

**OMAN, THE NETHERLANDS
INK MOU ON CERTIFICATES
OF SEAFARERS**

The Sultanate and the Kingdom of the Netherlands signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the mutual recognition of Certificates of Competency (CoC) for seafarers. **>A2**



HM THE SULTAN GREETES KING OF KSA

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes of good health, happiness and a long life to King Salman, praying to Allah the Almighty for the return of this occasion while the brotherly people of the KSA realise aspirations of further progress and prosperity. **-ONA**



Founded 1975 · Volume 46 No. 147 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

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FOREIGN MINISTER RECEIVES CREDENTIALS OF UK, EGYPTIAN AMBASSADORS

Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, received copies of credentials of Bill Murray, appointed ambassador of the UK to the Sultanate and Khalid Mohammed Abdulhaleem Radhi, appointed ambassador of Egypt to the Sultanate. During the meeting, Sayyid Badr welcomed the British ambassador, wishing him success in carrying out his duties, and further progress and prosperity to bilateral relations between the Sultanate and the UK. Sayyid Badr also welcomed the Egyptian ambassador, wishing him success in carrying out his duties, and the fraternal relations between the two countries further progress and prosperity. **- ONA**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

**OMAN
Pandemic impact**

1 The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Omani economy has been severe. **>A3**

**WORLD
Biden, Johnson meet**

2 US President and UK Prime Minister discussed climate change. **>A7**

**MARKET
Raysut Cement's unit**

3 Raysut Cement's \$30mn Duqm plant will go on stream in Q4 of 2021. **>B1**

COVID-19

New Supreme Committee's decisions to help private sector meet challenges

MUSCAT: As part of its ongoing convening, the Supreme Committee tasked with tackling developments resulting from coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic discussed updates about the pandemic, means of protection against the disease and ways to curb the spread of the virus.

After studying the impacts of the pandemic on private sector establishments and, to enhance the sustainability of businesses and their ability to adapt to the exceptional situations, the committee decided the following:

- Waiving fines charged against licenses issued by government departments for the activities indicated in Annex (1) which expired or due to expire through the period 1 June 2020 to 31 December 2021 provided renewal takes place.
- Waiving fines charged against renewal of non-Omani labour cards and associated fines for cards which expired or due to expire during the period 1 June 2020 to 31 December 2021, for those who have terminally left the Sultanate or for those who renew the cards.
- Waiving fines accrued on various establishments and companies due to non-renewal of their commercial registers and licenses, provided they do renew the registers and licenses during 2021.
- Allowing employers to renew expired labour permits for workers who are still abroad, while at the same time waiving related fines resulting during the period of 1 June 2020 to 31 December 2021.
- Absolving small and medium establishments of entre-



preneurship card renewal fees charged against all expired commercial activities during 2021. The committee also took the following decisions valid till 31 December 2021:

- Granting labour permits in lieu of leaving labour, for all segments and as per the prescribed fees set for each segment.
- Urging banks and financing firms to cooperate with 'affected' borrowers, notably small and medium enterprises (holders of Riyada business cards) by re-scheduling the loans, without charging fees for that.
- Absolving small and medium enterprises of registration fees in "Isnad" system affiliated to the Tender Board.
- Absolving small and medium enterprises of land usufruct (development) fees and postponing the repayment of outstanding dues.
- Postponing the repayment of small and medium enterprises' premiums indicated in Annex (1)—for holders of Riyada business cards benefiting from the (previous Al Raffd Fund) financing loans.
- Waiving rental fees payable by owners of small and medium enterprises for the activities indicated in Annex (1)—of holders of Riyada cards—regard-

ing real estate properties owned by government departments and authorities.

The committee also reviewed reports on the epidemiological situation, locally and globally. It noted that a general decline occurred in numbers of cases of infection with COVID-19, hospitalisation, admission to ICUs and deaths in the domestic front.

It noted, however, that many countries of the world are experiencing successive waves of the pandemic, marked by the emergence of new variants of the virus. Thus, the committee said, mandates the intensification of efforts to control the situation, lest a rapid setback might happen and lead to a spike in cases of infection.

The committee received evidence that many parties and individuals do not abide by the precautionary measures set by the departments concerned, particularly commitment to vaccination as a pre-requisite to entering government establishments and business outlets (commercial complexes, restaurants, etc.), as well as venues were hosting group activities (cultural, sports, social, etc.).

Yet, the committee regrets detecting other types of violations, including the holding of large social gatherings, non-wearing of face masks and non-abidance, in some establishments, by the precautionary measures.

The committee affirms that the authorities concerned will continue to penalise the offending parties and individuals and will shut down any establishments found in breach of the precautionary measures. **-ONA**

GOVT COMPANIES URGED TO BE SELF-SUSTAINING

New government companies will be established only if they are profitable, if they are not economically and commercially viable, they will not be established. Companies will eventually have to generate profits and the financial sustainability of these companies is the main focus for their establishment.

Abdulsalam bin Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Murshidi
Chairman of the Omani Investment Authority



**Financial
sustainability is a
key aspect of Oman
Vision 2040**

Times News Service

MUSCAT: All the government companies will have to stand on their own feet and not be dependent on the state's general budget for their survival, the chairman of the Omani Investment Authority (OIA), Abdulsalam bin Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Murshidi,

said on Wednesday.

In an interview with Oman TV, the chairman said that the new government companies will be established only if they are profitable, if they are not economically and commercially viable, they will not be established.

"Of course, there are other strategic goals that government companies must carry out, and with the presence of these goals, these companies will eventually have to generate profits and the financial sustainability of these companies is the main focus for their establishment," he added.

Al Murshidi also stressed that "no government companies after today will get money from the state's general budget to run their business, but every company we will establish must be able to

continue and support itself." The effort to encourage state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to stand on their own feet comes as part of efforts by the OIA that began a year ago, to ensure companies operate on a new structure of financial and operational performance. This was instituted through policies and guidelines aligned with Oman Vision 2040 that serve the national interest. The governance of SOEs became one of the OIA's top priorities, particularly in the light of Royal Decree No. 61/2020. The decree announced the restructuring, merging, and liquidation of a number of enterprises, the formation of new companies, the appointment of high-calibre people to boards of directors, and the launch of the Rawabet programme.

REAL ESTATE

Bank loans to help expats buy homes in Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Expats who wish to buy apartments in Oman under a new scheme launched by the government can fund their investment with the help of local banks, a senior official at a real estate firm in the country has said.

Fahad Al Ismaili, the CEO of Tibiaan Properties, said expats can pay for flats listed under the usufruct scheme by taking out a bank loan, which can then be repaid in instalments.

"The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning has expanded and amplified the rule to make it understandable," he said, speaking to Times TV. "They have issued a document which provides an explanation about the work being done, which is good, because there was a lot of confusion among people in this matter, as well as incorrect information sometimes given by real estate agents."

"This explanation has helped non-Omanis to obtain finance from banks for this new scheme," he added. "They can finance their residential units and get



the necessary funding from local banks, paying back these loans on instalments."

The usufruct ownership scheme for real estate in Oman is aligned with the government's Tawazun, or medium-term financial plan. One of the plan's articles is about real estate promotion and real estate investments, which aim to diversify the economy, create good foreign investment opportunities.

"The government is looking to share its best practices, and make sure everyone is aware of the

scheme," explained Al Ismaili.

Under the scheme, expatriates can currently buy property in certain areas of Muscat, including designated zones in Boushar, Seeb and Amerat.

Starting point

"This will be the starting point for the scheme, and it will then be expanded to other governorates," explained Al Ismaili. "These areas are not primarily residential, but more commercial in nature, where expatriates or non-Omanis may

like to stay, as opposed to purely residential areas, where locals have their homes."

"This rule also looked to maintain the demography of the country, while ensuring every community maintains a healthy way of living, and making sure everyone in the community is able to meet their needs," he added. "With anything new, we need to test the water before penetrating it aggressively. I second the government's decision in taking this careful step, because this is a new scheme

we are entering."

According to the regulations concerning the scheme, only flats in buildings that are already built and are less than four years old can be bought. The building must also be at least four storeys high. Furthermore, the flat in question must have at least two bedrooms. Only 40 per cent of flats in any building can be put up under the usufruct scheme, with a maximum of 20 per cent of people from the same nationality allowed to buy property in a single building. Flats must also cost at least OMR35,000. Flats can also be transferred to an owner's legal heirs.

"You cannot have the same price for all the projects: some may have central cooling, a swimming pool, a park, children's play areas, central gas pipelines, and many other facilities, but others may not have these amenities, so each developer will know how they need to price their units," said Al Ismaili.

Should someone wish to sell their flat, they can do so four years after purchase, while they can also remain its owners after they leave the country.



PRAYER
TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....12:04pm
Asr.....3:30pm
Maghrib.....6:08pm
Isha.....7:18pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....4:41am

MUTUAL RECOGNITION

Oman, the Netherlands ink MoU on seafarers certificates

MUSCAT: The Sultanate and the Kingdom of the Netherlands signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the mutual recognition of Certificates of Competency (CoC) for seafarers.

Oman was represented by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology and the Netherlands by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. The MoU was signed by Taher Mohammed Al Busaidi, Acting Director General of Maritime Affairs and Brigit Gijssbers, Director for Maritime Affairs in the Netherlands. -ONA



ONLINE EVENT

Virtual Youth Summit 2021 seeks to boost cooperation among students

MUSCAT: The Virtual Youth Summit 2021 was launched on Wednesday in its third edition.

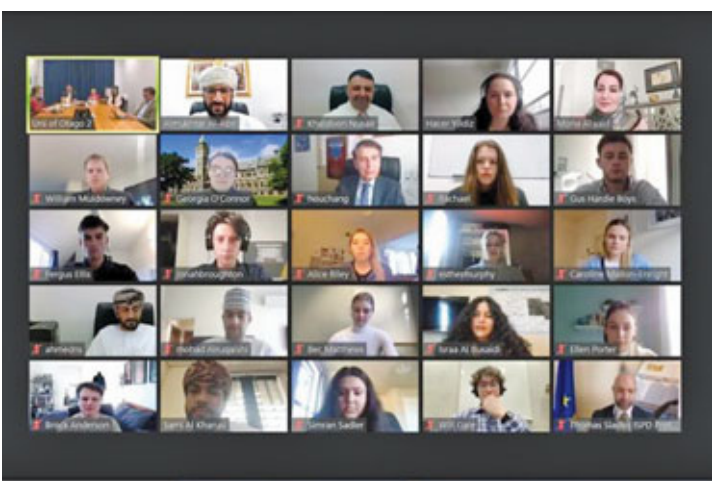
The two-day online event was organised by Sultan Qaboos University's (SQU) Political Science Group, in cooperation with students of Otago University in New Zealand.

The opening ceremony set the ground principles and preliminary negotiations between the Omani and New Zealand parties.

The summit seeks to enhance cooperation between the students of the two universities and discuss some common political, economic and cultural matters to find solutions that can be applied in both countries.

The opening of the summit, sponsored by the International Institute of Protocol and Diplomacy (ISPD), was preceded by a series of virtual lectures.

During the lectures, the students were trained on the global diplomatic practices and protocols, and ways to apply them in official international conferences.



PRELIMINARY NEGOTIATIONS: The opening ceremony set the ground principles and preliminary negotiations between the Omani and New Zealand parties. - ONA

The opening of the summit was attended Dr. Mona Fahd Al Said, SQU Assistant Vice Chancellor for International Cooperation, Dr. Almukhtar Saif Al Abri, Dean of the College of Economics and Political Sciences, Prof. Helen Nicholson, Vice Chancellor of the University of Otago, and Prof. Will Sweetman, Dean of the College of Social Sciences at the University of Otago. -ONA

RAO CADET OFFICERS CONDUCT MOBILISATION DRILL

The Cadet Officers Batch at Sultan Qaboos Military College, Royal Army of Oman (RAO), yesterday conducted a practical demonstration marking the conclusion of the final mobilisation exercise (Shield 26). The live ammunition demo, carried out as planned at the RAO range, with support from the Engineering Services division of the Ministry of Defence. The event was held under the auspices of Maj.Gen Mattar Salim Al Balushi, RAO Commander. -ONA



FLOATING TENDERS

Oman Airports Company announces the following tenders:

Tender REF. NO	TENDER TITLE	DOC'S FEE OMR	Last date for DOC'S DISTRIBUTION	TENDER SUBMISSION DATE
ITC-201101	Consultancy Services for Rectifications of Civil Defects at Salalah Airport (Re-Float)	105	30 th September 2021	14 th October 2021
ITC-201104	Consultancy Services for Rectifications of Mechanical Defects at Salalah Airport (Re-Float)	105	30 th September 2021	14 th October 2021

Tenders Collection: Specialized companies may obtain Tender Documents/ Specifications from Procurement Department upon receipt of complete payment of tender fees by Cash Transfer/ deposit into below OAMC bank account and submittal of clear scanned copy of deposit Receipt along with a copy of Company Commercial Registration Certificate to Email: **(FinanceTenders@omanairports.com)** provided with company name, tender number & contact person as a mandatory.

OAMC Bank Account Details:
Account Name: Oman Airports Management Co. S.A.O.C.
Account No: 0423010849180012
Name of Bank: BANK MUSCAT
Branch: Corporate Branch, CBD Area, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
SWIFT Code: BMUSOMRX

Required Bond: All participating Companies must provide a bank guarantee, issued by locally registered bank, for the sum of not less than 1% of the Tender value, addressed to the Chairman of the Internal Tender Committee, valid for 90 days from the date of submission of the Tenders.

Submission: All bids shall be submitted as per mentioned instructions in the tender documents and late bids will not be entertained.

All Technical Queries shall be sent to:
oamctenders@omanairports.com

The committee is not bound to accept the lowest tender.
Any payment received after last date of documents distribution will not be refunded

Headquarter Address:
Muscat International Airport
South Forecourt Building, First Floor
Oman Airports Management S.A.O.C
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.

Note: All Correspondence / Clarification / Enquiries send an e-mail:
oamctenders@omanairports.com

Beef burger

with fries and soft drink

1 omr

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Times of Oman

Founded 1975.

Vol. 17, No. 120

Muscat, Monday, September 23, 1991

Price: Baisas 100

1991 - the Year of Industry



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BUSINESS TIMES
Foreign investors make a bell for Britain - Page 7



The prodigious success of the fax - Page 8

Weather

Partly cloudy skies will prevail over Dhofar region and mainly clear skies over the rest of the Sultanate.

