

>> PRAYER TIMINGS	
Dhuhr	12:15 pm
Asr	3:42 pm
Maghrib	6:29 pm
Isha	7:40 pm
Fajr (Tomorrow)	4:38 am
>> IFTAR 6:29 pm	



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GREEN ENERGY OMAN TO GENERATE 25GW OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

MUSCAT: An international consortium comprised of OQ, InterContinental Energy and EnerTech today announced further progress on the development of the Green Energy Oman (GEO) integrated green fuels mega project. **>A5**



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BIG DEVELOPERS, INVESTORS TO BENEFIT FROM NEW PROPERTY SCHEME



The move adds flexibility to the market and signals further opening up of the country to foreign investors

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Big developers and major investors will benefit from the new ownership scheme rolled out by the Oman government recently that allows people to own properties outside integrated tourism complexes (ITC), say real estate

companies in the country.

The scheme announced by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning enables those who own property valued between OMR250,000 and OMR500,000 to receive five-year residency visas, while those who own property valued above OMR500,000 are eligi-



10-YEAR

RESIDENCY VISA HOLDERS CAN INVEST IN INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES, WHILE FIVE-YEAR VISA HOLDERS ARE RESTRICTED TO ONLY OWNING RESIDENTIAL ASSETS.

ble for 10-year residency visas.

Real estate developers say the latter is particularly attractive, as 10-year residency visa holders can invest in industrial, commercial and residential properties, while

five-year visa holders are restricted to owning residential assets only.

“One viewpoint is that this will be extremely beneficial to Oman as it can trigger a flood of investments into a wide range of assets beyond the standard ITC residential unit, based on the belief that there is significant pent-up demand for such assets,” said Ihsan Kharouf, head of the Oman office for Savills Middle East.

“The real beneficiary of the new law in our view will be the OMR500,000-plus option which allows the acquisition of industrial or commercial assets in addition to residential assets,” he said. “This option is also attractive because it does not compete with residential

assets that expatriates can already acquire within ITC projects at better price points, and opens up new investment avenues.

“It is likely that we will see interest among expatriate businessmen in Oman in owning factories, logistics warehouses, retail units or offices,” he added. “Businesses will be able to benefit from the greater security afforded by ownership and can potentially insulate themselves from future increases in rental rates.”

Kharouf explained that owners would also have more control over their assets and would be encouraged to make capital investments in the property which would not have been viable in a leasehold ar-

rangement. “Ultimately, we consider that this is a positive move as it adds flexibility to the market, specifically to expatriate business owners with commercial or industrial occupational requirements in the country, and signals further opening up of the country to foreign investors,” he explained.

Diversification, expansion

With Oman currently pursuing diversification and expansion of its economy, the property ownership scheme also ties in directly with Vision 2040, the country’s plans to create a diversified and sustainable economy with good employment opportunities and living standards for all. **>A5**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Fares from India now cheaper by 50%

1 People planning to travel between Oman and India will have to pay only half the amount they would have paid for their tickets two or three months back, thanks to the expanded operations between the countries. With India returning to full international operations in the last week of March, there has been increase in flights between airports in Oman and a number of major hubs in India. **>A3**

WORLD

Sri Lanka’s all-party govt move rejected

2 Sri Lanka’s two main opposition parties, Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) and Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) have rejected President Gotabaya Rajapaksa’s request to form an all-party interim government, said Sajith Premadasa, Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Sri Lankan Parliament on Monday adding that the President should resign from his post instead. **>A6**

MARKET

Marginal gain in MSX during March 2022

3 After being the only monthly decliner last month, Oman’s MSX index recorded the smallest monthly gain in the GCC in March-2022. It registered a gain of 3.7 per cent to close the month at 4,205.2 points. It reached the highest level since December-2018 in the first week of March-2022 but mostly trended downwards for the rest of the month. **>B1**



Herons make Daymaniyat Islands Reserve their home

A2

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ECONOMY

Young local entrepreneurs say they need support in tourism business

SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

MUSCAT: Local entrepreneurs need a strong support from the state-run organisations to help them survive in the tourism business as the government gears up for the 2040 Economic Vision.

There is an increasing number of young Omanis who are embarking in the tourism businesses ranging from trekking, hiking, camping and general tours. One of them is Nooralhuda Al-Mandhari and her partner Wisal Al-Rashdi, who own and manage a tourism company registered as HUN’na.

“Young Omani entrepreneurs need more support from all government organisations to make local tourism business a success. For example, we face problems when we register our business and there are so many hurdles there,” Wisal Al-Rashdi told *Times of Oman*. While Nooralhu-



Wisal Al-Rashdi, left, and Nooralhuda Al-Mandhari

da said that the costs to manage business operations are high and for a small business, that takes a lot of financial strain.

“We organised adventures for women athletes who are engaging in all sports all over Oman. At the same we have a scheme called Ghudu, which is a tourism project



Jaber and Mohammed Al-Jahfali, the Ghudu Tour Guides in Dhofar — Photo by Adnan Dhaishi

in which we take people to Dhofar to experience the way of life there,” Nooralhuda, said.

The word Ghudu means “lets go” in the local jabali (shehri) language and Nooralhuda and Wisal chose it to honour the people and the culture of Dhofar.

They travel at least ten times in

a year to Dhofar from one end to another to meet the local people to get to know their way of life.

The first they were in Dhofar, they fell in love with the culture, uniqueness of the people and their heritage.

Both Nooralhuda and her partner Wisal helped Suhaila Al

Kindi to promote her 1,500 kms walk from Muscat to Dhofar to raise environmental awareness in 2020. They also promoted in social media Anisa Al Raisi who crossed Oman in a straight line along with Major Natalie Taylor from the United Kingdom for 50 days to celebrate Oman’s 50th National Day.

In the National Tourism Strategy unveiled by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism last year, Oman is targeting 12 million tourists per year by 2040.

The Sultanate also wants to create over 500,000 jobs by 2040 in the tourism sector.

“Oman is a beautiful country. It has diversity spread in different regions. We need to promote it more but most importantly, support for young entrepreneurs, which is essential to reach the targets of the 2040 Economic Vision,” Nooralhuda pleaded.

FIM MXGP Championship to showcase Oman to world

The Oman MXGP World Championship has been endorsed by the FIM and organised by Trade8 International based in Oman, in conjunction with the Oman Automobile Association



MOTORSPORT: The FIM MXGP Motocross World Championship will take place in Mussanah on September 9-10, 2022 with the qualifying race on Friday and the finals on Saturday.



and Youth is supporting the holding of the FIM MXGP World Championship in Oman.

The World Championship of Motocross – MXGP – equals the Formula 1 and Moto GP in terms of prestige and worldwide visibility. In 2019, a total of 600,000 spectators attended the events across 18 countries, with 2,000 journalists covering the Grand Prix and the value of sponsorship equalled around \$430 million.

This is a unique opportunity to showcase the Sultanate to younger tourists and sports enthusiasts all over the world, knowing that the potential viewership is 1.5 billion

people internationally across 50+ channels such as Eurosport, beIN, Fox Sports, etc.

The Sultanate will further be promoted through a 1-minute postcard video during the live broadcasting showcasing the country as a cultural, touristic, and investment destination around the globe.

Oman will also appear in the MXGP PlayStation/XBOX game in 2023 which has average sales of 2 million copies yearly.

A press conference will be organised after the Eid holidays and information about purchasing tickets will be available soon.

