chance, and eventually, Wolves capitalised on that opportunity.

"We made a mistake; we need to blame ourselves. That's why we didn't win today, because in the first half, we had the chances to score. In the Premier League, if you're not clinical enough when you have chances, you can always concede," Pochettino said after the game, as quoted from Sky Sports.

"We didn't compete in the first five minutes of the second half; we conceded too many corners. In these moments, it's about competing better and being stronger. I

agree we're our own enemy. I don't want to take credit away from Wolves. They scored and did their job. But in the first half, we were the better side. And because of a lack of capacity to score, we didn't win the game," Pochettino added.

The Argentinian manager put up Armando Broja along with Nicolas Jackson, who were accompanied by Raheem Sterling on the wing.

The trio caused plenty of problems for the Wolves' defence, but Jackson failed to control the ball on various occasions. Sterling

missed his clear-cut opportunity, and Broja also failed to turn up when his moment came.

Wolves, who enjoyed a couple of good opportunities, eventually scored with Mario Lemina heading the ball in following Sarabia's corner. Chelsea pushed hard for an equaliser, with Pochettino putting five forwards in front. Wolves doubled their lead with Matt Doherty firing the ball into the back of the net in injury time. Chelsea found a consolation goal with Nkunku scoring to make the scoreline 2-1. **ANI**

Chelsea defender Disasi 'frustrated' following 2-1 defeat to Wolverhampton

LONDON: Chelsea defender Axel Disasi was left frustrated following their 2-1 defeat at the Molineux Stadium but hailed Christopher Nkunku for scoring his first Premier League goal for the club.

On Christmas Eve, Chelsea suffered a 2-1 defeat even with all the possession, Chelsea could not get past Jose Sa throughout the 90 minutes. They had chances but failed to keep their composure to finish off the opportunities.

"We are very frustrated and angry after the game. We didn't win and we feel we deserved more when you see the game. We did good things and bad things. We have to address the mistakes, and when we have the possibility to score, we have to score. We have to see where we can improve and keep going," Disasi said.



as quoted from the club's official website.

"When we see this statistic and our position in the table, it's not good. We have to be more killer in front of goal. We created many chances. But it's not just about scoring, it's also about conceding less and keeping clean sheets. Every training and every game we are growing and learning, we have a lot of new players, but it's not an excuse," Disasi added. **-ANI**

-ANTI

BATTER DEAN ELGAR

'Haven't got much Test cricket....': SA red-ball coach on Dean Elgar's retirement

CENTURION:: South Africa's red-ball coach, Shukri Conrad on Sunday said that the lack of Test cricket in the coming months was partially the reason why batter Dean Elgar has chosen to retire from international cricket.

Former South African skipper Dean Elger is set to draw curtains on his cricketing career following the conclusion of the two-match Test series at home against India. The ICC on Friday revealed that Cricket South Africa (CSA) announced the 36-year-old's final dance in cricket against India.

In a career that has spanned over 12 years, the left-handed batter will finish with 86 Tests and eight ODIs to his name.

While reasons for Elgar's retirement after the second Test have not been revealed explicitly, it is understood that Elgar was not a part of Conrad's long-term plans in a scant Test schedule. Conrad voiced out that the calendar was only partially responsible for his retirement and there needs to be more Tests for South Africa if they want to groom youngsters for the future.

"The fact that we haven't got much Test cricket is part of the reason we arrived at the decision we arrived at," Conrad said in Centurion, where South Africa will take on India, as quoted by ESPNcricinfo.

"Ideally, we would like to play more Test cricket because the more Test cricket we play, the more opportunity we have to groom cricketers for the future. If we have fewer Tests, that means I have very little opportunity to groom young cricketers. Sometimes we arrive at decisions like

Dean's now because of a lack of cricket and a lack of opportunity to blood young players," he added.

Proteas have played just two Tests in 2023, but next year they will be playing ten (one against India, two in New Zealand, two in the West Indies, two in Bangladesh, two against Sri Lanka at home and the Boxing Day Test against Pakistan). Instead of playing in these matches, Elgar chose to bow out in front of his home crowd at Cape Town for a perfect send-off.

Conrad said that Dean is the epitome of what a South African

cricketer and person is like and if the youngsters take up even half of his characteristics and qualities, the team will be good for the future.

"Dean epitomises what a South African cricketer and almost what a South African person is about: resilience, dogfighting, pride in performance and that ability to never back down," Conrad said. "Those are all the elements that Dean has brought to his extensive international and first-class career and to all the sides he has played in. Hopefully, if some of the young

bucks that are going to be stepping up into those big shoes, half of the characteristics and qualities that Dean had, then we will be in a good space," said Conrad.

Conrad said that these qualities would not be lost after Dean's retirement since he was not a combatant personality.

"Nice guys can be resilient as well. You don't have to be a knob to be resilient. The characteristics we display when we are on the field need to speak to what being South African looks like," Conrad said.

-ANTI



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ASIAN SHARES END MIXED

Asian shares were mixed on Monday after Wall Street capped its eighth straight winning week with a quiet finish following reports showing inflation on the way down and the economy potentially on the way up. - BNA

MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



WWW.TIMESOFOMAN.COM
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2023



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,561.40 points, down by 0.13 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.23 per cent at 441.09 points. Al Suwadi Power, up 4.76 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman United Insurance, down 5.26 per cent, was the top loser.

Treasury bills worth OMR47.3mn issued

The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR30 million, for a maturity period of 28 days, whereas, the value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR17.3 million, for a maturity period of 91 days

MUSCAT: The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) raised OMR47.3 million by way of allotting treasury bills on Monday.

The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR30 million, for a maturity period of 28 days.

The average accepted price reached OMR99.590 for eve-



ry OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR99.590 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 5.34464 per cent and 5.36665 per cent, respectively.

Whereas, the value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR17.3 million, for a maturity period of 91 days. The average accepted price reached OMR98.660 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR98.660 per OMR100. The

average discount rate and the average yield reached 5.37473 per cent and 5.44772 per cent, respectively.

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. The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) acts as the Issue Manager and provides the added advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities (Repo).

It may be noted that the interest rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 6.00 per cent while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 6.50 per cent.

Furthermore, treasury bills promote the local money market by creating a benchmark yield curve for short-term interest rates. Additionally, the government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures. -ONA

ISLAMIC BANKING SERVICES



Maisarah takes lead in financing 'Diba-Lima-Khasab' road project

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Maisarah Islamic Banking Services, the Islamic banking window of BankDhofar, announced its pivotal role as the lead partner in financing the groundbreaking 'Diba-Lima-Khasab' road project.

This historic initiative, scheduled for completion in 2027, is set to redefine road connectivity in the Musandam Governorate by linking the towns of Diba, Lima, and Khasab for the first time.

Under the visionary directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, the project has overcome challenges through the identification of cost-competitive alternative routes. This breakthrough ensures the realisation of a transformative carriageway, spanning 96 kilometres, navigating through rugged terrain - a testament to human ingenuity.