Southern Oman and interior will have southerly to southwesterly moderate winds and moderate northeasterly during day and light southwesterly at night over coastal areas of northern Oman.

Sea will be moderate with a maximum wave height of 2.0 metres along southeastern coast and slight to moderate with a maximum wave height of 1.25 metres along the rest of Oman coast.

Maximum temperature for the Muscat area is 35C and minimum temperature is 26C. Relative humidity is 50%-85%.

Tide will be high at 8:54 a.m. and low at 3:19 p.m. It will be high again at 9:24 p.m. and low at 3:20 a.m.

For the Salalah area, maximum temperature is 29C and minimum temperature is 23C. Relative humidity is 60%-85%.

Tide will be high at 8:25 a.m. and low at 2:40 p.m. It will be high again at 8:45 p.m. and low at 2:40 a.m.

Temperatures recorded in other countries:

Abu Dhabi 38, Dubai 34, Riyadh 38, Jeddah 32, Bahrain 33, Kuwait 39, Amman 26, Doha 36, Cairo 29, Karachi 32, Bombay 33, Paris 15, London 18 and Geneva 23.

TEMP MAX MIN
Seeb 32 25
Mina Qaboos 32 27
Buraimi 41 26
Khasab 33 29
Ibri 40 26
Niwa 40 21
Sohar 32 24
Salu 28 18
Sur 30 18
Masirah 30 24
Thumrait 40 23
Mina Rayan 40 23
Jahil Dhofar 30 19
Halma 40 23
Mannal 41 23
Fahad 42 23
Al-Hadramiyat 29 23
Madha 31 29

US Jews oppose settlements

JERUSALEM - American Jewish leaders have warned Israel that settlement building in the Occupied Territories is damaging their lobbying on Israel's behalf in Washington, newspapers reported yesterday.

Front-page reports on "Maariv" and "Hatzahot" suggested a widening rift between Israel and its American Jewish supporters over how to deal with President Bush's insistence on delaying consideration of loan guarantees to Israel.

It also came as Israel Radio and newspapers reported plans to break ground on Tuesday for a settlement bordering on the Occupied West Bank.

They said Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir would attend the ceremony. The settlement, Cochar Yigal, is apparently part of a network of outposts planned by Housing Minister Ariel Sharon along the Israel-West Bank border, with the aim of blurring the frontier out of existence. -AP

Questioning of BCCI staff begins

DUBAI - A public prosecutor in Abu Dhabi yesterday began questioning 20 top officials of the troubled Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) banking and legal sources said.

Authorities in the oil-rich Gulf Emirate, which owns 77.4 per cent of BCCI, detained 26 bank officials two weeks ago as part of their own investigation into the fraud allegations which led to the bank's worldwide shutdown on July 5.

Eighteen are still in custody, including former chief executive officers Swaleh Naji and Zafar Iqbal. Six have been released conditionally and two have been set free.

Banking sources said the prosecutor is expected to question some of the six, who have had to surrender their passports. At least 10 of those to be questioned, including Naji, an British citizen, Abu Dhabi's London lawyers Simmons and Simmons said on Friday the Emirate expected formal charges to be filed.

Abu Dhabi authorities expect formal charges to be filed against former BCCI executives currently held in Abu Dhabi, the lawyers said in a statement.

Legal sources said the prosecutor had the authority to file a case against the officials or drop the whole inquiry. They said they expected the question to take a few days.

Banking sources said they expected the 18 officials to remain in custody until the process was completed.

The Emirate's Government started its own investigation this month as part of its efforts to re-launch the bank is a small number of countries.

The Government has until December 2 to submit a comprehensive rescue plan to a court in London. Some banking sources in London said Merchant Bank Schroders Plc had been mandated by the Abu Dhabi Government to rebuild BCCI's operations in Britain.

UAE banking sources said BCCI was expected to relaunch its business in the UAE, Britain, Pakistan, and possibly a few other Middle East and European countries. Before the closure, it operated in 67 countries worldwide. -Reuter

Princess Diana

LONDON - Princess Diana, wife of heir to the British throne Prince Charles, left yesterday for a four-day official visit to Pakistan.

The Princess, who was flying to Pakistan via Oman, will visit Islamabad, Lahore and Peshawar, capital of the north-west frontier province. -Reuter

Armenians take fast track to independence

YEREVAN - Armenian leaders, bolstered by huge support for secession in Saturday referendum, have abandoned their gradualist approach to breaking with Moscow and say they will declare independence today.

Independence starts on Monday, when Parliament meets and says so, President Levon Ter-Petrosyan told reporters after the vote. "Independence is a political act against which there is no argument."

The first result showed 92 per cent of the electorate in Yerevan voted yes, 0.5 per cent no and 0.5 per cent of ballots were spoiled.

Results from outlying regions, which polls said would have voted even more strongly for independence, were due by Monday. Armenia's nationalist-dominated Parliament decided initially to secede following Soviet law - an uncertain process spread over five years and beginning with the referendum.

Then last month's failed right-wing coup against Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev snatched the power of Kremlin conservatives and sparked off a wave of independence declarations.

All but three of the 15 Soviet republics have now announced their secession, though Moscow has recognised only the three Baltic states.

But the show of national pride - which has stayed strong despite 900 years of foreign domination - does not disguise the rough seas which lie ahead for Armenia.

"Of course it will be difficult," Ter-Petrosyan aide Ashot Antinyan told reporters. "But in declaring independence we are supporting the people's will and fulfilling a long-held goal."

Largely Christian Armenia, which is about the size of Belgium, is surrounded by big neighbours. Azerbaijan is to the east, Georgia to the north and Turkey and Iran to the south and west.

The modern policy of Armenia is that we should have normal relations with all our neighbours," said Tigran Martirosyan, an official at Armenia's Foreign Ministry. "People are changing, states are changing."

But Armenia remains locked in a bitter territorial dispute with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, a mainly-Armenian area under Azerbaijan administration.

President Boris Yeltsin of Russia and Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan attend in Yerevan yesterday to discuss the conflict, which has cost more than 800 lives in five years.

Ceasefire declared in besieged Croatia

BELGRADE - The Federal Defence Minister and bloodied Croatia yesterday declared a ceasefire in the fighting raging in the republic from the Danube River to the Adriatic Sea.

It was not immediately clear whether this ceasefire, the second announced in less than week, could hold. Air raid sirens wailed in Zagreb, the Croatian capital, five miles before the ceasefire was to take effect at 3 p.m. (1300 GMT).

Army forces still were massed in eastern Croatia, and in the rival republic Serbia near the Croatian border. Fighting raged around the republic as the new ceasefire deadline approached.

But an order from Croatian President Franjo Tudjman read on Croatia TV announcing the ceasefire directed local officials to lift an embargo on water, food, electricity and medical care to Federal Army barracks in the republic.

Imposition of the blockade last Saturday drew the army much more into fighting with the republic's forces.

An agreement was reached with the leadership of Croatia at 11:50 today to issue and publicly announce mutual orders about the ceasefire, to end all attacks and movement, at 1500 hours (1300 GMT) on September 22, 1991, said a statement issued by Defence Minister Veljko Kadijevic.

"In this connection, I am ordering all commands, units, and institutions of the Yugoslav People's Army on the territory of the republic of Croatia: on September 22, 1991, at 1500 cease all attacks and movements, and ensure an absolute ceasefire," said the statement, which was transmitted by the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug.

Vesna Skare, a spokeswoman for Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, said he and Kadijevic reached a verbal agreement on a ceasefire yesterday morning, apparently in a telephone conversation.

She said the deal was made on the basis of overtures Croatia had made on Saturday to the Federal Army. More than 500 people have been killed in fighting in Croatia since the republic declared independence on June 25.

The last ceasefire agreement was made on Tuesday, when Tudjman, Kadijevic and Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic signed an agreement with European Community mediator Lord Carrington.

But fighting continued unabated after that agreement, and escalated within days.

The army launched a major offensive at eastern Croatia from Serbian territory on Friday, apparently aimed at some of the few strongholds Croatian forces have left in the area. Fighting has been reported around the towns of Vinkovci and Vukovar.

On Saturday, Croatian leaders offered to restore water and electricity to Federal barracks, and allow food to get in. But they said they would continue to surround the barracks.

Kadijevic rejected the feelers as insufficient and pledged "resolute military action."

It was not known what had changed in order for the two sides to call for a ceasefire.

Tanjung said Bosnia's President Alija Izetbegovic sent an appeal to the heads of state of the 12 EC countries yesterday warning about the situation in the republic and complaining of "persistent efforts to drag Bosnia-Herzegovina into the war."

He also formed a six-member crisis committee with two representatives each from the republic's Serbian, Croatian and Muslim populations, to monitor the situation and advise him how to keep out of the fighting. -AP/Reuter

Crucial congress for Palestinians

ALGIERS - A divided Palestinian leadership opens a congress today to decide whether to endorse a historic Middle East peace conference or lose a critical chance to try to negotiate for a homeland.

At issue is whether Palestinians should agree to Israeli conditions that exclude the Palestine Liberation Organisation from participating in the conference scheduled for next month.

The Palestine National Council, the Palestinian Parliament-in-Exile, began debate on the issue today.

Algerian security forces have deployed forces on land, in the air and offshore near the conference site of Club De Pins, a seaside resort about 12 miles west of Algiers.

In Damascus, Syria, meanwhile, three hard-line factions of the PLO presented petitions signed by 250,000 Palestinians insisting that the PLO must be directly represented by any peace conference.

American proposals for the peace conference go along with the Israeli view that Palestinian delegates must be acceptable to Israel and come only from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, occupied by Israel since the 1967 Mideast war. They would serve in a joint delegation with the Israelis.

The PLO insists on including Palestinians from the diaspora and Israeli-occupied East Jerusalem.

US Secretary of State James A. Baker III detailed in a letter to a Palestinian delegation he met in Jerusalem last week what sort of support the Palestinians can expect from the United States.

After PLO officials criticised the letter, Baker drafted a number of changes and resubmitted a new one on Friday.

In an interview published on Saturday in the Tunisian newspaper "Assabah" PLO Information Director Yasser Abed Rabbo said the organisation's response to the talks "can only be negative" because the letter "rejects the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination." -AP

Washington The World Bank, which lends cash to developing nations, said in its annual report issued yesterday that it has set aside \$30 million dollars from its own resources for immediate technical advice and assistance to the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union will receive the assistance ahead of a decision on Moscow's application last July to join the body. The Soviet Union is expected to be granted associate membership which entitles it to technical assistance, but not to loans. Moscow applied to join the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) after the seven major Western industrialised nations offered the country associate membership in the two bodies.

The report said the euphoria that had swept Eastern Europe after the political changes there had petered out and given way to the sobering realisation that the road to a market economy was not easy. -DPA

WB to give \$30 m to Moscow

Factions clash in Tbilisi; 40 hurt

MOSCOW - Rival armed factions confronted each other in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi yesterday and about 40 people were reported injured in overnight street clashes.

Supporters of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia guarded the Government compound and opposition forces held the television centre, local journalists said.

Shots were fired in the centre of Tbilisi during the night but most of the people injured appeared to have been hit by stones.

The besieged President who still controlled the republic's radio, called on the oppositions armed backers - rebels in the Georgian national guard - to return to the Government fold.

Gamsakhurdia, accused by opponents of having dictatorial tendencies, addressed the appeal to rebel Guards Commander Tengiz Kitovani and promised not to prosecute him for his mutiny.

Moscow Radio said the situation in Georgia had deteriorated and it would broadcast details from Tbilisi at 11 a.m. (0900 GMT).

The Ministry of Health reported that more than 40 people had been treated in hospital after a melee in the city centre between Gamsakhurdia supporters, many based in from the provinces, and backers of the opposition.

A Ministry spokesman said the injured were mostly opposition supporters who had come under a hail of stones. Many checked themselves out of the hospitals for fear of arrest.

"It seems like war has broken out in Tbilisi," said freelance journalist David Albert, who lives in the capital of the southern republic which declared its independence from the Soviet Union last April.

Albert said shots had been heard coming from the direction of Rustaveli Prospekt, the city's main avenue where loyalist forces surrounded the Government centre and formed a human chain to block the tree-lined street. -Reuter

BAGHDAD - President Saddam Hussein, facing renewed threats of US military action to enforce full Iraqi cooperation with UN weapons inspectors, convened a high-profile meeting of his defence and military chiefs.

But Iraq's state-run newspapers, which yesterday published front-page photographs of the Saturday meeting, gave no clue as to what had been discussed or decided.

No reports accompanied the pictures, which showed Saddam with his Deputy Izzat Ibrahim, Defence Minister Hussein Kamel Hassan, Interior Minister Ali Hassan Al-Majid, and Army Commander Ayad Al-Rawi.

Foreign Minister Ahmed Hassan Al-Samarrai, speaking in Jordan on his way to the UN General Assembly session in New York, condemned the US threats.

"This is not the first time that the United States launches threats against Iraq's security and the safety of its territory," he said.

"Such threats have been repeated frequently for various fake reasons." -Reuter

Iranian concern at US-Kuwait link-up

NICOSIA - Iran summoned Kuwait's Charge d'Affaires yesterday to convey its concern at a 10-year security pact between the Emirate and the United States, the Iranian national news agency IRNA said in a report received in Cyprus.

Foreign Ministry Director-General for Gulf Affairs, Mostafa Faramani Haeri, urged the envoy, Fozul Abdulaziz Al-Jasem, to seek explanations from Kuwait on the contents of the accord, IRNA said in a report received in Cyprus.

Faramani told the Kuwaiti diplomat that regional security will be provided merely through collective cooperation of regional countries," it added.

Iran's Supreme National Security Council on Saturday asked the Foreign Ministry to seek an explanation from Kuwait.

The Supreme Council session was chaired by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and attended by political advisers and top military commanders.

The pact, designed to bolster Kuwait's defences after Iraq's invasion and seven-month occupation of the Emirate, was signed on Thursday.

It gives US troops access to Kuwait ports and allows them to train and conduct military exercises with Kuwaiti forces. US military equipment will also be stored in Kuwait. -Reuter

GCC, Egypt, Syria to hold talks next month

NICOSIA - The Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Syria and the six allies of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) will meet in Cairo next month to discuss regional developments, the official Oman news agency said yesterday.

