

OMANI DONATES OVER 3,000 CLOTHES TO PEOPLE IN TANZANIA

Omani national Nasr Al Jahdhamy has donated more than 1,200 sweaters to schoolchildren, and another 2,000 dishdashas, to people in Tanzania, during a trip taken to the African country. **>A2**



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HIS MAJESTY THE SULTAN CONGRATULATES SWEDISH KING

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to King Carl XVI Gustaf of the Kingdom of Sweden on his country's National Day. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere greetings and wishes of good health and happiness to the King and to his country's people further progress and prosperity. **—ONA**



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DME

Oman crude oil price crosses \$70 a barrel

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman crude oil price crossed the \$70.38 per barrel mark on Friday (June 4, 2021) comprising an increase by 24 cents from the price of Thursday, according to the DME.

The Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME) is the leading energy focused commodities exchange in the Middle East and home to the benchmark sour crude oil futures contract.

Key component

The DME Oman is a key component of crude oil pricing for Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain and accounts for 50 per cent of their official selling price (OSP), while it solely reflects the price of Oman and Dubai crude oil. **>A3**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Study on e-learning during pandemic

1 A study by Dr Mohammed Al Siyabi, Dean, Military Technological College, explores the e-learning format in Oman during the COVID-19 pandemic. **>A3**

WORLD COVID cases in India decline sharply

2 India's daily new COVID-19 cases reported a sharp decline on Saturday. Down from yesterday's 132,364 cases, India yesterday reported 120,529 fresh COVID-19 cases. **>A6**

MARKET Madayn initiative to boost investment

3 Madayn has announced new projects in Sur Industrial City to be in line with the incentives that were announced earlier this year by Madayn. **>B1**

REOPENING

Children happy to return to parks and beaches

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The joyful squeals of children and the pitter-patter of their little feet could once again be heard at beaches and parks across Oman, after they were reopened to the public.

A number of venues, including exhibition centres, gyms, and wedding halls, to name a few, were allowed to reopen by the Supreme Committee to deal with COVID-19, following their temporary closure to halt the spread of the coronavirus pandemic in the country.

For Indian national Amit Kumar, it was a chance to take his children out of the house, after they'd been largely confined indoors for much of the last 14 months.

"Unfortunately, there was nowhere we could take them for so long, because although adults were allowed to enter many places, children sadly had to stay at home," he added. "We decided to take our son and daughter to Qurum beach on Friday afternoon, after about 4 o'clock in the evening, because it was too hot before then."

The first thing his children



did was to kick off their shoes and run gleefully into the water, where they thoroughly enjoyed splashing about after not being able to do so for more than a year. A couple of hours later, their parents took them out to a mall and then a restaurant, two other locations the little ones had not been allowed to enter until very recently.

"They were just so happy to be out again," said Amit. "Honestly, sometimes you only understand the value of something when it is taken away from you, and to see the happiness on their faces after spending so long cooped up at home is just priceless: it

makes you realise how much you miss the things we often take for granted.

"Until about March or April, the children used to go out to play every day, but because the temperatures have suddenly shot up, that was not possible," he added. "In a way, this decision to allow children to visit restaurants, beaches, parks and other areas has come at the right time."

Jordanian national Omar Al Jaber took his and his friend's children to the park, where they played to their heart's content after meeting each other for so long. Grateful for the opportunities for children to once again play outside, Omar asked people in the country not to take advantage of the loosening of economic restrictions.

"Just because a number of restrictions are lifted does not mean we can also ignore the precautions we still need to follow," he added. "I am sure many families have understood the importance of public places being available to them once again... let us now abuse this privilege. Otherwise, they might close once again and we don't know when they will reopen. **>A3**



Target groups for June 2021

Community:

- People aged 45 and above
- Citizens from Musandam Governorate
- Pilgrims

Key economic sectors:

- Oil and gas
- Ports and airports

Front-line workers and govt employees

- Healthcare workers (including those in the private sector)
- Government institutions
- Royal Oman Police
- Sultan's Armed Forces
- Students pursuing final higher education diploma exams, and their supervisors

citizens in the Governorate of Musandam, and pilgrims. Health workers are to also be vaccinated during this phase of the drive, including those in the private sector who have not received their first doses.

New batches of vaccines have already begun being used to issue second doses to people who have already received their first. On Friday, 4 June, "visitors flocked to take the second dose of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine at various immunisation centres in the governorate," said a statement from the Directorate General of Health Service of North Al Batinah.

Vaccination of people aged 45 and above will begin "during the

third week of June," said the Ministry of Health. "Students under the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation will also be vaccinated."

Health authorities have asked people currently eligible for vaccines to report to their nearest immunisation centre. All those who received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 10 weeks ago are eligible for a second shot.

"To complement the national immunisation campaign against COVID-19, the Directorate General of Health Services in Al Buraimi invites target groups to go to vaccination centres to receive the second doses of their vaccines," said one such advisory issued. **>A3**



Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre set to return to business

A5

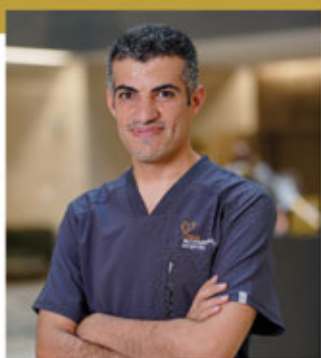


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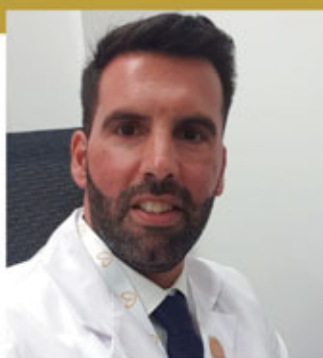
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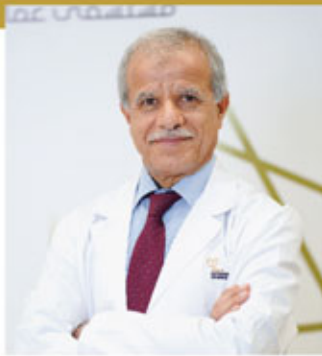
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Cardiologist



Dr. Ahmed Al-Maskari
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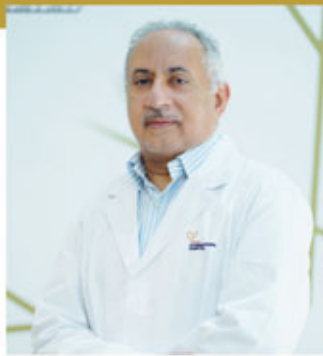
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Dhuhr.....	12.11pm
Asr.....	3:29pm
Maghrib.....	6:57pm
Isha.....	8:18pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	3.53am

Omani donates more than 3,000 clothes to people in Tanzania

Nasr has previously undertaken many aid trips to Yemen, taking with him convoys of trucks filled with tonnes of aid

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Omani national Nasr Al Jahdhamy has donated more than 1,200 sweaters to schoolchildren, and another 2,000 dishdashas, to people in Tanzania, during a trip taken to the African country during this year's Ramadan.

Nasr, who has previously undertaken many aid trips to Yemen, taking with him convoys of trucks filled with tonnes of aid, including flour, clothes, medicines, toys, books and many other items for those affected by the conflict there, organised his efforts in Tanzania with the help of the Asma Mwinyi Foundation.

"This foundation is run by the daughter of the President of Zanzibar, and they organise a lot of aid for the needy in their country," said Al Jahdhamy.

"She lives in both Tanzania and Zanzibar – both places have different issues that need solving – but this time, she needed help in an area in which she does not normally operate."

Nasr had collected sweaters donated out of the goodwill of students and staff from Indian schools in Oman, which were intended for children in the city of Morogoro, some 200km from the capital, Dar-Es-Salaam.

Nasr and his team spent four days in the city, handing out these sweaters at the Dalai Primary and Secondary School.

"It is only about an hour by plane from the capital, but from there, it takes another three hours by road to get to where we handed out the sweaters," he said. "We gave more than 1,000 sweaters to children from grade one to grade twelve."

Once he'd finished there, he went to the island region of Zanzibar. On the archipelago, he freely gave 2,000 Omani dishdashas to the needy.

Because it was Ramadan, people in the area he visited also each received a kilo of dates, so that they could break their fast.

His humanitarian visits to Zanzibar have come as part of the efforts of Hussein Mwinyi, the President of Zanzibar, whose father, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, was himself head of state for Tanzania from 1985 to 1995.



FOR THE NEEDY: Nasr Al Jahdhamy had collected sweaters donated out of the goodwill of students and staff from Indian schools in Oman, which were intended for children in the city of Morogoro, some 200km from the capital, Dar-Es-Salaam.

While there, he met with the president to draw up further plans to take care of the needy in Zanzibar and the rest of the country, through the Asma Mwinyi foundation.

Nasr is better known for his aid trips to Yemen, often organised either himself or through the Oman Charitable Organisation, but began his relief efforts in Tanzania many years previously.

