

MINISTERIAL DECISION SETS STANDARD FOR OMANI CAP

Qais Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, has issued a decision (No. 21/2022) determining the standards specification for Omani kumamah (cap) and stating that a fine will be awarded to those who breach the specification. **>A5**



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HM RECEIVES THANKS FROM QATAR

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of Qatar in reply to His Majesty's condolences cable on the death of Sheikh Mohammed Khalid Hamad Abdullah Al Thani. In the cable, Sheikh Tamim expressed his sincere appreciation for His Majesty's heartfelt sympathies, praying to the Almighty Allah to rest the deceased's soul in peace in paradise and to protect His Majesty and the Omani people against all harm. - **ONA**



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HM RECEIVES WRITTEN MESSAGE FROM EGYPT

His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has received a written message from President Abdel Fattah El Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The message was delivered to His Highness Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmood Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers, by Sameh Shoukry, Foreign Minister of Egypt and head of the Egyptian side in Oman-Egypt Joint Committee. **>A3**

END OF TOUR OF DUTY

On behalf of HM, Sayyid Asa'ad bids farewell to Pakistan's Ambassador

MUSCAT: On behalf of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, His Highness Sayyid Asa'ad bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs, Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan received in his office yesterday K.K. Ahsan Wagan, Ambassador of Pakistan to the Sultanate of Oman, to bid him farewell at the end of his tour of duty.

The ambassador expressed his thanks to His Majesty the Sultan for the support extended to him during his tour of duty in Oman from His Majesty, the government and the Omani people, which had enabled him to carry out his tasks.

He also expressed his best wishes of good health, happiness and long life to His Majesty the Sultan, wishing the Sultanate of Oman



further progress and growth under the wise leadership of His Majesty.

In his turn, HH Sayyid Asa'ad expressed his utmost thanks to the ambassador for the efforts he exerted in serving relations between the two countries, wishing him

permanent success, and the people of Pakistan further progress and prosperity.

The meeting was attended by the Secretary-General and the two advisers at the Office of HH Sayyid Asa'ad. - **ONA**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Industrial Innovation Academy launched

1 Madayn on Sunday officially launched its Industrial Innovation Academy in the Knowledge Oasis Muscat (KOM). **>A6**

OMAN HM's efforts praised by Egypt's minister

2 Dr. Sameh Shoukry has lauded the efforts of Oman under the leadership of His Majesty the Sultan. **>A6**

MARKET Oman Oil in pact to empower local SMEs

3 Oman Oil Marketing Company and Riyada have entered into a pact to provide 20 retail stores to support Omani startups. **>B1**

SIX IN 10 DROWNINGS TAKE PLACE IN SWIMMING POOLS

LEARNING HOW TO SWIM IS A PREVENTIVE MEASURE. ADD TO IT THE ADDITIONAL HEALTH BENEFITS ONE GETS WHILE SWIMMING: IT IS GOOD FOR YOUR HEART, LUNGS, PREVENTS DIABETES, REMOVES STRESS, AND BUILDS ENDURANCE AND MUSCLE STRENGTH... **IRINA SAMAKAR**, A SWIM COACH AT NAUTILUS SWIMMING CLUB

Overwhelming majority of cases are male children, reveals a Sultan Qaboos University study

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Nearly six out of 10 drowning incidents that occur in Oman take place in swimming pools, a new study conducted in the country shows.

Conducted by four medical researchers at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), the study shows that 59.4 percent of all patients who were brought in for emergency care because of drowning related incidents, had been swim-

ming in pools when they started to drown.

Compiled by Niranjan Lal Jeswani, Abdullah Al Reesi and Muhammad Faisal Khilji of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Sultan Qaboos University Hospital, and Syed Rizvi of the Department of Family Medicine and Public Health at the College of Medicine and Health Sciences at SQU, the study analysed the conditions of 74 patients. 54 of them were male, and 47 were

aged six and under.

As part of their study, the researchers also provided suggestions over how drowning incidents can be overcome.

Preventive measures

"Our study suggests that children, especially males under the age of six with no swimming ability, need strict supervision next to bodies of water," they said in their report. "Furthermore, preventive measures might include raising com-

munity awareness about the risk factors of drowning, commencing public CPR lessons, and strict pool safety regulation by related authorities."

The researchers observed in their report that drowning is a neglected public health problem, and a significant cause of disability and death among children. It is the third major cause of accidental injuries and deaths, and is responsible for seven percent of all injury-related deaths globally. **>A2**

EDUCATION

7,000 admission slots in Indian schools this year

Times News Service

MUSCAT: More than 7,000 seats across Indian schools in the capital are available to new students seeking admission, with online registration for prospective students to begin on 26 January.

"The centralised admission system with online registration introduced by the board of directors, Indian schools in Oman has facilitated the entire admission process, making it convenient for parents and schools to take care of the rush for admissions," said a statement from the board.

Online registration

Online registration for admissions is applicable to seven Indian schools in the capital area: Bausher, Muscat, Darsait, Al Wadi Al Kabir, Al Ghubra, Al

Seeb, and Al Maabala.

Of the 7,338 slots available from kindergarten to grade IX students seeking admission, 2,100 are in Indian School Muscat. Wadi Kabir has some 1,440 seats.

There are also plenty of seats available in Maabala (740), Al Seeb (1,100), and Indian School Bausher (779). There are far fewer seats in Indian School Al Ghubra (359), while Indian School Darsait has some 820 slots for new admissions. Across the board, the maximum number of places for new admissions are in kindergarten.

While previous years have roughly seen between 4,500 and 5,000 slots available to new admissions, the large numbers of families who returned to India during the COVID-19 pandemic has led to more seats being up for grabs. **>A5**

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MUSCAT

Announcement: Improvement works at the Desalination Plant in the Wilayat of Qurayyat and Water Transmission Lines

Oman Water & Wastewater Services Company announces that it is in the process of implementing the improvement works in the water desalination plant in the wilayat of Qurayyat, the main water transmission line and the water distribution networks in the Wilayat of Al-Amerat in Muscat Governorate, during the period from 28 to 29 January 2022 for a period of (48) hours.

The Company apologizes for any shortage in the water supply, and urges all customers to take the necessary precautions and continue rationalizing water consumption.

For more information, please contact the Call Center (1442).

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Maghrib.....	5:53pm
Isha.....	7:06pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	5:31am

Oman, Egypt affirm their resolve to work for economic integration

The Omani side was headed by Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister of the Sultanate of Oman



of Oman, while Sameh Shoukry, Foreign Minister of Egypt, headed his country's side.

The two sides explored various aspects of cooperation and ways of developing them and followed up steps to realise the accomplishments of the next stage.

They affirmed their resolve to press ahead with means of consolidating integration in all economic,

commercial and investment fields and all other areas that could open vistas for further collaboration so that they could keep pace with contemporary scientific progress and meet the aspirations of their peoples.

The two sides also discussed key regional and international issues of common concern. They expressed their satisfaction at the

level of political consultation and coordination at various levels.

They reiterated their keenness to work hand in hand within regional and international organisations and events in a manner that meets the two countries' aspirations for the establishment of pillars of international security. They voiced their commitment towards consolidating the march of joint Arab action.

The two sides approved a number of memoranda of understanding and executive plans relevant to bilateral cooperation.

At the conclusion of the session, Sayyid Badr and Shoukry signed the joint communiqué of the 15th session of the Omani-Egyptian Joint Committee.

The communiqué affirmed the depth of historic relations between the two countries and solid bonds binding them under wise directives of His Majesty Sultan

Haitham Bin Tarik and President Abdel Fattah El Sisi.

In the communiqué, the two sides express their deep satisfaction with the lofty status of bilateral ties. They affirmed their resolve to press ahead with means of consolidating integration in all political, security, economic, commercial, industrial, judicial, developmental, educational, media, labour, social and all other areas that could open new vistas for the realization of aspirations of their two leaderships and their peoples.

The communiqué stated that the two sides signed memoranda of understanding and executive programmes between their respective foreign ministries for political consultation, a memorandum of understanding in the field of housing and urban development, a memorandum of understanding for cooperation in the media field, an executive programme to

enforce the agreement on cooperation in the legal and judicial field, an executive programme in the field of tourism, an executive programme between the Ministry of Education in the Sultanate of Oman and the Ministry of Technical Education in Egypt.

The two sides discussed key regional and international issues of common concern and expressed their satisfaction at the level of political consultation and coordination at different levels with regard to those issues.

The two sides expressed their keenness to work together within regional and international organisations and events to achieve their joint interests, meet the aspirations of their peoples and help establish international security and peace. They also reaffirmed their commitment to diligently continue enhancing the march of joint Arab action. -ONA

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The 15th session of the Omani-Egyptian Joint Committee was held yesterday at the level of foreign ministers.

The Omani side was headed by Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister of the Sultanate

DISCUSSION

Shura Council chief meets Egypt's foreign minister

MUSCAT: Khalid Hilal Al Ma'awali, Chairman of the Shura Council received yesterday Dr. Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt.

During the meeting, Al Ma'awali briefed the Egyptian official on the development of the legislative work in the Shura Council. He also highlighted the powers granted to the council within the law of the Council of Oman.

The two sides discussed aspects of cooperation between the two countries in various fields, especially in legislation and means of developing them. The meeting was attended by the Shura Council's Vice Chairman Said Hamad Al Sa'adi, Secretary General Sheikh Ahmed Mohammed Al Nadabi, several members of the council and Ambassador of Egypt to Oman.

On the sidelines of the visit, the Egyptian Foreign Minister and his accompanying delegation toured the council's halls and facilities as they viewed its latest technologies. -ONA



MEETING

State Council Chairman meets Egypt's Minister

MUSCAT: Sheikh Abdulmalik Abdullah Al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council, received on Sunday Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt and his accompanying delegation.

The meeting came within the framework of the guest's official visit to the Sultanate of Oman.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed the existing bilateral relations between Oman and Egypt and ways to boost



them in various fields. They also discussed developments in the region, in addition to a number of regional and international is-

suues of mutual interest. The meeting was attended by a number of officials from both sides. -ONA

PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS

< FROM A1 Study on drowning incidents

The study covered two infants (aged between one and 12 months), 30 toddlers (between the ages of one and three years), 15 preschoolers (aged between four and six), 17 children of school-going age (aged between seven and 14), and 10 adolescents.

The patient details were taken from drowning-related admissions made in the emergency department over a 10-year period from January 2008 to December 2017.

A majority of those admitted for drowning-related medical emergencies - 69 people - made a full

recovery after being administered medical attention, while three became brain-dead and two were left with severe neurological injury, as a result of their drowning.

Other relevant details published in the study show that most of the drowning incidents (68 out of 74) took place in the evening. The most common areas where people experienced drowning were public swimming pools, where 38 incidents took place, followed by the sea, where 17 people required rescue after drowning. Irina Samakar, a swim coach at Nautilus Swimming Club, said

that the best way for people to prevent themselves from drowning was to learn swimming, irrespective of their age.

"Many disasters are unexpected and unpredictable," she explained. "Learning how to swim is a preventive measure. Add to it the additional health benefits one gets while swimming: it is good for your heart, lungs, prevents diabetes, removes stress, and builds endurance and muscle strength. There are also many healthcare workers who learn to swim with us, so that they can be of assistance to others if needed."