The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology is overseeing the delivery of the 'Diba - Lima - Khasab' project, which entails a construction cost of OMR151.9 million. The road is envisioned as a vital lifeline, stimulating tourism, commercial investments, and infrastructure development throughout Musandam governorate. Upon completion, the carriageway will provide easy access to tourist sites, unlocking opportunities for mining, manufacturing, and commercial investments.

Through such funding initiatives, Maisarah reaffirms its commitment to supporting

Through such funding initiatives, Maisarah Islamic Banking reaffirms its commitment to supporting Oman's economic growth

Oman's economic growth.

Commenting on the occasion, Kamal Uddin Hassan Al Maraza, GM and Chief Islamic Banking Officer said, "With extensive experience in project finance and debt syndication, we are ready to fund the development of Oman's infrastructure and strategic projects. The bank's seasoned project finance team renowned for 'Time-to-Money' executions offers tailored financing solutions, including term finance, working capital finance, LC/LG, and bill discounting, exemplifying its commitment to sustainable development."

As Maisarah Islamic Banking Services celebrates a decade of excellence, this collaboration with the Diba - Lima - Khasab road project contractors underscores Maisarah's dedication to providing innovative and ethical financial solutions in supporting Oman's socioeconomic progress.

OUTLOOK 2024

Road seems clear for Indian stock investors

NEW DELHI: Cumulatively, the past 12 months have been stellar for investors who parked their money in Indian stocks. Though there has been some turbulence, first during the Adani-Hindenburg episode and lately during the initial days of the Israel-Hamas war, the calendar year 2023 gave handsome monetary dividends to stock market investors.

By far in 2023, Sensex and Nifty gained 16-17 per cent, on a cumulative basis. They gained a mere 3 per cent each in the same period of 2022.

Firm GDP growth forecast, inflation at manageable levels, political stability at the central government level, and signs that the central banks world over are done with their monetary policy tightening have painted a bright picture for India - which many agencies

The strong inflow of funds from foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) lately also supported the stocks to march towards all-time highs

have termed to be the fastest-growing major economy.

"Despite a turbulent start in 2023, plagued by inflation anxieties, interest rate jitters, and murmurs of a global recession, the Indian market defied all expectations and is poised to finish the year with a resounding victory. While the Adani saga and the Israel-Palestine conflict threw temporary wrenches in its progress, the market navigated these challenges with remarkable maturity, showcasing its inherent resili-

ence," says Sunil Nyati, Managing Director, of Swastika Investmart, a stock broking services company.

The strong inflow of funds from foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) lately also supported the stocks to march towards all-time highs. Notably, foreign portfolio investors have again trained their sight towards India, becoming net buyers in the country's stock market.

Following a cumulative accumulation of Rs 9,001 crore in November, they have again made a beeline to invest in Indian stock

markets, with Rs 57,313 crore invested so far in December, data from the National Securities Depository (NSDL) showed.

The latest inflow comes at a time when India reported strong quarterly growth maintaining its fastest-growing major economy tag, inflation in a comfortable zone, and political stability in the run-up to General Elections 2024.

Harjeet Singh Arora, Managing Director of Mastertrust, a stock trading and investment broker company, says, "The market in 2023 had been a roller coaster. There was a net inflow of funds from FII during the earlier part of the year from March to July which was followed by a net outflow of funds for the next three months due to the rising tension and increasing global interest rates." -ANI

IN 2023



Unit price of South Korean car exports reaches record high

SEOUL: The average unit price of South Korean car exports is expected to hit an all-time high in 2023 thanks to stellar overseas demand for sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and electric vehicles (EVs), industry data showed Monday.

In the first 11 months of this year, South Korea exported a total of 2.52 million units of automobiles, worth 64.5 trillion won (\$49.5 billion), with the average unit price reaching 25.6 million won, according to the data from the Korea Automobile & Mobility Association (KAMA), YONHAP reported.

It is the first time that the unit price, or the price of a single product, has exceeded 25 million won, KAMA said.

The figure has been on a steady growth over the past few years, rising from 16.7 million won in 2018 and 17.9 million won in

2019. With the increase in the unit price, KAMA predicted that the total value of the country's car exports will likely top 70 trillion won for the first time.

Cumulative exports through November this year amounted to 64.5 trillion won, already surpassing last year's annual export value of 54 trillion won.

KAMA attributed the rise in the unit price of car exports to rising popularity of higher value-added cars, like SUVs and EVs, in international markets.

During the 11-month period, 18.3 million units of Korean SUVs were shipped overseas, accounting for 72.8 percent of the total passenger car exports.

Overseas sales of EVs soared 65.7 percent on-year to 316,000 units over the cited period, while exports of hybrid cars reached 283,000 units. -BNA

MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Al Suwadi Power, up 4.76 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman United Insurance, down 5.26 per cent, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,561.40 points, down by 0.13 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.23 per cent at 441.09 points. Al Suwadi Power, up 4.76 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman United Insurance, down 5.26 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Dhofar were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 538 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR2.33 million, with more than 13.31 million shares changing hands. Out of 36 traded securities, 7 advanced, 10 declined, and 19 remained unchanged. At the session close, foreign investors were net buyers for OMR64,000 while domestic investors were net sellers for OMR63,000, followed by GCC & Arab investors for RO 1K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,399.16 points, up 0.22 per cent. Prices of Ahli Bank, Al Madina Takaful and Bank Muscat were up by 1.29 per cent, 1.19 per cent and 0.37 per cent, respectively. Prices of Oman United Insurance were down by 5.26 per cent.

Industrial Index closed at 5,303.11 points, down 0.63 per cent. Prices of Jazeera Steel Products, Raysut Cement, Galfar Engineering and Al Anwar Ceramics were down by 4.80 per cent, 0.77 per cent, 0.63 per cent and 0.56 per cent respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.16 per cent before closing at 1,561.75 points. Prices of Al Suwadi Power, Al Jazeera Services and Barka Desalination were up by 4.76 per cent, 2.73 per cent and 1.72 per cent respectively.