Times News Service

MUSCAT: World Championship of Motocross – The FIM MXGP has announced its 2022 calendar and the latest addition on the world motocross stage, the Sultanate of Oman, the only GCC country as the closing hosting destination and race of the 2022 season.

The Oman MXGP World Championship has been endorsed by the FIM (Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme based in Geneva, Switzerland) and organised by Trade8 International based in Oman, in conjunction with the Oman Automobile Association.

The FIM MXGP Motocross

World Championship will take place in Mussanah on September 9-10, 2022 with the qualifying race on Friday and the finals on Saturday.

Around 8,000 spectators are expected with an estimated turnover of more than OMR2 million. This world class event transcends sports and will have a positive im-

pact on tourism and investment promotion.

It will contribute to propelling Oman on the world stage for which the support through government entities, national and private companies as stakeholders/sponsors is crucial as this is a national event.

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MIGRATORY BIRDS



Hérons make Daymaniyat Islands Reserve their home

MUSCAT: The Environment Authority spotted white and gray herons in the Daymaniyat Islands Reserve, Muscat.

Hamoud Khamis Al Neeri, Environmental Systems Specialist said that nests of the two species of birds were spotted, in addition to several tern birds in one of the reserve's islands. Those birds are considered among the first migratory birds to arrive in the reserve during this season.

In his turn, Mohammed Nasser Al Sa'adi, Head of Natural Reserves Development Department said that the Daymaniyat Islands Reserve comprises 9 islands. Each island houses a spectrum of wild plants, grass, seaweed and marvelous white beaches. These ecosystems are a safe haven for nesting turtles, as well as local and migratory seabirds.

The marine environment in the Daymaniyat Islands inhabited by diverse marine creatures, such as marine mammals and various types of fish.

The reserve is also known for its coral reefs which can be seen from the surface of the pristine and transparent sea water. -ONA





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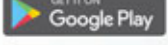
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Fares from India 50% cheaper as flights increase

With India returning to full international operations in the last week of March after suspending them for a prolonged period due to the COVID-19, there has been a dip in air fares

Times News Service

MUSCAT: People planning to travel between Oman and India will have to pay only half the amount they would have paid for their tickets two or three months back, thanks to the expanded operations between the countries. With India returning to full international operations in the last week of March after suspending them for a prolonged period due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been increase in flights between airports in Oman and a number of major hubs in India, leaving people with more options when it comes to selecting their airline of choice. "When I was returning to Muscat from Kolkata, I paid INR31,000 (OMR158) per ticket," said Avinash Kumar, an Indian national living in Nizwa in Oman, in the first week of January. "It



was quite expensive because there were not many travel options available at that time." Similarly, when Mukesh Mohanan boarded his flight from Kannur to Muscat in February 2022, he was required to pay INR38,000 (OMR194) per ticket. "I had hoped the ticket prices would be lower, but at that time, demand for travel was steadily picking up and there were a limited number of seats available. So, I decided to cough up high fares for my wife and I," he admitted. However, when Pradhyumn Tripathi flies back to Oman in the second week of April, he will only need to pay a total of INR14,000 (OMR71), first from the eastern Indian city of Ranchi to the capital New Delhi and then boarding his international flight to Muscat. This is largely due to more airlines announcing their operation timetables, enabling people to choose a flight and timing of their choice, while previously their choice was restricted to airlines operating under existing air bubble agreements between India and their destination countries. "I was surprised when the cost of the flight ticket turned out to be so low," he revealed. "Many friends who had flown before had told me that airfares were quite high when

they had travelled. I think the drop in fares is largely due to more availability of airlines." More flights are set to resume operations between Oman and India: Starting 25 April, low-cost carrier IndiGo will operate daily flights from Muscat to both Kochi and Mumbai. Flights from Mumbai to Muscat will depart at 9:45pm local time and arrive in Muscat at 10:55pm. The return flight will take off from Muscat an hour later, arriving in Mumbai the next morning at 4:10am. Flights from Kochi will depart at 11:25pm and arrive in Oman at 1:40am. Those wishing to board the return flight from Muscat need to note that the plane departs from Muscat at 2:40am, landing five minutes before 8am. Similarly, low-cost Omani airline SalamAir also announced plans to three Indian cities: Jaipur, Lucknow and Thiruvananthapuram, recently. With the exception of Sundays, flights to Jaipur will operate the remaining days of the week, while planes to Thiruvananthapuram will also operate six days a week, with the exception of Mondays. Passengers flying to Lucknow can make use of daily flights to that city.



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ON SOCIAL MEDIA



MOST READ ON FACEBOOK
23,034 REACH
For the 6th year in a row, an anonymous donor has helped release prisoners in Oman.

A story about an anonymous donor helping to release prisoners in Oman reached 23,034 people and had 2,001 link clicks on Facebook.

Story about an anonymous donor helping to release prisoners in Oman



MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK
1,300 VIEWS

The Maghrib Minute video in Hindi had 1,300 views and reached 6,500 people on Facebook.

Maghrib Minute video in Hindi



MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM
888 VIEWS

The Morning Minute video on SalamAir to connect Indian cities from Sohar and Salalah had 888 views and 45 likes on Instagram.

Morning Minute video on SalamAir to connect Indian cities



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Ramadan

IFTAR TIMING

6:29 pm



PRAYER TIMINGS

Dhuhr	12:15 pm
Asr	3:42 pm
Maghrib	6:29 pm
Isha	7:40 pm
Fajr (Tomorrow)	4:38 am



IFTAR RECIPE

ARANCINI



- INGREDIENTS**
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 1 small onion, finely chopped
 - 2 clove garlic, crushed
 - 1 cup uncooked Arborio rice
 - 3 cups heated chicken stock
 - Salt and pepper to taste
 - 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 - 1 egg, beaten
 - 1 egg
 - 1 tablespoon milk
 - 4 ounces mozzarella cheese, cut into 3/4 inch cubes
 - 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
 - 1 cup seasoned panko (or bread crumbs)
 - Vegetable oil for deep frying

- PREPARATION**
- Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and garlic; cook, stirring until onion is soft but not browned.
 - Add rice; cook, stirring for 2 minutes. Stir in 2 cup stock; continue cooking and stirring until the liquid is absorbed. Continue adding stock 1/2 cup at a time, stirring & cooking until all the stock has been absorbed. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Remove from heat; stir in Parmesan cheese. Transfer risotto to a bowl, and allow to cool; if time allows, chill for an hour in the refrigerator.
 - Stir 1 beaten egg into risotto. In a small bowl, whisk together remaining egg and milk. Roll 2 tablespoons of risotto into a ball. Press a piece of mozzarella cheese into the centre; roll to enclose. Coat lightly with flour, dip into the egg mixture; roll in Panko to coat. Refrigerate for 10 minutes (or overnight).
 - Heat oil for frying in a deep fryer or deep saucepan to 350 degrees F. Fry rice balls in small batches until golden brown. Drain on paper towels. Serve with sauce.

HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

VISIT A CHRONICALLY ILL PERSON

Think about all those who are spending their days in the hospitals. If you know a friend or a loved one who is chronically ill or battling for life, pay them a visit today, at their homes or in the hospital. Make them feel that they are not alone in their struggle.



GOOD DEEDS

TIME TO BE MINDFUL

Ramadan is a time to reflect and re-evaluate our lives. It's the time to be mindful, work on our strengths, and overcome our weaknesses. The fast involves not only abstaining from food and drink, but also from sins like dishonesty, cruel words, pride, and overindulgence.