He has deeply personal connections to the African country: His father is an Omani from Zanzibar, while his mother is from Tanganyika.

When the two merged to form Tanzania in 1964, he headed to the mainland, where he got married. In the 1980s, eight years after Nasr was born, the family moved to Oman. Nasr returned to the land of his birth 27 years later, and shortly afterwards began preparations to help the needy there.

"We began our charity in Tanzania in a very simple manner, distributing dates, clothes, and copies of the Holy Quran," he said.

"But as our trips there have increased, so have the things we donate to people there. I take

with me aids for disabled people, as well as medicines for the community.

"We also organised efforts to build a mosque for the local population, and drilled wells for them so that they have access to fresh water," he added.

Nasr's aid trips are always organised during the Holy Month, where he takes his annual leave, normally making it a point to return just before Eid: he's been employed as a public relations officer at Majan Shipping for the last 20 years. Although unable to celebrate Eid with his family this year, he realises his time in Africa is for a higher purpose.

Before travelling to Tanzania, Nasr and his family made food in their kitchen every day to distribute during the time of iftar to low-income workers in the country.

"On 29 May, I travelled to Qatar, where I spent a day, before flying to Oman the next day. This was the only route available to me, because unfortunately, when I flew to Tanzania during Ramadan, there were no Oman Air flights available because of issues around



the COVID-19 pandemic."

"Before the next Eid, I intend to get more support from Oman, so that with the help of the president, we can get more aid for the needy in Zanzibar," said Nasr.

"Before Eid Al Adha, we plan on sending them a 20-foot container filled with clothes. This will go directly to the Zanzibar government, and they will take care to distribute these clothes where

they are needed.

"Hussein Mwinyi has been the President of Zanzibar for a year now, and he is very keen to help the needy," he said.

"Hopefully, our assistance will benefit his people. Meeting the president was a great honour, and with his help, we can hopefully provide aid to those in Africa who require it."

Apart from Tanzania, through

charitable organisations, Nasr also sent sweaters to people who need them in Yemen and Syria. He is hopeful the kindness and generosity of the people in Oman will once again shine through, the next time he begins collecting aid for those who need it most.

"I am most thankful for the Indian schools in Oman for the effort they organised in collecting these clothes," he said.

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Wedding halls reopen, eye full capacity soon

Despite now being able to bring in some business, wedding hall owners say they require larger numbers of guests, so that they can pay off the losses incurred during the pandemic

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Wedding hall owners in Oman are happy to reopen their venues to ceremonies once again, but are hopeful they will soon be allowed to operate at full capacity.

While wedding halls and other large-scale facilities were allowed to reopen by the Supreme Committee to deal with COVID-19, after being required to close since the start of the pandemic, they can only operate at 30 per cent capacity, or accommodate up to 300 people, whichever is lesser. Despite now being able to bring in some business, wedding hall owners say they require larger numbers of guests to be allowed into their venues, so that they can pay off the losses incurred because of the economic impact of the pandemic.

“The decision to allow wedding halls to reopen with limited attendance is definitely better than shutting them down altogether,” said Zaher Mansour Al Balushi, who owns two wedding halls in Jalan Bani Bu Ali. “However, after they had been closed initially, I in-



currred large losses, because I had invested in air conditioners and lighting.

“I also had to pay back the people who had booked my venues, but were unable to go through with them, because of the decision to close businesses like mine,” added Al Balushi, who used to turn a profit of between OMR1,000 and 1,200 from the 10 or so bookings he received every month.

Saleh bin Saeed Al Ismaili was of a similar opinion. Earning profits ranging from OMR4,000 to OMR8,000 a month pre-pandemic, the coronavirus has seen his fortunes take a turn for the worse, as he is now burdened with losses of OMR40,000 ever since he was required to close his wedding hall in Saham in North Al Batinah.

“This is considered to be a very small number of people, when I

have a hall that can accommodate 800,” he said, of the 300-person limit he needs to comply with. “I have had to take on very large losses since the start of the pandemic, because of the workers’ salaries, rent, payments I need to make to people who have made bookings, and many other expenses. The hall also needs maintenance because it has not been used in a long time.”

Another wedding hall owner in Al Dhahirah said he used to have high numbers of bookings before the pandemic struck. His business was steadily growing, and his profits climbed with each passing month. COVID-19, however, has seen his profits dry up, and like many other businesses in the country, incur losses that need to be reversed at the earliest.

“When we were told to close because of the pandemic, I was

shocked,” said the owner, who did not wish to be named. “Apart from the maintenance and upkeep of my hall, how would I pay the monthly instalments towards the construction and furnishing of the building?”

“Because the building has not been used for a long time, it requires maintenance,” he said. “We also have to pay back previous deposit amounts, as well as the high amounts of the monthly payments that need to go towards the bank.”

“We were very happy when we were told we would be allowed to reopen, and that the bank is going to give us a grace period of six months to repay our loans, but even then we are already in a tough situation which will take us some time to get out of. I hope the number of people allowed to attend such functions is therefore allowed to increase.”

RESEARCH

e-learning still has a long way to go in Oman, finds study

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A study on the efficacy of the e-learning format in Oman during the COVID-19 pandemic by Dr Mohammed Al Siyabi, Dean of the Military Technological College, is among the research projects funded by the COVID-19 Research Programme of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

Titled “A Study of the E-Learning System Efficiency during the COVID-19 Pandemic in a Higher Education Context in Oman” the aim of the project was to determine the difficulties, complications, and potential solutions of the e-learning system implemented in Omani higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic. Principal investigator Dr Mohammed Al Siyabi and his team, which consisted of Mr Hussain Al Rashdi, Dr Abid Khan, and Dr Tariq Hussain from the Military Technological College, used both quantitative and qualitative approaches that subsequently lead to an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach in which a questionnaire, interviews and an experiment were used as data collection tools. The participants comprised of academic faculty, students, administrative and technical support staff from four different higher education institutions: the Military Technological College, Sultan Qaboos University, Dhofar University and the University of Buraimi.

According to Dr. Mohammed Al Siyabi, the main findings of the research project revealed that “e-learning is more prevalent to produce good quality results for mature learners and that the alertness and concentration level among young learners during online lesson delivery adversely impacts its outcomes”. He added



Dr Mohammed Al Siyabi, Dean of the Military Technological College

that there is still a long way to go to adapt to the e-learning mode of study with higher confidence in Oman despite all the efforts, new teaching techniques and advanced tools. He further stated that the research showed that assessment, which is an integral part of learning, is far behind to replace the conventional methods of supervised assessments and there is a need to build a higher confidence level in the process.

Suggestions

Based on the results, Dr Mohammed Al Siyabi suggested to continue online education even after the pandemic ends through hybrid mode of education and find alternative e-learning assessment tools which can make the online assessment system more reliable and effective. Moreover, he also recommended providing more technical support to teachers and students, making available all the necessary e-learning materials, developing students’ self-learning motivation, enhancing the ways of informing and communicating with students, and enhancing senior management’s awareness in crisis management.

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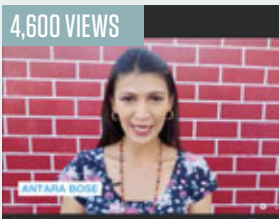
Temperatures soar in Oman.



Story on temperatures in Oman

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Maghrib Minute video

COMMODITIES

< FROM A1 Oman oil

The contract fairly represents the majority of the crude oil produced in the region and exported to the East of Suez market, and is today pricing around 170 million barrels per month. Oman crude oil price on the DME averaged at \$66.40 per barrel for July 2021 delivery. On Friday's trading crude oil extended its rally and topped \$72 per barrel. Also, the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies on Tuesday said that they would stick to agreed supply restraints. A weekly supply report on Thursday showed US crude inventories dropped more than expected last week.

REOPENING

< FROM A1 Kids happy

“I understand there is the urge to meet families now after being apart from them for so long, but let us continue to follow the procedures we need to, so that the pandemic can come to an even quicker end,” he said.

Once they'd enjoyed a few hours' play outdoors, Omar took the children to a popular ice-cream parlour. Needless to say, the kids were excited were the kids on being allowed in to such establishments once again.

“You could see the happiness on their faces,” he said. “The children have had an absolutely memorable weekend. We hope we are able to give them many more.”

VACCINATION

< FROM A1 Expansion of target groups part of ministry efforts

People in Muscat who need to know the location of their nearest vaccination centre can also contact the MoH call centre on 1144, which operates from 8am to 2pm on weekdays.

The expansion of target vaccination groups comes as part of the ministry's efforts to immunise 70 percent of the country's population to stop the spread of the coronavirus. As part of these efforts, the vaccines will be steadily rolled out to everyone in Oman aged 12 and above.

Under this initiative, students attempting their general diploma examination, and their academic supervisors, were vaccinated between 26 May and 3 June.

“Immunisation plans will be implemented in several ways, with the aim of reaching and facilitating beneficiaries of the vaccine,” added the ministry. “Procedures undertaken to reach them include opening immunisation centres across all governorates, and the formation of additional mobile vaccination teams if necessary.”