Prices of Al Batinah Power, Ooredoo, Oman Telecom and Abraj Energy were down by 4.55 per cent, 1.52 per cent, 0.94 per cent and 0.33 per cent respectively. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,569.25	4,557.85	4,561.40	4,567.20	-5.79	-0.13
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,399.16	7,383.08	7,399.16	7,383.08	16.08	0.22
Industry Index	5,350.01	5,285.44	5,303.11	5,336.51	-33.40	-0.63
Services Index	1,565.88	1,561.24	1,561.75	1,564.26	-2.51	-0.16
MSX Shariah Index	444.44	440.64	441.09	440.08	1.01	0.23
MSX TR INDEX	6,022.82	6,007.79	6,012.48	6,020.11	-7.63	-0.13
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,073.85	8,056.30	8,073.85	8,056.30	17.55	0.22
SERVICES TR IDX	1,742.02	1,736.87	1,737.44	1,740.23	-2.79	-0.16
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	5,715.14	5,646.17	5,665.04	5,700.72	-35.68	-0.63
FIXED INCOME INDEX	991.33	991.33	991.33	991.33	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap.....	Up.....	Down.....	Equal.....	Sec. Traded
13,313,065	2,331,714	538	23,716,682,164	7	10	19	36

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

R/N	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST BD.	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000002236	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	560	127	1	0.226	0.226	0.226	0.226	0.220	0.006	2.727	0.226	0.216	0.227	0.100	13,832,166
OM0000004788	MADINA TAKAFUL	5,000	425	1	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.084	0.001	1.190	0.085	0.084	0.087	0.100	14,875,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	105,918	28,456	20	0.269	0.269	0.268	0.269	0.268	0.001	0.373	0.269	0.269	0.268	0.100	2,019,220,610
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	5,650	622	2	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.000	0.000	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.100	16,500,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	2,080	634	1	0.305	0.305	0.305	0.305	0.305	0.000	0.000	0.305	0.302	0.312	0.100	100,916,177
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	6,839	383	2	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.000	0.000	0.056	0.056	0.057	0.100	19,943,129
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO.	15,000	1,050	1	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.000	0.000	0.070	0.068	0.070	0.100	6,300,000
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	10,459,848	1,673,576	14	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.000	0.000	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.100	479,416,230
OM0000003000	AI MAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING	1,000	1,020	2	1.020	1.020	1.020	1.020	1.020	0.000	0.000	1.020	1.000	1.035	0.100	70,380,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	121,250	12,125	10	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.100	0.101	0.100	546,788,850
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	18,730	1,442	3	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.000	0.000	0.077	0.076	0.077	0.100	15,371,941
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	5,532	1,147	3	0.213	0.213	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.200	0.200	0.213	0.100	11,000,000
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	214,839	38,456	35	0.180	0.180	0.179	0.179	0.180	-0.001	-0.556	0.179	0.179	0.183	0.100	39,380,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	7,319	7,759	7	1.060	1.061	1.060	1.060	1.070	-0.010	-0.935	1.060	1.045	1.171	0.100	795,000,000
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	16,856	5,500	7	0.328	0.328	0.323	0.323	0.328	-0.005	-1.524	0.326	0.326	0.326	0.100	210,254,986
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	2,090	497	1	0.238	0.238	0.238	0.238	0.250	-0.012	-4.800	0.238	0.230	0.260	0.100	29,725,714
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	3,689	996	1	0.270	0.270	0.270	0.270	0.285	-0.015	-5.263	0.270	0.000	0.290	0.100	27,000,000
Total	17	10,992,200	1,774,215	111												
Parallel Market																
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	26,764	564	7	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.001	4.762	0.022	0.020	0.022	0.100	15,716,939
OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	5,000	590	1	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.116	0.002	1.724	0.118	0.117	0.118	0.100	8,911,596
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	18,021	2,829	2	0.157	0.157	0.157	0.157	0.155	0.002	1.290	0.157	0.150	0.157	0.100	368,968,922
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	6,853	343	1	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.050	0.048	0.050	0.100	15,357,716
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	42,310	3,173	3	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.100	15,450,000
OM0000003141	BARKA WATER AND POWER	90,250	3,971	7	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.100	7,040,000
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	1,528	198	5	0.130	0.130	0.129	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.000	0.129	0.129	0.130	0.100	10,582,358
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	58,071	5,601	3	0.097	0.097	0.096	0.097	0.097	0.000	0.000	0.097	0.094	0.097	0.100	216,984,444
OM0000004669	SHARQIYAH DESALINATION	2,400	319	2	0.133	0.133	0.133	0.133	0.133	0.000	0.000	0.133	0.000	0.133	0.100	13,007,687
OM0000004735	SEMBORP SALALAH	21,960	1,889	4	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.000	0.000	0.086	0.083	0.089	0.100	82,093,188
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	13,575	747	9	0.056	0.056	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.000	0.000	0.055	0.053	0.055	0.100	80,443,080
OM0000009072	QO GAS NETWORKS	1,506,882	233,486	333	0.155	0.156	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.000	0.000	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.100	671,244,708
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	68,008	20,295	19	0.299	0.300	0.298	0.298	0.299	-0.001	-0.334	0.298	0.298	0.299	0.100	229,519,600
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	23,800	3,707	4	0.154	0.159	0.154	0.159	0.160	-0.001	-0.625	0.159	0.154	0.159	0.100	32,274,845
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	31,540	4,073	3	0.130	0.130	0.129	0.129	0.130	-0.001	-0.769	0.129	0.129	0.130	0.100	25,800,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	50,680	1,065	2	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.021	0.022	-0.001	-4.545	0.021	0.020	0.021	0.100	14,172,636
Total	16	1,966,622	282,850	405												

NEW ENERGY VEHICLE

China's NEV industry seeks green development amid transformation

BELJING: With the rapid development of disruptive technologies, China's new energy vehicle (NEV) industry has witnessed positive progress in recent years.

The green and low-carbon transformation with the goal of carbon neutrality has gradually become a concerted action to deal with climate change worldwide, and the NEV industry is a critical engine to boost the green and low-carbon transformation of China's automobile industry and the sustainable development of the country's economy and society, industry insiders said.

China's NEV industry has gained further momentum in 2023. In the first three quarters, the NEV sales reached 6.28 million units, up 37.5 percent year on year, with a market penetration rate of 29.8 percent, said Wan Gang, chairman of the China Association

NEV industry is a critical engine to boost the green and low-carbon transformation of China's automobile industry

for Science and Technology, at an NEV conference.

The overall goal of the country's automobile industry in green and low-carbon development is to achieve carbon peaking by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060, said Li Jun, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering.

Li said considering that most commercial vehicles use internal combustion engines, transforming the traditional energy power sys-

tem to decarbonisation and zero-carbonisation should be promoted in the research and development of future automotive products.

He also called for efforts to continuously expand the scale of the NEV market, reduce the power consumption of electric vehicles, and boost the high-quality development of electrification.

China issued a plan to develop the hydrogen energy industry in March 2022, clarifying that hydrogen energy is an indispensable component of the national energy system and a crucial carrier for realising green and low-carbon transformation.

Wan highlighted the need to drive the core technology innovation of hydrogen energy and fuel cell vehicles, and connect the "hydrogen highway" to promote cross-regional operation in large scale.

Hydrogen energy facilities

should be constructed rationally to establish a comprehensive and large-scale hydrogen-energy transportation demonstration project, Wan added.

More efforts should be made to reduce carbon emissions from vehicle operations and build low-carbon transportation and energy systems to realise the green, coordinated development of the whole industrial chain, according to a roadmap of the green automobile industry jointly compiled by several departments.