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MEGA PROJECT

Green Energy Oman to generate 25GW of renewable energy

MUSCAT: An international consortium comprised of OQ, InterContinental Energy and EnerTech on Monday announced further progress on the development of the Green Energy Oman (GEO) integrated green fuels mega project.

The project targets producing 25 gigawatts (GW) of renewable solar and wind energy, which will be used to produce over 1.5 million tons of zero-carbon green hydrogen per annum.

Najla Zuhair Al Jamali, Executive Manager of Alternative Energy at OQ said that GEO is at the vanguard of mega-scale



green fuels projects, which will make Oman at the forefront of countries that implement similar projects.

The project will utilise Oman's natural resources of wind and solar to produce green fuels.

-ONA

50 FEDDAN

Wheat harvesting season begins in North Al Batinah

SOHAR: Wheat harvesting season began in the wilayats of the Governorate of North Al Batinah, which was cultivated on an area of 50 Feddan (each Feddan equals 4,200 square metres).

The Directorate General of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources in the Governorate North Al Batinah exerts efforts in encouraging the farmers to cultivate various agricultural crops through providing improved seeds, guidance and periodic follow-up, as well as harvesting service.

The directorate added that during the last season, wheat



production ranged between 70 to 75 tonnes, while this season is expected to be lower than the last season, due to the impact of Shaheen Cyclone on the governorate in October 2021.

-ONA

URBAN STRATEGY

Real estate transactions value in Musandam tops OMR15mn

KHASAB: The geographic location of Musandam Governorate contributed to strengthening the economic relations between the Sultanate and the neighbouring countries.

Optimal utilisation

It also contributed to achievement of the socio-economic development and to the increase of standard of living and optimal utilisation and management of natural and cultural aspects in the Governorate.

Ali bin Ahmed Al Ma'ashani, Director general of the Directorate General of Housing and Urban Planning in Musandam Gov-

ernorate said in a statement to Oman News Agency (ONA) that the urban strategy in Musandam Governorate copes with the foundations of the Governorate and is in consistent with the comprehensive urban strategy.

A number of projects

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning has allocated a number of projects as promising, he said, adding that this included locations and lands for free zones in Musandam Governorate and other areas for renewable energy projects.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning has since 2021

allocated, within the urban strategy, areas for establishment of fisheries projects, he added.

Comprehensive study

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning has conducted a comprehensive study for the courses of the wadis in Musandam Governorate in order to identify certain areas for construction of dams, he said.

The value of real estate traded in Musandam Governorate amounted to more than OMR15 million in 2021 and the real estate fees collected stood at OMR600,000, he said.

-ONA

NEW OWNERSHIP SCHEME

<FROM A1> Tanfeedh initiative seeks to widen sources of revenue

Fahad Al Ismaili, the founder of Tibiaan Properties, said there will be indirect benefits to the five areas earmarked under the Tanfeedh initiative, which looks to wean Oman away from oil-and-gas-based sources of income and widening the sources of revenue.

The five areas are agriculture and fisheries, manufacturing, transportation and logistics, energy and minerals and tourism.

"If you have a major property developer who owns OMR 500,000 worth of assets, he now has the ability to expand his portfolio by building a tourist site, a factory, creating office space, etc. There are many options available

to him. All these economic activities will contribute to diversification," he said. "That is the major advantage of this law, so it is the big investors who will benefit.

Local manpower

"When you start constructing your building, you will engage with more local companies, employ local manpower, use in-country services. So, efforts like these are geared towards improving in-country value as well," added Ismaili.

"Depending on what sort of site you are building, it is likely you will engage other services over the long-term," he said. "For ex-

ample, if you have a tourist site, then you will need services and facilities for the tourists who will come there, or if you have a factory, you will need transport facilities, you will need maintenance services and other essentials, so, there will be many knock-on benefits.

"Similarly, if you build a residential property, or if you are bringing your own family as an investor, then you will need local services such as supermarkets, petrol stations, restaurants, medical facilities and so many others. So, there you have another source of both economic benefit and employment," said Al Ismaili.



NEW BATCH OF RECRUITS RECEIVED

The Royal Guard of Oman has received a new batch of Omani job seekers who started their basic military training programme. - ONA

COVID-19

Sur Health Complex gets vaccination centre

MUSCAT: The COVID-19 immunisation centre has been moved from the Executive Office of Sur Health City to Sur Health Complex from Monday, April 4, 2022.

"The immunisation centre against COVID-19 in the Wilayat of Sur announces its transfer from the Executive Office of the Health City of Sur to the Sur Health Complex, as of Monday, April 4, 2022," the Directorate General of Health Services in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate said in a statement on Monday.





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Site Visit - 12/04/2022 at School Premises at 1:30 pm.

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Last date of submission : 17/04/2022 before 12:30 pm (Quotes by e-mail will not be considered)

Ramadan Iftar Program



The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "He who provides a fasting person something with which to break his fast, will earn the same reward as the one who was observing the fast, without diminishing in any way the reward of the latter."

The Oman Charitable Organization is pleased to announce that it will receive donations for Ramadan Iftar Program in Sultanate of Oman for the year 1443 AH AD 2022

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Sri Lanka’s opposition parties reject request to form all-party interim govt

President Rajapaksa on Monday named at least four Ministers to maintain legitimacy and stability of Parliament

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka’s two main opposition parties, Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) and Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) have rejected President Gotabaya Rajapaksa’s request to form an all-party interim government, said Sajith Premadasa, Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Sri Lankan Parliament on Monday adding that the President should resign.

While speaking to ANI, Sajith confirmed that the two main opposition parties SJB and JVP refrained from giving their support to the President. He also called for his resignation amid the deepening economic crisis in the island nation. Following the mass resignation of his Cabinet Ministers, President Rajapaksa on Monday named at least four Ministers to maintain legitimacy and stability of Parliament and other functions of the country until a full Cabinet is appointed, even as he asked opposition members to join a unity government in the face of protests against an economic crisis.

The President replaced his brother Basil Rajapaksa and named Ali Sabry, a previous Minister of Justice, as the new Finance Minister, according to President’s media division. The four new Min-



CURFEW: The 36-hour long curfew that was imposed on Sri Lanka on Saturday evening at 6pm was lifted on Monday morning at 6am but the country is still under a state of emergency.

isters were sworn in before President Gotabaya Rajapaksa at the Presidential Secretariat today.

Leader of the House Dinesh Gunawardena was sworn in as the Minister of Education and Chief Government Whip Johnston Fernando was sworn in as the Minister of Highways, Colombo Post reported. Prof. GL Peiris was re-appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Leader of the House, Dinesh Gunawardena said the President made these appointments this morning to maintain government affairs until a full permanent Cabinet is appointed.

The President has already requested all political parties representing in Parliament to contribute to find a solution to the national crisis in the country. A permanent cabinet will be appointed after dis-

cussions with the political parties, the Colombo Post added further.

Meanwhile, Rajapaksa has invited all political parties in the country to accept ministerial portfolios and work together to find a solution to the national crisis.

In a letter, the President said that the current crisis was the result of several economic and global concerns and that a solution needs to be found within the democratic process of the country.

As one of the leading democracies in Asia, it needs to be addressed within the framework of democracy itself, the letter stated, adding that “together we must work together in the national interest for benefit of citizens and future generations.”