The expanded vaccination drive comes alongside the removal of a number of restrictions implemented by the Supreme Committee to deal with COVID 19, to stop the spread of the virus in the country. Marriage halls, exhibition venues and gyms are now once again open, although they must operate at reduced occupancy, shopping malls and restaurants can resume



regular work hours, and although children under 12 are allowed in the latter, they must operate at 50 percent capacity. People can also once again visit parks and beaches, but large-scale gatherings are not allowed.

However, Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Saidi, the Minister of Health and member of the Supreme Committee, warned that these activities could close once again, should it be found that people are not adhering to the precautions needed to reverse the spread of the disease.

“The numbers decreased before Eid, but gatherings organised during the holidays let to an increase

in case numbers, although we hope this will be a temporary rise,” he told Oman News Agency. “The Supreme Committee in all its statements has made it clear that the activities that have been reopened can be closed again, if the correct precautions are not followed.”

Furthermore, the entry ban of passengers travelling from 12 countries – Sudan, Brazil, Nigeria, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, the UK, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Egypt and the Philippines – has been extended. From 2 pm on Saturday, 5 June, the ban was extended to three more countries: Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam.



OMAN

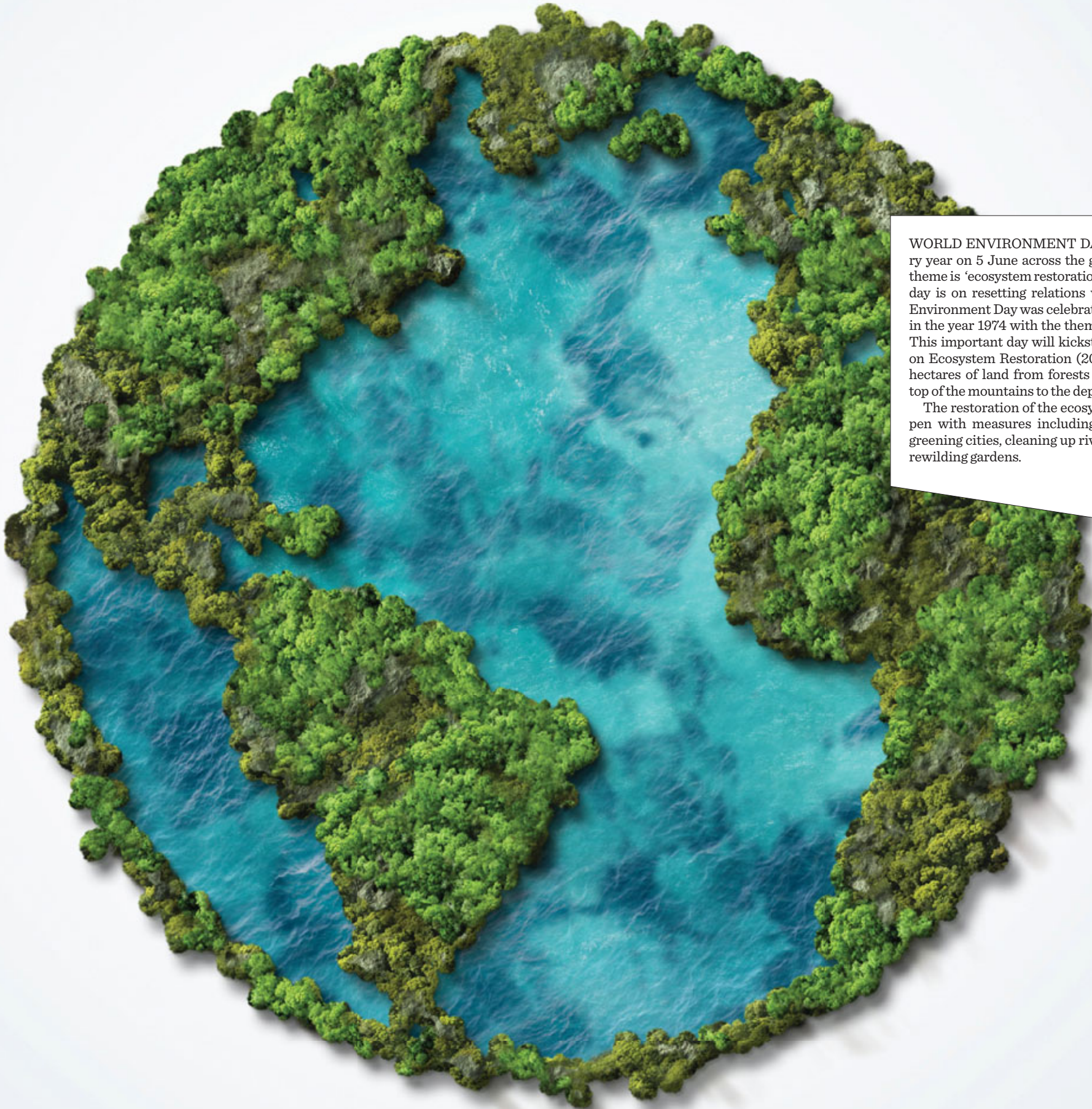


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OMAN CELEBRATES WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY



WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY is observed every year on 5 June across the globe. This year the theme is 'ecosystem restoration.' The focus of this day is on resetting relations with nature. World Environment Day was celebrated for the first time in the year 1974 with the theme 'Only One Earth'. This important day will kickstart the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) to revive hectares of land from forests to farmlands, from top of the mountains to the depth of the sea.

The restoration of the ecosystem can only happen with measures including planting of trees, greening cities, cleaning up rivers and coasts, and rewilding gardens.

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman joined other countries across the world to observe and celebrate World Environment Day, which is observed on June 5 every year. This year, the slogan for the celebrations is, "Reimagining, Recreating, Restoring", to highlight the revival of damaged ecosystems in various countries of the world.

The Environment Authority said: "The Sultanate's participation with the countries of the world on this occasion comes as

an affirmation of the continuation of work in protecting the Sultanate's environment, preserving the unique biodiversity and making more efforts to protect the ecosystem and work on its sustainability for future generations."

"The Environmental Protection and Pollution Control Law issued by Royal Decree No. (114/2001) made environmental planning an essential part of comprehensive development planning in all fields, in order to achieve the concept of sustainable development and give prior-

ity to the principle of protecting the environment and preventing its pollution."

"Coinciding with this global event, the Sultanate stresses the importance of preserving biodiversity and sustainable development in all its aspects. Therefore, it worked to consolidate the concept of preserving the environment, and it has dedicated to it a main axis concerned with environmental affairs, among the four axes on which the Oman 2040 vision is based," the authority emphasised.



SEVERAL-DAY VISIT



Yemeni minister arrives in Oman

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INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

SpaceX cargo Dragon en route to ISS seen flying in daytime

WASHINGTON DC: Recently launched SpaceX Dragon resupply spacecraft en route to International Space Station was seen flying into orbital in the daytime on Saturday morning. With a video, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Tweeted: "The SpaceX cargo Dragon flies into orbital daytime as it continues approach to the Space Station for docking this morning." The space-

craft carried the 7,300-pound (3,300-kilogram) shipment -- which also includes fresh lemons, onions, avocados, and cherry tomatoes for the station's seven astronauts -- should arrive Saturday. "Success! A SpaceX Dragon resupply spacecraft is on its way to the International Space Station after launching today at 1:29 pm ET from NASA Kennedy in Florida, carrying more than 7,300

pounds of science experiments, new solar arrays, and other cargo," NASA tweeted. According to NASA's statement, the spacecraft launched on a Falcon 9 rocket from Launch Pad 39A at Kennedy. It is scheduled to autonomously dock at the space station around 5 am Saturday, June 5, and remain at the station for about a month. Coverage of arrival will begin at 3:30 am on NASA Television, the agen-

cy's website, and the NASA app.

This 22nd contracted resupply mission for SpaceX will deliver the new ISS Roll-out Solar Arrays (iROSA) to the space station in the trunk of the Dragon spacecraft. After the Dragon docks to the space station's Harmony module, the robotic Canadarm2 will extract the arrays and astronauts will install them during spacewalks planned for June 16 and 20. **ANI**



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India witnesses sharp decline in COVID cases

India yesterday reported 120,529 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the country's infection tally to 28,694,879

NEW DELHI : India's daily new COVID-19 cases reported a sharp decline on Saturday as the country recorded 11,835 less cases as compared to Friday.

Down from yesterday's 132,364 cases, India reported 120,529 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the country's infection tally to 28,694,879, according to the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on Saturday.

India's active caseload further declined to 1,555,248 as active cases decreased by 80,745 in the last 24 hours. The active cases in the country have been less than 2 lakhs for the nine successive days.



The daily positivity rate stands further dips to 5.78 per cent, remaining below the 10 per cent mark for 12 consecutive days, while the weekly positivity rate stands at 6.89 per cent.