The report, received in Cyprus, quoted an official source as saying the Ministers, to meet during the first week of October, would discuss the proposed Middle East peace conference. It did not say whether the Ministers planned to discuss security arrangements in the Gulf region.

The GCC groups Oman, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain. They, together with Egypt and Syria, were key partners in the US-led alliance which defied Iraq in the Gulf war and evicted its forces from Kuwait in February.

The eight nations agreed in March on a joint security pact to defend the Gulf region against future Iraqi threats. It soon foundered over differences on the size and role of a proposed force which was to be deployed in Kuwait.

The tiny emirate last week signed a 10-year security pact with the United States, confirming persistent press and diplomatic reports that it saw no viable substitute to Western military might to deter any future Iraqi aggression.

The Omani agency, in a separate report, said the military chiefs of the six GCC countries were due to meet in the Sultanate on October 1 and 2 to resume talks on the formation of a joint GCC security force.

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AGREEMENT

ASMED, Oman Drydock sign pact to establish incubator for SMEs

DUQM: The Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development (ASMED) signed a technical cooperation programme with Oman Drydock Company, the executive arm of drydock services in ASYAD Group.

The agreement will establish an incubator specialised in the logistics sector, supply chains, and services affiliated with the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) to support and develop new small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The agreement also aims to provide a stimulating environment and support the sustainability of entrepreneurs in various work environments, as well as contributing to the Omani economy.

The agreement comes within the framework of empowering entrepreneurs and boosting their role in developing activities in special economic zones and free zones. This will be realised by



EMPOWERING ENTREPRENEURS: The pact was signed by Halima Rashid Al Zar'ei, ASMED Chairperson and Dr. Ibrahim Bakhit Al Nadhairs, CEO of Asyad Shipping and Drydock services. -ONA

providing technical and administrative support to incubated enterprises in order to achieve growth and tackle challenges.

Moreover, the agreement will contribute in providing competitive logistic services based

on innovation.

The agreement was signed by Halima Rashid Al Zar'ei, ASMED Chairperson and Dr. Ibrahim Bakhit Al Nadhairs, CEO of Asyad Shipping and Drydock services. -ONA

OMAN AIR



Oman Air ramps up pilot training to meet growing demand of flights

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Air, the national carrier of the Sultanate of Oman, has ramped up pilot training to meet growing demand for passenger and cargo flights, and to support its growth strategy for post-pandemic travel.

Oman recently reopened to vaccinated travellers and expects a sharp increase in demand for flights from Omani citizens and residents of Oman eager to travel again, expats returning to work in the Sultanate, as well as international tourists in search of Oman's celebrated appeal as a must-see destination in the Middle East.

At the heart of the airline's push to strengthen its pilot base is a renewed focus on Omani recruitment and training. 101 Omani nationals are currently enrolled in Oman Air's Cadet Pilot Training Programme: 30 have recently started technical language courses at Sultan Qaboos University in Muscat; 26 have completed their technical language courses and will soon start ground school; 14 will fly to the USA to complete their flight training; and 31 are currently undergoing flight training in Spain.

An additional 40 licenced Omani

pilots are enrolled as ab initio second officers as part of narrow-body type rating at the airline's headquarters in Muscat—8 of whom are now flying as First Officers. This reaffirms Oman Air's commitment to the country's broader Vision 2040 strategy which envisions and encourages nationalisation of the workforce and more opportunities for Omani youth in private and government sectors.

"With the easing of travel restrictions for Oman announced recently, enquiries to our call centre have surged and we anticipate robust demand for travel in the foreseeable short term," said Captain Nasser Al Salmi, Chief Operating Officer, Oman Air.

"To support what we then expect will be a gradual ascent to pre-pandemic levels in the coming years, our focus now from an operational standpoint is on route optimisation and pilot training, and making sure that Oman Air is sufficiently staffed to meet our goals for growth and success. With 165 Omani nationals enrolled in our various specialised pilot training programmes, we are confident that our pilot pool will strengthen operating capabilities for many years to come," he added.

COVID-19 PATIENT

Royal Hospital

MUSCAT: For the first time since the pandemic began, the Royal Hospital does not have any COVID-19 patient currently undergoing treatment.

"For the first time in 18 months, the Royal Hospital does not have any patients in the COVID-19 department," the Royal Hospital said in a statement on Wednesday.

MAURITANIA

Sayyid Badr holds virtual meeting

MUSCAT: On the sidelines of the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister held a meeting via video-conferencing with Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Mauritanians Abroad of the Islamic Republic

of Mauritania.

The two sides exchanged views on aspects of bilateral cooperation between the two countries and ways of their further enhancement.

The two sides also exchanged views on a number of regional and international issues of common concern. — ONA



Ministry of Higher Education, Research & Innovation

Electronic Tenders

The Internal Tenders Committee of the Ministry of Higher Education Research & Innovation announced the following tenders:

Tender No.	Tender Name	Company that are entitled to participate	Tender Price	Last Date for purchasing Tender	The deadline for submission of tenders
12/2021	Project of equipping mechanical engineering laboratories of Saham Vocational College	Specialized in providing Same service and registered with the Tender Board with Grade Excellent -First- Second- Third- Forth	25/= RO	12/10/2021	01/11/2021

The purchasing of the tender documents by E-Tendering system will starting on Thursday 23/09 /2021 at 07:30 am. To purchasing, please visit the following link:

<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om/>

All companies that are bidding must provide a bank guarantee or a certified cheque from a bank operating in the Sultanate for at least (1%) of the tender value on behalf of His Excellency Dr. / Chairman of the Internal Tender Committee.

Preference will be given to companies' or small and medium enterprises registered with the General Authority for the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) that includes the largest proportion of its tender Omanization.

Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest or any other tender.
Chairman of tender committee
Ministry of Higher Education Research & Innovation



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NEW AGE BANKING SUMMIT OMAN

Summit discusses challenges and new innovative solutions in banking sector

MUSCAT: The reality and challenges of the banking sector in the Sultanate, as well as the latest trends and developments in the industry was discussed at the 'New Age Banking Summit Oman' discussed.

The opening ceremony was sponsored by Taher Salem Al Omari, CEO of the Central Bank of Oman (CBO), who talked about the success of the bank's digital transformation, the continuity of banking work and expanding the use of digital channels such as the experience of 'remote working' during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In his speech, he reviewed the challenges that paved the way for new and innovative opportuni-



ties and solutions for the banking work, in addition to the steps taken in a bid to overcome challenges during the pandemic.

The conference included several working papers on changing the landscape of financial services due to rapidly altering market dynam-

ics, driving digital transformation to meet evolving customer needs, business sustainability and financial inclusion, developing an ecosystem of partnerships for collaboration between banks and fintech, and issuing regulatory reforms for survival and market competitiveness.

The summit also included working papers under the titles 'HPC and AI as a Service for Banking and Fintech,' 'Rethinking the Future of Islamic Banking,' 'Digitisation of Payments in Oman,' 'Accelerating Intelligent Automation in Financial Services,' and 'Business Payments Made Easy Solutions.'

The conference included a panel discussion on driving innovation and transformation in financial services.

Meanwhile, a number of banking institutions in the Sultanate were honoured on the sidelines of the conference. This honouring comes in recognition for their sincere work and electronic services provided to the public. -OMA

QUAD LEADERS SUMMIT

Visit to the US an occasion to strengthen global strategic ties: India's Prime Minister

NEW DELHI: Ahead of leaving for the US to participate in Quad Leaders' Summit, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said his visit will be an occasion to strengthen the strategic partnership with the United States, Japan and Australia.

"I will be visiting the USA from September 22 to September 25, 2021, at the invitation of President Joe Biden of the United States of America. During my visit, I will review the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership with President Biden and exchange views on regional and global issues of mutual interest," Prime Minister said in his Departure Statement ahead of his visit to the US.

"I am also looking forward to meeting Vice President Kamala Harris to explore opportunities for cooperation between our two nations particularly in the area of science and technology," he added.

Prime Minister Modi also said he will participate in the first in-person Quad Leaders' Summit along with President Biden, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga.

"I will also meet Prime Minister Morrison of Australia and Prime Minister Suga of Japan to take stock of the strong bilateral



relations with their respective countries and continue our useful exchanges on regional and global issues," said the PM.

Global challenges

The Prime Minister will conclude his visit with an Address at the United Nations General Assembly focusing on the pressing global challenges including the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to combat terrorism, climate change and other important issues.

Modi said the summit provides an opportunity to take stock of the outcomes of the virtual summit in March this year and identify priorities for future engagements based

on the shared vision for the Indo-Pacific region.

Global Strategic Partnership

"My visit to the US would be an occasion to strengthen the Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership with the USA, consolidate relations with our strategic partners - Japan and Australia - and to take forward our collaboration on important global issues," he emphasised.

Prime Minister Modi will be leaving for his three-day visit to the US on Wednesday. The main elements of his visit are bilateral meetings with the US leadership, participation in the Quad Lead-

ers' Summit, address at the UN General Assembly and business interactions. PM Modi will be accompanied by a high-level delegation including the External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval.

Quad is a partnership among four like-minded countries (India, US, Japan and Australia), in the pursuit of common interests in striving for a free open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.

Notably, this will be the Prime Minister's first visit abroad, beyond the neighbourhood, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. He had made a brief visit to Bangladesh in March this year. ANI



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



Founder: Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali
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CHALLENGES



ROLE APPRECIATED: Eng. Redha Juma Al Saleh, OCCI Chairman welcomed the owners of private health institutions and hailed their role in supporting the health sector particularly amid the implications of COVID-19. -OMA

OCCI bid to tackle private healthcare sector challenges

MUSCAT: Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) on Wednesday held a meeting with owners of some private institutions operating in the health sector.

The meeting aimed at discussing the challenges facing these institutions, as part of the OCCI's efforts exerted to ease the difficulties faced by these private institutions and find solutions to enable them adapt with the economic conditions and the current health situation.

At the beginning of the meeting, Eng. Redha Juma Al Saleh, OCCI Chairman welcomed the owners of private health institutions and hailed their role in supporting the health sector particularly amid the implications of COVID-19.

He commended the contributions of these institutions to providing treatment and preventive services, in collaboration with

the public health sector.

He said: "This meeting was held with a view to promoting the partnership of the private health sector and enhancing its role in supporting the health sector in the Sultanate."

Suggestions

"At the OCCI, we strive to set visions and suggestions for developing the economic sectors including the private health sector. These private medical and health institutions play a significantly important role in providing treatment and taking them to the levels we aspire to."

The OCCI's Chairman explained that the government supports national and foreign investments in the health sector as part of its efforts exerted to encourage investments in various economic sector. He stressed that the investment in this field is promising and bodes well. -OMA

BODY IDENTIFIED

Coroner identifies Gabby Petito's body, rules death a homicide

WASHINGTON: A body found at a national park in Wyoming has been identified by US authorities as Gabrielle "Gabby" Petito, a 22-year-old traveller who went missing on a road trip with her fiancé, the FBI said on Tuesday. Her death has been ruled a homicide.

"Teton County Coroner Dr. Brent Blue confirmed the remains are those of Gabrielle Venora Pe-

tito, date of birth March 19, 1999," the Denver office of the FBI said in a written statement. The remains were found on Sunday near a camping area along the border of Grand Teton National Park.

Initial determination

"Coroner Blue's initial determination for the manner of death is homicide. The cause of death

remains pending final autopsy results," the FBI said. Petito's family reported her missing on September 11, 10 days after her fiancé, Brian Laundrie, 23, had returned from a cross-country trip without her. A search is currently underway for Laundrie, who has been named a person of interest in the case.

Investigators continued their

search of a 24,000-acre (9,700-hectare) swampy Florida preserve area near Laundrie's home in North Port, Florida. Helicopters, drones, dogs and officers in all-terrain vehicles were deployed in the search.

The FBI also removed several boxes and a car from Laundrie's parents' home, where the couple had been living before the

road trip.

Petito and Laundrie set out on a road trip to visit several western US national parks in July. The couple documented their journey on social media, saying they intended to reach the western state of Oregon by October.

Petito's last known contact with her family was in late August, with the couple's next stop believed to

be the Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming.

She was never heard from again. Laundrie then drove the van they were traveling in to his family's home in Florida on September 1 — without Petito. While her family filed a missing person's report 10 days later, Laundrie has since disappeared. His family says they have not seen him in days. DW

CIVIL LAWSUIT SETTLED

UK family settles suit with US diplomat's wife over teen's death

LONDON: The parents of 19-year-old British motorcyclist Harry Dunn said on Tuesday that they have resolved a civil lawsuit with their son's accused killer.

Dunn was killed while riding his motorcycle near a US military base in central England in August 2019. He reportedly crashed into a car which was driving on the wrong side of the road.

The driver of the vehicle, Anne Sacoolas, was the wife of a US intelligence officer working at the nearby military base. She then fled the UK after the US government invoked diplomatic immunity. The Dunn family had filed the lawsuit in the US state of Virginia.

Lawyer tight-lipped about settlement

A spokesperson for Dunn's parents said an agreement had been "reached successfully between the parties." He did not provide any details about the deal. "It is never easy mounting a legal battle for justice abroad, let alone in the USA, but the family's courage and determination to see this through has been incredible," Dunn family spokesperson Radd Seiger said.



Sacoolas refuses to go back to UK

Although the civil claim against Sacoolas has been resolved, the UK government has filed criminal charges against her.

"The family feel they can now turn their attention to the criminal case and the long-awaited inquest into Harry's death, which will follow the criminal case," Seiger said. An attorney representing Sacoolas said in 2020 that she will not return to the UK to face jail "for a terrible and unintentional accident." Dunn's mother has said Sacoolas must face the UK justice system.

Virtual trial?

The case has caused a diplomatic rift between the US and UK, as American officials have refused to extradite Sacoolas. UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss reportedly mentioned the case during a meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Monday. President Joe Biden signaled that he would be in favor of a virtual trial for Sacoolas. Former President Donald Trump invited Dunn's family to the White House in October 2019, where he reportedly promised them financial compensation. Dunn's parents refused the offer. DW

ADVENTURE CALLS

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Biden, Johnson stress action on climate change, cooperation in Afghanistan

Johnson discussed the new trilateral partnership among the US, Australia and the UK to help Australia acquire nuclear-powered submarines

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Tuesday stressed upon climate change and agreed to continue cooperation in Afghanistan and the Indo-Pacific in Oval Office meeting on the sidelines of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly meeting.