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"Tender Announcement"

Supply of Food Parcels for the "Ramadan Iftar Program" for the Year 1443 AH / 2022 AD for Al Mahrah Governorate and Surrounding Areas in the Republic of Yemen

Tender No. 1/2022

Oman Charitable Organization (O.C.O.) announces a tender for the supply of 27,900 (twenty Seve thousand and nine hundred) food parcels for the "Ramadan Iftar Program" for the year 1443 AH / 2022 AD, and distributing them to all the districts of Al Mahrah Governorate and the surrounding areas according to the attached list of locations (16 locations).

Specialized merchants and suppliers wishing to submit their bids for this tender can obtain the terms and conditions from the Financial Department of Oman Charitable Organization against payment of nominal fees, during the period from Sunday 23 January 2022 to Thursday 27 January 2022. The last date for bid submission and acceptance shall be Monday 31 January 2022.

Bids shall be deposited in the tender box at the Financial Department, O.C.O. Headquarters Building at the Wilayat of Baushar, Muscat Governorate, Al Khuwair 33, Southern Street No. 47, near Sultan Said bin Taimur Mosque.

Bids shall be placed in closed envelopes sealed with red wax and addressed to H.E. the Chairman of the Projects and Tenders Committee of O.C.O. before the specified date.

"O.C.O. is not obligated to award the tender in whole or in part or to consider the lowest price."



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MEETING

HM receives written message from Egyptian President

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has received a written message from President Abdel Fattah El Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

The message was delivered to His Highness Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmood Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers, by Sameh Shoukry, Foreign Minister of Egypt and head of the Egyptian side in Oman-Egypt Joint Committee.

During the meeting, the minister conveyed the greetings of the Egyptian President to His Majesty the Sultan.

HH Sayyid Fahd and the Egyptian minister reviewed bilateral relations between Oman and Egypt based on the strong bonds between the two peoples. Shoukry stressed the significance of consolidating cooperation between the two countries in various spheres.

The meeting dealt with ways of enhancing the tasks of Oman-Egypt committee and encouraged the parties concerned to play a greater role in promoting investments and accomplishing joint projects.

The two sides also reviewed issues on the regional and international arenas and joint action to support security and stability in the regional front.

The Egyptian minister commended the wise and balanced policy espoused by the Sultanate of Oman and the country's positive role in upgrading understanding and constructive dialogue among other countries in a bid to support security and stability in the region.

He expressed his country's keenness on promoting bilateral relations. He said that the talks he conducted with Omani officials will reflect positively on their bilateral relations.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, head of the Omani side at Oman-Egypt Joint Committee.

It was also attended by Khalid Mohammed Abdulhaleem, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt accredited to the Sultanate of Oman. -DNA

More than 4,000 new COVID cases in 3 days

Times News Service

MUSCAT: More than 4,000 new COVID-19 cases have been registered in the Sultanate in the last three days, according to government figures.

The Ministry of Health has announced that 4,166 cases of coronavirus were registered during the past three days in the Sultanate. With this new announcement, the total number of cases registered in the Sultanate has gone up to 322,438 cases.

The Ministry also stated that the Sultanate has recorded three new deaths, which has taken the total number of deaths from



COVID-19 in the Sultanate to 4,128. Meanwhile, the number of people who have recovered from the disease has reached 305,675,

the Ministry added.

Giving date-wise details on the disease numbers from Thursday, January 20 to Saturday, January 22, 2022, the ministry said that on Thursday 1,708 infections and one death were reported.

On Friday, 1,143 infections and one death, and on Saturday, 1,315 infections and one death were registered. Dr. Amal Al Ma'ani, Director of the Department of Prevention and Infection Control at the Ministry of Health, confirmed that 99 per cent of infections in the Sultanate of Oman come from a mutant Omicron, according to the official account in Oman.

INVITATION TO TENDER



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Tender No.	: 2022-ENG-SOW-0004
Tender Title	: Reduce Green Anode Density Variation
Scope	: Contractor to do installation of new crusher, piping, control system and upgrade Bucker Elevator in paste plant as per scope.
Tender No.	: 2022-ENG-SOW-0003
Tender Title	: Replacement of UPS system
Scope	: Contractor shall design, supply, install and commission to replace UPS system Galaxy 1000 as per scope.

Kindly send your email and company profile to: tender@sohar-aluminium.com
For list of active tenders visit: <https://www.sohar-aluminium.com/en/content/tender-listing>

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OMANI KUMMAH

Ministerial decision sets standard for Omani cap

MUSCAT: Qais Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, has issued a decision (No. 21/2022) determining the standards specification for Omani kummah (cap) and stating that a fine will be awarded to those who breach the specification.

Article (1) states that "Standard Specification No. OS1646/2021" is set as the obligatory criteria for making Omani kummah.



Article (2) awards a fine of OMR1,000 to violators of the provisions of this decision and doubles the fine in case of repetition

of the offence.

Article (3) states that this decision shall be enforced from the date of its publishing in the Official Gazette.

The decision is a guard against prejudicing Omani kummah industry and affirms its standard specifications. It also explains the materials and other requirements for making the cap and its stages of stitching and embroidering. -ONA

MEETING

OHRC discusses annual plan

MUSCAT: Oman Human Rights Commission (OHRC) yesterday held its first meeting in 2022, under the chairmanship of Sheikh Abdullah Shuwaini Al Hosni, OHRC Chairman.

Field visits
The meeting discussed topics

submitted by the sub-committees, OHRC annual plan for 2022, and the schedule of field visits to Royal Oman Police (ROP) detention centers.

During the meeting, the commission reviewed the program of awareness and educational lectures to protect children from

negligence and abuse which is implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development and Omani Women's Associations.

Human rights
The meeting also discussed a number of other issues related to human rights in the Sultanate of Oman. -ONA

PAEDIATRIC UNIT

SQUH team conducts surgery

MUSCAT: A medical team from the Paediatric Unit of Sultan Qaboos University Hospital, has carried out an endoscope surgical operation using Neom physcam lapatascopic technique on a child who was suffering from defective discharge between the ureter and the bladder (left side).

The girl, aged one year and five months, was experiencing recurring urinary infections. Diagnosis showed that the child suffers from a duplex kidney defect (with two ureters draining the same kidney).

This is in addition to the presence of scars and reflux between

the ureter and the bladder.

The medical team, led by Dr. Zainab Nassir Al Balushi, Senior Consultant, Head of the SQUH Paediatric Department, resorted to the Neom physcam lapatascopic technique, which proved to be a success in treating the defect. -ONA

INDIAN SCHOOLS

Vacancies in schools

"The number of vacancies in kindergarten has always been the same," said a member of the board of directors. "Indian School Muscat used to offer as many as 600 vacancies earlier- 300 in the morning shift and 300 in the afternoon shift. However, this year, there are more vacancies because of the exodus of students to India."

Admission is open to children of Indian and other expatriate communities with valid resident visas. Children who have completed three years as of 1 April are eligible for kindergarten admission.

Admissions for children with special needs are open at Care and Special Education which is located on the Indian School Muscat premises. Parents can approach the CSE administration directly for admission (www.cseoman.com). Considering the COVID pandemic situations, admission procedures have been made completely online. Parents, therefore, do not have to visit the schools for submission of documents, or remittance of fees.

The closing date for online registration is 28 February 2022. More details on the admission process are available at <http://indian-schoolsoman.com/our-services/admission-2022-23/>

Regarding admission to classes X and XII, the board official said, "Under the norms of the CBSE, there are no direct admissions to these classes. But parents can contact us, should their children require admission in such cases."

Trending ON SOCIAL MEDIA

MOST READ ON FACEBOOK

15,876 REACH

Admission is open to children of Indian and other expatriate communities with valid resident visa.



Online registration for admission to Indian Schools to begin soon

A story on admissions open for Indian Schools reached 15,876 people and had 748 engagements on Facebook.

MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

12,100 VIEWS



The Morning Minute video

The Morning Minute video had 12,100 views and reached 39,600 people on Facebook.

MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

9,916 VIEWS



Video story of a man caught for drifting

A video story of a man caught for drifting in Oman had 9,916 views and 995 likes on Instagram.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS – INDIAN SCHOOLS
ONLINE REGISTRATION FOR ADMISSIONS IN INDIAN SCHOOLS IN THE CAPITAL AREA (2022-2023)

On line registration for admissions to classes KG I to Class IX in Indian Schools in the capital area for the academic year 2022-2023 will start from 26th January 2022.

SL.N.	SCHOOL	CLASSES
1	Indian School Muscat	KG I – IX
2	Indian School Al Wadi Al Kabir	KG I – IX
3	Indian School Darsait	KG I – IX
4	Indian School Al Ghubra	KG I – IX
5	Indian School Bousher	KG I – IX
6	Indian School Al Seeb	KG I – IX
7	Indian School Al Maabala	KG I – IX

Admission is open to children of Indian and other expatriate communities with valid resident visa.

For the online application form and for more details about the admission process, please visit <http://indianschoolsoman.com/our-services/admission-2022-23/>

A non-refundable processing fee of OMR 15/- will be payable on each application.

The scanned copy of the application form, duly signed by the parent, along with the copy of the processing fee receipt/deposit slip shall be emailed to admissions2022@indianschoolsoman.com with the application registration number as the subject on or before the closing date (2:00 p.m., 28th February 2022).

Admissions for children with special needs are open at Care and Special Education (CSE) which is located on the Indian School Muscat premises. Parents can approach the CSE administration directly for admission (www.cseoman.com)

Admissions are purely subject to availability of seats in the respective schools.



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Madayn launches Industrial Innovation Academy in KOM

The academy aims at boosting the performance of factories in Madayn's industrial cities, and enhancing their operations through innovative techniques

MUSCAT: The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates – Madayn on Sunday officially launched its Industrial Innovation Academy in the Knowledge Oasis Muscat (KOM) under the patronage of Dr. Khamis Saif Al Jabri, Chairman of Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-Up Unit.

The launching ceremony was attended by Dr. Saleh Said Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry, Chairman of Madayn's Board of Directors; and Asila Salim Al Samsami, Undersecretary of Investment Promotion at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

Commenting on the launch of Industrial Innovation Academy, Hilal Hamad Al Hasani, CEO of Madayn said that the Academy has been set up to explore and study value-adding investment opportunities in various sectors, and develop and incubate these opportunities to enhance the local content.

"The academy aims at boosting the performance of factories in Madayn's industrial cities, enhancing their operations through incorporating innovation components,



INAUGURATED: The launching ceremony was attended by Dr. Saleh Said Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry, Chairman of Madayn's Board of Directors; and Asila Salim Al Samsami, Undersecretary of Investment Promotion at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion. -ONA

as well as developing the skills of the national cadres. Besides, the Industrial Innovation Academy focalises on keeping abreast of current and future phases, unifying efforts, enhancing performance, reducing costs, and achieving sustainable and added value to the factories in Madayn's industrial cities," Al Hasani elaborated.