On Sunday, 26 Sri Lankan Cabinet Ministers resigned en masse from their positions amid rising

public anger against the government over the economic crisis. All 26 of them signed a general letter, consenting to resign paving the way for a new Cabinet to be formed.

Mahinda Rajapaksa will continue to be in the office and all other members of the Cabinet have tendered their resignations to the PM.

Meanwhile, a 36-hour long curfew that was imposed on Sri Lanka on Saturday evening at 6 pm was lifted on Monday morning at 6 am but the country is still under a state of emergency.

The country’s government on Saturday blocked access to social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp and YouTube, but lifted the ban on Sunday afternoon after the PM’s son Namal Rajapaksa spoke against it. **ANI**



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SHIPWRECKED

Mediterranean boat accident kills over 90 migrants, says UN



GENEVA: Nearly 100 migrants died in the Mediterranean waters after the boat carrying them from Libya got shipwrecked, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi said.

“More than 90 people have died in another Mediterranean tragedy. Europe has proven its ability to host 4 million refugees from Ukraine generously and effectively. It must now urgently consider how to apply this to other refugees and migrants knocking, in distress, at its doors,” Grandi said on Twitter on Sunday.

The Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), or Doctors Without Borders) aid group said on Twitter that the overcrowded boat carrying migrants left Libya “many days ago.”

“The commercial tanker

Alegria 1 rescued the only 4 survivors early this morning. We know from our initial contact with Alegria 1 that the survivors reported being at sea for at least four days on a boat with nearly 100 people on board,” MSF said on Twitter on Saturday.

The aid group urged coordination centers in Rome and Malta to assign a safe place for surviving migrants.

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor said in its annual report earlier this year that about 1,864 migrants died or disappeared in 2021 compared to 1,401 in 2020. In recent years, the EU has been struggling with an ongoing migration crisis as people try to cross the Mediterranean, fleeing poverty and war in Africa and the Middle East. **ANI**

BHAVALAYAM-2021

‘Matsyagandhi’ bags first prize in online stage play contest

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The drama ‘Matsyagandhi’ received the first prize in the Online Stage play Contest organised in memory of late Girija Baquer by Bhavalaya Art & Culture Foundation, a prominent non-profit, global platform for the promotion of art and culture.

The prizes were announced in a meeting held at the Oman Women’s Association Hall in Qurum on Thursday, March 31st.

The dramas ‘Matsyagandhi’, ‘Chairs’ and ‘Pathimoonnam Manikoor’ received the first, second and third prizes respectively.

The Best Director Award went to Rajesh Kayamkulam (Matsyagandhi) while the Best Playwright Award went to Sreekumar Marath (Pathimoonnam Manikoor).

Ranjith Damodaran (Chairs) and Sajitha Vijayakumar (Matsyagandhi) bagged the Best Actor and Best Actress prizes respectively.

Five versatile artist awards and two Nataka Prathibha awards were also announced on the occasion. Eminent people from the cultural



sphere such as Kabir Yousef, Anirban Ray, Azra Aleem, Sudha Raghunath were honored for their versatility in the various art forms and from Sultanate of Oman theatre artist Aliya al Balushi was awarded.

Padmanabhan Thalora and Keralan K.P.A.C were honoured as ‘Nataka Prathibha’ for their comprehensive contribution to The theatre field.

H.E. Amit Narang, Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman

was the chief guest of the function.

Dr. Humaid Bin Saeed Bin Rashid Al Ameri, a renowned writer, film director, and the President of Omani Society for Cinema and Theatre, and Maryam Al Zedjali Omani Women’s Association Vice-Chairwoman, were the guest of honours.

Lakshmi Kothaneth Journalist and daughter of late Girija Baker participated in the ceremony as the special guest.

The programme was presided

by Dr J. Retnakumar, Bhavalaya Founder and Chairman.

“It was encouraging to see the high level of participation and standard in the dramas previewed. Bhavalaya will strive to bring more such contests to promote Art & Artists,” said Dr J. Retnakumar, Founder & Chairman of Bhavalaya.

Ms. Smruthi Sasidharan was the Anchor of the program.

Vinod VN Head of School of Drama & Fine Arts Department,



University of Calicut, and Asst. Professor and Sandeep Kumar faculty member were the judges of the contest and explained in depth how the plays were judged ranging from lighting to voice to other mechanisms.

The plays used different settings as their stage such as beach, room and cutouts.

The play had to be enacted as they would be on a stage with no breaks or edits. Including the background music had to be live

recording. The prize for the best popular Stage play will be announced after the online voting, the organisers added. Currently the online voting is going on in full swing.

Bhavalaya core committee members Prakash Vijayan and Mrs. Nisha Prabhakaran along with Team Bhavalaya coordinated the well conduct of the program.

Vinod Raghavan, Bhavalayacore committee member delivered the Vote of Thanks.



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WORLD



VARUNA 2022

India, France’s 20th edition of bilateral naval exercise ends

NEW DELHI: The 20th edition of the Indo-French bilateral naval exercise ‘Varuna 2022’, aimed at strengthening the strategic partnership between India and France, culminated on Sunday.

As per an official statement, the exercise this year had an expanded scope covering a broad spectrum of maritime operations and the eventful tactical sea phase of the exercise laid primary focus on advanced anti-submarine warfare tactics, gunnery shoots, seamanship evolutions, tactical manoeuvres and extensive air operations.

The units also undertook cross deck landings by integral helicopters, showcasing a high level of interoperability between them. Gun firing and underway replenishment procedures were also exercised between ships.

The final phase of the exercise progressed with a tapered focus on advanced anti-submarine warfare (ASW) exercises. INS Chennai with Sea King Mk 42B, maritime patrol aircraft P8i, French Navy frigate FS Courbet, support vessel FS Loire, and other units exercised on the full spectrum of ASW operations. The later part of the exercise also included an exchange of sea riders at sea.

The last day (April 3, 2022) of the exercise had cross visits of personnel, cross embarkation of sea riders and a closing session was conducted. Participants and operations teams of participating units met onboard INS Chennai for a comprehensive debrief.

All evolutions conducted at sea were discussed with options for possible inclusions in future editions of the exercise. After debriefing, the culmination of the exercise was marked by the traditional steam past between ships of both navies. INS Chennai passed the column of French warships at close range with personnel bidding each other favourable winds and following seas for the journey ahead.

Seamless coordination, precise execution of manoeuvres, and clockwork execution of complex anti-submarine warfare exercises characterized the conduct of Varuna-2022. All operational objectives of the exercise were accomplished by the participants in full measure. **ANI**

FRESH ROUND

EU to discuss another package of sanctions against Russia on April 6



BRUSSELS: The European Union is mulling additional sanctions against Russia and relevant proposals will be discussed on Wednesday, *The Financial Times* reported.

“Further EU sanctions & support are on their way,” President of the European Council Charles Michel said on Twitter on Sunday, drawing attention to the events in Bucha. The *Financial Times* said on Sunday, citing a diplomat with knowledge of the plans, that EU ambassadors are expected to discuss a fresh round of anti-Russia sanctions on Wednesday.

The new restrictions could target individuals, but could also include a ban on Russian ships using EU ports. Export and energy supply restrictions are also possible, *The Financial Times* said.

Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio said on Sunday that Western countries could introduce french sanctions against Russia over the Bucha incident.