“Earlier today I addressed the



MEETING HELD: Johnson thanked President Biden for America’s cooperation on a number of fronts including lifting a ban on British beef, travel restrictions and most importantly climate change.

United Nations General Assembly and I made clear the climate has to be the core area of action for all of us, and as we look ahead to the

UK hosted COP26, which I’m really anxious to attend in Glasgow in November,” Biden said. “Our economies have to work together,

including through our build back better world initiative that we launched in Cardiff Bay, and today we’re going to discuss the next

steps on all of this and as well as how the US and UK can continue our cooperation in Afghanistan and the Indo-Pacific and around the world and I want to thank you again, Boris, for making the effort to be here,” he added.

Johnson thanked President Biden for America’s cooperation on a number of fronts including lifting a ban on British beef, travel restrictions and most importantly climate change, reported CNN.

“I think the most important thing today has been your speech Joe to UNGA where you made a commitment on supporting the world to adapt to climate change, doubling the American commitment,” Johnson said, calling it fantastic to see the US stepping up and leading on the issue.

Johnson also discussed the new trilateral partnership among the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom to help Australia acquire nuclear-powered submarines, saying it “has great potential to benefit the whole of the world with security.”

Asked if Britain was still at “the back of the queue” for a free trade

deal, the President said he would talk about trade with Johnson today and they will “have to work that through.” Biden said he does feel very strongly about the Irish Accords and keeping those in place amid Brexit.

“We spent an enormous amount of time and effort in the United States. It was a major bipartisan effort made and I would not at all like to see, nor I might add would many of my Republican colleagues, like to see a change in the Irish Accords, the end result having a closed border again,” Biden said, drawing an agreement from Johnson.

Biden also briefly weighed in on the possible extradition of Anne Sacoolas, the US woman accused of killing 19-year-old Harry Dunn in August 2019 while she was driving on the wrong side of the road in England, saying the case is being worked on and he believes there had been a civil settlement reached. He said he doesn’t know the status of the case right now but he would follow up, reported CNN. -ANI

VOLCANIC ERUPTION

Effects of La Palma island volcanic eruption could last for months, say experts



MADRID: The volcanic eruption on the Spanish island of La Palma and its aftermath could last up to 84 days, experts said on Wednesday.

The Canary Island Volcanology Institute (INVOLCAN) said it analysed similar historical eruptions on the Canary Islands archipelago to reach the figure.

The volcano erupted on Sunday after a week of seismic activity that progressed to a 3.8 magnitude quake.

Estimating the end of the eruption

INVOLCAN looked at data from past eruptions in the region that, like the latest eruption, were fol-

lowed by heavy lava flows and lasting seismic activity.

While 84 days was the maximum, the institute suggested a minimum of 24 days and an average of 55 days until the eruption stops.

The latest on the eruption

Experts at the Volcanology Institute reported an increase in smaller eruptions on Tuesday night that saw rocks and cinders thrown high into the air.

The lava now covers 154 hectares and it continues to flow towards the sea. Some 1,000 people were evacuated late Tuesday from the coastal neighborhood of Todoque. The total number of people evacuated now stands at

around 6,000. At least 200 homes have been completely destroyed and many more have been severely damaged.

Authorities say that dangers still lie ahead for residents, including earthquakes, lava flows, toxic gases, volcanic ash and acid rain.

There are particular concerns that the meeting of the lava with a body of water could cause explosions and produce clouds of toxic gas.

The volcano has also been spewing out between 8,000 and 10,500 tons of sulfur dioxide every day, the Volcanology Institute said. The gas is harmful to ecosystems and can cause respiratory problems in humans. -ANI

COVID VACCINE

UK government approves Covishield as approved vaccine in revised travel advisory

LONDON: United Kingdom government on Wednesday in its revised travel advisory said that Covishield is qualified as an approved vaccine.

Earlier, the UK government did not accept people vaccinated with Covishield and considered them as unvaccinated. The need for them to go through 10-day quarantine was criticised in India. The new travel advisory by the UK stated that the four listed vaccines, such as AstraZeneca Covishield, AstraZeneca Vaxzevria and Moderna Takeda, qualify as approved vaccines.



The advisory also said that the individual must have had a complete course of an approved vaccine of at least 14 days before the individual arrives in England.

The advisory also approves individuals with a full course of the Oxford/AstraZeneca, Pfizer BioNTech, Moderna or Janssen vaccines from a relevant public health body in Australia, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Bahrain, Brunei, Canada, Dominica, Israel, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, New Zealand, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea or Taiwan. -ANI

COVAX

WHO DG thanks India for resumption of COVID vaccine supply from October

GENEVA: Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on Wednesday extended gratitude to India for resuming crucial COVID vaccine shipments to COVAX from October.

Ghebreyesus also said that the move will help WHO to reach its goal of 40 per cent vaccination in all countries by the end of the year. “Thank you Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya for announcing India will resume crucial COVID-19 vaccine shipments to COVAX in October. This is an important development in support of reaching the 40 per cent vaccination target in all countries by the end of the year. #VaccinEquity,” Ghebreyesus said in a tweet.

The remark of WHO’s Director-General came after Union Minister of Health and Fam-



ily Welfare Mansukh Mandaviya announced that in the fourth quarter of 2021, the government of India will resume ‘Vaccine Maitri’, an initiative to provide COVID vaccines to countries around the world and also fulfil its responsibility under COVAX.

Mandaviya also announced that the Indian government is expecting more than 30 crore doses from vaccine manufacturers in

the month of October.

Meanwhile, with the administration of 37,78,296 vaccine doses in the last 24 hours, India’s COVID-19 vaccination coverage surpassed the landmark figure of 80 crores (80,85,68,144) as per provisional reports till 7 am on Wednesday.

This was achieved through 79,78,302 sessions, the Indian Ministry of Health said. -ANI

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GT OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

Monza GT Open challenge awaits Al-Zubair and Soucek

MONZA: Al-Faisal Al-Zubair and Andy Soucek head to the legendary Italian circuit of Monza this weekend to continue their challenge for honours in the 2021 International GT Open Championship.

Soucek currently holds second place in the championship standings, 24 points behind the leading duo of Michele Beretta and Frederick Schandorff in their Vincenzo Sospiri Racing Lamborghini.

Belgium's Baptiste Moulin and Japanese team-mate Yuki Nemoto are third and Al-Zubair lies fourth after missing one race in the Lechner Racing Team's Porsche 911 GT3 R because of illness.

Al-Zubair said: "I am really looking forward to Monza. It is a track that I love from the past and my days in the Porsche Super Cup. It is a track that I have



GT OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP: Belgium's Baptiste Moulin and Japanese team-mate Yuki Nemoto are third and Al-Zubair lies fourth after missing one race in the Lechner Racing Team's Porsche 911 GT3 R.

performed strongly at and I hope to keep the form for this year and my first appearance there in the endurance series.

"The team has been on great form. Obviously we had some bad luck in Austria. But the important thing was that Andy and myself kept up a good pace throughout and the car was running great. If that continues on the same path, and with a bit of luck, hopefully we can get back to the podium with race wins.

"These are the last two races of this season for us. It will be difficult because there are four or five Pro car guest entries that will be added this weekend. I am confident in myself and Andy and am looking forward to getting back on track."

Teams will be permitted up to three free practice sessions on the

Italian circuit with the opening 40-minute stint getting underway at 17.10hrs on Thursday (September 23rd) afternoon.

Sessions two and three start at 11.00hrs and 15.10hrs respectively on Friday and the first 30-minute qualifying session fires into life at 10.55hrs on Saturday. This precedes the opening 70-minute race, starting with a rolling start at 16.55hrs.

The International GT Open series is sharing the race meeting with MAXX Formula, TCR Europe, Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland, Euroformula Open and the French F4 race series'.

Second qualifying for GT Open teams takes centre stage from 09.00hrs on Sunday morning and the second one-hour race starts at 14.30hrs.

MCC announces amendment to Laws of the Game

These changes have been approved by the MCC Committee, following initial discussion by the club's specialist Laws sub-committee

LONDON: The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) on Wednesday announced amendments to the laws of the game to use the gender-neutral term 'batter' and 'batters' rather than 'batsman' or 'batsmen'.

These changes have been approved by the MCC Committee, following initial discussion by the club's specialist Laws sub-committee. "MCC believes that the use of gender-neutral terminology helps reinforce cricket's status as an inclusive game for all. The amendments are a natural evolution from work already undertaken in this area as well as an essential part of MCC's global responsibility to the sport," read an official statement.

The changes are effective immediately and updates have been made to the Laws of Cricket published at lords.org/laws. A number of Governing Bodies and media organisations are already using the term "batter" in their Playing Conditions and reporting. The MCC expects and encourages



LAWS OF THE GAME: The changes are effective immediately and updates have been made to the Laws of Cricket published at lords.org/laws.

others to adopt the updated terminology following Wednesday's announcement of the change to the Laws.

At the time of the last redraft in 2017, it was agreed, following consultation with the International Cricket Council (ICC) and key figures within women's cricket, that the terminology would remain as "batsman" and "batsmen" within the Laws of the game.

The changes announced reflect the wider usage of the terms "batter" and "batters" which has occurred in cricketing circles in the intervening period. The move to "batter" is a natural progression,

aligning with the terms of bowlers and fielders that already sit within the Laws.

Women's cricket has enjoyed unprecedented growth at all levels around the world in the same period. England's victory over India in the 2017 World Cup Final took place in front of a capacity crowd at Lord's. A record international crowd saw Australia defeat India in the T20 World Cup Final in Melbourne three years later and earlier this year, Lord's broke the record for a domestic women's match as 17,116 watched Oval Invincibles defeat Southern Brave.

Jamie Cox, Assistant Secretary (Cricket and Operations) at MCC said: "MCC believes in cricket being a game for all and this move recognises the changing landscape of the game in modern times."

"Use of the term "batter" is a natural evolution in our shared cricketing language and the terminology has already been adopted by many of those involved in the sport. It is the right time for this adjustment to be recognised formally and we are delighted, as the Guardians of the Laws, to announce these changes today," he added. **ANI**

LA LIGA



Suarez brace lifts Atletico back to top of La Liga

MADRID: Luis Suarez scored two headers in the last 12 minutes to give Atletico Madrid a 2-1 win away to Getafe and take them momentarily to the top of La Liga.

The Uruguayan equalized for his side, who had struggled to create chances against bottom of the table Getafe, with a looping header from Mario Hermoso's 78th-minute cross and then won the game in the first minute of injury time after a looped cross from the right-wing.

Although Atletico coach Diego Simeone made several changes to the side that drew at home to Athletic Club Bilbao on Saturday with Luis Suarez, Hector Herrera and Yannick Carrasco back in the starting 11, Atletico struggled to trouble Getafe in the first half.

The visitors had more of the ball but their own chance was a double occasion that saw David Soria save well from Suarez before Carrasco's effort from the rebound was deflected over.

Getafe took the lead after a rare error from Jan Oblak, who failed to collect a high ball, which was clipped back into the area for Stefan Mitrovic to head against the post, with the ball bouncing into

the net off the Atletico keeper.

Suarez headed against the bar in the 68th minute and Atletico's task was made easier soon after when Getafe midfielder Carlos Cunha was sent off for a bad challenge on Atletico substitute Matheus Cunha.

Getafe failed to heed the warnings and Suarez took advantage of some poor defending in the closing minutes to net his two goals, which lift Atletico above Real Madrid (who face Mallorca on Wednesday) while keeping the home side in the relegation zone with six defeats from their first six games of the season.

Elsewhere on Tuesday, Radamel Falcao's 96th-minute header gave Rayo Vallecano a surprise 2-1 win away to Athletic Club Bilbao, who had been unbeaten going into the game.

Alvaro Garcia put Rayo ahead in the fifth minute and Athletic equalized when Pathe Ciss deflected Iker Muniain's free-kick into his own net, but the Colombian striker decided the game for the visitors at the death. Goals from Iago Aspas and Brais Mendez gave Celta Vigo their first win of the season as they triumphed 2-0 away to Levante. **Xinhua**

WORLD CUP

Rio in talks to host FIFA Club World Cup, says mayor

RIO DE JANEIRO: Rio de Janeiro mayor Eduardo Paes confirmed on Tuesday that the Brazilian city has expressed formal interest in hosting this year's FIFA Club World Cup.

In a video broadcast live on social media, Paes said he decided to act after Japan gave up its right to stage the tournament because of coronavirus concerns.

"We're working on it. It's Rio's wish. I'm talking to the CBF (Brazilian Football Confederation) and with other officials to see what we can do," Paes said.

"[We] have some connections, contacts with FIFA. It's not simple. It seems that there is a predilection to stage the final in Asia. It must have something to do with private sponsors. I'm not an expert on the subject but we are trying to make it happen."

The annual tournament is this

year scheduled to run from December 9 to December 19. Last week, Rio's finance and planning secretary Pedro Paulo said matches could be played at both the Maracana and Olympic stadiums.

Al-Ahly, Chelsea and Auckland City have already qualified for this year's Club World Cup as the champions of Africa, Europe and Oceania, respectively.

The competition will also feature the winners of this year's continental club tournaments in Asia, South America and North and Central America and the Caribbean, as well as the reigning champions of the host nation's top league.

The only time the tournament has been held in Rio was the inaugural edition in 2000, when Corinthians beat domestic rivals Vasco da Gama on penalties at the Maracana. **Xinhua**

FOOTBALL

Pressure on Koeman as Barca visit Cadiz

MADRID: FC Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman's job is under threat if his side fails to win away to Cadiz on Thursday night.

Barca's 1-1 draw at home to Granada on Monday, in which only a late header by defender Ronald Araujo saved a point for Koeman's side, had further raised the pressure on the coach in the wake of the 3-0 defeat at home to Bayern Munich the previous week.

But more than anything, it was the performance that was so worrying for Barca, with Koeman bringing defender Gerard Pique on for the last 15 minutes to play as a target man alongside Luuk de Jong.