The death toll due to the virus climbed to 344,082 with 3,380 fatalities being recorded in a span of 24 hours.

Meanwhile, recoveries continue to outnumber the daily new cases for 23 successive days, as India witnessed 1,97,894 recoveries in

the last 24 hours, the ministry said. The recovery tally of India has reached 26,795,549 and the recovery rate stands at 93.38 per cent.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research, a total of 36,11,74,142 samples tested up to June 4, of which 20,84,421 samples were tested yesterday.

The Union Health Ministry has informed that nearly 22,78,60,317 vaccine doses have been administered so far under the nationwide vaccination drive.

Lioness dies from COVID in Indian zoo

A 9-year-old lioness by the name of Neela has died in an Indian zoo from coronavirus, officials at the Arignar Anna zoological park said on Friday.

The state-run zoo, located just outside Chennai, said Neela passed away from COVID-19 on Thursday, while eight other lions also tested positive for the virus.

"Samples of tigers and other large mammals are being sent for testing," the statement added.

The zoo said five lions started showing loss of appetite and occasional coughing on May 26, which prompted the zookeepers to send samples away for testing from 11 lions in total.

All the other lions who have tested positive are being kept under close observation by staff.

The source of their infection is unclear, although the zoo said that all of its keepers had been vaccinated against coronavirus.

There have been various coronavirus cases in animals, including two white white tiger cubs thought to have died of COVID-19 in neighboring Pakistan and lions also testing positive in Spain and two other cities of India. **ANI/DW**

Facebook suspends Trump's accounts for two years

WASHINGTON: Facebook on Friday suspended former US President Donald Trump's account for two years, effective from the date of the initial suspension on January 7 this year.

The information about the suspension was shared by Nick Clegg, Facebook's Vice-President of global affairs in a blog post.

"We are today announcing new enforcement protocols to be applied in Exceptional cases such as this, and we are confirming the time-bound penalty consistent with those protocols which we are applying to Mr Trump's accounts. Given the gravity of the circumstances that led to Mr Trump's suspension, we believe his actions constituted a severe violation of our rules which merit the highest penalty available under the new enforcement protocols. We are suspending his accounts for two years, effective from the date of the initial suspension on January 7 this year," read Clegg's Facebook post.

Last month, the Oversight Board upheld Facebook's suspension of former US President Donald Trump's Facebook and Instagram accounts following his praise for people engaged in vio-



lence at the Capitol on January 6.

Reacting to the suspension, Trump said that next time he will not organise dinners for social-media tech giants.

"Next time, I'm in the White House there will be no more dinners, at his request, with Mark Zuckerberg and his wife. It will be all business!", read the statement of Trump. CEO Mark Zuckerberg wrote in a post at the time that "the risks of allowing the President to continue to use our service during this period are simply too great."

The company has also suspended his account on Instagram, which Facebook owns.

Twitter, by contrast, has permanently banned Trump from its service and there is no trace of his account there. **ANI**



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Chinese virologist says Fauci emails prove her Wuhan lab leak claims

A trove of Fauci’s emails covering the onset of the coronavirus outbreak was released this week

WASHINGTON: A Chinese virologist, who was among the first to suggest the COVID-19 virus leaked from a Wuhan lab, said that US top coronavirus advisor Anthony Fauci’s emails prove that she was right all along.

A trove of Fauci’s emails covering the onset of the coronavirus outbreak was released this week to media under a freedom of information request. In one email sent last April, an executive at a health charity thanked Fauci for publicly stating



LAB LEAK: In one email sent last April, an executive at a health charity thanked Fauci for publicly stating that scientific evidence does not support the lab-leak theory.

that scientific evidence does not support the lab-leak theory.

Dr. Li-Meng Yan was one of the first to research the emerging coronavirus and previously revealed

she was forced into hiding after accusing Beijing of a cover-up, New York Post reported.

Now, as international leaders finally focus on her Wuhan lab-leak

theory, the scientist told Newsmax that Fauci’s emails contain “a lot of useful information” suggesting he always knew more than he revealed.

“They verify my work from the very beginning, even from last January, that these people know what happened, but they choose to hide for the Chinese Communist Party and for their own benefits,” Yan insisted speaking of the treasure trove of documents released this week.

“He knows all these things,” she insisted of Fauci and the apparent gain-of-function work carried out by the now-notorious Wuhan Institute of Virology in the heart of the city where the pandemic first emerged.

One email, she said, showed that “Dr. Fauci even back to 1st of February last year immediately realized that there would be gain-of-function experiment involved in the COVID-19 virus.”

Over 3,000 pages of emails were obtained by the Washington Post, BuzzFeed News and CNN through Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, date from January to June 2020.

The emails have sparked the debate whether Fauci chose to remain mum despite knowing about

the onset of the virus.

The emails revealed about early days of the US Covid outbreak. Dr Fauci and his colleagues took notice, in the early days, of the theory that COVID-19 may have leaked from a laboratory in Wuhan, China.

In an interview with CNN, Fauci said the email had been taken out of context by critics and he had an “open mind” about the origin of the virus.

With regard to the “lab leak” email, the doctor told CNN that he still finds it unlikely that a Wuhan laboratory released the virus.

“I don’t remember what’s in that redacted [email], but the idea I think is quite far-fetched that the Chinese deliberately engineered something so that they could kill themselves as well as other people,” he said.

Amid criticism of an inconclusive international probe into the virus’ origins and new reports of Covid-related illness in the region weeks before it was officially identified, the theory is once again sparking debate. **ANI**

BANNED



PUBLIC OFFICES: President Vladimir Putin banned people who have been involved in “extremism” or “terrorism” from running for public offices.

Vladimir Putin signs law banning ‘extremists’ from running in elections

MOSCOW: Russian has banned individuals designated as “extremists” from running for public offices, a move condemned by the opposition as an effort to further limit political competition.

By signing a new law on Friday, the day which also marks the birthday of jailed Kremlin critic Alexey Navalny, President Vladimir Putin banned people who have been involved in “extremism” or “terrorism” from running for public sectors. CNN reported that the law prevents members of “extremist” or “terrorist” organizations from standing in elections for a period of three to five years, depending on the person’s position.

Founders and leaders of designated groups will not be able to run for elected office for five years after a court’s decision to ban the group. Employees or financial sup-

porters of court-ruled extremist and terrorist organizations will be banned from running for office for three years.

Navalny was imprisoned earlier this year by a Moscow court for allegedly violating the probation terms of a 2014 case in which he received a suspended sentence of three and a half years. Navalny’s chief of staff Leonid Volkov tweeted on Friday he didn’t believe Putin “accidentally” signed the law today.

The new legislation comes ahead of a court decision on whether to designate both Navalny’s political and anti-corruption organizations as extremist groups following a lawsuit filed in April by the Moscow Prosecutor’s Office.

A political analyst of Carnegie Moscow and founder of R Politik, Tatiana Stanovaya said that the

law threatens not only opposition politicians but ordinary Russian citizens.

“The law is part of a larger campaign against anti-regime behavior in Russia,” she said. “The battlefield has become much larger, now even a Russian citizen who participates in protests, retweets an opposition post or donates to opposition groups, face the risk of prosecution.”

The new legislation signed by Putin means Navalny supporters face the possibility of being barred from running in Russia’s upcoming parliamentary elections in September.

Navalny was already barred from running in Russia’s last presidential election in 2018 because of his conviction. Russia’s next presidential election is scheduled for 2024. **ANI**

GUN LAWS

US judge overturns California’s decades-long ban on assault weapons

WASHINGTON: A federal judge overturned California’s three-decade-old ban on assault weapons on Friday, ruling that it violates the constitutional right to possess arms.

San Diego District Judge Roger Benitez called the ban a “failed experiment,” adding that California’s definition of military-style weapons unlawfully deprives law-abiding citizens of arms allowed in most other states and by the Supreme Court.

Benitez said Americans have the right to own semi-automatic rifles.

“Like the Swiss Army knife, the popular AR-15 rifle is a perfect combination of home defense weapon and homeland defense equipment. Good for both home and battle,” the judge said in his ruling’s introduction.

“Guns and ammunition in the hands of criminals, tyrants and terrorists are dangerous; guns in the hands of law-abiding respon-

sible citizens are better,” he added in the 94-page decision.

The ruling comes as gun-related homicides surge across the US, which President Joe Biden has called an “epidemic.”

California governor condemns decision

Governor Gavin Newsom slammed the ruling, calling it “a direct threat to public safety and the lives of innocent Californians, period.” Newsom pledged to challenge the decision.

“We’re not backing down from this fight, and we’ll continue pushing for common sense gun laws that will save lives,” he said in a statement.

State Attorney General Rob Bonta has 30 days to appeal.

US mass shootings on rise

California banned the sale of assault weapons in 1989. Plaintiffs James Miller, a California resident, and the San Diego County

Gun Owners, a political organized, challenged the law in a suit filed in 2019 against California’s attorney general.