Chen Jiachang, vice minister of science and technology, emphasized that as the global NEV industry experiences rapid growth, it is vital to strengthen basic research and pivotal technology research and intensify international sci-tech cooperation to provide sci-tech support for global green and low-carbon development in the sector. —Xinhua

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Interactive AI to break onto the scene in 2024

BRUSSELS: Barely a year ago, few people had heard of Chat GPT, Bard and Llama — artificial intelligence (AI) chatbots that promised to make the world a lot more productive but would likely leave millions of people out of a job.

These AI assistants have since helped users around the world to generate content that would often take humans many more hours to achieve on their own. The huge layoffs threatened haven't happened, at least not yet.

Dozens of alternatives have sprung up over the past year, with some specialising in app coding, video and graphic content production, or music creation.

Chatbots help millions, but still limited

Despite the incredible power of so-called large language models upon which these chatbots run, critics say they are plagiarizing the internet to produce content that is often bland, contains factual errors or shows political or racial bias.

Tesla founder Elon Musk has tried to address this with the beta launch of his AI assistant last month. Grok, as it's known, is billed as being a chatbot with "a sense of humor" and a "rebellious streak," although it's also been accused of political bias.

As the AI space grows ever more competitive with tens of billions of dollars being invested globally, tech industry luminaries are predicting where the technology will head next.

One of them, Google DeepMind



co-founder Mustafa Suleyman, believes that the future of AI assistants will be in their ability to interact with humans in an advanced manner. "The third wave will be the interactive phase," Suleyman told MIT Technology Review in September. "That's why I've bet for a long time that conversation is the future interface. You know, instead of just clicking on buttons and typing, you're going to talk to your AI."

The Grok logo and Elon Musk's X account displayed on screens in Krakow, Poland, on December 8, 2023.

AI becomes less artificial

Interactive AI will allow humans to have a deeper conversation with their AI chatbot. Whereas systems like Amazon's Alexa respond to simple commands, the next generation of AI tools will be able to respond in a more human-like way.

Suleyman said they will also be able to act on decisions by them-

selves, so users can give their assistant "a general, high-level goal, and it will use all the tools it has to act on that."

Interactive AI will talk to other people and other chatbots to achieve the goal set by the user.

The technology will also adapt to users' preferences and learn from user feedback, helping computers to function more like how humans work and think.

Companies will be able to use Interactive AI to improve customer services, guiding users through troubleshooting steps. The technology will also help with sales and marketing and lead generation by offering personalized communication based on a customer's individual needs. Industry experts believe Interactive AI will produce content that is more novel and original.

Interactive AI will be able to shoulder the burden of more complex, time-consuming tasks that require interaction with other humans, websites and chatbots and

can report back to the user regularly on progress or results.

By being able to handle more advanced feedback from users, interactive AI can also prevent harmful or offensive content from being produced or ensure complex projects are delivered exactly as specified.

When will Interactive AI take off?

Several firms are already pushing the interactive envelope. Suleyman's own chatbot, Pi AI, is a precursor to Interactive AI. Billed as "your personal AI," it is designed to be used for brainstorming, planning and learning or even just venting. Another early version of Interactive AI is Character.ai, which allows users to interact with multiple characters of AI assistants whose "personalities" have been crafted by other users. Many of the characters are fictional or based on celebrities. The platform says it exists to allow conversations and give advice.

AI spreading faster than other tech

Microsoft founder Bill Gates believes that AI is about to "supercharge the innovation pipeline" as more people use the technology. In an end-of-year blog post, he said that high-income countries like the US would see significant levels of AI use by the general population within 18 to 24 months. He predicted that African countries would begin to see a comparable level of AI use within three years or so. —DW

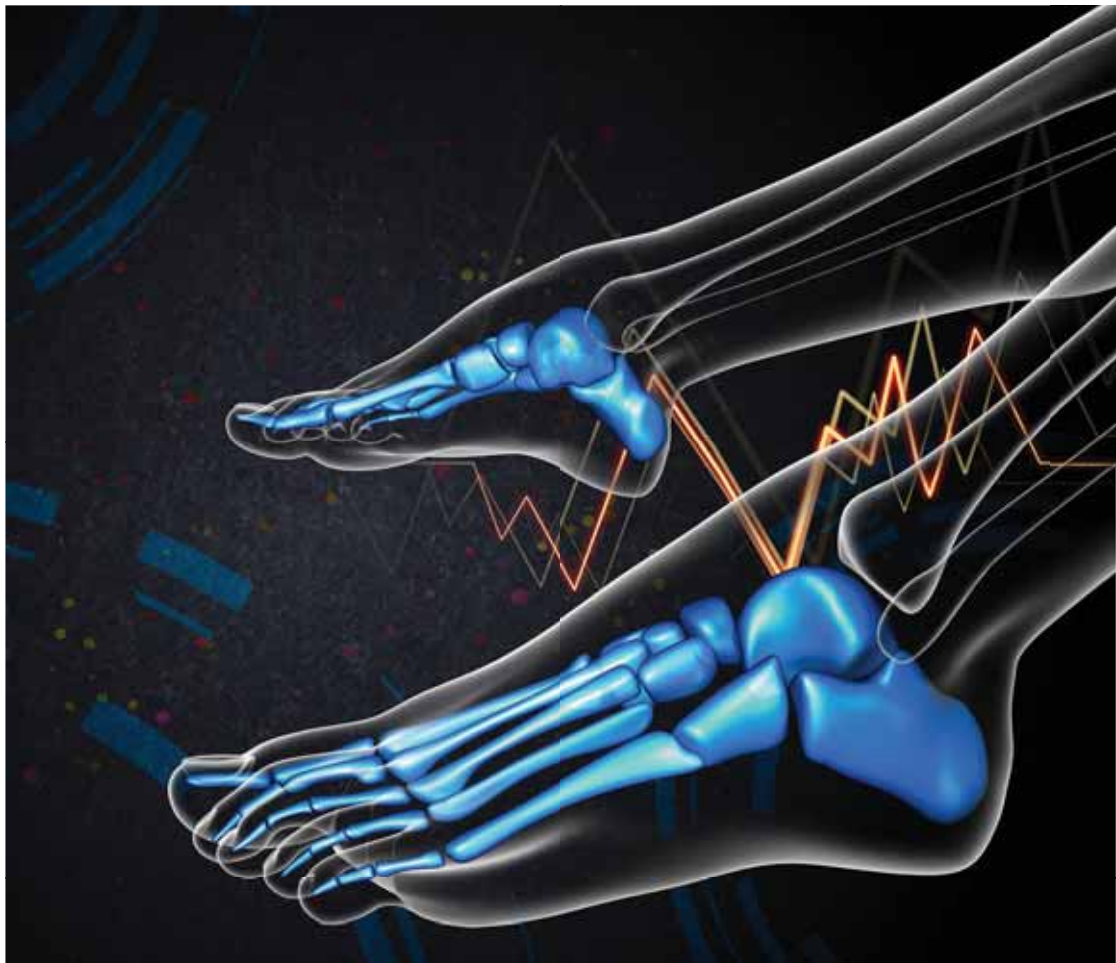
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GETTING HEALTHIER IN 2024 STARTS WITH YOUR FEET



Feet and ankle issues
can be signs of overarching
health problems like

**DIABETES,
ARTHRITIS AND
CARDIOVASCULAR
DISEASE**

Good foot and ankle health is critical for good overall health, so no matter what your wellness goals are for 2024, be sure to start from the ground up.