The sight of Barca simply playing high balls into their rivals' penalty area was painful for fans used to seeing their team pass their way through the opposition midfield and defense, and a measure of their disillusionment with the club is the fact that only 27,000 out of a permitted 40,000 attended the game.

Koeman has the excuse of the loss of Lionel Messi, Antoine Griezmann and other squad players



over the summer, and in an interview with Dutch football magazine Voetball International on Tuesday, he explained that Messi had helped "disguise" the club's shortcomings in recent years.

"It is this kind of situation that brings the best out of me and my team," added the coach.

Koeman will have to face the same problems as on Monday in Cadiz, with a long injury list limit-

ing his options. Ansu Fati, Sergio Aguero, Ousmane Dembele, Jordi Alba and Pedri are all still out through injury, while teenage defender Alejandro Balde was forced out of his debut on Monday with a back problem.

That means Sergino Dest will have to play at left-back with Oscar Mingueza on the right, with Pique coming back into central defense.

17-year-old Gavi could be given a start after supplying the pass for Araujo's equalizer on Monday, and the youngster has been one of the bright spots for Barca this season, although it seems unlikely that Koeman will turn to Riqui Puig, who looks to have fallen even further down the pecking order at the club.

Cadiz beat Barca in their home ground last season, and Alvaro Cervera's side is capable of producing the sort of organized defensive display that gave Barca so many problems on Monday. Unless the Blaugrana are able to deal that with better than they did against Granada, it could be Koeman's swansong. **Xinhua**

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by November 2021 reaching \$73.47, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by 48 cents from the price of Tuesday, which was at \$72.99. - **ONA**

MARKET BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 3,917.21 points, down 0.10 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.73 per cent at 579.62 points. Renaissance Services was the top gainer, up by 6.64 per cent. While A'Saffa Foods, down 4.76 per cent, was the top loser.

Raysut Cement's \$30mn Duqm plant to go on stream in 2021 fourth quarter

Duqm plant will add another 1mn tonnes to Raysut Cement's capacity and helping the company cater to Oman and regional markets

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Raysut Cement Company (RCC), Oman's largest cement manufacturer with global footprints said that its \$30 million Duqm grinding unit in Oman to go on stream in fourth quarter of

2021. "Duqm plant will add another 1 million tonnes to our capacity, helping us cater to Oman and other regional markets with increased supplies, where construction activity is poised to pick up in post-pandemic resurgence," said Joey Ghose, Group CEO of RCC.

The Duqm plant will raise RCC's annual group output to 74 million tonnes, and help the Muscat Stock Exchange-listed company raise output to 10 million tonnes by 2022.

Yousef Ahmed Alawi Alibrahim, Chief of Support Services and Business Development, RCC, said the Duqm grinding unit's construction has been progressing despite the COVID-19 pandemic situation, thanks to the prudent safety and health protocols in place. "This has been a challenging year for manufacturing industries in general, but RCC has been able to negotiate the hurdles with effective planning focusing on health and safety," he said.

The Duqm plant is also a milestone project for RCC to scale up its output to 22 million tonnes shortly.

Yousef Alibrahim, who has been with Raysut since 2004, said RCC's capacity expansion will help create employment opportunities for Omani nationals, leading to social and economic progress. He joined Raysut Cement Company as an accountant, growing up the ranks as head of the Internal Audit to Advisor to Support Services, before his current role of Chief of Support Services and Business Development.

As part of developing the Duqm plant, RCC had signed a land lease and Port of Terminal services

agreement with Port of Duqm Company. The new grinding unit will also complement RCC's expansion and new investments and acquisitions in Oman, Asia and East Africa.

Last year, RCC had acquired Sohar Cement Company in Oman at \$60 million. It is also developing a new greenfield 1.2 million tonnes per annum cement plant near Tbilisi, Georgia, at an investment of \$200 million. A majority takeover of LafargeHolcim's cement terminal at Thilafushi Islands in the Maldives and an investment of \$40 million in a grinding unit in Berbera, Somaliland, are other RCC projects.



Yousef Ahmed Alawi Alibrahim, Chief of Support Services and Business Development

AGREEMENTS



PDO works with contractors to employ more than 100 Omanis

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) has signed agreements with seven contractors to upskill and employ more than 100 Omanis in a variety of positions within the engineering and IT disciplines.

The Memorandums of Understanding (MOCs) were signed at the Oman In-Country Value Forum held under the auspices of Abdulsalam Mohammed Al Mursidi, President of the Oman Investment Authority.

Under the terms of the agreements, PDO will fund the training of the participants who will then secure work with Al Baraka Oilfield Services (ABOS), KCA Deutag (KCAD), Arabian Industry Projects (AIP), Data Boat (DB), Data Migration and Services (Rihah), and PhazeTechnologies (PT) upon the successful completion of their one-year training programme. PDO also signed a MOC with the Oman Society of Petro-

leum Services (Opal) to support in executing the training programme.

The MOCs signed with AIP, ABOS, and KCAD are part of PDO's efforts to upskill Omani electricians and mechanics by equipping them with the skills required to become licensed chief electricians and mechanics.

The same programme mandates that for every upskilled electrician or mechanic, a fresh graduate should be employed to fill the vacant entry-level position. This is part of a bigger effort to increase the Omanisation percentage within this field.

Additionally, the MOCs signed with AIP and Opal aim to upskill light vehicle drivers to take up new professions to improve their career prospects and increase their productivity, while the agreements signed with DB, Rihah and PT aim to train and develop 14 women holding Bachelors' degree in majors related to hi-tech fields such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Front-end Engineering,

MOU

Bank Nizwa and AAOIFI sign pact for Islamic finance development in Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Bank Nizwa signed a comprehensive MoU with the top Islamic Finance Standard Setting Body, AAOIFI, Bahrain, in a virtual signing ceremony recently. Bank Nizwa, Head Office, Muscat, Oman.

This makes Bank Nizwa the only bank in the Sultanate and internationally to carry such a wide-ranging relationship with AAOIFI. The association, covering mutual benefits, is set for joint development of Islamic banking and finance in the Sultanate and beyond. Among the key features include:

Bank Nizwa becoming AAOIFI's official candidate registration and exam centre for AAOIFI's Sharia (CSAA) and Accounting (CIPA) certifications. Omanis who plan to register and sit for the said prestigious programs can now come to Bank Nizwa, Head office to fulfil the same. Exclusive staff discounts for Bank Nizwa on all AAOIFI lead initiatives and special subsidies/scholarships of over 70 per cent the fee for AAOIFI, CIPA and CSAA programmes, with complementary training and mentoring for staff. The customised staff development facility for Bank Nizwa. Bank's select staff to be annually deputed for a short period in AAOIFI as visiting fellows.

Internship for select CIPA and CSAA qualified Omanis in Bank Nizwa. Joint R&D support and assistance in other technical, Sharia, Branding, Fintech, Product Development, and other similar solutions that relate to the mutual development of Islamic banking and finance and much more.

It is noteworthy that Oman follows AAOIFI standards and



PARTNERSHIP: Bank Nizwa becomes the only bank in the Sultanate and internationally to carry such a wide-ranging relationship with AAOIFI. - Supplied picture

fully adopts AAOIFI accounting standards while being in line with AAOIFI Sharia standards.

Khaled Al Kayed, the CEO of Bank Nizwa on the signing ceremony of the milestone agreement stated, "We at bank Nizwa feel proud and pledge our full support to AAOIFI. We shall aim to give our best to fully materialise the potential of this grand and pioneering association, assuring AAOIFI of brotherly partnership for meeting set objectives of Islamic Finance in Oman. AAOIFI carries the backbone status for the industry and to have partnered with them comprehensively, speaks volumes of the commitment of Bank Nizwa in 'contributing through synergy' for achieving national aims and vision 2040. This association is set

to provide a much refined, well-entranced and active modern Islamic financial sector in Oman via Bank Nizwa. No doubt this partnership with AAOIFI will facilitate in a big way to meet desired ends."

Omar Mustafa Ansari, the Secretary-General of AAOIFI, on the occasion expressed his utmost gratitude for Bank Nizwa and its leadership, congratulating the bank on the role and performance for Islamic Banking and Finance in Oman. "Bank Nizwa is fast becoming Oman's brand of Islamic Finance and even the region is becoming familiar with the success story and brand of Bank Nizwa. AAOIFI feels proud to partner with such a prestigious entity that epitomises the rapid success of Islamic finance in Oman. No

doubt the future looks bright with Bank Nizwa setting its standards high, both in numbers and otherwise. We are elated to provide our full support to such a progressive bank while being certain that we are partnering with an entity that is going to further strengthen its leadership in Islamic finance. The first of its kind comprehensive association spells a new chapter of bonding between the two organisations and we look forward to working together with Bank Nizwa in every way for its own and industry's development."

The virtual ceremony was witnessed by Bank Nizwa's core management members and key representatives from AAOIFI, Bahrain, alongside the leadership of both entities.

CLOUD SERVICES

BIOS Middle East expands with new cloud footprint in Muscat

DUBAI: BIOS Middle East announced it has established a new cloud footprint in Muscat, to serve customers in Oman.

In addition to serving customers in Oman, the cloud footprint will also provide customers in surrounding GCC countries such as Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar with the ability to do out of the country in region disaster recovery as a service.

Telecommunications

"As well as having strong internal demand for cloud services that we are keen to serve, Oman has long been considered the Switzerland of the Middle East when it comes to telecommunications, making it an excellent location for in-region out of country disaster recovery for companies around the Gulf," said Adam Wolf, Technical Director, BIOS Middle East.

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MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Renaissance Services was the top gainer, up by 6.64 per cent, while A'Saffa Foods, down 4.76 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 3,917.21 points, down 0.10 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.73 per cent at 579.62 points. Renaissance Services was the top gainer, up by 6.64 per cent, while A'Saffa Foods, down 4.76 per cent, was the top loser.

Shares of Bank Dhofar was the most active in terms of the number of shares traded while Bank Muscat was the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 423 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR2.7 million, with more than 8.5 million shares changing hands. Out of 44 traded securities, 12 advanced, 28 declined and 16 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net

buyers for OMR145K while local investors were net sellers for OMR94,000 followed by foreign investors for OMR51,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 6,232 points, down 0.35 per cent. Prices Global Investment Holding, Oman & Qatar Insurance, United Finance, Muscat Finance and Madina Takaful were up 3.17 per cent, 2.07 per cent, 1.82 per cent, 1.72 per cent and 0.98 per cent respectively. HSBC Bank Oman, Oman & Emirates Holding, Sohar International Bank and National Bank Oman were down 2.17 per cent, 1.35 per cent, 1.09 per cent, and 0.54 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,990.95 points, up 0.34 per cent. Services Index was down by 0.48 per cent before closing at 1,680.62 points. — **United Securities**

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index.....	High.....	Low.....	Value.....	Prev. Value.....	Diff.....	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX.....	3,928.17	3,917.17	3,917.21	3,920.94	-3.73	-0.10
FINANCIAL INDEX.....	6,254.99	6,232.86	6,232.86	6,254.99	-22.13	-0.35
Industry Index.....	6,010.06	5,988.65	5,990.96	5,988.65	2.30	0.04
Services Index.....	1,682.56	1,678.81	1,682.16	1,667.11	15.05	0.90
MSX Shariah Index.....	585.73	579.02	579.62	583.91	-4.29	-0.73
MSX TR INDEX.....	4,721.26	4,708.04	4,708.08	4,712.56	-4.48	-0.10

Trading Summary

Volume.....	Turnover.....	Trades.....	Market Cap.....	Up.....	Down.....	Equal.....	Sec. Traded
8,505,825	2,762,278	423	21,947,891,305	12	9	23	44