In his part, Dr. Hussain Suleiman Al Salmi, Chairman of Industrial Innovation Academy Board of Directors, pointed out that the academy presents a valuable addition to the industrial sector with its six strategic programmes that address vital elements. "These programmes were previously distributed over several sectors but are now under one umbrella to accelerate identifying challenges, finding solutions and exploring innovations while linking them directly to the academic sector in the Sultanate," Al Salmi added.

Speaking at the ceremony, Dr. Ayman Abdullah Al Fudhaili, Acting CEO of Industrial Innovation Academy, stated that the launch comes along the lines of Madayn Vision 2040 which is centred

around creating world-class business cities while maintaining the Omani identity to contribute to economic growth.

"Acting as an innovation arm of Madayn to ensure the realisation of its 2040 vision, the Industrial Innovation Academy revolves around achieving six strategic programmes that present a roadmap to enhance the objectives of Madayn," Al Fudhaili pointed out.

He explained that the first programme 'Connection' aims at linking the local products and services of companies operating in Madayn's industrial cities with the government tenders, while the second programme 'Supply' focuses on finding SMEs that provide goods and services within supply chains networks for the majority of economic sectors.

Moreover, the third programme 'Development' lays emphasis on maximising the use of local raw materials and building downstream industries through industrial complexes, and the fourth programme 'Sustainability' aims at identifying the troubled factories in the industrial cities, identi-

fying their challenges, and formulating innovative solutions.

Additionally, the fifth programme 'Innovation' corresponds in integration with Connection, Supply, Development and Sustainability programmes to emerge innovative products that are capable to compete in the local markets. Lastly, the sixth programme 'Omanisation' pays attention to qualifying and training the national cadres to ensure the provision of job opportunities at the middle and senior levels.

These programmes have been developed after conducting in-depth studies to get familiarised with the needs of the local market and taking into consideration that Oman Vision 2040 focuses on achieving a diversified and sustainable economy that is centred around technology, knowledge and innovation.

A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed during the launching ceremony between the Industrial Innovation Academy and Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit to enhance joint cooperation between the two sides.

This was signed by Dr. Khamis Saif Al Jabri, Chairman of Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-Up Unit, and Hilal Hamad Al Hasani, CEO of Madayn.

Another Memorandum of Cooperation was signed with the National Employment Programme through which the Academy will act as the strategic partner and operational arm of the 'Supply' programme. The programme aims at identifying priority sectors, analysing the supply chains of these sectors, and benefiting from the investment and employment opportunities emanating from the analysis of these chains.

The second Memorandum of Cooperation was signed by Dr. Ayman Abdullah Al Fudhaili, Acting CEO of Industrial Innovation Academy, and Eng. Al Azhar Ahmed Al Kindi, Technical Director of the National Employment Programme. -ONA

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EGYPT'S MINISTER

HM's efforts to boost economy praised

MUSCAT: Dr. Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt has lauded the efforts of the Sultanate of Oman, under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, to boost the country's economy and attract investments, which will in turn achieve progress and prosperity for the Sultanate in various spheres.

This came during a joint press conference held with Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, at the Foreign Ministry's premises here today. Shoukry affirmed that the meeting of the Omani-Egyptian Joint Committee and the MoUs signed between both sides during the meeting, will contribute to promoting the march of development in the two countries and meet the aspirations of their peoples.

Work is underway to explore more areas of cooperation that contribute to augmenting the volume of trade exchange between the two countries, affirmed the Egyptian Foreign Affairs Minister.

Shoukry added that Oman and Egypt have promising opportunities that require more efforts to bolster trade and investment cooperation. These advantages, the Egyptian minister affirmed, will enable Egypt to be a gateway for Omani products heading for African and European countries. They also enable Oman to be a gateway for the Egyptian products, said Shoukry.

As for the negotiations on the Renaissance Dam, he pointed out that Egypt was not to blame for the impasse in negotiations, halted since the last negotiations were held under the supervision of the African Union.

He affirmed that Egypt is always ready to resume negotiations with Ethiopia if there is a political will to help reach an agreement.

The Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs underscored his country's keenness to reach con-

sensus between the three countries and to forge a legally binding agreement in accordance with the rules of international law and practices to meet the needs of all parties, namely Ethiopia's right for development and the right of Egypt and Sudan to their share of the Nile waters.

Regarding the return of Syria to the Arab League, the Egyptian Minister said, "We hope that favorable conditions will prevail so that Syria could return to the Arab League and play its role as a supporting element for the Arab national security. We will continue to communicate with Arab countries to achieve this purpose."

In his turn, Sayyid Badr affirmed Oman's support for the Renaissance Dam negotiations. He described the Egyptian stand as valid and reasonable, noting that Oman looks forward to the two sides' reaching an agreement that satisfies the interests of all countries that are party to the accord.

Sayyid Badr added that the consultations held by the Sultanate of Oman and the Arab Republic of Egypt featured many common issues and focused on exchanging views about the way to maximize benefits from the deep-rooted political and historical relations.

Sayyid Badr added that, within the context of the 15th session of Omani-Egypt Joint Committee, a number of agreements were signed to spruce up cooperation in different economic, commercial, investment and cultural relations.

Sayyid Badr pointed out that the Omani-Egyptian Businessmen's Council and the private sectors in the two countries look forward to opportunities to expand commercial exchange and engage in quality investments with greater returns, namely within the two countries' visions for domestic development.

-ONA

MASSIVE FIRE

16 dead in fire

YAOUNDE: A fire that broke out in a nightclub in Yaounde's Bastos district during the early hours of Sunday has killed at least 16 people and injured eight others, Cameroon's Communications Ministry said in a statement. The tragedy hit in the main room of Liv's Night Club in an upscale area of Cameroon's capital. -w

SURGE IN CASES

New Zealand PM Ardern cancels her wedding due to Omicron surge

WELLINGTON: New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern on Sunday informed that she has cancelled her wedding amid a new wave of Omicron cases in the country.

"My wedding won't be going ahead but I just join many other New Zealanders who have had an experience like that as a result of the pandemic," Ardern said during a regular COVID-19 news conference on Sunday, CNN reported.

She said that health authorities have reported nine Omicron cases in Motueka in a single-family household, CNN reported adding that the family travelled to Auckland to attend a wedding, a funeral, an amusement park, and a tourist attraction last weekend, prompting the country to move to the highest "red light" setting.

When asked how she felt about her decision to cancel the wedding that was due to be held this summer, Ardern replied, "Such is life."

Last month, New Zealand said it was pushing back its phased border reopening until the end of February over concerns about the Omicron variant, according to CNN.

Chris Hipkins, the nation's minister for COVID-19 response,



said: "Waiting till the end of February will increase New Zealand's overall protection and slow Omicron's eventual spread. There's no doubt this is disappointing and will upset many holiday plans, but it's important to set these changes out clearly today so they can have time to consider those plans."

Hipkins also said New Zealand's Cabinet has agreed to other precautionary measures, including reducing the interval between a second Covid-19 vaccine dose and a booster shot from six months to four months, and increasing the required length of stay for returning travelers from seven to 10 days in managed isolation and quarantine, as per CNN. -ANI

NEW CASES

India reports over 333,000 new COVID-19 cases, daily positivity rate at 17.78%

NEW DELHI: India reported 333,533 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, taking the active caseload to 21,87,205, informed the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on Sunday.

While the daily positivity rate and weekly positivity rate stand at 17.78 per cent and 16.87 per cent respectively, the recovery rate stands at 93.18 per cent. The active cases account for 5.57 per cent of the total cases. With this India's tally of cases rises to 39,237,264. The new infections were 4,171 less than that reported on Saturday. India had reported 337,704 new COVID-19 cases and the daily positivity rate stood at 17.22 per cent on Saturday. As many as 525 fatalities were registered in the last 24 hours, taking the country's death toll to 489,409.

The total recoveries climbed to 36,560,650 with 259,168 people recovered in the past 24 hours, the ministry said.

The country conducted 1,875,533 tests in the last 24 hours, taking the cumulative testing to 715,520,580. With the administration of 7,110,445 vaccine doses in the last 24 hours, India's COVID-19 vaccination coverage has exceeded 1,61,92,84,270. -ANI

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LEGENDS

An honour to play with so many legends of the game: Imran Tahir

Gautam Viswanathan

MUSCAT: To play with the same legends he grew up watching is an honour for Imran Tahir, who is currently part of the World Giants at the Legends League Cricket tournament currently taking place in Oman.

Speaking to the media after his side earned victory over the India Maharajas, in which former South Africa international Tahir unexpectedly shone with the bat as he made a quickfire 52 off 19 deliveries, he said he was just doing what was needed for the team.

“I am really, really pleased that I was able to perform for the team, because that is why I have come here,” he said. “The wicket is so good for batsmen here... there are small boundaries so it is easy for the batsmen. I guess that suits this [Twenty20] format...



the audience also wants that. I am just happy that I did something special for my team.

“I have always wanted to play international cricket, so when I did play in any format, I realise that I must play in a manner expected from me by the team,” said Tahir, who was born in Lahore, Pakistan, but represented South Africa internationally. “I never take things for

‘I am really, really pleased that I was able to perform for the team, because that is why I have come here’

granted. To play with such great legends is an amazing honour. I used to watch these guys on TV when I was growing up, because that used to be my dream [when I was little].”

Ex-England batsman Kevin Pietersen led the charge for the World Giants with a 53-run knock, and he was ably aided by Tahir, Darren Sammy (28) and Brad Haddin (21), as they reached the target of 210 set by the India

Maharajas and won by three wickets.

“I play this game because it is purely a passion of mine...I respect the game,” added Tahir. “I was a very normal cricketer, like millions around the world. I am very grateful to the Almighty that he has given me the rewards for working hard. When I was nothing, I used to work in a shop to earn a living, and despite where I am today, I will never forget my roots.”

Ex-India international Naman Ojha, facing the media after the defeat, decided to take a more balanced view of things. Despite hammering a blockbuster 140 runs from 69 deliveries during his time on the pitch, he was unable to guide his team to victory.

“Victory and defeat happens all the time,” he said. “If we don’t do well in this game, there is al-

ways another one coming along. It is a good, grassy wicket. In the beginning, the ball seems a bit, but then it comes to you nicely.”

Ojha welcomed tournaments such as this one, because of the opportunities they provided cricketers even after they have retired from international duty.

“My second thought is to play all leagues around the world...we now have opportunities to play around the world,” he admitted. “I think this is a great tournament – all of the cricket greats are coming here to play, so it will get better and better as it goes forward.”

“At present, however, the opportunities to play are fewer, because of COVID. The tournaments that are scheduled to be held often get postponed,” he said. “However, you still need to be prepared to play each and every day.”

WORLD GIANTS SCORE 3-WICKET WIN OVER INDIA MAHARAJAS

Times News Service

MUSCAT: India Maharajas lost to the World Giants by three wickets with three balls to spare in the Legends League Cricket match played at the Al Amerat Cricket Ground on Saturday.

World Giants scored 210 for 7 in 19.3 overs beating India Maharajas 209 for 3 in 20 overs by three wickets.

In the encounter, Imran Tahir hit five sixes and scored an unbeaten 52 off just 19 balls to help his side secure an impressive win over India Maharajas.