“Feet and ankle issues can be signs of overarching health problems like diabetes, arthritis and cardiovascular disease, so paying attention to them is vital for early diagnosis and treatment says Michael Coyer, DPM, FACFAS, a foot and ankle surgeon and Fellow Member of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS). “Additionally, many common New Year’s resolutions related to fitness and weight loss are difficult to tackle if you’re experiencing

foot and heel pain, making it important to fix these issues first.”

Get a jumpstart on your 2024 health resolutions with these foot health facts from ACFAS:

“I want to lose weight”: Obesity aggravates foot problems, like heel pain and flat feet, making it hard to exercise. And, without exercise, obesity worsens, potentially increasing the progression of serious health threats. Break the cycle by seeking evaluation and treatment for chronic, activity-limiting foot and ankle problems. Once cleared to begin exercise, don’t do too much too soon. Follow a gradual routine of low-impact exercise until your body adjusts to



the stress of regular physical activity.

“I want to build strong bones”: Osteoporosis is a bone-thinning disease affecting more than 28 million Americans, and your feet can present clues that there’s a problem. Early symptoms can include increased pain with walking accompanied by redness and swelling on the top of the foot, as well as unexplained foot fractures. Don’t ignore foot pain. Visit your foot and ankle surgeon who can detect osteoporosis through a bone densitometry test. Once you have a diagnosis you can take steps to prevent stress fractures, such as wearing shoes that provide support and cushioning, and using custom orthotics.

“I want to age gracefully”: Taking good care of feet and ankles can improve balance, coordination and stability to reduce a senior’s risk of a life-altering fall. Examine your feet regularly. At the sign of bumps, lumps or other changes, or if you’re experiencing pain, make an appointment with your foot and ankle surgeon. Maintain foot strength and mobility with simple stretching exercises. Your foot and ankle surgeon can recommend appropriate exercises and discuss options for

insoles and special footwear for additional protection.

“I want to feel my best”: Having persistently cold feet is not just uncomfortable, it could be a sign of a medical condition that causes poor blood flow in the legs or feet, such as peripheral vascular disease, Raynaud’s phenomenon and heart disease. It could also be an indication of hypothyroidism, adrenal insufficiency or an autoimmune disorder, such as lupus. If your feet are persistently cold, follow up on it with your foot and ankle surgeon to determine if there’s a greater issue to be addressed.

“I want to manage my diabetes better”: Foot care is fundamental to diabetes management. Visit your foot and ankle surgeon for guidelines on diabetic foot care to help prevent problems like ulcers, cracked heels and bone infection that can lead to serious complications, including amputation.

For more information on foot care or to find a foot and ankle surgeon near you, visit FootHealthFacts.org, the patient education website of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons. -StatePoint

Sarfraz makes way for Rizwan as Pakistan announce 12-player squad

Sarfraz has been sidelined from the Test squad after the nightmare he went through in the Perth Test

MELBOURNE: Pakistan on Monday announced their 12-man squad for the upcoming Boxing Day clash against Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground with Mohammad Rizwan replacing experienced wicketkeeper Sarfraz Ahmed.

Sarfraz has been sidelined from the Test squad after the nightmare he went through in the Perth Test. He scored just 7 runs in both innings with Mitchell Starc



causing him all sorts of trouble. Rizwan's inclusion in the second Test squad is one of the three changes that Pakistan have made for the highly anticipated clash.

Pacer Khurram Shahzad was ruled out of the series because of an injury, while all-rounder Faheem Ashraf will also miss out after the poor test with bat and

ball in Perth. However, out of these changes, the most prominent one remains Sarfraz being sidelined for the second Test. His selection received

a lot of criticism due to his struggles in Australian conditions. In 10 innings, Sarfraz has scored 239 runs at an average of 29.87. Pakistan skipper Shan Masood stated that Sarfraz was backed because of his performance in domestic cricket and the commitment as well as intensity he brought to the game. "I wouldn't think that that one change would have changed the whole course of the game. The reason to play Sarfraz was pretty much the same [as the reason to play Aamer Jamal and Khurram Shahzad]. People go back to stats and Rizwan averages very well in SENA. Firstly there's no competition between the two. They're equally important to the team. Any competition they have is healthy competition. We know what Rizwan has done but we gave Sarfraz the benefit because he averaged 56.50 on his last tour here in 2016. Yes, that's been quite a while but he's also played red-ball consistently in the Quaid-e-Azam trophy in the last few years," Masood said

as quoted from ESPNcricinfo. "Rizwan just came from the World Cup, a lot of white-ball cricket. And he also had a gap in red-ball cricket since Sarfraz took over from him for the New Zealand series. Sarfraz had an outstanding performance there and Rizwan hadn't played a lot of red-ball cricket. So there was a method to it. He's been there, he played red-ball cricket. Karachi had a very good season where he was the tournament's MVP, and that allowed us to get a player like Rizwan into shape. If I had it my way, I'd ideally like both to play but that's not possible. Now we think Rizwan is ready and we can give Saifi that little bit of break to recuperate and come back," Masood added. Pakistan squad for the second Test: Imam-ul-Haq, Abdullah Shafique, Shan Masood (c), Babar Azam, Saud Shakeel, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Salman Ali Agha, Shaheen Afridi, Hasan Ali, Mir Hamza, Aamir Jamal, Sajid Khan. -ANI

SECOND TEST

Australia name unchanged playing XI for Boxing Day Test against Pakistan



NAGPUR: Melbourne's hometown star Scott Boland remains on the sidelines as Australia on Monday named an unchanged playing XI for the Boxing Day Test against Pakistan.

Australia, a day before the clash, confirmed an unchanged Playing XI with skipper Pat Cummins admitting that Boland was unlucky to miss out.