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PD	LAST BD	LAST OFFER	PDA VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET															
OM0000003224 RENAISSANCE SER.	800,000	360,000	5	0.450	0.450	0.450	0.450	0.422	0.028	6.635	0.450	0.422	0.444	0.100	106,384,500
OM0000005005 ALMAHA CERAMICS	1940,254	969,369	85	0.486	0.500	0.486	0.500	0.482	0.018	3.734	0.500	0.480	0.500	0.100	27,500,000
OM0000001590 MUSCAT FINANCE	440,635	25,918	22	0.058	0.060	0.058	0.059	0.058	0.001	1.724	0.060	0.058	0.060	0.100	18,121,633
OM0000001160 NATIONAL GAS	62,703	8,791	6	0.141	0.141	0.140	0.140	0.138	0.002	1.449	0.140	0.140	0.140	0.100	11,900,000
OM0000001772 ALANWAR INVESTMENT	10,000	1,130	1	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.112	0.001	0.893	0.113	0.110	0.114	0.100	22,800,000
OM0000001749 OMAN CEMENT	110,000	24,750	3	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.224	0.001	0.446	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.100	74,446,390
OM0000001525 OMAN INVEST & FIN.	114,790	15,884	12	0.140	0.140	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.000	0.000	0.138	0.139	0.145	0.100	32,706,000
OM0000001533 OMINVEST	2,015	621	1	0.308	0.308	0.308	0.310	0.310	0.000	0.000	0.308	0.310	0.314	0.100	250,409,422
OM0000002176 JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	2,000	740	1	0.370	0.370	0.370	0.378	0.378	0.000	0.000	0.370	0.370	0.388	0.100	47,211,429
OM0000002200 AHJI BANK	40,500	4,374	5	0.108	0.108	0.108	0.108	0.108	0.000	0.000	0.108	0.107	0.108	0.100	210,563,006
OM0000002226 ALJAZEERA SERVICES	97,671	37,716	16	0.388	0.388	0.386	0.386	0.386	0.000	0.000	0.386	0.386	0.386	0.100	23,624,849
OM0000002796 BANK MUSCAT	312,750	138,001	12	0.440	0.444	0.440	0.442	0.442	0.000	0.000	0.440	0.438	0.440	0.100	1,579,917,858
OM0000003026 OMAN TELECOM	292,245	217,194	21	0.752	0.752	0.740	0.744	0.744	0.000	0.000	0.744	0.744	0.748	0.100	558,000,000
OM0000003968 OOREDOO	159,253	60,082	5	0.378	0.380	0.376	0.378	0.378	0.000	0.000	0.380	0.380	0.380	0.100	246,056,919
OM0000003398 SOHAR INT BANK	239,209	21,768	3	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.092	-0.001	-1.087	0.091	0.091	0.093	0.100	272,095,668
OM0000002168 AL ANWAR CERAMIC	102,257	43,128	14	0.430	0.430	0.420	0.422	0.430	-0.008	-1.860	0.422	0.422	0.430	0.100	92,840,000
OM0000001400 OMAN FLOUR MILLS	458,635	352,993	36	0.780	0.788	0.780	0.788	0.784	-0.016	-2.041	0.780	0.712	0.760	0.100	120,960,000
Total	17	5,184,917	2,282,458	248											
Parallel Market															
OM0000003125 GLOBAL INV. H.	247,052	15,958	14	0.065	0.065	0.064	0.065	0.063	0.002	3.175	0.065	0.063	0.065	0.100	13,000,000
OM0000005963 PHOENIX POWER	268,500	12,351	6	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.045	0.001	2.222	0.046	0.045	0.046	0.100	67,279,667
OM0000006879 OMAN QATAR INSUR.	56,200	8,318	1	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.145	0.003	2.069	0.148	0.140	0.150	0.100	14,800,000
OM0000002374 UNITED FINANCE	20,000	1,120	1	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.055	0.001	1.818	0.056	0.056	0.057	0.100	19,552,067
OM0000004768 MADINA TAKAFUL	63,786	6,572	10	0.103	0.104	0.103	0.103	0.102	0.001	0.980	0.104	0.103	0.104	0.100	18,025,000
OM0000001319 ALUMINIUM PROD.	194,179	27,285	19	0.140	0.145	0.140	0.141	0.140	0.001	0.714	0.141	0.141	0.143	0.100	4,738,574
OM0000001152 OMAN NAT. ENG.	101,445	9,126	18	0.089	0.091	0.089	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.090	0.092	0.092	0.100	11,700,000
OM0000001301 DHOFAR CATTLE	4,900	392	1	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.085	0.085	0.000	0.000	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.100	6,872,250
OM0000001962 AL MADINA INV.	406	25	1	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.061	0.061	0.000	0.000	0.062	0.060	0.062	0.100	4,270,000
OM0000002287 GULF MUSHROOM P.	259	56	1	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.239	0.239	0.000	0.000	0.216	0.216	0.251	0.100	9,943,660
OM0000003281 TANGER FINANCE	508,696	38,220	40	0.075	0.075	0.074	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.074	0.074	0.075	0.100	19,018,250
OM0000003521 GALFAR ENGINEER	308,100	23,724	21	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.000	0.000	0.077	0.076	0.078	0.100	15,629,956
OM0000003711 SOHAR POWER	470	20	1	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.044	0.044	0.000	0.000	0.043	0.043	0.000	0.100	9,724,440
OM0000004420 BANK NIZWA	1,111	106	2	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.000	0.000	0.095	0.094	0.096	0.100	217,500,000
OM0000004669 SHARQIYAH DESALIN.	2,000	224	1	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.115	0.115	0.000	0.000	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.100	11,247,248
OM0000004925 ALBATINAH POWER	2,000	102	4	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.000	0.000	0.051	0.050	0.051	0.100	34,419,259
OM0000004933 AL SUWADI POWER	850	34	1	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.052	0.052	0.000	0.000	0.053	0.050	0.054	0.100	37,149,130
OM0000007084 MCT DESALINATE	1,000	80	1	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.080	0.078	0.080	0.100	12,444,032
OM0000007407 DHOFAR GENERATING	10,000	1,250	2	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.000	0.000	0.125	0.120	0.125	0.100	27,780,000
OM0000008447 OMAN RETT FUND	5,000	435	1	0.087	0.087	0.087	0.087	0.087	0.000	0.000	0.087	0.087	0.095	0.100	56,964,028
OM0000001483 NATIONAL BANK OMAN	130,000	24,080	4	0.186	0.186	0.185	0.185	0.186	-0.001	-0.538	0.185	0.185	0.187	0.100	300,800,076
OM0000001681 OMAN EMIRATES HO.	37,074	2,718	7	0.074	0.074	0.073	0.073	0.074	-0.001	-1.351	0.073	0.072	0.073	0.100	8,896,875
OM0000001517 HSBC BANK OMAN	1,147,880	103,334	13	0.090	0.091	0.090	0.090	0.092	-0.002	-2.174	0.090	0.088	0.092	0.100	180,028,151
OM0000002804 A'SAFFA FOODS	5,200	1,966	2	0.382	0.382	0.382	0.382	0.424	-0.042	-9.906	0.382	0.382	0.444	0.100	45,840,000
Total	24	3,116,908	277,316	172											

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RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

Signs of global economy emerging from COVID impact: RBI Governor

MUMBAI:

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Wednesday the world is witnessing initial signs of recovery from the impact of COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic caused structural changes in global economy and impacted the poor more.

“COVID-19 is a watershed event in our era. It has caused widespread devastation of lives and livelihoods. There are very few parallels to this shock,” he said.

Das was speaking at 48th convention of the All India Management Association here.

“The pandemic is likely to leave

indelible marks on the world economy,” said Das adding that the pandemic has affected the poor and the vulnerable more.

In India too, he said, COVID-19 has impacted many dynamic sectors of the economy and propelled them to opt for greater adoption of new digital technologies. -ANI

GREEN BOND/SUKUK

Apicorp unveils its inaugural Green Bond Framework

DAMMMAM:

The Arab Petroleum Investments Corporation (Apicorp), a multinational development financial institution focused on the energy sector in the Mena region, announced that it has launched its inaugural Green Bond Framework (Framework).

The Framework will serve as a means to raise Green Bonds/ Sukuk which reinforce the institution's commitment to projects that are aligned with its recently approved ESG Policy Framework as well as advance the development of the broader sustainable finance market.

In particular, the projects financed, refinanced and/or invested in by Apicorp's Green Bond/Sukuk are also intended to be aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and will aim to promote climate mitigation and adaptation, the transition to a circular economy, pollution prevention and control and biodiversity preservation.

Notably, the Green Bond Framework is in alignment with the International Capital Market Association's (ICMA) Green Bond Principles 2021 (GBP). In addition, the Green Bond Framework enjoys a Second Party Opinion (SPO).

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RESTAURANT OPERATIONS MANAGER

Responsibilities:

- To manage operations and production of the restaurant.
- To liaise with the respective Government/ Statutory Authorities to procure the necessary licenses and documentations.
- To lead the operations and production team to deliver within specific standards and schedules required.
- To manage overall costs including material, equipment, manpower, etc.
- To manage production planning, forecasting, purchasing and stock control.
- To maintain and improve the overall performance of the restaurant on a regular basis including cost analysis and monitoring of processes.
- Provide on-job coaching and guidance to team members, managing their performance to ensure a smooth operation
- To work along with the Marketing team to develop Marketing Strategies and Promotion plans to successfully market the restaurant in the relevant media platform.
- Manage and supervise the food & beverage staff to ensure maximum utilization of the manpower allocated.
- Ensure strict compliance with all relevant Hygiene and Safety legislation and requirements.
- To maintain close, professional and effective links with all external contractors/suppliers to ensure that they deliver to mutually accepted

agreements and highest quality levels.

- To handle responsibilities for the special orders made at the restaurant. It involves all planning associated with each event, right through to delivery.

Educational Qualifications & Experience:

- Post Graduate/Graduate or equivalent qualification.
- Minimum 05 years of experience in a supervisory level at F&B, Catering, Hotels and Hospitality establishments.
- Knowledge of food hygiene and Health and Safety requirements.
- A good understanding of quality assurance, procedures and protocols.
- Excellent communication skills both verbally and written English/ Arabic.

Key Skills Required:

- Excellent co-ordination skills
- Strong presentation and communication skills, verbal and written.
- Effective planning, management and organizing skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills to work with internal teams and external suppliers and customers.
- Must possess neat and pleasant grooming habits.
- Proactive approach to problem solving.
- Change orientated to make business improvements.

If you feel you are right for the position and for any further information, please write us at **oman2020marketing@gmail.com**

WE ARE HIRING

SPACE MARKETING for Online Directory

Responsibilities:

- Contact potential clients to describe advertising opportunities. This usually takes the form of cold calling over the telephone but may involve face to face contact as well.
- Contact existing clients to arrange the placement and design of advertisements they have agreed on and ensure an ongoing relationship.
- Research client needs and explain the benefits of buying advertising space, responding to any objections.
- Explain pricing costs to potential clients and negotiate a fee, if necessary.
- Account manage an existing client

to ensure their needs are satisfied and they are happy with the service.

- Work with production teams to ensure that agreed advertisements are carried in the right place and at the right time.
- Track purchases and keep record of sales, contacts and deals.
- Work to maximize sales and meet targets.
- Deliver sales reports to management.

Key Skills: Excellent telephone manner, ability to persuade clients, outgoing, and sociable

Education: Any degree, candidates with marketing background will be preferred.

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Work Location	Work from Home	At Office
Timing	Flexible (target based)	4 hours

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intermediate & finished products, Calibrating lab
instruments, compiling reports. Looking suitable
placement. Having Oman driving licence.

Contact No. Oman-96359802,
India+91 9400032844,
Email: mollythomas53@rediffmail.com

JOB WANTED

ENGINEER

B Tech, Mechanical Engineer, 32
Indian Male, having 7+ years experi-
ence in Technical Sales, Design
and Execution in Oman. Currently
on visit visa. Looking for a suitable
position. Contact 99654650

B.E civil engineer having 13 yrs
Oman experience mainly in building
construction looking for a suitable
position. Contact 72132426

Indian male BE civil engineer 4+ yr
experience in site execution, quan-
tity survey, autocad. NOC available.
Contact 94194752

B.Tech Mechanical Engineer Gradu-
ated (2021) from VIT-Vellore(TN)
India looking for suitable job to
build a career while contributing to
the organisation. Contact 78525667
/ 24992407

B.E civil engineer having 13 yrs of
Oman experience mainly in building
construction looking for a suitable
position. Contact 91731098

Graduate Civil Engineer having 25
yrs+ exp. seeking suitable placement
(Consultancy/Contracting firm)-exp
in buildings (commercial/residen-
tial/head quarters) infrastructure
,waterline, refinery/plant. available to
join immediately. Omani D/L & NOC
is available. Contact 92671539

B.Tech, Civil & MBA, 4yrs experi-
ence in Oman as a service coordina-
tor/sales post. Currently working
Oman. Contact 79275813

Structural Engineer 7 yrs consul-
tancy exp. In Oman with D/L.
Contact 94340408

GROUP FINANCE MANAGER

with 20 yrs+ experience
seeks suitable placement

Contact 92578435
Email: 1974KSD@gmail.com

Projects Manager

Indian Male, having 12 years of
Experience in Oman, presently working
as Projects Manager, NOC available.

Contact 92636569
Email: nisarg_shah35@yahoo.com

Senior Manager (HR/Administration/Operations)

Indian male, 42, MBA, 12yrs experience in Senior
management role with international exposure in many
countries including Europe, worked as HR and Admin
Head of company in Qatar. Also having Experience in
Education Industry (India) in a senior Management
Position. Presently in Muscat (family visa).

Contact 94326527
Email: sreekanth.kerala987@gmail.com

PROJECT ADMIN / CEO OFFICE MNGMT / HR / OPS CORPORATE & MKTG. COMMUNICATIONS / ADMIN

Smart Indian, Masters, Excellent English, Arabic
speaker, 17years Oman exp in Airport Projects,
Hospital. Media in Project Coordination, Corporate
& Mktg. Communication, CEO & Chairman Office
Mngmt, Operations, Marketing, NOC, Immediate.

CONTACT 99283938

ADMIN / FINANCE

Indian male, MBA (Finance), having D/L,
22 years exp in finalization in Accounts, Internal
auditing, MIS and Admin in various sectors.
15 years exp in Gulf & 13 Years in Oman
looking for a suitable SR position.

GSM: 96974637
Email: goutam14b@gmail.com

ACCOUNTANT

Indian Male 39 years, B com, having 14 years
Gulf experience as Accountant. Looking for
suitable placement. Having Oman driving
license and NOC available.

Contact: 97998397
Email: salafcs@yahoo.com

INDIAN HSE ASSISTANT

Indian Male, 24 Yrs. Diploma in fire and
safety. Having 2 years' experience in India.
looking for HSE assistant jobs.
Currently available in Oman. NOC available.

GSM 92166848 / 94110108

HOSPITALITY

Srilankan with 5 yrs experience
in Rotana Dubai as Room attendant
seeks job in housekeeping office
boy/helper, roomboy/watchman. Con-
tact 92806514

IT

Lady Informatics Engineering, web-
site development and design for both
(frontend and backend) with platform
WordPress, 2 years experience, avail-
able visa in Oman, GSM 96097995

Over 13 years retail experienced
IT professional looking for suitable
placements in IT technical/inventory
positions. NOC available. Can join im-
mediately. Contact +91-9847731912,
dino.davis2@icloud.com

IT, Profession MCA, MBA-System
& Network administration with 15
years of GCC experience, looking for
suitable openings. Contact 92640206
Email: afdcruz21@gmail.com

LOGISTIC

14 years experienced Shipping /
Logistics professional (operations &
documentation) looking for a job in
the shipping companies / logistics
sector. Contact 71610495.

ACCOUNTANT

Indian Male Accountant available for instant joining:
Having B.com higher grade graduation with 6 years
of acquaintance and comprehension on major
accounting platforms, well versed in Microsoft and
profound communication skills, NOC Available.

Contact No: +968-94649272
Email: sherin.am01@gmail.com

Business Management

Syrian Female seeking suitable placement with
Bachelor in Business Management, 6 years experi-
ence in Accounting, Finance, Administration, Office
Coordinator with excellent communication skills
in Arabic & English. Family Visa with valid D/L.

Pls contact 91917771

FINANCE MANAGER

Finance Professional CA/CIMA/
MBA, with 18 years of GCC
experience, open to Immediate
Managerial Vacancies.

Contact Number # 78556829

HSE OFFICER

Indian HSE Officer, diploma in Mechanical
Engineering & Diploma in fire and safety
engineering. NEBOSH, OSHA AND QA/QC
Holder. 5 years Experience in HSE seeks
suitable placement.

Contact 7974 3601

Management Professional with Business Development Experience

Looking for suitable placement
Worked in Diversified Business Conglomerate, Oil & Gas and
Construction Industry. Long journey in Oman with progressive
career growth. Professional experience in Sales, Administration,
Business Development, Project Management and Overall
Company Management. Dual Masters in Oil & Gas Management
and International Business with PMP Certification. NOC with
Local Transfer is available.