The state attorney general’s office have said assault weapons as defined by the law are more dangerous than other firearms and are disproportionately used in crimes, mass shootings and against law enforcement, with more resulting fatalities.

State officials said overturning the ban would also mean allowing not only assault rifles, but things like assault shotguns and assault pistols.

The ruling comes just over a week after a California transit employee killed nine co-workers before taking his own life, the latest in a spate of deadly US mass shootings.

Following a search of the shooter’s home, police uncovered 12 guns, around 22,000 rounds of ammunition and suspected Molotov cocktails. **BN**



CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT: San Diego District Judge Roger Benitez called the ban a failed experiment.

SUSPENDED

Nigeria suspends Twitter ‘indefinitely’ after it deletes President’s tweet

ABUJA: Nigeria on Friday indefinitely suspended Twitter’s activities two days after the social network deleted a tweet from President Muhammadu Buhari.

“The federal government has suspended, indefinitely, the activities of the microblogging and social networking service Twitter in Nigeria,” the Ministry of Information and Culture said in the statement, reported africanews. On Wednesday, the microblogging site deleted a tweet by the President which Nigerians had criticized as a declaration of war.

In the deleted tweet, Buhari had made a reference to the country’s 30-month civil war in 1967-1970, warning “those who wanted the government to fail” to desist from



fomenting trouble.

“Many of those misbehaving today are too young to be aware of the destruction and loss of lives that occurred during the Nigeria civil war. Those of us in the fields for 30 months, who went through the war, will treat them in the language they understand,” the president tweeted on Tuesday night.

Information Minister Lai Mo-

ammed accused Twitter of ‘having an agenda’, reported africanews.

“The mission of Twitter in Nigeria is very, very suspect. Has Twitter deleted the violent tweets that Nnamdi Kanu has been sending,” Mohammed wondered.

Kanu is the leader of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). The main aim of IPOB is to create an independent state for the people of old Eastern Region of Nigeria through an independent referendum.

When people were burning police stations and killing police officers during #ENDSARS, for Twitter it was about the right to protest. But when a similar thing happened on the Capitol, it was “insurrection”, Mohammed said,

reported africanews. Earlier, the Nigerian government on Wednesday had expressed doubts about Twitter’s mission in the country, accusing the US technology company of double standards and supporting the secessionists in the west African country.

Information and Culture Minister Lai Mohammed took a swipe at Twitter after it deleted a tweet by President Muhammadu Buhari who issued a warning to troublemakers in Nigeria.

“We have a country to rule, and we will do so to the best of our ability. Twitter’s mission in Nigeria is very suspect, they have an agenda. The mission of Twitter in Nigeria is very suspicious,” Mohammed said. **ANI**

HECKLED

Twitter’s CEO Jack Dorsey heckled at Bitcoin 2021 conference in Miami

FLORIDA: Twitter’s CEO Jack Dorsey on late Friday (local time) was heckled at the Bitcoin 2021 conference held in Miami.

“Twitter’s CEO Jack Dorsey heckled over censorship during an #Bitcoin event,” tweeted Disclosure. tv. At the event, one of the attendees interrupted the discussion at one point, seemingly accusing Dorsey of undue censorship of free speech through Twitter.

According to US-based entertainment news company Meaww, the attendee who interrupted Dorsey was an activist. She attacked Dorsey at the bitcoin reference for being a “giant hypocrite about censorship and freedom of speech”.

Laura registered her protest

against the new censorship rules and accused Dorsey of “interfering” with people’s rights.

Human rights violation

“Censorship is human rights violation,” she said. Following her gimmick, Laura was quickly escorted out, reported Meaww.

Twitter banned Laura back in 2018 after she posted a tweet about Minnesota Representative Ilhan Omar. In her tweet, Laura mentioned that Omar was one of the first two Muslim women elected to Congress.

Laura had registered her protest against getting banned from the platform by handcuffing herself to the glass doors leading into Twitter’s Manhattan headquarters. **ANI**

SPORTS



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Oman Cricket calls on teams to register for new season

Premier Division League will start first in August followed by A and lower division games in September

MUSCAT: With a lot of international and domestic activity in the pipeline, Oman Cricket has called on Senior Division teams to register for the new cricket season that is set to see an early start.

Premier Division League will start first in August followed by A and lower division games in September. The online registration of Premier and A Division teams with payment of fee will begin on June 15 and end on June 30. The deadline for players registration has been set as July 10. Premier Division will see 50-over and T20 games (season starts on August 13) while A Division will consist of 40-over and T20 tournaments on turf pitches, starting on September 10.

The 30-over B Division and 20-over lower Division leagues will also start simultaneously on



SENIOR DIVISION TEAMS: The online registration of Premier and A Division teams with payment of fee will begin on June 15 and end on June 30.

September 13, all on astro-turf pitches across the capital.

Last date for B and lower division teams registration is August 10 while deadline for player registration will be August 15.

While the COVID-19 pandemic left the last season crippled and curtailed around the globe, cricket authorities are expecting a better 2021-22 calendar to make up for the lost time. With International Cricket Council (ICC) likely to announce new

schedule of Men's World Cup League 2 games, Oman Cricket has decided to begin preparations by starting the season in August, two months earlier than last year.

Oman may also be asked to host T20 World Cup matches if the event is moved to the UAE later this year. An early start to the season will also see its world class cricket infrastructure in full gear and up to the task.

Dates for Junior League and

Women's League teams registration will be announced later.

Close to a hundred teams are likely to be in action across various formats this season though the exact number of teams will only be known after the registration process is over.

Further information can be had from Oman Cricket's Iqbal Ariwala during working hours from Sunday to Thursday (8.30 am to 5.30 pm) by calling on OC office number 24970018.

FRENCH OPEN



Serena Williams, Medvedev, Zverev enter fourth round of French Open

PARIS: American tennis star Serena Williams came from behind in the second set to beat Danielle Collins 6-4, 6-4 in the ongoing French Open on Friday.

With this win, the 23-time Grand Slam singles winner sailed into the fourth round with straight sets victory over her opponent. Serena hit 22 winners against 20 unforced errors in a tough game against Collins, who was a quarter-finalist here last year.

"I really do not think about it too much because I am still playing, but I feel good to hopefully be an inspiration and continue to be an inspiration," the French Open website quoted Serena as saying.

"It is fun, I just really enjoy my

time here and I enjoy playing in front of this crowd and in general, I always try to have fun," she added.

The 39-year-old Williams will next lock horns with Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina, the number 21 seed, for a place in the quarter-finals.

Meanwhile, Russian tennis player Daniil Medvedev defeated Reilly Opelka 6-4, 6-2, 6-4 in just one hour and 38 minutes to reach the fourth round.

German tennis player Alexander Zverev also entered the fourth following a straight-sets victory on Friday over Laslo Djere.

Zverev fought back from 2-5 down in the second set and saved three consecutive set points in the match. **ANI**

INVESTIGATION

Russian tennis player Yana Sizikova questioned over 'corruption'

PARIS: French authorities were investigating Russian tennis player Yana Sizikova on suspicion of match-fixing at last year's French Open, Paris prosecutors said.

French police detained and questioned the 26-year-old before releasing her from custody on Friday. Investigators also searched her hotel room. The Russian player denies all the allegations against her and her lawyer said she might sue for defamation. Officials said Sizikova, who is ranked 101st in doubles and 765th in singles, was arrested for "sports bribery and organized fraud for acts likely to have been committed in September 2020." The player was detained on Thursday after she and her new tennis partner Ekaterina Alexan-



drova lost in under an hour 1-6, 1-6 to Australian pair Storm Sanders and Ajla Tomljanovic in the first round of the women's doubles.

What is Sizikova suspected of?

Police believe she deliberately lost a first-round doubles match at the French Open last year. Sizikova, who lives between Russia and Spain, was making her first-ever appearance at the tournament.

Suspensions were aroused because of abnormally high betting activity, including bets of tens of thousands of euros, on the match in countries outside France.

Investigators are particularly interested in the fifth game of the second set — which featured two

unusual double-faults by Sizikova who lost her serve to love.

A case was opened in October by a French police unit that specializes in betting fraud.

What has Sizikova said?

Sizikova denies the allegations. Her lawyer, Frederic Belot, said the athlete planned to file a complaint for defamation.

"She was placed in custody like a criminal. She says she is innocent and did not want me to assist her during her questioning because she considers herself like a victim," Belot said.

"Yana Sizikova had nothing to reproach herself for and intends to give all the necessary explanations to French investigators." **ANI**

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IT BOARD COMMITTEE

In line with its strategic approach to embedding digitalisation across its operations, Bank Nizwa has formed an IT and cybersecurity committee, a first-of-its-kind initiative in Oman's banking industry.

MARKET BUSINESS & FINANCE



RBI CUTS GDP FORECAST

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday cut its forecast of real GDP growth at 9.5 per cent in the current financial year (2021-2022). RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the economy is likely to grow at the rate of 18.5 per cent in the first quarter.