Tahir, known for his clinical bowling performance, came to bat when his team needed 70 runs in 6.2 overs and with four wickets in hand. The tail-ender surprised all by kicking -off his innings with a couple of boundaries against Munaf Patel.

Tahir then kept the scoreboard moving by rotating the strike, before he launched a couple of sixes against Manpreet Gony in the 18th over. The 42-year-old hit the Gony for three massive sixes.

Tahir hit a four in the penultimate over, before sending the ball over the boundary in the final over to wrap up the proceedings.

Tahir, however, was not very impressive with the ball as he returned wicketless and leaked 35 runs in his four-over quota, which included six wide deliveries.

Apart from Tahir, former England star batter Kevin Pi-



etersen smashed 53 off 27 balls while Sammy played a crucial 11-ball 28 in the latter stages of the run chase.

Earlier, it was Naman Ojha, who led the attack with the bat. The wicketkeeper-batter scored 140 in just 69 balls, while Mo-

hammad Kaif the captain scored an unbeaten 53 off 47 balls to help his side post 209/3 after being invited to bat first.

Yusuf Pathan came into bat in the last over of the match and smashed the last ball for a monstrous six.

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Nadal decimates Mannarino to storm into quarter-finals

The opening set started off on a competitive note with both the players holding their serves to take it to a tie-break

MELBOURNE: Sixth-seed Rafael Nadal decimated Adrian Mannarino of France 7-6 (16-14), 6-2, 6-2 in a match that lasted for two hours and 40 minutes to enter the quarter-finals of men's singles here at the Rod Laver Arena on Sunday.

The opening set started off on a competitive note with both the players holding their serves to take it to a tie-break. The tie-breaker turned out to be an even intense battle where both Nadal and Mannarino saved three set points each. Ultimately the 20-time grand slam champion held his nerve to win the tie-breaker 16-14 in the seventh set point of the set. Unlike the first, the second set turned out to be a completely different story with the 2009 Australian Open Champion



Nadal dictating terms right from the word go by breaking Frenchman Mannarino in the very first game. The Spaniard looked unstoppable and broke his opponent again in the fifth game to take a 4-1 lead and ultimately winning the set 6-2.

In the third set as well, the 20-time grand slam champion Nadal started on a similar note by breaking Frenchman Adrian Mannarino in the opening game. In the very next game Mannarino broke back to level the score 1-1 in second set. But that break hardly affected the Spaniard as he broke

his opponent in the next game and never looked back. He broke him again in the fifth game to take a convincing 4-1 lead and bagged the third set with a similar score line of second. Rafael Nadal hit 16 aces and 42 winners enroute to his entry in last-8.

Shapovalov knocks out Zverev to enter last-8
Fourteenth seed Denis Shapovalov came up with a clinical performance to knock out third seed Alexander Zverev of Germany 6-3, 7-6 (7-5), 6-3 in men's singles match that lasted for two hours

and 21 minutes here at the Margaret Court Arena on Sunday to enter the quarter-finals.

Shapovalov took control of the match right from the opening set breaking the third seed German in the fourth game of the match to take a 3-1 lead and ultimately winning the set 6-3. In the second set too Shapovalov started off on a winning note breaking Zverev in the very first game and by holding his next game he took a 2-0 lead. The Olympic gold medallist Zverev fought back to break the Canadian in the fourth game of the set to make it 2-2.

In the eighth game the third-seeded broke Shapovalov again and went on to take a 5-3 lead but he was broken back in the next game. Both the players held their serves to level the score 6-6 and the set went to a tie breaker.

In the tie-break, the 14th seen Shapovalov raced to a 5-1 lead but Zverev won three points on trot to make it 4-5. The set ultimately went to the Canadian who won the tie-break 7-5.

Alexander Zverev also lost his temper in the match breaking his racquet. With a two-set lead, Denis Shapovalov raced to a 3-0 lead in the third set holding two games and breaking one.

The Canadian held his serve to win the third set 6-3 and win the fourth round match in straight sets. Denis Shapovalov went on to hit 35 winners in comparison to 18 hit by Zverev. **ANI**

AUSTRALIAN OPEN



Sania Mirza, Rajeev Ram cruise into mix doubles quarter-finals

MELBOURNE: Mix doubles team of India's Sania Mirza and USA's Rajeev Ram cruised into the quarter-finals of the Australian Open on Sunday.

Playing at Court 3, the Indo-American pair defeated the duo of Matwe Middelkoop from the Netherlands and Australian Ellen Perez in the second round. It took Mirza and Ram one hour and 27 minutes to defeat the Dutch-Aussie pair by 7-6(4), 6-4.

The wild-card duo who had defeated the third-seeds Robert Farah-Nicole Melichar in the previous round started the match at a

good pace against Mirza and Ram. But Indo-American pair gained the upper hand after taking the first set in a critical tie-breaker.

With momentum on their side, Mirza and Ram upped their ante and cruised to a straight-set win after they broke their opponents early in second.

The unseeded Sania Mirza - Rajeev Ram, both former Grand Slam champions, won the first-round match 6-3, 7-6(3). Both Sania Mirza and Rohan Bopanna were ousted from the women's and men's doubles, respectively, in the opening round. **ANI**

PREMIER LEAGUE

Marcus late winner lands United in top-four, Villa earn win

LONDON: Substitute Marcus Rashford struck in stoppage time to earn Manchester United a dramatic 1-0 win over West Ham United at Old Trafford and lift them into the top four for the first time since October in the Premier League table.

There were few clear-cut chances in the opening 45 minutes, with a cross by Bruno Fernandes narrowly evading the head of Cristiano Ronaldo. After the break, United upped the pressure, with Alphonse Areola saving from Fred before Raphael Varane headed over. At the other end, Tomas Soucek's header from a corner flashed narrowly wide, while David De Gea made a late save from Michail Antonio.

In the third minute of added time, Rashford arrived at the back post to convert a low cross from fellow substitute Edinson Cavani. United leapfrog West Ham into fourth on 38 points, with the Ham-



mers a point and a place back.

At St Mary's Stadium, a hard-fought display from Southampton ended Manchester City's 12-match winning run in the league with a 1-1 draw.

Kyle Walker-Peters gave Saints

an early lead, scoring his first Premier League goal in the seventh minute with a superb finish after he had linked up with Nathan Redmond.

Southampton had chances to increase their lead but Jan

Bednarek's header was kept out by Ederson and Armando Broja's header struck a post after the break. City turned up the pressure and it paid off in the 65th minute when Kevin De Bruyne's free-kick was headed in by Aymeric Laporte.

Both De Bruyne and substitute Gabriel Jesus struck the woodwork for the leaders but they could not find a way past a Southampton defence superbly led by Mohammed Salisu.

City are on 57 points, 12 ahead of Liverpool, having played two matches more. Southampton stay 12th with 25 points.

Villa, Newcastle edge to win; Moutinho star

Joao Moutinho scored one goal and set up another as Wolverhampton Wanderers defeated Brentford 2-1 in Premier League on Saturday.

All three goals arrived in the second-half following a disjointed first 45 minutes. Wolves went ahead on 48 minutes when Nelson Semedo teed up Moutinho to fire in from the edge of the area with the outside of his right foot. Brentford levelled with 20 minutes remaining through Ivan Toney's vol-

ley from a Bryan Mbeumo cross.

But Wolves hit back to win the match seven minutes later when Moutinho laid the ball off to Neves, who curled in their second. After a fifth match unbeaten, Wolves move on to 34 points, two behind sixth-placed Spurs.

At Goodison Park, Emiliano Buendia scored the only goal as Aston Villa earned a 1-0 win over Everton. Villa dominated early on and went close through Buendia before the Argentinian gave Villa the lead in first-half stoppage time.

Buendia glanced in a fabulous header from a corner by former Everton player Lucas Digne for his second league goal of the season.

Elsewhere at Elland Road, Jonjo Shelvey's second-half free-kick moved Newcastle United to within a point of safety as they beat Leeds United 1-0. Shelvey won the match for Newcastle on 75 minutes when his low free-kick beat Meslier and arrowed into the far corner. **ANI**

CRICKETER OF 2021

Mohammad Rizwan named ICC Men's T20I Cricketer of 2021

DUBAI: Pakistan wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan on Sunday was named the ICC Men's T20I Cricketer of the Year.

The Pakistan wicketkeeper-batter ruled the roost in 2021 when it came to the shortest format of the game. Aggregating a staggering 1326 runs in only 29 matches, Rizwan struck at an average of 73.66 and a strike rate of 134.89. Apart from his exploits with the bat, he was as solid as ever behind the stumps, playing a key role in Pakistan's run to the semis during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021, where he ended up as the third-highest run-scorer.

He also scored the maiden T20I century of his career against South Africa in Lahore early in the year and ended it continuing his form with a brilliant knock of 87 against West Indies in Karachi. With another T20 World Cup coming up next year, Pakistan will hope that Rizwan continues in the same vein.

Oman's Zeeshan Maqsood has been named as Men's Associate Player of 2021. Not only leading his side with aplomb, but Maqsood also flourished in both batting and bowling roles for Oman in



2021. He played a crucial role as a middle-order batter and picked up wickets consistently with his left-arm orthodox as well.

At the heart of his team's ICC Men's T20 World Cup campaign on home soil, Maqsood took on some of the Associate best across the year, as well as Bangladesh at the global tournament.

On the other hand, Austria's Andrea-Mae Zepeda has been named as Women's Associate Player of 2021.

Andrea-Mae Zepeda enjoyed her dream year in the international game, consistently at the top of the order for Austria while scoring her runs at a brisk rate.

Out of the eight T20Is, she played this year, three were against Belgium, while the other five came against Italy. Zepeda was destructive in the series against the Belgians in particular, as she registered 50+ scores, including a century, in all three matches against them. **ANI**

INDIA VS SOUTH AFRICA

India suffer series whitewash

CAPE TOWN: India suffered an ODI series whitewash of 3-0 after losing the third and final match against South Africa by four runs here at the Newlands Cricket ground on Sunday.

Chasing 288 to avoid a series whitewash against Proteas the visitors did not get an ideal start losing captain KL Rahul in the fifth over for 9 caught by Janne-malan of Lungi Ngidi's bowling with only 18 runs on the board. Shikhar Dhawan and Virat Kohli then stitched a partnership as India went past the 50-run mark in the tenth over. The duo soon notched up a fifty run stand scoring runs at a brisk pace. Dhawan went on to score his 35th ODI fifty and his second of the series.

The rub of the green also went India's way as Kohli's outside edge went away from the first slip fielder and the team reached the triple-figure mark in the 19th over. India lost the wicket against the run of play of Dhawan as a leading-edge went up in the air and keeper Quinton de Kock made no mistake to take the catch of Andile Phehlukwayo's bowling.

In the same over Rishabh Pant got out to a golden duck leaving India in a spot of bother at 118 for 3. The loss of two wickets in quick succession did not deter Kohli as



he went on to score his 64th ODI half-century.

Kohli along with Shreyas Iyer took India's total beyond the 150-run mark. Kohli-Shreyas partnership did not last long as Kohli was dismissed for 65 of a leading edge caught in the off-side by Bavuma of Keshav Maharaj's bowling.