The Kiev authorities and the media have been spreading video footage, allegedly from the Ukrainian town of Bucha near Kiev, with the bodies of allegedly dead people lying along the road. The Russian Defense

The new restrictions could target individuals, but could also include a ban on Russian ships using EU ports. Export and energy supply restrictions are also possible

Ministry said that all photos and videos allegedly evidencing the Russian troops’ crimes in Bucha are yet another provocation since Russian units completely withdrew from the town as early as March 30.

Russian Ambassador to the United States Anatoly Antonov said in an interview with Newsweek that the US is deliberately hushing up the fact that after the withdrawal of Russian troops, Ukrainian forces subjected the city of Bucha to artillery fire, which could have led to losses among the civilian population. According to Antonov, the Kiev authorities are shifting the blame on Russia in what concerns Bucha, where not a single civilian was injured while the town was under the control of the Russian forces.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Sunday that the crimes committed by Ukrainian radicals in Bucha are meant to escalate violence and disrupt the Russia-Ukraine peace negotiations.

The West scaled up military assistance to Kiev, as well as anti-Russia sanctions, after Moscow launched a special military operation in Ukraine in the early hours of February 24.

The move came after the Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics (DPR and LPR) appealed for help in defending themselves against the Kiev forces. Russia said that the aim of its special operation is to demilitarize and “denazify” Ukraine and that only military infrastructure is being targeted. According to Russian President Vladimir Putin, the goal is to protect the people of Donbas, “who have been subjected to abuse, genocide by the Kiev regime for eight years.” **ANI**

FIVE-YEAR TERM

Hong Kong’s Carrie Lam will not seek a second term

HONG KONG: Hong Kong’s Chief Executive Carrie Lam said on Monday she would not seek a second five-year term.

“There’s only one consideration and that is family. I have told everyone before that family is my first priority in terms of my consideration. They think it’s time for me to go home,” Lam told a regular press briefing.

Lam added she would complete her five-year term on June 30, which would bring an end to 42 years of public service.

She said she had already informed Beijing’s leaders about her decision.

Hong Kong set to choose new leader

Hong Kong’s leadership election is due to take place on May 8 after it was postponed for six weeks in March due to a coronavirus surge.

The city’s chief secretary John Lee is seen as the front runner to take over from Lam. Lee was the city’s head of security during the 2019 pro-democracy protests that transformed the semi-autonomous city and ushered in a crackdown from authorities in Beijing.

Hong Kong’s chief executive is elected by a 1,500-member election committee, lawmakers, representatives of various industries, as well as pro-Beijing representatives like deputies to China’s parliament. Beijing has also taken steps to increase its control over Hong Kong’s elections.

Lam’s tumultuous record

Lam was sworn into office as the fourth chief executive by Chinese President Xi Jinping in July 2017.

Hong Kong became more isolated during her term over a crackdown on pro-democracy protests and rigid COVID-19 restrictions. Lam, who promised to unite the semi-autonomous city when she first took office, found it difficult to balance interests with Beijing.

Lam’s reputation declined after the 2019 protests and a subsequent draconian national security law imposed by Beijing, which made it easier to punish protesters and crack down on free media in Hong Kong. In 2020, Lam was sanctioned by the US Treasury for her part in curtailing political freedoms in Hong Kong.

Her management of coronavirus has also been heavily criticized as Hong Kong experienced its worst phase of the pandemic earlier this year.

Hong Kong was initially slated to hold the chief executive election on March 27, but the pandemic delayed the vote for six weeks until May 8. **ANI**



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SPORTS



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Al-Zubair finishes fifth on Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe debut

The Omani represented Al-Manar Racing by HRT at the wheel of a Mercedes-AMG GT3

Times News Service

IMOLA: Oman's Al-Faisal Al-Zubair teamed up with Fabian Schiller and Axil Jeffries to finish fifth in the Silver category on his first appearance at a round of the Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe Powered by AWS at Imola on Sunday.

The Omani represented Al-Manar Racing by HRT at the wheel of a Mercedes-AMG GT3 and the racing trio completed 94 laps of



the demanding Italian circuit in the three-hour endurance race, which attracted 52 entries across the various categories.

Victory in the Silver category fell to Team WRT's Thomas Neubauer, Benjamin Goethe and Jean-Baptiste Simmenauer in an Audi R8 LMS, with Marius Zug, Alex Aka and Nicolas Schöli crossing the finish in second place after losing out on a potential win during the last set of pit stops.

The Al-Manar Racing by HRT Mercedes had completed 17 laps after the opening 30 minutes of the race and the crew were holding fifth place at that point. By the 90-minute mark, the team had completed 50 laps and had slipped back to seventh.

But they delivered a resilient fight back through the middle of the race and, by the 2hr 30min point, the Mercedes had clocked 77 laps and the crew were lying in second position in the Silver category before slipping back to fifth by the chequered flag on lap 94 af-

ter incurring a 10-second penalty.

Al-Zubair said: "This weekend was a little bit tougher than we expected. I think finishing P5 out of 18 Silver class cars was a good job considering we got a 10-second penalty for overshooting the pit entry. Finishing just outside the overall top 20 with a grid of 52 cars with the penalty included was a good result and a good way to start the championship. We are heading in the right direction.

"The format here is different to other championships in that they put everything in one day. We have qualifying in the morning and the race in the evening. There is not much time in between if something goes wrong. Pirelli tyres are new to me. I am just getting my head around it and to learn the way of the car. We have to manage it a bit better next time. The set-up of the car felt good on the test day but all three of us struggled with the set-up and the tyres in the race.

"As a championship there is

nothing that gets close to the GT World Challenge. The level of drivers proves that. You only have to look at the level of names participating in that. For example, there were 17 Pro entries, which consist of three factory drivers

in each car. This shows that the championship is prioritised by manufacturers. It makes it extremely difficult, but I think it's a good thing to race at the top level to push ourselves in the right direction, like we did in the Super Cup.

"We have quite a long break now to the Six Hours of Paul Ricard. But the test was positive there and we will be looking for a podium or a win in the Silver class. This is our goal." Action began with free practice on Saturday morning and Al-Zubair, Schiller and Jeffries clocked the second quickest lap of 1min 40.937sec in the Silver Cup category to finish just 0.314sec behind the Attempto Racing trio of Marius Zug, Nicolas Schöli and Alex Aka in their Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo2.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Heung-min stars in Spurs comeback win against Newcastle, West Ham edge Everton

LONDON: Son Heung-min netted his 14th goal of the season and produced an assist as Tottenham Hotspur moved up to the fourth spot in the Premier League table with a 5-1 win against Newcastle United.

Newcastle had taken the lead on 32 minutes, through defender Fabian Schar's free-kick into the bottom-right corner. Spurs levelled four minutes later, when Ben Davies met Son's inviting delivery with a glancing header for his first Premier League goal since September 2017. Matt Doherty added Spurs' third three minutes



after half-time. Son then made it nine goals in his last nine home Premier League matches with a composed finish from Dejan

Kulusevski's 54th-minute cross before Emerson Royal got on the scoresheet with a close-range finish on 63 minutes.

Steven Bergwijn came off the bench to wrap up the victory, firing in after being teed up by another substitute, Lucas Moura, on 83 minutes.

A fifth win in six takes Spurs above Arsenal to fourth position on goal difference, with both teams on 54 points. The Gunners have two matches in hand.

At London Stadium, a stunning Aaron Cresswell free-kick and Jarrod Bowen's strike secured

a 2-1 win for West Ham United against 10-man Everton.

West Ham went ahead on 32 minutes through Cresswell's brilliant, curling strike into the top corner. Everton were back on level terms on 53 minutes through Mason Holgate.