GSM: +968 9943 8477 / e-mail: harimct@gmail.com

OPERATIONS AND INVENTORY CONTROLLER

INDIAN MALE WITH +20 YEARS OF
EXPERIENCE IN SUPPLY CHAIN, PURCHASE,
SALES & DISTRIBUTION, MIS, INVENTORY
& CREDIT CONTROL SEEKS PLACEMENT.

CONTACT 94619442, vineeth33@yahoo.com

ADMINISTRATION

39-year Indian HR professional (MBA-HR)
14 yrs Exp (HR/SAP/Admin) with Oman DL
& NOC. Seeking suitable openings in Human
Resource & Admin jobs.

Contact: +968-78539053
Email: rkkambat@gmail.com

HSE Advisor

Omani HSE Advisor,
5 yrs experience
seeks placement.

Contact +96879990740
Email: mundhirsaidalrashdi@gmail.com

JOB WANTED

MEDICAL

A Senior general physician with
valid MOH licence, data flow, promet-
ric, ACLS BLS certificates looking
for a suitable placement in Muscat
area. NOC available from current
employer. Whatsapp 91465358

PURCHASE/PROCUREMENT

Inventory, purchase, sales Indian
male 30, having 8 years experience
in retail, F&B operations, accounting
and various other skills, NOC avail-
able. Contact 96219904
Email: khanshah98@gmail.com

Purchase, Procurement, Logistics &
Stores professional, more than 25
years experience having very good
knowledge in Construction, Mechan-
ical & Commercial materials, looking
for immediate openings. NOC & DL
available. Contact 99276414. Email:
shettigarthulsidhar@gmail.com

Indian male, B.Com 11 years pur-
chase & procurement experience in
Oman with valid D/L & NOC looking
for a suitable position. # 94038075

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COMFORTABLE JAPANESE SNEAKERS DESIGNED WITH RESEARCH



Some fashion companies have re-imagined the use of kimono and obi in Japan by repurposing them for service to create custom sneakers and footwear for men and women. Each shoe upper is made from kimono or obi – the belt-like sash used to tie a kimono.

In a world of mass-produced consumer goods, this uniqueness stands out from other footwear options and supports the initiative of Cool Japan. Repurposed kimonos create beautiful and unique sneakers that men or women can wear on any occasion, even formal events. The materials used are eco-friendly, beautiful, and perfect for breathing new life into something valued and treasured.

Mottainai's philosophy, often associated with Japan's traditional culture, says that one should not waste anything. According to the principle of mottainai, even items such as a kimono can have a different life than something else, such as Japanese sneakers.

Typically, traditional kimonos are often worn on special occasions and passed down from one generation to the next. This practice alone follows Mottainai's philosophy by placing value on these family keepsakes.

Recycling kimonos and obi – the sash tied around a kimono – can transform them into sneakers with the same elegant design and patterns.

Kimonos get tied with a himo tare. Once tied, it's an obi belt. These belts are symbolic of family tradition as every family uses its exceptional designs and patterns.

Since every pair gets created with a unique pattern and design, there are never two exactly alike pairs. It's a dream come true for shoe collectors and lovers alike.

**Inspired by Japanese culture,
unique sneakers are making a
statement and creating waves in
the fashion industry.**



LIFESTYLE

Customers can create the perfect pair for their wardrobe needs with multiple customisation options, including laces, velcro, black soles, white soles, and wooden patterns. These comfortable and fashionable shoes feature intricate kimono patterns that incorporate inspiration from nature including flowers, trees, and birds. Colours frequently implemented in kimonos include red, blue, green, and yellow.

During the Edo Period (1603-1868), this sustainability practice came about when kimonos became a source of secondhand clothing materials due to rising living costs and high taxation. Fast forward to the present day, and we see the practice of repurposing kimonos as an innovative and groundbreaking approach to cut textile waste.

Some people find it difficult to imagine that an expensive piece of clothing, like a kimono, can become something else. Still, there is a robust mottainai culture in Japan that views each item with value and purpose.

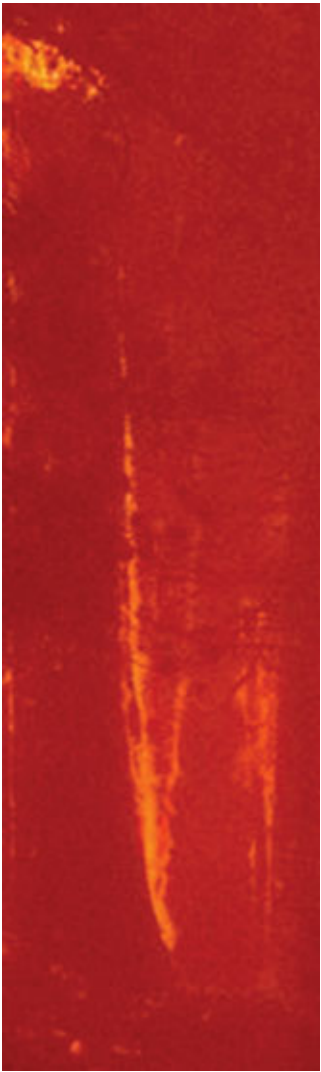
As more people from around the globe seek out new fashion statement pieces and ethical companies and products to support, these shoes are an exciting option for fashionistas who value style and comfort.

With nearly endless possibilities of combinations, there is no better way to refresh your footwear collection. Moreover, because of its roots in Japanese tradition, the tenants of sustainability are sewn right into every customized pair.

This rare approach has drawn positive interest among Westerners curious about Japanese culture. Increasing awareness of this new fashion trend places it in a unique position to support Cool Japan in delivering delightfully crafted products inspired by Japanese culture to the rest of the world.

-ARTICLECITY

FEATURE



Record temperatures and forest fires in North America, Southern Europe and Siberia. Typhoons in Southeast Asia. Floods in Germany and China.

Climate change has already made extreme weather worse across the world — and only rapid cuts to greenhouse gas emissions can stop temperatures rising further and weather extremes getting stronger.

Germany amended its climate law this year to aim for greenhouse gas neutrality by 2045, after its highest court declared its old plans partly unconstitutional. But bringing the climate balance of the EU's biggest emitter to zero will cost a lot of money: €6 trillion (\$7 trillion), according to a recent study on Germany's net-zero goals by consulting firm McKinsey & Company.

Germany would need to invest 7 per cent of its economic output — about €240 billion — into green technologies and infrastructure each year. It's an "unprecedented task," said Ruth Heuss, a senior partner at McKinsey and co-author of the study.

Next 10 years 'crucial'

In total, this would require an additional €1 trillion of investment. A further €5 trillion of funding that would be spent regardless would need to be invested differently — namely in green technologies. This could be used for subsidies to buy electric cars, for example, or support entrepreneurs who invest in climate-friendly production processes instead of keeping old plants online.

It also includes investments in public transport, charging stations for electric cars, battery storage and the expansion of a nationwide infrastructure for green hydrogen. The money could be redirected from polluting investments like subsidies for air travel.

Money is less critical than time, said Heuss, because the latter is in short supply. "The next 10 years are the crucial ones. We need to roughly triple the speed at which we decarbonise," she said.

Years of approval procedures for solar parks, power lines or the location of wind turbines can no longer be afforded, she added, neither from an ecological nor an economic point of view. And the longer the conversion is delayed, the faster the measures would have to be implemented — which in turn leads to higher costs. That's why it's crucial "to create the framework conditions relatively quickly now."

Germany's energy sector is responsible for about a third of the country's carbon pollution, and the emission of climate-damaging gases must be reduced twice as fast this decade when compared to the past 30 years. The challenge also applies to industry, which generates a quarter of total emissions.

Other measures for climate neutrality include the electrification of transport, supplying the steel and cement industries and other businesses with green electricity, and more investment in recycling and technologies for improved battery storage.

Research and investment in storage processes for carbon dioxide are also essential for Germany's climate balance to be truly zero in the end, said Detlef Stolten from the Jülich Research Centre in western Germany. "Without that, it won't work."



WHAT

CLIMATE

Germany wants to be climate neutral by 2045. Restructuring its economy will cost trillions. But not investing the money would cost even more.



NEUTRALITY

WILL COST

Climate damages

Experts expect that the money devoted to economic restructuring will have a positive effect not only on the environment, but also on the German economy as a whole. And the restructuring itself is expected to create more jobs.

In an optimal scenario, the authors of the McKinsey study assumed that the additional investments could be covered by the savings. This means that in a best-case scenario, climate neutrality would come at zero cost to society as a whole — even before factoring in the damages caused by climate change.

Stolten, whose institute is working on a separate calculation of the costs, estimates that the 2045 target could incur about €1.8 trillion in additional costs — about €70 billion a year. This would put the total additional investment for the country's climate neutrality at about the same level as the cost of German reunification.

"From what we see now, that is affordable," said Stolten, pointing to the floods in western Germany in mid-July that killed more than 180 people, wiping out roads and bridges and destroying livelihoods. "If we now need €30 billion to rebuild small parts of Rhineland-Palatinate and North Rhine-Westphalia — and that is certainly not the total damage, it will be higher — then you can already see that this puts things incredibly into perspective."

Conditions 'better than ever before'

Germany's Federal Environment Agency has estimated that each extra ton of CO₂ emitted costs the economy €201 today — a number that is rising. This includes not only the damage to houses, roads or crops caused by floods, storms or drought, but also the health consequences of heat waves and air pollution, as well as the ecological costs of destroyed forests and soils. The damage caused to ecosystems worldwide alone could rise to €14 trillion by 2050 — 7 per cent of the global gross domestic product.

It is "definitely also cheaper for everyone in total," said Carolin Scheinut, executive director of think tank Green Budget Germany, adding that "the weakest in society also suffer disproportionately from the consequences of climate change."

If the global community sticks to the Paris Agreement and limits climate change to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit), immense social, ecological and economic damage could be prevented. The McKinsey report finds the conditions for a climate-friendly shift in Germany "are better than ever before." Consumers are increasingly opting for sustainable products and many companies are pushing toward sustainable value chains.

But even if the goal of being climate neutral by 2045 is achieved, Germany could still fall short of the agreements of the Paris Agreement for the 1.5 C target. For this to happen, Germany's carbon footprint would have to be at zero as early as 2038. -nw



GERMANY

ROUND-UP

Nissan X-Terra amazes customers with its ‘Go Anywhere’ capabilities

The model, which empowers owners to go anywhere has impressed customers with its robust yet sophisticated look



MUSCAT: Nissan X-Terra, the vehicle specially designed for adventure and the outdoors has received a terrific response from customers in Oman.

The model, which empowers owners to go anywhere has impressed customers with its robust yet sophisticated look. They have defined the vehicle as an ideal partner for customers seeking exciting outdoor adventures.

Powering the all-new X-Terra is a 2.5-litre four-cylinder petrol engine with a seven-speed automatic transmission. The petrol engines deliver 124kW /165 hp and 241Nm of torque that ensures an exciting drive of speed and acceleration. Created for adventures, with a roomy

interior and advanced technologies Nissan X-Terra ensures safety and comfort. Nissan Intelligent Mobility features add to its attraction.

A spokesperson for Nissan Oman, from the house of Suhail Bahwan Automobiles (SBA), said, “The seven-seater, spacious, comfortable X-Terra is a catalyst for new experiences, allowing owners to connect with the people in their lives, and to confidently ‘Go Anywhere’ together. It addresses a variety of needs and all types of terrains as it is both, good for city use and great for an adventure with family and friends. Developed in

line with the “unbreakable” frame vehicles design philosophy, it combines masculine solidity with sleek and modern execution.”

The all-new X-Terra delivers a robust four-wheel-drive system, including a four-wheel lock, brake limited slip differential and electronic locking rear differential – while leading the class in interior room and comfort.

Built on 70 years of unmatched Nissan SUV expertise, the all-new Nissan X-Terra 2021 reflects the evolution of four-wheel adventure travel and a growing consumer desire for connection. It effortlessly

all-new X-Terra’s athletic look, reflecting the Nissan Design team’s dynamic and modern philosophy.

Styling stands out

The styling of the all-new X-Terra was developed at the Global Design studio in Japan. At 4.9m in length, 1.9m in height and just over 2.1m in width – with a ground clearance of 243 mm – the X-Terra looks right at home next to its bigger sibling, the Patrol, and borrows some design elements.

The front face resembles the Patrol with the powerful new V-motion grill, with its thick frame contrasting with the refined horizontal chrome bars within. The proportions of the all-new X-Terra are strong and bold. The hood is tall and horizontal, the body is muscular, and the driver sits up high for a commanding road presence. The overall image is imposing and rugged, but designers have also added expressions of sophistication and technology. This is underlined by the unique C-shaped LED signature headlamps, similar to those of the Patrol, but evolved and interpreted in a new way for the all-new X-Terra. The quad LED projector lamps, like ice-cubes, have a high-tech vibe. Each one is intricately framed in its bezel, showing off an attention to detail.

The front bumper with its unique layers overlapping each other creates an overall protected, yet sophisticated feeling. Combined with sleek, hi-tech headlamps and a powerful grill creates a distinctive front face that looks tough, modern and upscale.

In the rear, the width of the vehicle is highlighted by the strong horizontal movement of the tail lamps. The wide LED signature rear lamps and the characteristic chrome centre finisher further emphasize its strength and width. Like its Patrol sibling, the rear bumper uses squared-off shapes to show that the all-new X-Terra is well protected.

Taking a closer look at the wheels, the titanium grade models will come equipped with 17-inch alloy wheels, while the platinum grade will come with a set of 18-inch machine-cut alloys. Chrome side steps and chrome auto-folding mirrors complement the overall look, alongside the fender vent and smart roof rail.

The all-new X-Terra is available in seven exterior colours, including bright brown and burgundy. The upscale exterior is matched by premium black and light grey interior colours that add to the richness of the vehicle, along with a choice of cloth or leather seat fabrics, depending on the grade.

OMAN ARAB BANK

OAB introduces training programme for university graduates

MUSCAT: Oman Arab Bank (OAB) has recently launched an advanced programme to provide Omani talent, college, and university graduates with the necessary knowledge and skills to enhance their prospects of securing jobs within the banking sector.