Boland announced himself to the world when he took 6-7 on his debut in the MCG against Eng-

land in the 2021-22 Ashes. But he will remain on the sidelines as the pace-tiro of Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood are fit to take part in the second Test on Tuesday. "We're a huge fan of Scotty, I don't think that's a secret. It's very rare that you're going to get through seven Test matches with the same (fast) bowling line-up, there's always niggles or things that pop up," Cummins said as quoted from cricket.com.au. -ANI

PREMIER DIVISION LEAGUE

Muscat CT beat Yalla Shabab, AER defeat Orient Travels

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Muscat CT beat Yalla Shabab in a low-scoring thriller in the Premier Division League 2023-24 powered by Muscat Pharmacy LLC at the Oman Cricket Academy Turf 1 on Saturday. Bilal Khan and Kaleemullah exploited the conditions to their favour picking four Muscat CT batsmen out for just nine runs on board. Shoaib Khan and Suraj Kumar tried stitching a partnership but were out scoring 26 respectively. Muscat CT posted a paltry 111 on board. Bilal Khan and Mujibur Ali picked 3 wickets each. In response, Afriedh KT and Samay Shrivastav wreaked havoc in the Yalla Shabab camp bundling them for a mere 67. Mohd Naseem scored a quick 22 while Afriedh KT and Samay Shrivastav claimed 4 wickets each. Muscat CT remain unbeaten in the league so far in their 5 matches. Brief Scores : Muscat CT



111/10 in 39.2 overs (Suraj Kumar 26(47); Mujibur Ali 3(23) beat Yalla Shabab 67/10 in 21.3 overs (Mohd Naseem 22(21); Samay Shrivastav 4/4, Afriedh KT 4/26) In a match on Friday, AER beat Orient Travels in the A Division League 2023-24 at the Oman Cricket Academy Turf 2. AER got off to a timid start losing five wickets within the first

session of the game. Syed Amir Ali's blistering run-a-ball 113 ensured AER got to an above-par total of 233 on the board. Ibrar Hussain picked 5 wickets. In response, Sajith Fernando and Ibrar Hussain looked to dominate AER's bowling attack, but couldn't take the team through falling short by 57 runs. Syed Amir Ali, Muhd Ihtesham



and Amandeep Singh picked two wickets while Akbar Ali claimed 3 scalps. AER registered their 3rd win of the league and have saved themselves from relegation. Brief Scores: AER 233/9 in 50 overs (Syed Amir Ali 113(113); Ibrar Hussain 5/39) beat Orient Travels 176/10 in 35.1 overs (Ibrar Hussain 88(73); Akbar Ali 3/19) by 57 runs.

VICTORY DAY OF BANGLADESH

Gulf Overseas Exchange Gold Cup Football Tournament 2023-2024 concludes in Muscat

MUSCAT: On the occasion of Victory Day of Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Social Club Oman had organised a football tournament in the name "Gulf Overseas Exchange Gold Cup" Football Tournament 2023-2024.

Eight teams from different regions of Oman participated in the Gulf Exchange Gold Cup football tournament this year at the Muscat Club Stadium, Wadi Kabir. The participating teams were: Al Heil Ekadosh, Barka Ekadosh, Team Hamriya, Shah Jalal FC, Wadi Kabir FC, Cox Bazar FC, Oman brother, Muscat FC

Councillor Mohammad Rafiul Islam of Bangladesh Embassy Muscat inaugurated the tournament on Friday, 24 November.

The Deputy Ambassador of Bangladesh, Mrs. Moushimi Rahman was the guest of honour at the final of the tournament. Mrs. Shakunthala, Manager of Abeer Hospital was also present for the final.

It was presided over by Club Chairman Sirajul Haque and anchored by Club General Secretary NM Amin. Main sponsor Gulf Overseas Exchange Manager Mr. Masud Rana was also a special guest.

Club Vice President Rezaul Karim, VP Azimul Hoque Babul Treasurer Maulana Abdul Salam, Joint Secretary Abdul Rahim, Mohd. Shah Jahan, Publicity Secretary Hafez Mohammad Nazim Uddin Chowdhury, Mohsin Sarkar, Ajit Shil, Tawhid, Manik, Jasim were also present.

The event was also attended by



prominent people of the community namely Mohd. Noman, Mohd. Shahbuddin, Engineer Mostafa Kamal Nur Hossain Talukder, Gulf Exchange officials and many renowned community leaders.

Full medical support Full medical support including ambulance for the whole tournament was provided by Abeer Hospital, Ruwi. The tournament concluded with the final at 8.30pm at Muscat Club Stadium in presence of thousands football fans. In the final, Barka Ekadosh defeated Al Heil Ekadosh in a penalty shootout to win the tournament. A good number of Bangladesh football fans and family members were watching the matches.

FOOTBALL



England manager Gareth Southgate backs his decision to pick Maguire

LONDON: Gareth Southgate, the head coach of the England national team, praised Manchester United defender Harry Maguire and expressed support for consistently including him in the national squad, even when he wasn't featuring in the Red Devils' starting lineup. Harry Maguire has faced a lot of criticism for his performance from the fans as well as former players. After being stripped of captaincy before the beginning of the 2023/24 season and eventually lost his place in the starting XI. Despite his position in the club, the 30-year-old defender was one of the first names on Southgate's sheet. The English manager backed his decision to stick with the defender and hailed his "resilience." "He's a resilient character and you've got to have that resilience. If you're playing at a club like Manchester United, you're talking one of the biggest clubs in the world. There is always going to be

any number of stories in the news every day about a club like that," Southgate told Sky Sports. "We know that he can play in the biggest games, we've seen him in the tournaments, we know what he brings to the group. In my view, you back your players and I've felt at the times we've felt the need to do that, it's been the right thing to do. We've always had belief in him. People say 'you have your favourites', but it's not a case of 'they're the people I like the most'. They're the people that have played well for us, they're the ones that we think are still our best players," Southgate added. Maguire was a crucial figure in Manchester United's defensive line-up last month. His efforts were recognized as he was crowned Premier League Player of the Month for November. After clinching the award he became the first defender to win the award since Liverpool's Joel Matip who achieved it in February last year. -ANI



All-new 2024 Kia Seltos SUV now in Oman

The Seltos SUV is designed to turn heads with a stylish exterior with long hood, a strong, character line on the front bumper, and sharp lines pressed into the bodywork



MUSCAT: Kia's all-new 2024 Seltos SUV has now debuted in Oman. With striking looks, aggressive power and impressive space the Seltos is set to become one of the most popular SUVs to carry out routine tasks.

The Seltos SUV is designed to turn heads with a stylish exterior with long hood, a strong, character line on the front bumper, and sharp lines pressed into the bodywork. Complementing its stylish

design are a diamond pattern radiator grille garnish, body colour outside mirror, side repeater lamp in outside mirror, electric folding mirrors, 2-tone colour bumper, body colour door handles, halogen lamps, daytime running lights, front and rear fog lamp, roof rack, and alloy wheel.

The Seltos is equipped with a 1.5-liter gasoline engine that

dishes out 113 HP and is paired to a CVT transmission. To further elevate the driving experience, the Seltos is equipped with a Drive Mode Select system that lets drivers adapt the car to their preferred style or the road conditions. Drivers can choose from 'Normal', 'Eco' and 'Sport' mode. The Eco mode is tuned to maximize vehicle range by using fuel-saving meas-

ures, while Sport mode increases responses from the steering and electric motor to maximize the dynamic driving feel of the car. Normal mode provides a careful balance between the two.

On the interior front, the Seltos is equipped with a range of features to maximise convenience, connectivity and ease of use. They include power windows, driver's seat height adjuster, split folding rear seats, auto AC, rear AC vent, steering audio control, rear view camera, 8" audio display and more.