Bowen restored West Ham's lead just five minutes later, following up after Michail Antonio's initial shot was blocked by Jordan Pickford.

West Ham are up to sixth in the table on 51 points, three behind fifth-placed Arsenal having played three more matches. **ANI**

LA LIGA

Pedri's wonder strike against Sevilla takes Barcelona to second spot

BARCELONA: FC Barcelona on Sunday defeated Sevilla 1-0 at Camp Nou, and in doing so they have moved up to second place in the La Liga table.

It was a tight, tough battle between the home side's attacking prowess and the visitors' rock-solid defending and could have been heading for stalemate had it not been for a moment of absolute genius by teenager Pedri in the 72nd minute.

The 19-year-old outfoxed both Ivan Rakitic and Diego Carlos be-

fore deftly converting the most magnificent of finishes.

Pedri may have missed about half of the season through injury, but he has now already scored as many goals as he did in his debut campaign - four.

He has scored twice in La Liga, once versus Espanyol and now against Sevilla.

He also found the net at San Mames in the Copa del Rey encounter with Athletic Club, and in the Europa League away to Galatasaray. **ANI**



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OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by June 2022 reaching \$102.03, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by 85 cents from the price of Friday, which was \$101.18. - **ONA**

MARKET BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,128.64 points, up by 0.09 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.320 per cent at 476.26 points. Galfar Engineering & Contracting, up by 8.14 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Hassan Engineering, down by 34.38 per cent, was the top loser.

Oman's MSX index records marginal gain in March 2022

The benchmark index registered a gain of 3.7 per cent to close the month at 4,205.2 points

Times News Service

MUSCAT: After being the only monthly decliner last month, Oman's MSX index recorded the smallest monthly gain in the GCC during March-2022, according to a new report.

The benchmark registered a gain of 3.7 per cent to close the month at 4,205.2 points.

The index reached the highest level since December-2018 during the first week of March-2022 but mostly trended downwards for the rest of the month.

"The gains during March 2022 more than offset the declines during the first two months of the year that resulted in a first-quarter 2022 gain of 1.8 per cent, the smallest in the GCC," the Kuwait-based investment, strategy and research firm Kamco Invest said in its March 2022 GCC Markets Monthly report.

In terms of sectoral performance both the Financial and Industrial indices recorded gains



REPORT: The index reached the highest level since December-2018 during the first week of March-2022 but mostly trended downwards for the rest of the month. - **File picture**

during the month at 5.0 per cent and 4.8 per cent, respectively, the report added.

On the other hand, the Services index showed a decline of 1.6 per cent to close the month at 1,617.51 points. In terms of company performance, Construction Materials Industries in the under monitoring market topped the monthly gainers' table recording a 45 per cent increase in share prices.

Monthly trading activity on the exchange witnessed significant improvement as compared to last month. The total volume of shares

traded during March-2022 was up 66.0 per cent to reach 838.1 million shares as compared to 504.8 million shares during February-2022, the Kamco Invest report said.

On the other hand, monthly value traded also witnessed a jump of 92.0 per cent to reach OMR168.5 million.

In terms of investor participation, the share of Omanis in the total value of buy trades improved slightly during March-2022 to 91.3 per cent as compared to 90.9 per cent during February-2022. Their share in the total value of sell trades also increased from

88.66 per cent last month to 89.55 per cent in March-2022.

In economic news, ratings agency S&P upgraded the sovereign credit rating of the Sultanate of Oman from 'B+' to 'BB-' with a Stable outlook. This is the first upgrade the Sultanate received since 2015.

Lower public debt risk and improved fiscal indicators were the main attributes cited for the upgrade. S&P expects the Sultanate to realise a fiscal surplus equivalent to 5.7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2022 compared to the fiscal deficit estimated

to equal 4.7 per cent of GDP which it achieved in 2021. S&P forecasts Oman's real GDP to grow 3.9 per cent in 2022.

The credit rating agency expects the Sultanate's non-oil sector to be the main driver of economic growth. Furthermore, in a move to attract foreign inflows, Oman's market regulator plans to allow full foreign ownership in listed companies on the exchange.

In a recent announcement, the MSX said that Muscat Clearing and Depository has finalised measures to open up the market.

A broad-based rally in GCC markets coupled with elevated oil prices pushed the MSCI GCC aggregate benchmark up 17.7 per cent during the first quarter of 2022, the biggest gains since the second quarter of 2009.

"Gains were supported by four consecutive months of gains in the index," the Kuwait-based investment, strategy and research firm Kamco Invest said.

"All markets were in the green during the quarter with Abu Dhabi reporting the biggest gain of 17.2 per cent followed by Qatar and Saudi Arabia with gains of 16.4 per cent and 16.0 per cent, respectively," the report added.

In terms of monthly performance, the MSCI GCC index was up 5.2 per cent during the month backed by positive performance in all Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) markets during March-2022.

On the sectoral front, the GCC Capital Goods, Materials and

Banks sectors topped during the first quarter of 2022 with gains of almost 20 per cent. Energy and Healthcare followed with a growth of 18.2 per cent and 15.1 per cent, respectively.

Consumer Durable & Apparels and Pharma were the only sectors that declined this quarter by 10.0 per cent and 5.1 per cent, respectively, the Kamco Invest report said.

The monthly performance also saw Materials at the top with a gain of 9.7 per cent followed by Healthcare and Cap Goods indices.

Moreover, despite recent weakness, the disruption caused on the supply front pushed crude oil prices to a seven-quarter high growth of almost 40 per cent during the first quarter of 2022. The volatility in oil prices saw prices reaching a 14-year intraday high of \$139.1 per barrel during the first week of March-2022 but closed the month at \$107.9 per barrel.

Global equity markets also had a positive month with the MSCI World index gaining 2.5 per cent backed by peace talks between Russia and Ukraine.

However, a resurgence of COVID-19 cases in China that resulted in lockdowns in several large cities pushed the Chinese gauge down 6.1 per cent during the month while also lowering the MSCI Emerging Market index by 2.5 per cent. The US market was up 3.6 per cent while the European benchmark showed marginal growth of 0.6 per cent during the month of the arch.

MINERALS DEVELOPMENT OMAN

Pact signed to conduct aerial geophysical surveys



STRATEGIC: The agreement was signed by Eng. Nasser Saif Al Muqbali, CEO of MDO and Steven Sanders, Chairman of the board of directors of Sander Geophysics. - **ONA**

MUSCAT: Minerals Development Oman (MDO) signed a contract with the Canadian company Sander Geophysics to conduct aerial geophysical surveys for the concession areas of MDO (21,480 square kilometres) for two years, starting from May 2022.

The signed programme aims to collect data that helps in identifying rock formations in the concession areas, which will result in producing more accurate geological maps.

The agreement was signed by Eng. Nasser Saif Al Muqbali, CEO of MDO and Steven Sanders, Chairman of the board of directors of Sander Geophysics.

Al Muqbali said that the agreement will contribute to discovering strategic minerals in Oman and will attract investors in the mining sector. - **ONA**

REPORT

Green finance offers over 1mn GCC jobs and \$2tn GDP boost



Aurelien Vincent



Anthony Yammine

DUBAI: By developing the right structure and mechanisms for green finance, GCC governments have the potential to unlock \$2 trillion in cumulative GDP contribution, more than 1 million jobs and foreign direct investment in sustainable industries, according to Strategy&, Middle East, part of the PwC network.