Suryakumar Yadav joined Shreyas in the middle as the wicket-keeper as the duo kept the scoreboard moving. But Proteas once again got the breakthrough as Shreyas was out caught of a short pitch ball by Phehlukwayo of Sisanda Magala's bowling.

India reached the 200-run mark in the 38th over. But India's woes continued as Suryakumar too was dismissed caught in the

mid off by Bavuma of Dwaine Pretorius' bowling. Deepak Chahar tried to fight a lone battle but he lost another partner in Jayant Yadav dismissed by Lungi Ngidi caught by Bavuma in mid-off by Bavuma.

Boundaries and sixes from Chahar helped India go past 250-run mark in the 45th over. Chahar notched up his second ODI half-century of 31 balls taking India closer to victory from precarious situation.

With only 10 runs needed off 18 balls India, unfortunately, lost Chahar who was caught by Pretorius of Ngidi's bowling. With seven required of 9 balls India lost Bumrah for 12 of Phehlukwayo's bowling caught by Bavuma. **ANI**



MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,224.43 points, down by 0.27 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.50 per cent at 512.69 points. Vision Insurance, up 3.61 per cent was the top gainer while, Voltamp Energy down 7.07 per cent, was the top loser.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Oman Oil signs major agreement to empower local SMEs



MUSCAT: Oman Oil Marketing Company (OOMCO) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Public Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Riyada) to provide 20 retail stores to support Omani startups.

The agreement, which was signed by Hussain bin Jama Bait Ishaq, Acting Chief Executive Officer at OOMCO and Abdulaziz Al-Raisi, Vice President of the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development, allows Riyadh cardholders to apply to

rent out specially equipped retail spaces at OOMCO Ahlain stations in various locations throughout the country.

Entrepreneurs who meet the criteria for registration will be offered several benefits, including having their products displayed and marketed in Ahlain stores, as well as being promoted on Oman Oil Marketing Company and its partners' social media pages.

Business owners will also be provided with basic utilities and exempted from registration fees

for the first four months of the contract.

"Our priority is to support up-and-coming SMEs to grow and make a success of their businesses. This agreement with the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development is a clear testament of our commitment to such endeavours, and, as we align ourselves with Oman's 2040 vision, it's one of many 'In-Country Value' initiatives that we are conducting to encourage entrepreneurship and support the socio-economic

development of the nation," said Hussain bin Jama Bait Ishaq.

Abdulaziz Al Raisi also commented, "In line with our strategy to develop SMEs and aid their integration into the public, this memorandum provides a unique opportunity for budding business-owners, giving them an affordable facility from which to grow.

"We appreciate the incentives provided by Oman Oil Marketing Company and its wider efforts in serving as a catalyst for the success of the SMEs."

CMA INITIATIVE

Programme on Advanced Anti-Money Laundering

MUSCAT: The Capital Market Authority (CMA) will organise Advanced Anti-Money Laundering Programme in collaboration with the International Compliance Association (ICA) in two parts each part will address one of the sectors regulated by the CMA i.e. the capital market sector and insurance sector. The first course of the programme will be organised from February 10 - March 15.

The programme targets compliance officers of the regulated companies and will comprise five workshops to be conducted via Zoom teleconferencing, and the participants will take a test at the end of the programme to obtain the professional certification and membership in the ICA for one year qualifying the members to benefit from the literature, training courses and services offered by the ICA.

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Tender Announcement

The Capital Market Authority invites a tender for specialized companies to assist in setting up a legislative and regulatory framework for the regulation of Virtual assets (VAs) and licensing, supervision and regulation of Virtual Asset Service Providers (VASPs) in the Sultanate of Oman through the consideration of the various global forms to choose the most appropriate to be adopted and implemented. The project is going to be implemented in two phases, the first phase to identify and set out the legislative and regulatory framework required for the regulation of virtual assets, and licensing, supervision and regulation of the services providers to ensure the development and growth of the industry and to furnish the proper safeguards for investors whilst the second phase would provide training and technical support for the Capital Market Authority and setting up work manuals, forms and proposals for the regulatory systems for the licensing, supervision and regulation processes.

Tender Number	Description	Release the RFP	Last date for Purchase of RFP	Last date of filing the proposal	Tender fees in OMR
1 / 2022	Assistance with the legal drafting and operational implementation of a regulatory framework for Virtual Assets (VAs) and Virtual Asset Service Providers (VASPs)	23 January 2022	3 February 2022 02:00 PM	23 March 2022 02:00 PM	95 /- OMR Non Refundable

- Specialized companies interested in participating in the above tender must deposit the tender fee into bank account, and submit the original payment receipt of the tender along with a copy of the commercial registration certificate and the contact details of the authorized person (business card) to the admin department; hence, we shall provide you with Tender document.
- Bidders must attached an electronic copy of the tender bond of not less than 2% of the tender value. The bond shall be valid for 90 days from the submission of the proposal.
- CMA is not obliged to accept the lowest bid or any other bid without any justifiable reasons.

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Account no : 0423019706330018
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SWIFT code: BMUSOMRXXXX
Please attach a copy of the deposit receipt

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For inquiries, please contact :
e-mail : Admin@cma.gov.om
Telephone Number : 24823299
From 8 am to 3 pm
(Sunday to Thursday).



Tender Notice

Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI), announces following E-Tender for 2022:

Tender Number	Tender Name	Deadline for Specifications Request	Deadline for tender bids	Tender Price
03/2022	Supply, Installation and Configuration of Endpoint Protection Solution	27 Jan 2022	10 Feb 2022	25 OMR

Interested companies registered with Tender Board may obtain Tender document from the E-Tendering website: <http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>. The Vendors must provide **Electronic Bank Guarantee** issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of (2%) of the Tender value valid for (90) days on website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> and addressed to Public Authority for Social Insurance.

CORRESPONDANCE:

- Tender inquiry : All correspondence pertaining to the TENDER Inquiry must be online at E-Tendering system (<http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)
- E-Tendering system inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the e-tendering system technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number: Tel : **+968 24402200** , E-mail : etenderhd@ita.gov.om

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MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Vision Insurance, up 3.61 per cent was the top gainer while, Voltamp Energy down 7.07 per cent, was the top loser.

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,224.43 points, down by 0.27 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.50 per cent at 512.69 points. Vision Insurance, up 3.61 per cent was the top gainer while, Voltamp Energy down 7.07 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Phoenix Power were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded while Ooredoo were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 448 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR2.16 million, with more than 14.7 million shares changing hands. Out of 40 traded securities, 4 advanced, 15 declined and 21 remained unchanged. At the session close, Domestic investors were net buyers for OMR32,000 while GCC &

Arab investors were net sellers for OMR25,000 followed by foreign investors for OMR7,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 6751.82 points, down 0.25 per cent. Prices of Vision Insurance, Al Anwar Investment, Al Sharqia Investment, Ominvest, and Oman United Insurance were up by 3.61 per cent, 0 per cent, 0 per cent, 0 per cent, and 0 per cent respectively. Prices of United Finance, Muscat Finance, Ahli Bank, Global Financial Investments, and Takaful Oman were down by 1.7 per cent, 1.7 per cent, 1.64 per cent, 1.47 per cent, and 1.41 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5873.65 points, down by 0.36 per cent. Services Index was up by 0.02 per cent before closing at 1651.23 points. — **United Securities**

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,243.20	4,222.48	4,224.43	4,235.83	-11.40	-0.27
FINANCIAL INDEX	6,775.43	6,751.82	6,751.82	6,768.83	-17.01	-0.25
Industry Index	5,904.59	5,873.65	5,873.65	5,894.84	-21.20	-0.36
Services Index	1,653.96	1,646.14	1,651.23	1,650.84	0.39	0.02
MSX Shariah Index	515.28	512.70	512.70	515.28	-2.58	-0.50
MSX TR INDEX	5,107.73	5,082.80	5,085.14	5,098.86	-13.72	-0.27

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
14,704,566	2,169,057	448	22,388,308,795	4	15	21	40

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PD	LAST MD	LAST OFFER	PDA VALUE	MARKET CAP
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REGULAR MARKET

OM0000006920	VISION INSURANCE	2,021,570	174,652	45	0.084	0.088	0.084	0.086	0.083	0.003	3.614	0.087	0.087	0.088	0.100	8,600,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SER.	134,000	60,058	6	0.450	0.450	0.448	0.448	0.444	0.004	0.901	0.448	0.430	0.448	0.100	105,911,680
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	127,800	51,131	24	0.402	0.402	0.400	0.400	0.398	0.002	0.503	0.400	0.400	0.400	0.100	48,959,184
OM0000002235	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	3,000	993	3	0.334	0.334	0.330	0.336	0.336	0.000	0.000	0.330	0.330	0.346	0.100	20,564,636
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INV.	182,195	16,872	20	0.094	0.095	0.091	0.093	0.093	0.000	0.000	0.092	0.090	0.092	0.100	8,370,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	167,030	87,291	7	0.538	0.538	0.534	0.534	0.524	0.000	0.000	0.524	0.522	0.524	0.100	1,873,024,791
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	846,296	317,571	19	0.372	0.376	0.368	0.376	0.376	0.000	0.000	0.376	0.366	0.376	0.100	244,755,030
OM0000003398	SOHAR INT. BANK	1,116,761	126,440	22	0.114	0.114	0.112	0.113	0.114	-0.001	-0.877	0.113	0.113	0.118	0.100	337,877,039
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	285,716	57,023	35	0.206	0.206	0.196	0.200	0.202	-0.002	-0.990	0.196	0.182	0.206	0.100	40,000,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	99,826	77,468	19	0.788	0.788	0.772	0.776	0.784	-0.008	-1.020	0.772	0.776	0.788	0.100	582,000,000
OM0000003035	ALMAHA CERAMICS	130,466	56,210	17	0.434	0.436	0.430	0.430	0.436	-0.006	-1.378	0.436	0.436	0.470	0.100	23,650,000
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	100,260	12,032	2	0.122	0.122	0.120	0.120	0.122	-0.002	-1.639	0.120	0.118	0.120	0.100	233,958,896
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	125,000	7,288	7	0.058	0.059	0.058	0.058	0.059	-0.001	-1.695	0.059	0.059	0.059	0.100	17,814,487
Total		5,339,920	1,045,329	226												