Contributing to make every drive a delight are a range of technological features including a Smart Key with Button Start, Auto Cruise Control, Terrain Mode System (Snow, Mud, Sand) and more.

In terms of safety, the Seltos SUV impresses on all fronts. The features include engine immobiliser, driver and front passenger airbags, anti-lock braking system, electronic stability program, tyre pressure monitoring system, keyless entry system and rear parking system.

The all-new 2024 Seltos SUV is now available for an experience at any Kia showroom.

Reliable International Automotive, the distributor for Kia in Oman provides a rewarding ownership experience for customers.



Second raffle draw of 'Nabil Buy & Win' promotion winners announced

MUSCAT: National Biscuit Industries Ltd, manufacturers of the brand 'Nabil' with an extensive range of biscuits, cream wafers and snacks, announced 10 winners in the second round of 'Nabil Buy & Win' promotion raffle draw.

The winners of 4g gold coins are: Mohammed Suwailem Ali Al Hatmi, Talal Khamis Al Hadi, Mazin said Alrawahi, Rajkumar Ramasamy Sivagnanam, Abdullah Zaher Nasser, Mohammed Delowar Hosain, Muhammadali, Sreekanth Maheswari, Venkatesan Kandasamy and Zayed Hossain.

Congratulations to all the winners of the second raffle draw on winning the gold coins! Still, there are more chances to win gold coins. Additionally, one lucky winner will win the Mega Raffle prize - a brand-new MG RX5! So what are you waiting for? To participate and win, get your hands on Nabil products today!

How to participate: The 'Nabil Buy & Win' promotion is valid from October 20, 2023 to January 15, 2023. To participate, Raffle coupons can be found in multipacks of Nabil Maamoul Oman.

Snackits, Cocozoo, Sugar Free Digestive & Relish. Each Raffle coupon has a unique code; consumers have to merely register their coupon code on www.Win-WithNabil.com

This is the eighth year that National Biscuit Industries Ltd. SAOG will be giving away a car as a bumper Raffle prize to one of its loyal patrons. The company has launched a range of new products under various brands - Relish, Cocozoo, Kracklite and Nutgestive to name a few of them. The company thanks the consumers of Oman, for their continued support and promises to offer them a wider basket of quality products at the most affordable prices.

National Biscuit Industries Ltd. S.A.O.G., which is an ISO 22000:2005 and HACCP accredited company, has, for over three decades, been producing a wide range of biscuits and Snacks. Brand Nabil is exported to over 40 countries worldwide. With the continued patronage of its loyal consumers, it has always maintained a Number One position in the biscuit segment and is truly the Pride of Oman.

SAFETY TEST

Outlander earns top rating in 2022 Latin NCAP



MUSCAT: The Mitsubishi Outlander has achieved a five-star rating in the 2022 Latin New Car Assessment Program (NCAP), an automobile safety assessment program for vehicles sold in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Mitsubishi Motors remains dedicated to its safety philosophy, striving to realize a mobility society with zero traffic accidents by continuously developing safe-

ty technologies and promoting awareness of traffic safety.

The Outlander features Mitsubishi Motors' high-rigidity RISE2 body and seven SRS airbags, ensuring superior collision safety performance. Additionally, it is equipped with advanced safety features, including a Forward Collision Mitigation system (FCM) that enhances preventive safety performance. These features have earned the

model five-star ratings in JNCAP3 in Japan, as well as in the ANCAP4 in Australia and New Zealand.

With "I-Fu-Do-Do" as its product concept, translating to authentic and majestic in Japanese, the Outlander represents Mitsubishi Motors' flagship model, bringing its expertise in all-wheel control technologies to the masses. To date, approximately 260,000 units of the Outlander have been sold worldwide.

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ROUND-UP

Experience the thrills of winter at Mall of Muscat

This winter, let the Mall of Muscat be your destination for thrill, joy, and unforgettable moments



MUSCAT: Mall of Muscat, leading leisure and entertainment destination invites visitors to immerse themselves in the wonders of the winter season, far beyond the traditional shopping experience. A spokesperson for Mall of Muscat said, “Nestled in the heart of the capital city, the Mall of Muscat is a vibrant hub of activity and excitement. We invite families and

friends to create unforgettable memories in a setting brimming with enchantment and joy. This winter transform your outing into a magical wonderland at Mall of Muscat which offers a festive and thrilling experience for all.” At the Mall of Muscat, each corner unveils a new adventure. The

Oman Aquarium, a mesmerising underwater journey, captivates visitors of all ages. Fabyland offers a paradise for children with a diverse range of activities, from soft play zones to exhilarating rides. For the adventurous souls, Xtreme Zone provides an energetic playground with trampolines, climbing

walls, and more. Movie enthusiasts can indulge in the latest international films at Novo Cinemas, offering a state-of-the-art cinematic experience. Fun VR, one of Oman's largest virtual reality venues, merges technology with interactive entertainment, providing a unique and immersive experience. Xcape Muscat adds to the excitement with its thrilling escape room adventures. As the festive season unfolds, the Mall of Muscat stands as the ultimate destination for those seeking a blend of entertainment, technology, and retail excitement. With over 240 diverse brands, the mall offers something for everyone, ensuring a delightful and thrilling visit. This winter, let the Mall of Muscat be your destination for thrill, joy, and unforgettable moments. Join us in celebrating the season in all its glory, surrounded by the warmth of family, friends, and the spirit of wonder.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Oxy Oman supports Haima, Ibri hospitals with ambulance and medical equipment

MUSCAT: As a part of its social responsibility to local communities and in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Oxy Oman recently announced its support of Haima and Ibri hospitals, which are located near Oxy Oman concession areas. As part of the agreement, Oxy Oman is funding the hospitals with the provision of medical equipment, in coordination with the Directorate-Generals of Health Affairs in Al Wusta and Al Dhahirah Governorates. Oxy Oman is also assisting Haima Hospital by funding the purchase of an ambulance that is modified to fit the needs of the hospital. The signing ceremony was held at Oxy Oman headquarters under the auspices of Qasim Mohammed Al Salmi, Director General of Planning and Studies at the Ministry of Health.

This initiative falls under the umbrella of strategic partnerships and continuous collaboration with key stakeholders

polyclinics and health centres, along with a 24-hour emergency department. “Oxy Oman is committed to the healthcare and wellbeing of communities throughout the Sultanate of Oman. Our support for Haima and Ibri hospitals, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, underscores our dedication to enhancing healthcare access near our operations. We hope that the provision of vital medical equipment will aid the hospitals in successfully attending and caring for patients throughout Al Wusta and Al Dhahirah governorates,” said Lauver. This initiative falls under the umbrella of strategic partnerships and continuous collaboration with key stakeholders and is part of Oxy Oman's endeavour and long-term commitment to support programmes that enhance social and health initiatives in the Sultanate.