While all GCC countries have already begun their respective sustainability journeys, policymakers must act decisively and in a differentiated manner to capture the largest share of the economic prize. The report, entitled Middle East Green Finance: A \$2 Trillion Opportunity, advises governments to focus on four priorities: enact policies that promote environmental sustainability in all industries, create a green sovereign wealth fund, strengthen capital markets, and develop standardised and transparent reporting mechanisms for environmental performance.

Aurelien Vincent, Partner with Strategy& Middle East, said, "Investors around the world are pouring capital into projects with a strong environmental, social, and governance (ESG) angle. Our analysis has found that green investments in six key GCC industries could have a profound socioeconomic impact that has the potential to create over 1 million skilled jobs and turbocharge foreign direct investment in highly sustainable industries."

Commenting on the nature of

the region's renewable energy and project financing opportunities, Anthony Yammine, Principal with Strategy& Middle East, said, "GCC countries have some of the highest solar exposures in the world. A solar-photovoltaic panel in a GCC country produces twice as much output as it would in Germany or any climatically similar European country - 1,750 to 1,930 hours of full-load operation per year. We can also identify clear opportunities in green hydrogen where production technologies are easily accessible, reducing barriers to entry.

Based on our global supply and demand analysis, exporting countries can potentially capture a market of approximately 200 million tons of green hydrogen by 2050, worth \$300 billion yearly. The green hydrogen export market can also create 400,000 operations and maintenance jobs."

To quantify the benefits of green investing in terms of economic diversification and growth, we looked at six major non-oil sectors in the GCC, including power, water, construction, mobility, food, and waste management. We estimate that the cumulative GDP contribution of these sectors can reach \$2 trillion through 2030. With the expansion of these sectors, we estimate they could add over 1 million jobs by 2030.

That is a significant opportunity that GCC governments can grasp through four strategic moves.

WORLD SHARE MARKETS

Shares turn mixed, 2-year Treasury yields near 2.5%

SYDNEY: World share markets were mixed on Monday while bonds continued to spell the risk of a hard landing for the US economy as short-term yields hit three-year highs. A holiday in China made for sluggish trading, and MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan inched up 0.3 per cent.

Japan's Nikkei dipped 0.1 per cent, while S&P 500 stock futures eased 0.1 per cent and Nasdaq futures 0.2 per cent.

EURO STOXX 50 futures were flat and FTSE futures added 0.4 per cent, Reuters reports.

Data out last week showed inflation in the EU had already surged to a record high, piling pressure on the European Central Bank to rein in runaway prices even as growth slows sharply.

"It really looks like it is time for the ECB to act," warned analysts at ANZ in a note. "While the ECB will be cautious about raising rates, it certainly looks like it should act sooner to abolish its QE programme."

The US Federal Reserve has already hiked and is seen doing a lot more after Friday's solid March payrolls report. A number of Fed officials are due to speak at public events this week, with the prospect of sending more hawkish signals, and minutes of the last policy



meeting are due on Wednesday.

"We now expect the Fed to hike by 50bps in May, June, and July, before dialling the pace back slightly by delivering 25bps hikes in September, November and December," said Kevin Cummins chief US economist at NatWest Markets. "This will bring the funds rate into restrictive territory sooner, with 2.50-2.75 per cent by year-end 2022."

Investors reacted by hammering short-dated Treasuries and further inverting the yield curve as the market priced in the risk all

this tightening would ultimately lead to recession.

On Monday, two-year yields were up at three-year highs of 2.49 per cent and well above the 10-year at 2.410 per cent.

The jump in yields has underpinned the US dollar, particularly against the yen given the Bank of Japan acted repeatedly last week to keep its bond yields near zero.

The dollar was trading firm at 122.60 yen and not far from its recent seven-year peak of 125.10. The euro drifted to \$1.1041 and could fall further should the EU

act to stop gas flows from Russia.

The dollar index was last at 98.617, having recently bounced around between 97.681 and 99.377.

The rise in bond yields globally has been a drag on gold, which pays no return, and the metal was stuck at \$1,920 an ounce.

Oil slid 13 per cent last week - the biggest weekly fall in two years - after US President Joe Biden announced the largest-ever US oil reserves release.

Brent was last quoted 47 cents lower at \$103.92, while US crude lost 33 cents to \$98.94. - **BNA**

MARKET



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MSX index ends higher

Galfar Engineering & Contracting, up by 8.14 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Hassan Engineering, down by 34.38 per cent, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,128.64 points, up by 0.09 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.320 per cent at 476.26 points. Galfar Engineering & Contracting, up by 8.14 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Hassan Engineering, down by 34.38 per cent, was the top loser.

Galfar Engineering & Contracting was the most active in terms of the number of units traded and turnover.

A total number of 1137 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR3.87 million, with more than 32.8 million shares changing hands.

Out of 54 traded securities, 14 advanced, 18 declined and 22 remained unchanged.

Financial Index closed at 6,633.86 points, up by 0.59 per cent. Prices of Ahli Bank, Al Sharqia Investment, AlAnwar Investment and Vision Insurance were up by 3.45 per cent, 1.12 per cent, 3.16 per cent and 3.81 per cent respectively. The prices of, Ominvest, and Sohar International

Bank were down by 1.24 per cent and 0.91 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Omaniya Financial Services, Bank Muscat, Muscat Finance and Oman United Insurance remained unchanged.

Industrial Index closed at 5,980.99 points, down by 0.37 per cent over the previous close. Prices of Al Anwar Ceramic, Al Maha Ceramics and Jazeera Steel Products were down by 2.29 per cent, 5.93 per cent and 0.52 per cent respectively. Prices of Oman Cables Industries, Oman Cement, Oman Flour Mills and Raysut Cement remained unchanged.

Services Index was down by 0.40 per cent before closing at 1,605.36 points. Prices of Al Jazeera Services and Oman Investment & Finance were up by 1.44 per cent and 0.73 per cent respectively. Prices of National Gas, Oman Telecom, Ooredoo and Renaissance Services were down by 2.8 per cent, 0.92 per cent, 0.6 per cent and 0.96 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Maha Marketing and Jazeera Services remained unchanged. — **United Securities**

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,143.41	4,120.57	4,128.65	4,124.94	3.71	0.09
FINANCIAL INDEX	6,656.64	6,625.94	6,633.86	6,594.69	39.16	0.59
Industry Index	6,032.44	5,981.00	5,981.00	6,003.44	-22.44	-0.37
Services Index	1,611.80	1,605.36	1,605.36	1,611.79	-6.44	-0.40
MSX Shariah Index	479.50	476.26	476.26	477.78	-1.53	-0.32
MSX TR INDEX	5,219.39	5,190.61	5,200.78	5,196.12	4.67	0.09
FINANCIAL TRIDX	6,959.54	6,927.45	6,935.72	6,894.78	40.95	0.59
SERVICES TR IDX	1,660.90	1,654.26	1,654.26	1,660.90	-6.63	-0.40
INDUSTRIAL TRIDX	6,260.66	6,207.27	6,207.27	6,230.56	-23.29	-0.37

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
32,809,410	3,874,740	1,137	22,092,295,511	14	18	22	54