Madayn unveils new incentives to enhance investment climate

Madayn's Board of Directors agreed to implement an array of investment opportunities in Sur Industrial City

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Board of Directors of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates – Madayn has announced new projects in Sur Industrial City to be in line with the incentives that were announced earlier this year by Madayn.

These incentives include exemption from rental value for a period of two years, followed by a reduction in the rental value for a period of three years by 50 per cent for contracts concluded during the period from 2021 to 2024, in addition to reducing all other fees listed in Annex (1) of the Investment Regulations by 50 per cent during the same period.

Madayn's Board of Directors has



TOWNSHIP: The Board of Directors has approved the project of establishing an integrated workforce township by the private sector to enhance the offered services and boost the business environment in Sur Industrial City. - Supplied picture

agreed to implement an array of investment opportunities in Sur Industrial City.

This was announced during its fourth meeting this year chaired by Dr Saleh bin Said Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of

Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry, and Chairman of Madayn's Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors has approved the project of establishing an integrated workforce township

by the private sector to enhance the offered services and boost the business environment in Sur Industrial City.

Madayn's board of directors has also approved the shipyard project in Sur Industrial City, which

includes the establishment of a factory for modern fishing vessels, and a ship maintenance and repair centre, among other related services. These efforts shall play a key role in enhancing an attractive environment for promising projects

in the Sultanate's fisheries sector. It is worthwhile mentioning that the total volume of investments in Sur Industrial City has touched OMR1.5 billion by the end of 2020.

The announced incentives come within the efforts made by Madayn to mitigate the economic consequences resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the global drop in oil prices. The incentives also support Madayn's vision to enhance Oman's position as a leading regional centre of manufacturing, ICT, innovation, and entrepreneurship excellence.

Following the meeting, Dr Saleh bin Said Masan and members of the Board of Directors of Madayn, visited the project of Access Management System to Madayn's industrial cities, which is based at KOM 4 building in the Knowledge Oasis Muscat.

Key pillar

This project represents a key pillar of the infrastructure development strategy of the industrial cities to keep pace with the technology trends, provide value-adding services, and facilitate procedures for the investors and their clients.

The project features an integrated system that manages and facilitates the entry and exit of vehicles to/from the industrial cities of Madayn.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION

Global food prices rose at rapid pace in May

ROME: Global food prices rose in May at their fastest monthly rate in more than a decade, even as world cereal production is on course to reach a new record high, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) reported.

The FAO Food Price Index averaged 127.1 points in May, 4.8 per cent higher than in April and 39.7 per cent higher than in May 2020.

A surge in the international prices of vegetable oils, sugar and cereals led to the increase in the index, which tracks monthly changes in the international prices of commonly-traded food commodities, to its highest value since September 2011 and only 7.6 per cent below its all-time peak in nominal terms.

The FAO Cereal Price Index increased 6.0 per cent from April, led by international maize prices, which averaged 89.9 per cent above their year-earlier value.

However, maize prices started to retreat at the end of May, mostly on improved production prospects in the United States of America. International wheat prices also showed a late-month decline but averaged 6.8 per cent higher in May than in April, while international rice quotations held steady.

The FAO Vegetable Oil Price Index gained 7.8 per cent in May, mainly reflecting rising palm, soy and rapeseed oil quotations. Palm oil prices rose due to slow production growth in Southeast Asian countries, while prospects of robust global demand, especially from the biodiesel sector, drove soy oil prices higher.



FOOD PRICE INDEX: The FAO Food Price Index averaged 127.1 points in May, 4.8 per cent higher than in April and 39.7 per cent higher than in May 2020. - Photo used for illustrative purpose only

The FAO Sugar Price Index increased by 6.8 per cent from April, due largely to harvest delays and concerns over reduced crop yields in Brazil, the world's largest sugar exporter, even as large export volumes from India contributed to easing the price surge.

The FAO Meat Price Index increased by 2.2 per cent from April, with quotations for all meat types rising due to a faster pace of import purchases by China, as well as rising internal demand for poultry in the leading producing regions.

The FAO Dairy Price Index rose by 1.8 per cent in the month, averaging 28 per cent above its level of one year ago. The increase was led by solid import demand

for skim and whole milk powders, while butter prices declined for the first time in almost a year on increased export supplies from New Zealand.

A new Cereal Supply and Demand Brief, also released today, offered FAO's first forecast for world cereal production in 2021 - now pegged at nearly 2 821 million tonnes, a new record and a 1.9 per cent increase from 2020, led by a foreseen 3.7 per cent annual growth in maize output.

World cereal utilisation in 2021/22 is predicted to expand by 1.7 per cent to 2 826 million tonnes. Total cereal food consumption is forecast to rise in tandem with the world population, while increased

use of wheat for animal feed is also anticipated.

Based on those forecasts, world cereal stocks at the close of crop seasons in 2021/22 are anticipated to increase by 0.3 per cent to 811 million tonnes.

While the expected modest rise would end three consecutive years of decline, the global stocks-to-use ratio is forecast to decline further to 28.1 per cent.

FAO's first forecast for world trade in cereals in the new season indicates an increase of only 0.3 per cent from the high level estimated for 2020/21 when trade is expected to expand by as much as 6.3 per cent to a peak level of 468 million tonnes. -WAM

GARTNER REPORT

Global chip shortage expected to persist until second quarter of 2022

DUBAI: The worldwide semiconductor shortage will persist through 2021, and is expected to recover to normal levels by the second quarter of 2022, according to Gartner, Inc.

"The semiconductor shortage will severely disrupt the supply chain and will constrain the production of many electronic equipment types in 2021. Foundries are increasing wafer prices, and in turn, chip companies are increasing device prices," said Kanishka Chauhan, principal research analyst at Gartner.

The chip shortage started primarily with devices, such as power management, display devices and microcontrollers, fabricated on legacy nodes at 8-inch foundry fabs, which have a limited supply. The shortage has now extended to other devices, and there are capacity constraints and shortages for substrates, wire bonding, passives, materials, and testing, all of which are parts of the supply chain beyond chip fabs. These are highly commoditised industries with minimal flexibility/capacity to invest aggressively on short notice.

Across most categories, device shortages are expected to be pushed out until the second quarter of 2022, while substrate capacity constraints could potentially extend to the fourth quarter of 2022.

Gartner analysts recommend that OEMs dependent directly or indirectly on semiconductor take four key actions to mitigate risk and revenue loss during the global chip shortage:

Extend supply chain visibility - The chip shortage makes it essential for supply chain leaders to extend the supply chain visibility beyond the supplier to the silicon level, which will be critical in projecting supply constraints and bottlenecks and eventually, projecting when the crisis will improve.

Guarantee supply with companion model and/or pre investments-OEMs with smaller and critical component requirements must look to partner with similar entities and approach chip foundries and/or OSAT players as a combined entity to gain some leverage. Additionally, if scale



Kanishka Chauhan, principal research analyst at Gartner

allows, preinvesting in a commoditised part of the chip supply chain and/or foundries, could guarantee the company a long-term supply.

Track leading indicators - While no relevant parameter by itself will project how the shortage situation will evolve, a combination of relevant parameters can help guide organisations in the right direction.

"Since the current chip shortage is a dynamic situation, it is essential to understand how it changes continuously. Tracking leading indicators, such as capital investments, inventory index and semiconductor industry revenue growth projections as an early indicator of inventory situations, can help organisations stay updated on the issue and see how the overall industry is growing," said Gaurav Gupta, research vice president at Gartner.

Diversify supplier base- Qualifying a different source of chips and/or OSAT partner will require additional work and investment, but it would go a long way in reducing risk. Additionally, creating strategic and tight relationships with distributors, resellers and traders can help with finding the small volume for urgent components.

ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFIED FRAUD EXAMINERS

CBO president meets board members of ACFE

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Tahir bin Abdullah Al Amri, the Executive President of the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) met with the board members of the Oman Chapter of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE). The meeting was held at the Central Bank headquarters last Tuesday. The meeting was also attended by Ali Al Asmi and other officials of the bank.

Jose Chacko, President of ACFE Oman Chapter thanked the CBO chief for his valuable time and presented the activities of the chapter and appraised the ways and means in which ACFE can join with CBO



Tahir bin Abdullah Al Amri

in bringing up the best practices in the administration of Anti Money Laundering and Anti Bribery policies initiated by the Central Bank



Jose Chacko

in the Sultanate. Jose Chacko, the president was accompanied by Davis Kallukaran, the Immediate Past President,

Vice President Khalil Al Rawahi, Treasurer Kevin Frank, Fathiya Maskari, Director Training, Salim Al Mushaifri Membership director and Murad Al Balushi, Director at Large.

Tahir Al Amri emphasised the need to develop more and more professional accountants and fraud examiners in most of the financial, insurance and banking sectors in Oman to eradicate the nuisance of money laundering, bribery and corruption. He asked the chapter leaders to reach the objectives of ACFE to schools and colleges in the Sultanate to attract more and more aspirants to this vital profession.