LYNK & CO'S

Hit Oman’s roads in style with SUV range 05

MUSCAT: Lynk & Co, recognised for its cutting-edge European technology and innovative designs in the automotive realm, showcased its latest SUV range model 05 in the vibrant city of Muscat, Oman. With a steadfast commitment to redefining the automotive experience, Lynk & Co has successfully revolutionized the Omani market by offering an unparalleled driving experience. The innovative model is now on the roads, prioritising the safety and peace of mind of Omani motorists. 05 Model – Your ultimate adventure companion For thrill-seekers yearning for exhilarating adventures and off-road odysseys, the Lynk & Co 05 emerges as the ideal partner. A fusion of style, power, and adaptability, the 05 is masterfully designed to triumph over challenging terrains, all the while ensuring unmatched comfort and luxury for its passengers. The Lynk & Co 05 boasts a powerful Drive-E 2.0TD T5 Turbo Engine, delivering an impressive blend of performance and efficien-



cy. With remarkable horsepower, the Lynk & Co 05 offers an exhilarating driving experience, ensuring you're always in control. Experience superior fuel efficiency for both city and highway driving. Safety is a priority in the 05 model, with the inclusion of the Adaptive Cruise Control and Queuing Assistant (ACCQA) to provide unbeatable security. An additional layer of vigilance and safety is granted by the Door Opening Warning (DOW) feature. The Smart Adjustable Powertrain+ (SAP+) system enriches your driving encounter, while the 8-speed automatic transmission

ensures smooth gear shifts. The Borg Warner 5th Generation Intelligent 4-Wheel Drive system lets you effortlessly navigate a variety of terrains. This model is equipped with state-of-the-art features to elevate your driving experience to new heights. Dive into a world of superior sound quality with the Harman Infinity Audio system. Experience a dash of sophistication with laser-engraved aluminium trim panels, harmoniously paired with the Full Spectrum Ambient Light, setting the ideal ambience. Indulge in opulence with the meticulously crafted Nubuck interior

upholstery, enveloping you in an atmosphere of refined elegance that exemplifies the Lynk & Co 05 adventure. Commitment to Oman As Lynk & Co introduces the 05 model to the Omani market, the brand wholeheartedly commits to offering a world-class ownership experience. With a focus on customer satisfaction and unmatched after-sales support, Lynk & Co ensures that every customer embarks on a journey of excellence. Lynk & Co is a premium global automobile brand jointly owned by Volvo and Geely. In Oman, Lynk & Co operates under a new line of auto business 'Mobility Auto LLC' from Towell Group. Their vision is built on the pillars of innovation, connectivity, and sustainability. Embracing a global perspective while integrating European design and technology, Lynk & Co aspires to create a seamless connection between people, cars, and the world. As a dynamic industry leader, the brand continuously pushes boundaries to offer exceptional driving experiences to its valued patrons.

7-SEATER FAMILY SUV

Changan CS95 2024 redefines luxury, family driving experience

MUSCAT: Changan CS95 4WD 7-seater is touted as the pinnacle of luxury and ideal for large families, the Changan CS95 4WD is transforming the driving experience in Oman. This 2024 model, equipped with an AISIN 8 AT transmission, guarantees reliable quality, smooth shifting, and excellent fuel economy. Featuring a range of updates, the latest CS95 provides an improved driving experience that is bound to captivate. Merging luxury with family-oriented design, the new Changan CS95 is a perfect mix of sophistication and functionality, appealing to both discerning individuals and families. A spokesperson for Arabian Gulf Automobiles and Equipment LLC (AGAE), said, “The Changan CS95 combines stylish design, advanced technology, and spacious comfort, making it a standout choice for those seeking a premium SUV experience. The model has received great response from auto enthusiasts since its launch early this year.”

Equipped with a high-quality AISIN transmission, a smart grille, and an array of advanced technologies including a 540-degree HD view, Carplay, Android Auto, an induction electric back door, and a panoramic skylight, this impressive vehicle offers unmatched comfort and spaciousness for an extraordinary driving experience. Loaded with outstanding upgrades, such as an advanced 8-speed transmission and a notable 390 torque, exceeding its previous version by 30, the 2024 CS95 is designed to raise performance standards. This model also features a larger tyre size of M20, up from the former M19, providing enhanced stability and grip on the road. A significant feature of the new CS95 model is its intelligent technology and ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance Systems) features. This includes a range of advanced safety and assistance systems such as Lane Departure Warning (LDW) and Lane Change Support (LCS) to help ensure safe and controlled driving. The Traf-



fic Jam Assist (TJA) feature assists in navigating congested traffic situations. The CS95MCA2 also includes Pedestrian Warning with auxiliary braking, which helps detect and prevent potential collisions with pedestrians. Additionally, the Blind Spot Detection (BSD), Lane Change Assist (LCA), and Rear Collision Warning (RCW) systems provide enhanced awareness and protection during lane changes and rear-end collision scenarios. These intelligent technologies and ADAS features make the CS95 a reliable and

safety-focused choice for drivers. The CS95's intelligent technology includes a 540° HD transparent chassis that offers a video resolution of 1280x960, enabling 3D display, intelligent opening, and lane departure warning features. This provides users with a clearer picture quality and enhanced functionality. When combined with an automobile recorder, it offers comprehensive coverage and monitoring capabilities for improved visibility and safety. A full-bodied and modish SUV Changan CS95 offers impressive

dimensions measuring 4949mm in length, 1930mm in width, and 1790mm in height. Under the hood, it is equipped with a powerful 2.0 T GDI engine, delivering a maximum power of 224hp. The CS95 2024 MY also boasts a substantial maximum torque of 390 Nm, ensuring exceptional performance on the road. Its smooth transmission is facilitated by an 8-speed automatic gearbox (8AT). With a wheelbase of 2810mm, this SUV provides ample interior space for comfort and practicality. It features 20-inch wheels with 255/50 R20 tyres, further enhancing its sturdy and confident stance. Additionally, the CS95 offers both 2WD and AWD driving modes, allowing drivers to adapt to different road conditions with ease. The all-new Changan CS95 stands out with its latest generation Blue Core Engine, incorporating four key technical points. These include the utilization of double-cycle high-pressure direct injection AGILE combustion technology, low friction loss con-

trol technology, intelligent thermal management technology, and ultra-clean NVH (noise, vibration, and harshness) control technology. These advancements contribute to the CS95's exceptional performance, fuel efficiency, intelligent temperature regulation, and reduced noise levels, ensuring a smooth and comfortable driving experience. The Changan CS95 features an intelligent grille that offers several benefits to enhance fuel economy and cold start performance. This active intake intelligent grille adjusts its state based on the external environment and car conditions. It ensures the engine remains in an efficient operating range for extended periods, optimizing fuel efficiency. Additionally, at high speeds, the grille intelligently closes to minimize air resistance, leading to improved fuel economy. Moreover, during cold starts, the intelligent grille closes to prevent cold air from entering the heat emission system, ensuring efficient heat management.





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