Parallel Market

OM0000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	10,000	3,080	2	0.308	0.308	0.308	0.308	0.300	0.008	2.667	0.308	0.308	0.330	0.100	21,680,120
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	353,458	75,960	6	0.214	0.215	0.214	0.215	0.215	0.000	0.000	0.215	0.214	0.215	0.100	349,578,467
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	673,127	69,289	12	0.103	0.103	0.102	0.103	0.103	0.000	0.000	0.102	0.102	0.103	0.100	206,032,217
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	4,188	220	2	0.053	0.053	0.052	0.053	0.053	0.000	0.000	0.052	0.050	0.053	0.100	6,625,000
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	4,575	288	1	0.063	0.063	0.063	0.060	0.060	0.000	0.000	0.063	0.062	0.063	0.100	7,312,500
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	10,000	1,270	1	0.127	0.127	0.127	0.127	0.127	0.000	0.000	0.127	0.125	0.130	0.100	380,536,632
OM0000003281	TAGEER FINANCE	328,301	27,432	23	0.084	0.084	0.083	0.084	0.084	0.000	0.000	0.083	0.083	0.084	0.100	21,301,560
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	2,000	150	1	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.073	0.076	0.100	15,223,983
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	1,525,939	154,111	26	0.101	0.101	0.100	0.101	0.101	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.100	0.101	0.100	225,932,256
OM0000004669	SHARQIYAH DESALIN.	1,460	146	2	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.102	0.102	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.092	0.100	0.100	9,975,820
OM0000004735	SEMBOCORP SALALAH	500	39	1	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.000	0.000	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.100	1,667,472
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	10,000	960	1	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.000	0.000	0.096	0.095	0.105	0.100	16,800,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	180,230	8,651	16	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.046	0.049	0.100	32,394,597
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	19,802	962	4	0.049	0.049	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.049	0.048	0.049	0.100	34,291,504
OM0000005965	PHOENIX POWER	3,709,470	181,764	10	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.000	0.000	0.049	0.045	0.050	0.100	71,667,472
OM0000007910	AMAN REAL ESTATE	1,000	96	1	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.096	0.096	0.099	0.100	18,000,000
OM0000001132	OMAN NAT ENG.	887,119	93,519	29	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.106	-0.001	-1.149	0.106	0.106	0.107	0.100	13,650,000
OM0000007084	MCT DESALINATE	48,888	4,187	3	0.087	0.087	0.085	0.086	0.087	-0.001	-1.149	0.085	0.084	0.087	0.100	13,377,234
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	26,000	1,826	2	0.071	0.071	0.070	0.070	0.071	-0.001	-1.408	0.070	0.065	0.071	0.100	7,000,000
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV. H.	17,366	1,167	3	0.068	0.068	0.067	0.067	0.068	-0.001	-1.471	0.067	0.066	0.067	0.100	13,400,000
OM0000007407	DHOOFAR GENERATING	666,000	43,108	30	0.065	0.065	0.062	0.065	0.066	-0.001	-1.515	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.100	14,445,600
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	92,292	5,361	8	0.058	0.059	0.058	0.058	0.059	-0.001	-1.685	0.058	0.058	0.059	0.100	20,250,376
OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD.	93,000	10,788	12	0.116	0.116	0.116	0.116	0.121	-0.005	-4.132	0.116	0.110	0.116	0.100	3,894,288
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	15,000	2,250	6	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.160	-0.010	-6.250	0.150	0.144	0.150	0.100	18,000,000
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	272,931	25,083	13	0.093	0.093	0.090	0.092	0.099	-0.007	-7.071	0.090	0.090	0.093	0.100	7,489,053
Total		35	8,952,646	711,729	215											

DATA

China's cargo, container throughput register steady growth in 2021

BEIJING: Cargo and container throughput at China's ports registered stable growth in 2021, data from the Ministry of Transport shows. Last year, cargo throughput at China's ports totalled 15.55 billion tonnes, up 6.8 per cent year on year, according to the ministry. The country's container

throughput at ports during the period climbed 7 per cent from a year earlier to 282.72 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), the ministry said. In December 2021, China's ports handled nearly 1.34 billion tonnes of cargo, while container throughput stood at 23.07 million TEUs, according to the

ministry. China has adopted multiple measures to cope with the container shortage amid the COVID-19 pandemic, such as shipping empty containers back to domestic ports, accelerating the production of containers and promoting digital transformation of ports for smooth flow of cargo. - **Xinhua**

CRYPTOCURRENCY

Bitcoin falls again, down by nearly 4%

WASHINGTON: Bitcoin dropped again on Saturday and was last down around 4 per cent for the day, hovering around the \$35,000 level.

Bitcoin, the world's biggest and best-known cryptocurrency, is now about half its \$69,000 peak in November. It was last at \$35,049, after falling as low as \$34,000 and following a steep fall on Friday, Reuters reported.

The currency has had wild price swings and has been hit as risk appetite has fallen on inflation fears and anticipation of a more aggressive pace of interest rate hikes from the US Federal Reserve.

Other risk assets have fallen with stocks falling on Friday. The S&P 500 and Nasdaq recorded their biggest weekly percentage drops since the start of the pandemic in March 2020.

In a research note on Friday, Edward Moya, senior market analyst for the Americas at OANDA, said bitcoin was falling as "crypto traders de-risk portfolios following the bloodbath in stocks" and in advance of next week's Federal Reserve policy meeting.

"Bitcoin remains in the danger zone and if \$37,000 breaks, there is not much support until the \$30,000 level," Moya wrote on Friday. - **BNA**

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TAP INTO THE BENEFITS OF USING PEN AND PAPER



February is International Correspondence Writing Month (InCoWriMo) — a challenge to handwrite a piece of correspondence each day of the month — meaning there’s no better time to tap into the power of the handwritten word.

“With our many digital forms of communication, we have gained immediacy but lost intimacy,” says Ariann Langsam, vice president of marketing for Pilot Pen, whose background is in biology and neuroscience. “But handwriting is scientifically proven to solidify both cognitive connections needed for learning and comprehension, as well as emotional connections between individuals. We can make a powerful impact on the lives of others by connecting through the written word, and there are neurological and social benefits that keep writing by hand relevant not only during International Correspondence Writing Month, but all year long.”

It’s Good for the Soul

In an era when digital devices and social media seem to dominate how we connect with loved ones, the art of letter writing has become rare. But sitting down to write correspondence by hand can be a much more personal way to connect than modern modes of communication. A recent study conducted by Pilot Corporation of America

reinforced the emotional social benefits that come from putting pen to paper. A remarkable nine out of 10 respondents perceived cards with handwritten messages as more thoughtful and heartfelt than cards with printed messages. Even more respondents (92 per cent) shared that they have saved handwritten cards or letters from a loved one as a cherished keepsake. When asked what emotions they felt when receiving a handwritten card, respondents reported they felt “appreciated,” “touched,” “cared for,” and “recognised”. We could all use a bit more of these feelings. This month, consider taking a few minutes to send a handwritten note to a loved one or friend.

It’s Good for the Brain

The benefits of handwriting are firmly grounded in principles of learning and memory. For children, learning to handwrite letters plays a role in fostering the transition to literacy. Mounting evidence suggests that handwriting practice, particularly in preschool and early elementary school, may provide children an advantage in learning this vital skill.

Writing by hand serves students well beyond those early years. Researchers at Princeton and UCLA discovered that college students who took handwritten notes outperformed students who typed their notes. The study authors believe this is because typing notes lends itself to

taking down information word-by-word. Taking notes by hand, however, required students to think more deeply about the lecture content and be judicious in what they wrote down.

You may no longer be in school yourself, however you still likely need to record information. Whether it’s instructions from your boss, recommendations from your doctor, or thoughts before book club, consider jotting things down by hand to help you better synthesise information.

Make it Count

To impress your pen pals during the month of correspondence and make your InCoWriMo challenge a success, you’ll need to gather some supplies: stationery, envelopes, stamps and a trusty pen. To take on a month-long writing challenge, Pilot suggests the G2, America’s number one selling, longest-lasting gel ink pen. You’ll be able to glide well beyond 28 days of penning handwritten letters, taking notes, tackling to-do lists and anything else that comes across your desk. For tools and inspiration, visit PowerToThePen.com.

From the classroom to correspondence and beyond, rediscover the art of handwriting and make a bigger impact by putting down the digital device and picking up a pen.

- Statepoint

ROUND-UP

Global auditing firm Rtulsian expands GCC presence with Omani partnership

The decision of Rtulsian to partner with Al Motamad Auditing, an established Omani auditing firm, and grow its GCC footprint demonstrates the firm’s continued confidence in the region’s accounting industry, which remains vital to the economy despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic

MUSCAT: Multinational auditing firm Rtulsian has partnered with Al Motamad Auditing to bring its expertise to the Omani market. The move coincides with the Sultanate’s implementation of Value Added Tax (VAT) legislation, an area in which Rtulsian has extensive experience.

The firm has a strong GCC presence with offices in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain, where it helped leading companies to navigate the introduction and implementation of VAT.

The decision to partner with an established Omani auditing firm and grow its GCC footprint demonstrates the firm’s continued confidence in the region’s accounting industry, which remains vital to the economy despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rtulsian Partner - Global Practice, Shashwat Tulsian said, “The introduction of VAT is in line with Oman’s Vision 2040 programme, which aims to diversify the economy and attract more foreign direct investment. Rtulsian’s partnership with Al Motamad Auditing reflects our commitment to supporting local businesses and contributing to the growth of the Sultanate’s accounting industry. Hiring Omani team members and enhancing their skills are among our top priorities, further dem-

onstrating our support of Vision 2040’s objectives.”

He added, “The implementation of VAT in the UAE, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia encouraged a positive change in the way that companies manage their businesses, including a heightened focus on properly maintaining accounting records. We expect to see a similar shift in Oman and look forward to supporting Omani companies with a range of functions, including auditing and consultancy, and guiding them through the process. Backed by a team of experienced professionals, our office in Muscat is already supporting businesses across the Sultanate, including the previously underserved areas of Salalah and Sohar.”

The country applies 5 per cent VAT on most goods and services, with exceptions for essential food items, medical care, education, and financial services. According to Oman’s Tax Authority Chairman Saud Nassir al Shukaili, this should raise approximately OMR400 million, equivalent to around 1.5 per cent of gross domestic product.

Rtulsian Global is a 5-decade full-service multinational Accountancy practice headquartered in London having offices in six countries. Over the last few years, the firm has opened offices



in Bahrain, successfully acquired a 21-year-old accounting practice in the UAE, and established offices in Saudi Arabia, bringing tremen-

dous opportunities for local employees to develop their skills, earn new expertise and unleash their true potential.

Headquartered in London, UK, the company provides a range of services to SMEs and corporate customers, including auditing,

taxation, accounting, financial structuring, mergers and amalgamations, and business consultancy, among others.

UNIQUE EVENT

One Planet One Future to create awareness on environmental wellness in Oman

MUSCAT: One of the major challenges that our world faces today is environmental wellness. While nations across the globe, especially our country Oman, are making relentless efforts and taking enormous initiatives, we as individuals also have a great role to play.

To create awareness about various aspects of environmental changes and to urge individuals to come together and provide their support, this unique event One Planet One Future is being organised at City Amphitheater, Qurum on Friday, February 11 at 7pm.

One Planet One Future will be staged under the auspices of the Environment Authority. Confirming their support to this mega project, Advisor of Environment Authority Mahmoud said, “It is one of our responsibilities to promote and create awareness about our environment within our society which includes people of Oman and the expatriate communities. As such, Environment Authority is pleased to support this unique event One Planet One Future.



“Using performing arts as the medium of communication, without any language barriers, this event promises to be entertaining and also delivers a relevant message asking all to contribute to environmental wellness.

“We wish the performers and organisers the very best and hope it creates the desired results among its audience.”

Speaking about the event, Director Premila Ramesh (Orbit Training Centre for Performing Arts – Nrityanjali) who will be performing along with her students, said, “I wonder if there is anyone in the world who is not affected by the changes that are happening to our environment.