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TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Tender No.	Tender Name	Last date for Tender Clarification	Last date for bids submission	Refundable Deposit
ORC/04/2021	Annual Agreement for Scrap Coolers Sale	10/06/2021	13/06/2021	RO. 100/-

Following is the list of "scrap coolers and related accessories" to be part of the agreement:

1. Chest coolers or freezer	9. Open front cooler 4 door	17. Old compressors
2. Single door	10. Vending machine	18. Old water cooler
3. Double door	11. Postmix Overcounter	19. Old doors
4. Four door (Two double door)	12. Postmix undercounter	20. Fan Motor
5. ELM	13. Post mix tower (No compressor)	21. Old cooler shelves
6. Open Front Cooler 1 door	14. Old MS BIB stand	22. IC Freezer -Vertical (Single door)
7. Open front cooler 2 door	15. Old unit	
8. Open front cooler 3 door	16. Old A/C	

• Tenderers are requested to pay a deposit in cash as per above table, payment receipts will be handed upon receipt of ID card copy and two business cards of the company's representative. The deposits will be refunded if the bid was unsuccessful, subject to presenting the payment receipt.

• The Tenders are to be submitted in sealed envelope and to be signed, stamped and addressed to Oman Refreshment Tender Committee and marked with Tender Number & Name.

• The bids should be sent to the Secretary, Oman Refreshment Tender Committee, Oman Refreshment SAOG Head Office located next to Al Ghoubrah's traffic lights, opposite Avenues Mall.

• The submission date/time shall be on or before the deadline specified in the above table. Any proposal submitted after the given date/time will not be considered.

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JOB VACANCIES

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Whatsapp no: +968 95933456

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Looking for part time accountant job. Contact 91019796

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Email: cb3415@gmail.com

Senior Accountant: Indian male MBA finance, with 2 yrs of Accounting experience looking for suitable job preferably as Senior Accountant Position. NOC available. Contact 72420067 / 95272057.
Email: fahadbinabdallah@gmail.com

Accountant with 3 years Oman experience (6 years total Experience), MBA Finance, well versed in VAT, NOC Available. Contact 97874226

Sr. Accountant Sri Lankan 20+years Oman experience seeks placement. Contact 99630192

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Indian female looking for office assistant or accountant job. 97947214

Indian female, 8 years experience coordination, ex-secretary, admin asst. Contact 92243552

Omani male 15 yrs experience in the field of Public relation & good communication skill looking for a suitable placement. Contact 97407500.
Email khalidoman017@gmail.com

Indian male with 17 years experience in Oman with reputed companies / International school / vehicle service showroom familiar with bank / embassy related works looking for vacancy of messenger / driver / merchandiser etc. Contact 92847256

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Bangladeshi looking for driver job, 4 yrs experience. Can speak Arabic & Hindi. Contact 97625632

Looking for driving job, 4 yrs experience, Can speak English, Arabic & Urdu. Contact/Whatsapp 95283531

Looking for a driver job (16 years experience in Oman). # 93092377

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Email: pvmani_2006@yahoo.com

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MEP Mechanical Engineer with 2 years Experience. Contact 79027224.
Email mhmdsalah6a@hotmail.com

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Email: Muheenpatgar08@gmail.com

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FEATURES



JAPAN'S FASCINATION WITH PERFECT — AND EXPENSIVE — FRUITS

The first Yubari melons have just sold at auction for more than €20,000.
More pricey fruit will be coming onto the market soon,
destined to serve as expensive gifts.

The first Yubari melons have just sold at auction for more than €20,000. More pricey fruit will be coming onto the market soon, destined to serve as expensive gifts.

Yubari is famous for the quality of its melons, which are known as a delicacy and a symbol of the imminent arrival of summer.

Perfectly round with a delicious green sheen, a pair of melons from the town of Yubari in northern Japan were sold for an eye-watering 2.7 million yen (€20,260, \$24,702) at the first fruit auction of the season at Sapporo wholesale market.

Yubari is famous for the quality of its melons, which are known across the country as a delicacy and a symbol of the imminent arrival of summer.

The melons were purchased by Hokkaido Products, a local baby food manufacturer, which announced that they would be quickly frozen, divided into 10 equal segments and sent to customers taking part in a lottery.

The president of the company told local media that he wanted to "cheer

people up" during the ongoing hardships brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.

The price the company paid for the two melons was significantly higher than the maximum of €900 last year's prime specimens went for, with lavish spending during the pandemic and economic crisis frowned upon by many.

But it was significantly less than the €37,527 record paid for a pair of the fruit in 2019.

A premium on gift-giving

And that bodes well for farmers growing other fruit that will soon be coming to market in a nation that places a premium on presenting close friends or business partners with gifts that are clearly extremely expensive as a mark of deep respect.

"When I was a young girl, I remember my father being visited at different times of the year by businessmen and officials of the city where we lived, and they would always bring a gift," said Maya Hamada, a professor of literature at Kobe University.

"Sometimes, it would be a bottle of

very nice whisky, but I always thought it was best when they brought us fruit," said Hamada, whose father was a senior executive in a pharmaceuticals company.

"They brought us cherries when the first ones had ripened, while others came with boxes of apples or a melon that had been carefully wrapped and placed in a box," she recalled. "But my favourite was always the juicy peaches that are a specialty of Okayama prefecture. They were wonderful."

Gift-giving is an important ritual in Japanese culture. Any time someone visits another person's home, even if that person is family, they traditionally come bearing a present, usually something that is edible. A similar pattern is followed in the world of business, where executives attend meetings bearing gifts.

Valuing a relationship

"It is very important that the gift is expensive, and obviously so," pointed out Hamada. "The person who is giving the gift is communicating that he values the relationship very highly and is therefore happy to pay a lot of

money to continue that friendship."

The giving of a gift also implies obligation in business circles, she said, with the recipient now perceived to be in debt to the person that gave him the gift — a form of leverage that might be exploited in the future when a new deal needs to be agreed on or arranged.

Kevin Short, a professor who specialises in environmental education at the Tokyo University of Information Sciences, said the tradition in Japan of exchanging gifts dates back to the early years of the Edo Period, between 1600 and 1868. He says, gift-giving has become an ingrained part of the culture. And while fruit is a common gift now, it was another sought-after commodity back then.

"Initially people gave presents of fish that were caught at different seasons of the year," he said. Skipjack, for example, are considered at their best when the fish migrate south off Japan's east coast in the autumn months.

"People in Japan still express their appreciation for the different seasons through the food they eat and there is also a degree of competition among

people to be seen to be paying the largest amount for the first fish of the season or a particularly good specimen," Short said, adding that the concept was later adopted for high-end fruit.

Prestige fruit

"There is a lot of prestige attached to giving gifts in Japanese society," he said. "It's a sign of respect and serves to reinforce the notion that a favor must one day be returned."

Every region of Japan has its specialty fruits and vegetables, with consumers more than willing to pay a premium. A bottom-of-the-range square watermelon from Kagawa Prefecture will typically go for €122, a single mango of the "Taiyo no Tamago" (Egg of the Sun) brand, grown in Miyazaki Prefecture, typically go for well over €80 each and a premium boxed pair can be found on display in high-end department stores for over €2,400.

In 2016, a bunch of 26 Ruby Roman grapes from Ishikawa prefecture sold at auction for more than €8,000 — which works out to an eye-watering €275 per grape. —**rw**

ROUND-UP

Al Mazyona monthly draws of Zeinah, Shababi and Children’s Accounts held

Al Mazyona is the longest-running savings scheme and offers the highest prize money in the country for its different draws

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat’s landmark Al Mazyona savings scheme continues to successfully promote the concept of savings amongst all members of the community in Oman. Al Mazyona is the longest-running savings scheme and offers the highest prize money in the country for its different draws. In 2021, the scheme is offering over OMR11 million to 7,470 winners, with the number of winners going up by 12 per cent compared to the previous year. The bank recently held Al Mazyona prize draws for its different customer segments as part of its important role in strengthening



the savings habit amongst people in Oman. Ten lucky Zeinah account holders won cash prizes of OMR1,000 each for April in the recently held draws. All Zeinah customers having a minimum balance of OMR100 were automatically entered in the draw. A prize draw was also held for the bank’s

Shababi customers wherein 100 lucky winners won OMR100 each. They were chosen from among all Shababi customers with a minimum balance of OMR10. Prize draws were also held in the Children’s Account category with 100 winners winning OMR 100 each. All children with a minimum balance of OMR 50 were automati-

cally entered into the draw. Recently Bank Muscat announced the countdown to the special Al Mazyona Mid-Year draw with over OMR 1.5 million in high-value prizes to be given away to 92 lucky winners from different governorates, Asalah Priority Banking and Al Jawhar Privilege Banking customers. The unique

Mid-year draw will reward Asalah and Al Jawhar customers as well as those from all the governorates of the Sultanate. Bank Muscat has launched a special campaign across the media and social media channels to make customers aware that they can get more chances to win by saving more. Details regarding the

draw will be posted on the bank’s social media channels in the coming days and the draw will also be live-streamed on its social media accounts. All customers maintaining a minimum balance of OMR 30,000 in their Al Mazyona accounts will be automatically entered into the draws to select the winners of the two OMR 250,000 special mega prizes during the draw. High savings Asalah Priority Banking customers maintaining a minimum balance of RO 30,000 will be entered into the draws for 10 Mid-year prizes of OMR 50,000 each for a total of OMR 500,000 in prizes for Asalah customers. Al Jawhar customers maintaining a minimum balance of OMR 10,000 will be eligible to win one of the 10 Mid-year prizes of OMR 20,000 each adding to a total of OMR 200,000. Also, 70 winners will be chosen from amongst customers across all governorates in the Sultanate having a minimum balance of OMR 1,000, with each winner getting OMR 5,000 in the prize draw for a total of OMR 350,000 in prizes. With over OMR 1.5 million to be given away during the Mid-year draw, the country’s biggest savings scheme is all set to create further excitement in the coming weeks.