This two-year programme is in line with the bank’s strategy to support national competencies

by providing them with the practical experience necessary to achieve success in the future. The programme reflects positively on the bank’s economic development plans by investing in Omani youth and promotes sustainability.

OAB aims to improve economic progression through investment in the local youth workforce, increasing sustainability, driving

knowledge transfer, and enabling banking technology localisation within Oman. The programme also reinforces the bank’s commitment to empowering national talent, with the graduates gaining valuable practical experience that will help them start their careers in the banking sector.

The bank will work closely with each graduate employee to identify

their abilities and match them with their career aspirations. They will be assigned to different divisions of OAB’s operations, rotating between Corporate Banking, Credit Admin, Credit Review, and Trade Finance, to nurture wider expertise of banking products and services. The two-year programme is open to proactive and determined Omani nationals who are recent gradu-

ates in finance or accounting with a GPA of 2.4 or higher.

The programme will also present a chance to the graduates to learn from seasoned OAB professionals across a wide range of business departments.

It will touch upon all areas of business banking, with each segment of the programme being supported by a mentor, to evaluate

graduate performance, assist and provide a model of commitment, productivity, and professional responsibility. The programme encourages personal growth with professional qualifications and training that is critical to a career in banking. It has been specifically designed to maximise the potential of each candidate with a designed development plan.



SCAN ME

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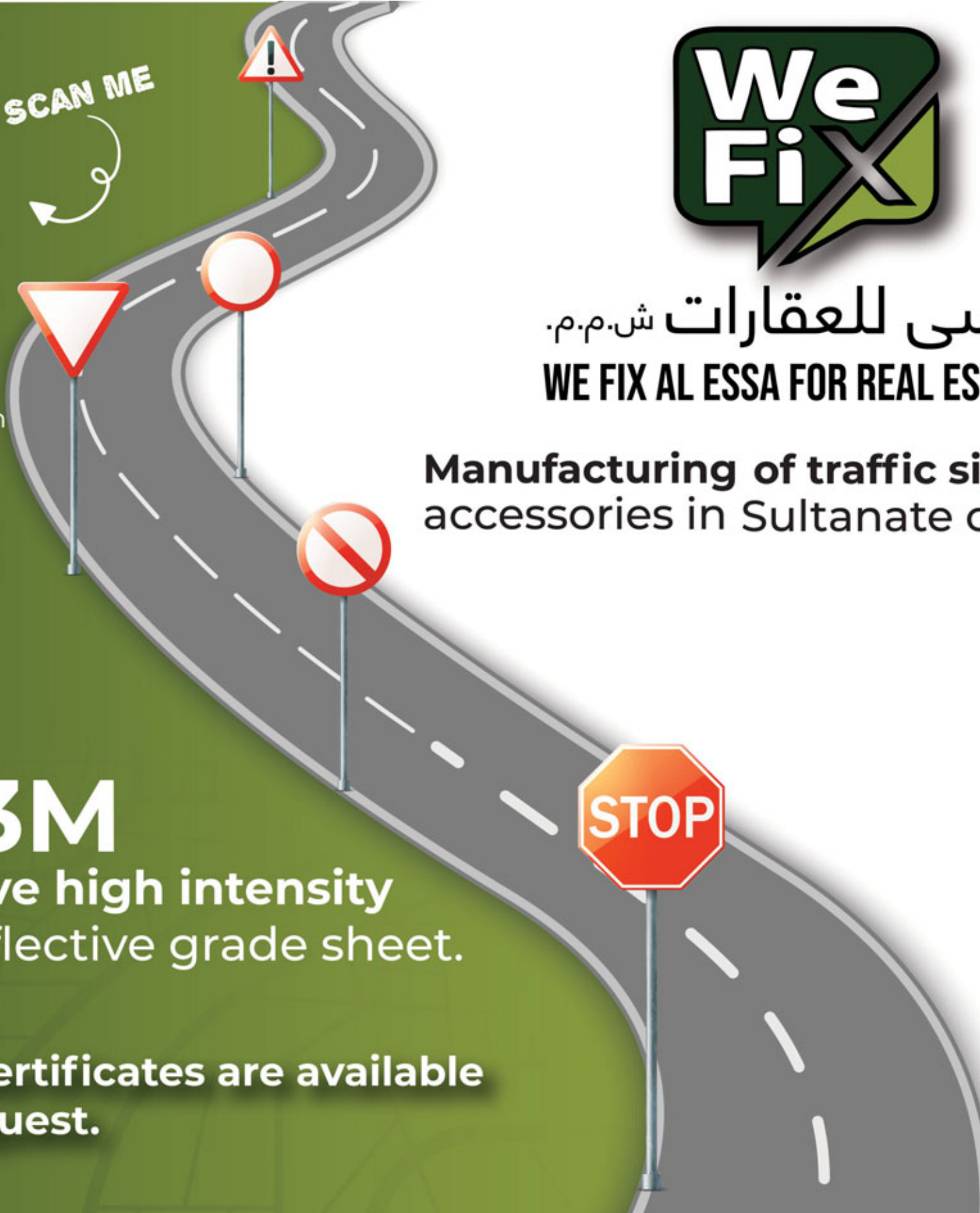
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ROUND-UP

Alizz Islamic Bank unveils ‘Hiyya’ awards for women

The announcement of the first edition of the prestigious ‘Hiyya’ award augurs well for the growing number of women in the business stratum

MUSCAT: In a move to honour female entrepreneurs and business executives, Alizz Islamic Bank unveiled its special and exclusive ‘Hiyya’ awards for women, recently, and announced that the grand award ceremony would coincide with the Omani Women’s Day, which is celebrated all over the nation on October 17, every year.

The announcement of the first edition of the prestigious ‘Hiyya’ award augurs well for the growing number of women in the business stratum and reflects rightly on the country’s stand towards empowerment of women in general. As per the set protocol, Alizz Islamic Bank has adopted rigorous steps to maintain transparency and credibility to the selection of nominees and short-listing of winners. Beginning with a 10-day nomination period - starting from September 22 to October 1, 2021 - it will follow through by opening the voting



process on its website from October 2 to October 14, 2021. The nomination process will be available for everyone, with the option of self-nomination or nomination of other women deemed worthy of ‘Hiyya’ awards. Winners will be selected from the final tally of the public vote and the awards will be distributed on October 17.

Designed to recognise and felicitate women, the ‘Hiyya’ awards come as an expression of appreciation and gratitude for the pioneering role played by women in building the nation; it is a formal acknowledgement of their contribution in various fields as they continue to demonstrate their expertise and experience in the social and economic arena. The

awards have been classified into several categories, including the award for Best New Business, Best Online Business and the Most Inspiring Businesswoman Award, which is considered as an important catalyst for the growth of female-owned businesses.

Other award categories are: Made in Oman Award for the Best Business Owned by Women in the field of locally produced goods; Best Service Customer Service Award for businesses - owned by women - that provide customer service; Social Responsibility Award, which will be given to the woman who gives back to the community through dedicated social responsibility programme; an Award for the Best Online Business

ness that provides its services via the Internet; and, finally, the most coveted of them all, the Role Model of the Year Award.

This award will be given to that woman who has proven to be an idol with her leadership skills and successful portfolio.

Throwing the spotlight on the upcoming Hiyya awards, Mohammed Al Ghassani, AGM - Chief Consumer Banking Officer at Alizz Islamic Bank, said, “Women have, since the beginning of the Renaissance, partnered with men in building our beloved nation. They have taken strong and steady strides to ensure that the nation runs smoothly on all levels. This devotion is pronounced in all the development projects that have started and are still growing to this day. They have been a part of all-round development and have received equal rights, which have ensured their place alongside men in all departments.”

Al Ghassani added, “These awards come as an appreciation and gratitude from the executive management of the Bank and as an expression of solidarity with Omani Women’s Day. It is our way of celebrating this great day and we spare no effort to support women’s creative energies in various fields, and at all levels. Besides the awards, we have also organized several events and celebrations to enhance the spirit of cooperation among women working in our bank, while establishing a sense of belonging to the workplace, which is reflected in their continuous productivity at work.”

IN DUBAI



Khimji’s House of Travel appointed as authorised ticket reseller of Expo 2020

MUSCAT: Khimji’s House of Travel has been appointed as an Authorised Ticket Reseller of Expo 2020 Dubai within Oman.

Cashio Vettom, General Manager of Khimji’s House of Travel, said, “The timing is perfect. The airports and land borders have opened up, offering the opportunity to travel to Dubai and experience one of the largest and most spectacular cultural gatherings in the world. As an Authorised Ticket Reseller, we are now able to service our clients and facilitate access to expo tickets in a quick, seamless manner. We have made the distribution process easy through the travel agent network in Oman and our team has been trained to cater to questions regarding the available logistics and possibilities during this period.

Kailash Nagdev, Senior Vice President, Sales & Analytics, Expo 2020 Dubai, said, “The sheer scale of what’s on offer at

Expo 2020 is incredible, including the diverse entertainment programme that will ensure there is something for everyone, of all ages, nationalities and interests - from musical concerts and dance shows to theatrical performances, sports and more. We are delighted to be working with Khimji’s House of Travel to offer an unmissable celebration of human ingenuity, unrivalled cultural experiences, the world’s best entertainment and once-in-a-lifetime experiences to every visitor.”

From 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022, Expo 2020 Dubai will gather more than 200 participants - including 192 countries, as well as multilateral organisations, businesses and educational establishments - for a visually striking and emotionally inspiring 182 days. Expo tickets can be obtained from the Khimji’s House of Travel or your nearest preferred travel agent.

LOYALTY PROGRAMME

Exclusive privileges for credit card users through BankDhofar’s Rewards Programme

MUSCAT: To further enrich its customer experience, BankDhofar offers a wide array of exclusive privileges for BankDhofar credit card users, through the comprehensive Rewards Loyalty Programme. The programme includes various added-value options for shopping, dining, holidays, travelling, and much more.

Yousuf Ahmed Al Balushi, Executive Manager Payment Hub at BankDhofar noted: “At BankDhofar, we strive to enrich our customers’ experience, not only through our innovative products and services but through the various offers. The comprehensive loyalty programme offers BankDhofar credit card users a wide array of exclusive privileges, including various added-value options for shopping, dining, holidays and travelling. We encourage our customers to use their cards and benefit from the points of the Rewards Programme.”

With the Rewards Programme, customers can earn points when they use their credit cards. These points can then be redeemed, allowing customers to choose from more than 300 airlines and destinations worldwide. They also have the choice of over 180,000 hotels across the globe to use the points. Additionally, the rewards programme allows customers to redeem points at various shopping outlets, restaurants, cafes, health clubs and spas. Customers may view their points through BankDhofar’s mobile banking app, or they may visit the website



The programme includes various added-value options for shopping, dining, holidays, travelling, and much more

to redeem their points.

In addition to the rewards programme, BankDhofar credit cards - as well as debit cards - offer a vast array of exclusive benefits and privileges including appealing discounts and special offers at various shopping outlets including hotels, health and wellness outlets, dining, boutiques, cinema, leisure and entertainment. Special offers include exclusive discounts up to 50% when using BankDhofar debit or credit cards.

RECOGNITION

ahlibank wins ‘Excellence in Private Banking’ Award

MUSCAT: ahlibank receives the coveted ‘Excellence in Private Banking’ Award at the Oman Banking & Finance Awards ceremony, presented during the high-profile New Age Banking Summit held recently at the Al Bustan Palace Hotel in Muscat. Powered by Oman Economic Review (OER), the event felicitated top banking and financial institutions in the country.

The ‘Excellence’ award marks a new prestigious landmark for ahlibank in premium retail banking as it strives to deliver more value-added services to its clients. Receiving the award from Tahir Al Amri - Executive President of Central Bank of Oman, Najla Muradha Al Lawati, AGM- Head of Private Banking & Wealth Management of ahlibank, opined that it was, indeed, a turning point for



the bank, as it has, in a short period, managed to expand its product portfolio to offer products and services for niche segments. ahlibank provides expert financial and investment solutions to high-net-worth clients, through ‘Exclusiv’ Banking, offering them a personalised, world-class banking experience,

that satisfies their evolving needs and lifestyles.

Speaking on the sidelines of the award ceremony, Najla Al Lawati expressed her appreciation for the honour from Oman Banking and Finance Awards and credited the Bank’s team of professionals for meeting the high standards set by

the founders of the bank. “Through consistency and perseverance, we have come out winners in understanding and realising the needs and wants of our customers - our evolving portfolio of products and services speaks for itself.

“Our customer-centric approach to every transaction and engagement has played a pivotal role in finding our niche in this highly competitive market.

“With products and services that are on par with global standards, we have managed to create a feel-good platform for customers to enjoy privileges that have broken the shackles of traditional banking practices. It is thanks to the experience and expertise of our team that we have managed to score high at the Oman Banking and Finance Awards,” she stated.

MAJOR SALE OF VEHICLES

Budget Rent a Car inducts huge share of Mitsubishi vehicles into its fleet

MUSCAT: General Automotive Company (GAC), the official distributor of Mitsubishi Motors vehicles in Oman, is happy to announce the major sale of vehicles to Budget Rent a Car, one of the leading car rental agencies in Oman since 1981. The major sale included Mitsubishi L200 and Mitsubishi Montero Sport.

Commenting on the sale, Aftab Khan, the Sales head said, “It is truly an honour to have a company such as Budget Rent A Car choose Mitsubishi for their fleet expansion. I am confident that each of these vehicles will be a welcome addition to their growing fleet of vehicles and will contribute to their success.”



“Mitsubishi is a brand known for its quality, reliability, performance, and comfort. Moreover, it is a brand that we have personally had a great experience with, and

their vehicles are clearly distinguished by their operational efficiency and low operating costs. Additionally, GAC is renowned for providing exceptional service

and support to its customers. All of these qualities are highly valued by us, and we are convinced these new vehicles will add tremendous value to our fleet,” added Yusuf Calcuttawala, Sales Manager of Budget Rent a Car.

The 2021 Montero Sport adopts a more powerful yet refined exterior design complete with Mitsubishi’s signature Dynamic Shield front view design concept. Its bold exterior is complemented with a refreshed interior that delivers high quality and comfort, together with advanced functionality. The Montero Sport is also brimming with technology, thanks to several advanced and convenient new features.



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