“Directly or indirectly, each one of us faces the brunt. I wanted to reach out to as many people in Oman as possible with a value-added message of ‘what can we do as individuals to protect our environment’. One Planet One Future is a contemporary dance production that will have no language barriers. It will be supported with the dramatic stage set up and props; adorning custom-made costumes, performers will surely light a spark in our audience and compel them to reconsider their life choices.”

One Planet One Future will encourage people to be ‘eco-war-

riors’, manage waste responsibly, coach not to poach discussing biodiversity and sustainability, reduce reuse & recycle, prevent pollution of all kinds and other related subjects.

Young Omani students have been invited to come to the stage and speak about their environmental concerns.

“We are also running an ‘Awareness Through Creative Art’ challenge for all students. Through this challenge, we are encouraging students to present their environmental concerns creatively. They may create artwork or craftwork / write a poem / write an essay / create a poster etc., related to environmental concerns and submit to organisers.

“We will showcase them on our social media pages extensively and also identify the best work. Winners will be given 2 VIP tickets and invited to come on stage and receive a trophy in acknowledgement of their creative work.”

The event is organised by Orbit Events Management.

APPOINTMENT



Radisson Blu Hotel, Muscat strengthens leadership team with new general manager

MUSCAT: Radisson Blu Hotel, Muscat announced the appointment of Michael Kasch as the new General Manager. The hotel comprises 153 guestrooms and suites along with four restaurants and bars that offer a wide variety of cuisines and ambience, including an Italian fine dining offering and an Irish pub. The hotel hosts numerous business events throughout the year.

Michael brings 30 years of experience and expertise in the hotel industry and has worked in several countries across the region & globe before his previous assignment with Air Arabia in UAE as General Manager - Hospitality. Throughout his career, he has held numerous leadership positions in the food & beverage departments of reputable hotels in the UAE, Japan & Jordan. He has led several successful teams as Executive Assistant Manager & General Manager with brands like Rotana, Accor, Ramada and Marriott hotels in UAE.

A German national, Michael holds a certificate in Hotel Man-

agement from Royal Hotel School in Turnhout Belgium. He is a passionate hotelier committed to effecting change and encouraging efficiency within his teams to achieve new levels of profitability, the highest customer service in all outlets.

“It is indeed a wonderful opportunity and I’m excited to be a part of the Radisson Hotel Group. I am looking forward to working for this hotel which has outstanding facilities & professional service, and a convenient location that offers much more than just great accommodation. Not forgetting the passionate team that delivers hospitality and continues to enhance the stay experience for our guests,” said Michael.

He decided to join Radisson Hotel Group as the company offers great opportunities to develop within and focuses on talents to strengthen its offerings worldwide. He believes in his colleagues and empowers them to make every moment matter to our hotel guests.

EXCITING DEALS

Hot deals on LG, Bosch & Hisense home appliances and electronics at OTE mega warehouse sale



MUSCAT: Yet another edition of OTE’s hugely anticipated warehouse sale – the biggest in the home appliances and electronics space – will take place at the end of this month.

Spanning a total of five days from January 26 to 30, this blockbuster retail event features a staggering array of merchandise from three world-leading brands: LG, Bosch and Hisense. The venue is the LG Warehouse at Ghala (next to the OTE Service Centre Complex), where a multitude of items is up for grabs at attractive discounts ranging from 20 – 70 per cent.

As with previous editions of this popular annual bumper sale, cus-

tomers can expect great deals on everything from television sets, washing machines, refrigerators, dish washers, cookers, air-conditions, IT products, audio-visual devices, and other home appliances.

LG, Bosch and Hisense are world-class brands distributed in Oman by OTE Group. The biggest of these brands is LG, a prominent player in the global consumer electronics industry, well-known for its innovations in the TV, home appliance and air conditioner product segments.

Positioned in the high-end, yet affordable luxury brand segment is German brand Bosch, which is synonymous with the manufacture

of energy-efficient household appliances ranging from washing machines and dryers to refrigerators, freezers, stoves and ovens dishwashers, to small appliances such as coffee makers and food processors. Hisense has made a mark in Oman with its TVs and ACs.

Bargain prices

Bargain prices await customers on a wide collection of new stock items, showroom display units and repaired sets across all three leading brands during the mega showroom sale. Visiting hours are from 9 am – 1 pm and 4 – 8 pm on Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. (4 – 8 pm on Friday).

ROUND-UP

Own Ford F-150 XLT with exclusive benefits

With a reputation for toughness and a proven track record of 44 consecutive years as America’s favourite truck, the Ford F-series line-up has continually raised the standards expected of all light-duty trucks

MUSCAT: The Ford F-150 XLT, one of the most popular and built Ford tough pick-up trucks is now available with an exclusive offer. Service 3 Years / 60,000km and Registration 1 Year. (Condi-



tions apply. For details visit a Ford showroom.) The offer is valid until March 9. With a reputation for toughness and a proven track record of 44 consecutive years as America’s favourite truck, the Ford F-series line-up has continually raised the standards expected of all light-duty trucks. The all-new F-150 XLT has a durable, proven foundation – a fully boxed high-strength steel frame with a high-strength, military-grade, aluminum alloy body. Every panel of the distinctive, rugged exterior is redesigned while main-

taining its bold and tough signature look, including an updated headlamp design, new power dome hood and wrap-around bumpers. The interior is completely redesigned to elevate owners’ experience with style, comfort, utility and technology. Featuring enhanced materials, new color choices and more storage, it is built around the functional needs of truck customers. Every surface has been thoughtfully designed. The F-150 XLT has a standard 8-inch centre screen that allows customers to control multiple functions simultaneously, includ-

ing navigation, music or truck features. The landscape design strikes a balance between demands for technology accessibility and the greater convenience of physical buttons. Every customer gets touch screen functionality and better rearview camera vision. Both screens feature access to the new digital owner’s manual, which can help all customers find the information they need more easily. Customers can keep going into the night with exclusive available Zone Lighting. This allows occupants to turn on and off individual sections of exterior lights through the SYNC 4 screen so they never have to work, camp or do anything in the dark. The F-150 XLT is equipped with Trailer Reverse Guidance and Pro Trailer Backup Assist. Trailer Reverse Guidance, made popular on Super Duty, uses the truck’s high-resolution cameras to provide multiple views along with helpful graphics that tell drivers which way to turn the steering wheel while backing up. Pro Trailer Backup Assist, which makes backing up a trailer as easy as turning a dial, continues on F-150.

OMAN ARAB BANK



OAB picks December winners of Hasaad Savings Scheme

MUSCAT: Omani Arab Bank (OAB) recently announced the names of the winners of its Hasaad Savings Scheme for December 2021. The draw witnessed 108 customers winning prizes of OMR 500 each and two winners of OMR 10,000 as part of the Big Prize Draw. As for the Elite account holders, one customer was the winner of the Elite Grand Prize of OMR 25,000 from the Al Buraimi branch. Commenting on the result of the last scheme of 2021, Rashad Al Shaikh, Head of the Retail Banking Division at OAB, said,

“We are delighted to see the huge turnout and the number of savings as we bid adieu to the last year. We are proud of our valued customers for their efforts to save, aligning with our objective of the Hasaad Savings scheme. As always, we ensure that they are well rewarded and appreciated for their savings. Alongside encouraging savings culture for unforeseen circumstances, it is our responsibility to be more than just another financial institution and support them in maintaining sound financial management practices.”

CEREMONIAL EVENT

ahlibank’s Retail Banking team concludes 2021 with exceptional achievements

MUSCAT: Continuing to establish its position as a preferred bank not just for customers, but also as an employer, ahlibank has been conducting a series of recognition meetings to felicitate its employees and keep them motivated. At the back of exceptional business performance, ahlibank held a ceremonial event to honour the most outstanding achievements of its Retail Banking team, post a review of the bank’s 2021 fourth quarter, based on a series of indicators reflecting the bank’s overall performance and the way forward approach for 2022. ahlibank has been able to achieve positive growth in its profits and assets over the past year,

due to its keenness to strengthen its traditional and digital products and services to serve its customers, with a key focus on retail banking. This highly competent division of the bank has been instrumental in expanding ahlibank’s portfolio of retail products and services in 2021, even during the challenging business environment. The team strengthened ahlibank’s retail product portfolio with new launches for diverse customer categories, including, ‘MyChoice’ and ‘Al-Nukhba’. Designed to meet the clients’ future requirements, ahlibank’s strengthened retail portfolio supports its sustainable growth and expansion in the Sultanate. Commenting on the success and



excellence achieved by the team, which reflected positively on the bank’s performance, Muneer Al Balushi, AGM – Head of Retail Distribution, ahlibank, said, “ahli-

bank’s Retail Banking team has extensive experience in the sector. The dedicated work along with the new banking solutions, with the aim of achieving effective results

that improve customer satisfaction, have enhanced the bank’s overall performance. This has also helped in supporting our ability to overcome challenges and take advantage of market opportunities optimally. We are proud to have outstanding team members, and appreciate their constructive efforts to make the Bank an active centre that puts customer satisfaction first and contributes to our long-term vision goals.” “As we continue to move forward in the new year, we affirm our commitment to play an active role and support the development of Oman’s banking sector. We also strive to maintain the bank’s growth, strengthen our portfolio with new

services and products and expand our branch network across the Sultanate, to cement our position as a promising player in Oman’s banking industry,” he added. ahlibank’s annual meeting of the retail division progressed with interactive discussions involving representatives of teams from a product, marketing, branch support, branch transformation, customer management, customer experience, E-channels and operations. The bank’s Retail Banking achievements were reviewed, highlighting significant growth and expansion of retail banking solutions, a customer-focused approach, and a dedicated team of relationship managers.

ISLAMIC BANKING SERVICES

Maisarah announces new attractive profit rates on personal, home & auto finance

MUSCAT: Central to its efforts to enhance its customers’ experience through convenient products and tailored financial solutions, Maisarah Islamic Banking Services recently announced new profit rates on its personal finance, home finance and auto finance. The new rates have been introduced to make it easier and more attainable for customers to acquire financing for personal use, build or purchase the house of their dreams, and own the automobile of their choice. Nasser Said Al Bahantah, DGM & Chief Retail Banking Officer at Maisarah, reaffirmed BankDhofar’s Islamic banking window’s commitment to offering specifically designed financial solutions to meet the specific needs of every individual customer. “Following the positive response to our diverse bundle of financing options, we have introduced revised profit rates to enable our customers to achieve their goals and have access to the easy and convenient home, auto and personal finance options.



We expect to see high demand on these finances that come with competitive rates, simple steps, fast approval and easy documentation,” he noted. As per terms and conditions of the revised finance profit rates, the starting profit rate for Personal Finance is 4.99% and it is applicable for all new, additional and take-over of finances from other banks. Meanwhile, 4.95% is the starting profit rate for Home Finance and Auto Finance, and it is applicable for all new, additional and take-over of home and auto finances from other banks.