PROMOTION

Oman Oasis Immuno celebrates more winners from its Scratch and Win draws

MUSCAT: At the forefront of innovation, customer-centricity and unfaltering commitment to quality, Oman Oasis has been known to place its consumers’ health as a priority. Fortified with Zinc and Copper to boost immunity, Oman Oasis’s Immuno has been a popular choice in the Sultanate. Produced and distributed by Oasis Water Company, it also has ongoing promotions, draws and schemes that offer a rewarding experience for its consumers. Recently, it announced the second and third round of winners of the Immuno Scratch and Win draws. The first draw which was held on 25 March had a total of thirty-six winners. The second draw conducted on 26 April witnessed another round of excitement as twenty-one more winners were announced. The same number of winners was again picked up at the third and final draw held on 25 May. The draws had an assortment of prizes that included three Huawei P 40 Pro phones, twelve 22 carats 4 grams gold coin, sixty Omantel Hayyak recharge worth OMR10, and three Acer laptops. Winners of key prizes from the second draw: Hassan was the proud winner of one Huawei P40 Pro phone, whereas Rashid Mubarak Al Badri, Javed Khan, Hatim Salim and Mohamad Hashim each walked away with a 4-gram gold coin. The lucky win-



ner Hilal was exhilarated on winning an Acer laptop. Winners of key prizes from the third and final draw: Shameer Kodakkadan was thrilled to win one Huawei P40 Pro phone and Nithish Radhakrishnan turned lucky with the Acer laptop. Zehra, Ahamed Shabeer, Khalid Khaleel Al Balushi and Basmaceach won a

4-gram gold coin. This exclusive Scratch and Win promotion concluded on 24 May 2021. It saw an overwhelming response from the consumers. Through ongoing campaigns like these, Oman Oasis has managed to engage with its consumers on a personal level and has created a strong bond with them.

By being able to anticipate future demands and prioritising its consumers’ needs, it has grown to be the preferred choice and a household name in the Sultanate. With over two decades of experience in the industry, it also holds several international product quality certifications like the IBWA membership, NSF, ABWA, and WQA.

IMMUNISATION PROGRAMME

Al Hayat Hospital announces COVID-19 vaccine roll-out

MUSCAT: As part of the nationwide immunisation programme, Al Hayat International Hospital is gearing up for the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out. Dr K P Raman, Founder and Chairman, Al Hayat International Hospital emphasised, “We wholeheartedly welcome the decision of the Ministry of Health for selecting Al Hayat as one of the COVID-19 private sector vaccination centres in Oman. The determination of Omani leadership will place the nation on the world’s healthcare map. Today, the vaccination of the population is a top priority, the world over, and the vaccination is safe and effective in preventing severe infection and ICU admission. We are inviting the private sector to actively participate in the vaccination campaign, and save lives. “In order to ensure, personalised patient care, Al Hayat has conceptualised a wide range of custom-made changes in its routine services ever since the pandemic struck the county. Prior to COVID-19, our principal focus was on selective surgical, orthopaedic



surgeries and cardiac cases. “At the moment, the key focus is on sick COVID-19 patients, and we have reserved nearly 80 per cent of the bed capacity for effectively handling the prevailing situation,” Dr Raman added. “Though we have increased the number of beds, increasing the medical human capital at a short notice had been a huge challenge. However, the move to make qualifying examinations online by the authorities for selected medical personnel will simplify the long procedures of recruitment during

the pandemic. “The government-sector healthcare services have always been ready to accept critical COVID-19 patients, and are providing free treatment to citizens and expatriates. Treatment and care of critical COVID patients are costly, and it is welcome that MOH bears the entire cost of treatment for all. Al Hayat is proud and privileged to participate in the services of the sick along with MOH. Moreover, the private sector doctors receive updates through COVID-19 webinars on treatment and develop-

ments frequently. “As one of the leading locally-owned and operated private hospitals in the Sultanate, we strictly adhere to internationally acclaimed healthcare and safety standards covering COVID-19 testing, infection control, and use of Personal Protective Equipment. The state-of-the-art facilities at Al Hayat make one feel confident that he/she receives utmost care in a comfortable and safe environment – a hospital for the family and the nation,” says CEO Suresh Kumar. To participate in the campaign, companies must register the names of their employees with the Ministry of Health to get the job from approved private hospitals. For corporates, the cost of the Pfizer vaccine per dose is OMR20. At the time of registering and booking, companies should transfer OMR40,000 (for 2 doses) to the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Pandemic Vaccine Fund (National Bank of Oman Account Number 10161251050001). Al Hayat will be charging OMR3 as administrative charges for each dose.

INTELLIGENTLY-DESIGNED

Danube Hospitality Solutions launches its comprehensive Master Catalogue

MUSCAT: At Danube’s Hospitality Summit, June 1 2021, Danube Hospitality Solutions announced the launch of its most comprehensive, most forward-looking Master Catalogue, offering the widest range of operating supplies and equipment, to strategically meet the growing needs of the hospitality sector in the Middle East. The intelligently-designed Master Catalogue is Danube Hospitality Solutions’ pièce de résistance, covering an impressive 10,000 plus products across 10 product categories that fulfil the requirements of the modern-day hospitality sector to deliver extraordinary and memorable customer experience. It was a star-studded event were in attendance was the crème de la crème of the FNB and hospitality industry, to set the tone for the months ahead Danube Hospitality hosted a panel discussion where we the insights of Fahad Al Gergawi, CEO of Dubai Investment Development Agency (Dubai FDI), Andy Cuthbert- General Manager-Jumeirah Creekside Hotel & C&I and Jumeirah Hospitality Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai UAE, Sunjeh Raja, Director & CEO, International Center for Culinary Arts (ICCA Dubai) and Rizwan Sajjan, Founder and Chairman Danube Group. The massive 700 page Master Catalogue, also available in digital format, developed in partnership with 41 international brands, is presented as a reliable one-stop solution provider for your HORECA & Catering needs. The DHS team have done an outstanding job in developing a bewildering range of new and exciting OS&E products, collected with absolute care and passion, combining Danube’s experience and know-how in sourcing the crème de la crème of China Ware, Glass Ware, Cutlery, Kitchen Ware, Stewarding, Buffet, In-room Dining, Modular Storage Solutions, and Table Accessories. Shubhojit, Group Director Retail and Hospitality Solutions, was quoted as saying, “While our OS&E products cover everything hospitality or food servicing establishment needs for their day to day operations such as state-of-the-art kitchen equipment, refrigeration & storage solutions as well as all the tableware, our FF&E solutions offer the finest aesthetic touch to the interiors. Our strategic partnership with 41 international brands allows us to offer our esteemed clients end-to-end expertise and perhaps the

The intelligently-designed Master Catalogue is Danube Hospitality Solutions’ pièce de résistance, covering an impressive 10,000 plus products

widest imaginable customisation options in the furniture, fixtures and furnishing solutions. Danube has already built an impressive collection of satisfied clients which includes the likes of Novotel, Hilton, Radisson Blu, JW Marriott Marquis, The Ritz Carlton, Yas Island, and many more, which speak volumes about the fact that Danube Hospitality Solutions is strategically well-poised to offer the best solutions to the challenges faced by our hospitality industry with professional ease and finesse.” The Group Managing Director, Adel Sajjan said on the occasion, “The Danube as a group has seen immense growth over the past decade due to the trust that our customers place on us owing to the stellar products and services we provide across our different verticals. With Danube Hospitality Solutions, we have extended the same quality and service standards to provide everything that a hospitality establishment needs under one roof.” There is no doubt that the Master Catalogue adds a silver feather and pays tribute to the vision of Danube Hospitality Solutions to become a one-stop solution provider for the entire hospitality services and supplies in the Middle East. Danube Hospitality Solutions’ demonstrable ability to respond to the needs and aspirations of its customers at a rate faster than anybody else is matched by its extensive logistical apparatus and warehousing facilities which are strategically located across the region. On top of that, Master Catalogue features a number of international brands and manufacturers highlighting and enhancing the ability of DHS to cater to all price points on a spectrum.



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