VALENTINE’S DAY

Celebrate the month of love with Al Baleed Resort Salalah by Anantara

MUSCAT: Indulge in the art of seduction with Asian dining this Valentine’s Day. Celebrate love with gourmet dining in chic style at the Mekong. Toast to love over a delightful buffet that gets your endorphins flowing. The scene will be set for lovers as you taste each delicious morsel. Make it a memorable Valentine’s evening as you share this buffet. We’ll reward you with a special souvenir of your evening as you leave. Date: 14 February 2022, Venue: Mekong, Time: 6.30pm – 10.30 pm



An unforgettable romance Discover the true passion in the ultimate tailor-made dining experience. Love is truly a splendour thing when the right ingredients are gathered. Relish the romance of a private dining experience on the sands in a private cabana, beside the lapping Arabian Sea. Your personal chef will help curate the perfect 5-course menu to take your love to greater heights. Forget the world and focus on your love as your private butler delivers food and drinks. Make your Valentine’s Day momentous with Dining by Design. A special giveaway for couples will be held on the night. Date:

11 - 16 February, Venue: Beach-front, Time: 6.30 pm – 10.30 pm

A gourmet valentine Take your loved one on a journey of culinary splendour. Discover the foods of love in a 5-course dining journey on the sands beside the sea, where love is the main focus. Sip on bubbly after your arrival with the lights dimmed low. A dazzling selection of dishes will entice your appetite as the band plays in the background. Share a sweet dessert with your loved one, ending the evening on a high note. Date: 14 February, Venue:

Beach, Time: 6.30 pm – 10.30 pm A special giveaway for couples will be held on the night.

Romantic beach retreat Lavish your loved one with extra attention in a beautiful Salalah retreat. Check in to a One Bedroom Garden View Pool Villa and spend some quality time together. Choose from breakfast at our airy Sakalan restaurant or in-villa for quiet moments. At Anantara Spa, enjoy a blissful therapy for two that you’ll never forget. Dine on a sumptuous 3-course dinner as the sun goes down over the ocean.

Inject some romance into your relationship with this amazing deal. Package includes: One Bedroom Garden View Pool Villa for two nights or more Daily breakfast at Sakalan or in-villa honeymoon set-up One couple’s treatment at Anantara Spa Three-course dinner by the sea Love your body this February Treat yourself or a loved one to an Anantara Spa experience during February and reap the benefits. Choose an Anantara Signature Massage to ease weary bones and restore lightness to your limbs. We will add a complimentary Pomegranate Body Scrub to polish your skin with indigenous Omani ingredients followed by a bath and steam for total cleansing, or an Elemis facial to bring back your natural radiance. You’ll also receive 25% off for another treatment during your stay and a special gift from Elemis to take home. Book one 60-minute Anantara Signature Massage and receive: Complimentary 30-minute Pomegranate Scrub, bath and steam or 30-minute Elemis Facial plus Free Elemis gift, 25% off a further treatment during your stay.

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ROUND-UP

Alizz Islamic Bank unveils new offers

These offers make it easier for customers, whether new or existing, to purchase or build a small house, a car or finance commodities through easy and flexible procedures



The bank's new offers provide opportunities to purchase and build a perfect home as per their monthly income through simple and easy procedures. In addition, it extends attractive offers to purchase a vehicle or fund electronic products, furniture which is subject to flexible terms with respect to the funding period or repayment. With an intention to promote customers experience in the Islamic banking sector and provide them with appropriate options,

Alizz Islamic Bank has unveiled a package of different offers for the first quarter of 2022. As per the offer, it is now possible to purchase or build a house, with real estate financing at a percentage starting from 4.85%. In addition, special offers are being extended to those wanting to transfer their financing to Alizz Islamic Bank from other Islamic and commercial banks at a reduced financing rate starting from 4.75% per cent for customers who transfer their financing to Alizz Islamic Bank. Likewise, the option of car and commodity financing has become flexible and accessible as the customer can choose the car model and complete his transactions in no time, with a financing ratio rate starting from 4.95%. Commenting on launching this campaign, Mohammed Juma Al Ghassani, AGM and Acting Chief Consumer Banking officer at Alizz Islamic Bank, said: "Your home and your car are waiting for you at Alizz Islamic Bank. In fact, these offers make it easier for customers, whether new or existing, to purchase or build a small house, a car or finance commodities through easy and flexible procedures. Such diversity of options meets various expectations and requirements of different customers. Our team is aware that customers' interest must be given the highest priority, as serving our customers, satisfying their needs and giving them advice is of utmost importance to us. Customers from all segments of the society who are willing to apply for such finances can visit our branches across the governorates and wilayats. Otherwise, customers can call the customer service centre 80072265, as our staff is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to respond to inquiries relating to funding. Alizz Islamic Bank, as one of the pioneering Integrated Islamic banks in the Sultanate, is keen to provide Sharia-compliant banking solutions and products approved by the Sharia Supervisory Board.

COMPLIMENTARY VEHICLE CHECK



Mercedes-Benz Oman's vehicle health check ensures best drive with every ride

MUSCAT: Ensuring that every ride is as smooth as the first, Mercedes-Benz Oman is offering a complimentary 15-point Vehicle Health Check from 1st February to 28th February 2022. Available at Mercedes-Benz Service Centres in Sohar and Salalah in Muscat, the service specifically targets components that are prone to wear and tear, and even minor faults, guaranteeing peak performance on the roads. "At Mercedes-Benz, we take pride in our reputation for reliability. Our complimentary Vehicle Health Check is designed to reassure customers of the safety and integrity of their vehicle," said Shaun Michael, Chief Executive Officer at Mercedes-Benz Oman. "Whether there is something of concern or drivers just want peace of mind that their Mercedes-Benz is running at its best, our teams will be delighted to provide their expert service and support." Conducted by Mercedes-Benz certified Service Advisors and trained technicians, the Vehicle Health Check offer includes a complimentary 15-point check of engine oil level and leak, engine air filter, coolant fluid level, coolant system, brake fluid level, windscreen wiper condition, front and rear brake pads, vehicle undercarriage, AC temperature, AC filters, suspension components, steering components, bodywork inspection, and an electronic diagnostic test. Customers will also benefit from the brand's latest digital solution, StarView, which provides them with personalized video updates and real-time status reports on the results of their health check via email and SMS. The offer is valid on all Mercedes-Benz models registered before January 1, 2019.

NATIONAL BANK OF OMAN

NBO appoints Aliya Al Balushi as new head of Talent and Performance Management

MUSCAT: National Bank of Oman (NBO) has announced the appointment of Aliya Al Balushi as its new Head of Talent and Performance Management. Aliya has over 16 years' experience in the banking industry with previous senior roles in Compliance, Internal Audit and Corporate Communications. Bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience to her new role, she is anticipated to steer the bank's roadmap for talent acquisition, people development, and performance management, as it seeks to strengthen

its position as a future-ready, world-class institution. "At NBO, we are proud to have a market-leading workforce and Aliya will be a tremendous asset to the team. As we strengthen our endeavours to create and sustain a strong performance-based culture and nurture a leadership pipeline, her role will be integral to supporting our business performance and ultimately, providing our customers with a first-rate banking experience," said Abdullah Al Hinai, Chief Executive Officer, CEO of NBO. Among her most recent roles,

Aliya served as the Finance and Administration Director, AGM Compliance and AGM Internal Audit. She has a wealth of experience in diverse fields from Compliance and Audit to Human Resources, Finance and Procurement, and is credited for implementing several transformational strategies. Aliya's educational attainments include a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) in Finance from the University of Durham, UK, and a Bachelors of Arts (BA) in Finance, Accounting and Management from the University of Nottingham, UK.



COOLING PLANT

Al Mouj Muscat enters strategic partnership with Tabreed Oman

MUSCAT: Under the patronage of Eng. Salim bin Nasser Al Afi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, Al Mouj Muscat, Oman's premium lifestyle destination, has signed an agreement with Tabreed Oman, subsidiary of Tabreed - the world's leading district cooling company, to acquire and professionally own and operate its district cooling plant. Situated within Al Mouj Muscat's 1902 square meter site, the plant provides district cooling infrastructure to the integrated tourism complex's extensive mix of buildings which includes over 6,000 homes, multiple offices, a mall, iconic hotels, Masjid Al Mouj and Community Hub, golf club and over 85 shops and restaurants. This agreement presents an opportunity to both continue and enhance Al Mouj Muscat's provision of high-quality, energy-efficient cooling to residents, staff and visitors, helping ensure optimum temperatures and comfort at all times. Commenting on the signing, Al Mouj Muscat's CEO Nasser bin Masoud Al Sheibani says, "It is with great pride that we welcome this forward-looking partnership. Tabreed Oman is an Omani success story, an innovator of environmentally friendly cooling solutions that consistently reduce emissions, which aligns with our commitment to long-term sustainability. This transaction increases Tabreed Oman's total operating capacity from 32,000 refrigeration tonnes (RT) to 62,000 RT, nearly doubling the size of its business. Eng. Abdullah bin Said Al Hinai, Tabreed Oman's Chief Executive Officer, says, "We are delighted to have entered into a truly promising partnership which as well as



representing a significant increase in our presence in the Sultanate, particularly when it comes to residential cooling, allows us to continue operating Al Mouj Muscat's established cooling infrastructure. "Our portfolio includes educational institutions, hotels, shopping malls and other businesses and this agreement is a natural progression for the company, helping us get closer to end-users." The partnership entails an exclusive cooling concession for 30,000 refrigeration tonnes (RT), with over 19,000 RTs already connected and operational. This transaction increases Tabreed Oman's total contract capacity from 32,000 RT to 62,000 RT, nearly doubling the size of its operation.

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OFFERS

Nissan X-Terra empowers owners to go beyond boundaries

MUSCAT: Nissan X-Terra, the vehicle especially 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. Customers of X-Terra can now avail low EMI, starting from OMR 206. EMIs are calculated on the basis of 20% down payment and 3.25% rate of interest for 6 years loan tenure. A spokesperson for Nissan Oman, from the house of Suhail Bahwan Automobiles (SBA) said, "This is a good time for potential buyers to check out the Nissan X-Terra which is available with on low EMI. The X-Terra is a catalyst for new experiences, allowing owners to connect with the people in their lives. The vehicle 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." He added, "Designed for adventure and the outdoors with a roomy interior and advanced technologies Nissan X-Terra ensures safety and comfort. It is equipped



with an active safety suite, which comprises blind-spot warning, lane departure warning, intelligent driver alert, and intelligent forward collision warning. The SUV also has multiple airbags and a digital rear-view mirror." Powering the X-Terra is a 2.5-liter 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. The 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 Nissan

X-Terra reflects the evolution of four-wheel adventure travel and a growing consumer desire for connection. It effortlessly combines impressive strength with bold new design and built-for-comfort roominess. Underlining this is breakthrough engineering and a suite of cutting-edge Nissan Intelligent Mobility (NIM) technologies to offer a superior driving experience and adventure-ready confidence for drivers to explore new places. The SUV's rugged frame facilitates its durability and practicality, while the future-forward aesthetics are exhibited in the quad LED projector lamps and a bold new V-motion grille. The revised rear and new LED taillights add to the X-Terra's athletic look, reflecting the Nissan Design team's dynamic and modern philosophy.

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