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, APRIL 4

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	P&A VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET															
OM0000008200	VISION INSURANCE	281,000	30,635	2	0.110	0.110	0.109	0.109	0.105	-0.004	3.810	0.109	0.100	0.105	0.100 -10,900,000
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	788,348	94,781	19	0.116	0.122	0.116	0.120	0.116	0.004	3,448	0.118	0.118	0.120	0.100 -233,958,896
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	5,642,539	550,606	169	0.097	0.098	0.097	0.098	0.095	-0.003	3,158	0.097	0.097	0.100	0.100 -19,600,000
OM0000002236	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	163,709	45,947	13	0.278	0.284	0.278	0.281	0.277	-0.004	1,444	0.284	0.286	0.284	0.100 -17,198,401
OM0000000440	AL SHARQIA INV.	733,794	67,584	23	0.089	0.091	0.089	0.090	0.089	-0.001	1,124	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.100 -8,100,000
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST&FIN	115,204	15,855	11	0.137	0.140	0.137	0.138	0.137	-0.001	0,730	0.138	0.138	0.140	0.100 -32,706,000
OM0000004118	RAYSUT CEMENT	124,521	20,536	17	0.165	0.165	0.164	0.165	0.165	0.000	0,000	0.164	0.161	0.164	0.100 -33,000,000
OM0000001580	MUSCAT FINANCE	327,300	19,922	19	0.061	0.061	0.060	0.061	0.061	0.000	0,000	0.061	0.060	0.061	0.100 -18,735,929
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDSTR	2,671	2,618	4	0.980	0.980	0.980	1.050	1.050	0.000	0,000	0.980	0.964	0.980	0.100 -94,185,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	121,664	28,191	16	0.232	0.232	0.231	0.232	0.232	0.000	0,000	0.231	0.232	0.236	0.100 -76,762,469
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	550,517	277,248	60	0.504	0.506	0.500	0.504	0.504	0.000	0,000	0.504	0.502	0.504	0.100 -1,801,612,960
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	123,875	47,129	17	0.378	0.382	0.378	0.380	0.382	-0.002	-0.524	0.380	0.378	0.380	0.100 -47,461,225
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	40,639	13,451	12	0.332	0.332	0.330	0.330	0.332	-0.002	-0.605	0.332	0.332	0.332	0.100 -214,811,596
OM0000003386	SOHAR INT BANK	769,610	82,761	11	0.110	0.110	0.105	0.109	0.110	-0.001	-0.909	0.108	0.105	0.109	0.100 -325,916,790
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	7,500	6,480	5	0.864	0.864	0.864	0.872	-0.008	-0.917	0.864	0.864	0.864	0.864	0.100 -648,000,000
OM0000003234	RENAISSANCE SER	10,951	4,536	2	0.414	0.416	0.414	0.414	0.418	-0.004	-0.957	0.416	0.414	0.416	0.100 -97,873,740
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	44,125	14,016	8	0.318	0.318	0.316	0.318	0.322	-0.004	-1.245	0.316	0.290	0.316	0.100 -212,540,205
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	325,050	138,791	22	0.428	0.430	0.424	0.426	0.436	-0.010	-2.294	0.424	0.424	0.436	0.100 -93,720,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	23,000	3,302	3	0.139	0.140	0.139	0.139	0.143	-0.004	-2.977	0.140	0.140	0.141	0.100 -1,815,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	62,094	28,558	9	0.488	0.488	0.476	0.476	0.506	-0.030	-5.929	0.476	0.472	0.476	0.100 -26,180,000
Total		20	10,268,111	1,493,812	442										

Parallel Market

OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	7783,389	721,730	184	0.089	0.094	0.089	0.093	0.086	0.007	8,140	0.094	0.092	0.094	0.100 -18,877,739
OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD.	1,527,230	155,092	119	0.103	0.104	0.099	0.102	0.097	0.005	5,155	0.103	0.103	0.104	0.100 -3,424,288
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	56,558	11,189	6	0.205	0.205	0.195	0.198	0.191	-0.007	3,965	0.195	0.195	0.205	0.100 -321,927,278
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV H	4,324,761	333,086	111	0.076	0.078	0.076	0.077	0.075	-0.002	2,867	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.100 -15,400,000
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT ENG	175,671	18,359	16	0.105	0.106	0.104	0.105	0.103	-0.002	1,842	0.104	0.103	0.104	0.100 -14,700,000
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO	77,774	62,369	39	0.085	0.087	0.084	0.085	0.084	-0.001	1,190	0.087	0.086	0.087	0.100 -10,359,375
OM0000004788	MADINA TAKAFUL	408,330	38,818	17	0.095	0.096	0.094	0.095	0.094	-0.001	1,064	0.095	0.094	0.098	0.100 -16,625,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	1,081,040	104,860	19	0.096	0.097	0.096	0.097	0.096	-0.001	1,042	0.097	0.097	0.097	0.100 -216,984,444
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	228,600	21,284	15	0.094	0.094	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.000	0,000	0.093	0.090	0.093	0.100 -1,623,000
OM0000001889	SALALAH MILLS	411	408	2	0.992	0.992	0.992	1.100	1.100	0.000	0,000	0.992	0.000	0.992	0.100 -54,959,370
OM0000002341	OMAN CHLORINE	17,968	4,348	1	0.242	0.242	0.242	0.242	0.242	0.000	0,000	0.242	0.242	0.242	0.100 -16,481,085
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	1,069,000	120,865	19	0.113	0.113	0.120	0.125	0.125	0.000	0,000	0.112	0.112	0.120	0.100 -338,587,712
OM0000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	2,501	2,081	2	0.832	0.832	0.832	0.872	0.872	0.000	0,000	0.832	0.832	0.872	0.100 -53,431,800
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	98	11	2	0.111	0.111	0.111	0.112	0.112	0.000	0,000	0.111	0.110	0.111	0.100 -13,440,000
OM0000003861	VOLTAMP ENERGY	1,259	151	2	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.125	0.125	0.000	0,000	0.120	0.120	0.125	0.100 -10,175,344
OM0000004348	SMN POWER HOLDING	118,700	5,342	1	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.000	0,000	0.045	0.042	0.045	0.100 -8,983,602
OM0000004925	ALBATRAH POWER	204,066	9,795	13	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0,000	0.048	0.047	0.049	0.100 -32,394,597
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	287,049	13,778	17	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0,000	0.048	0.047	0.048	0.100 -70,204,870
OM0000007084	MCT DESALINATE	11,517	1,347	2	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.000	0,000	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.100 -18,199,397
OM0000007280	ARABIA FALCON INS	100	12	1	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.000	0,000	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.100 -1,879,691
OM0000007407	DHOFAH GENERATING	100	6	1	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.053	0.053	0.000	0,000	0.057	0.053	0.057	0.100 -11,778,720
OM0000007910	OMAN REAL ESTATE	100	9	1	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.097	0.097	0.000	0,000	0.091	0.091	0.099	0.100 -19,400,000
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	240	19	2	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.000	0,000	0.080	0.077	0.080	0.100 -37,694,911
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	520,000	58,760	11	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.114	-0.001	-8.777	0.113	0.112	0.113	0.100 -226,035,345
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	3,098,750	288,223	60	0.093	0.093	0.092	0.093	0.094	-0.001	-1.064	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.100 -32,470,430
OM0000004735	SEWICOOP SALALAH	30,811	2,333	5	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.000	0,000	0.082	0.082	0.084	0.100 -78,274,900
OM0000002580	OMAN EDU TRAINING	15,000	3,150	2	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.214	-0.004	-1.869	0.210	0.193	0.215	0.100 -14,700,000
OM0000004833	AL SUWADI POWER	282,662	13,571	21	0.049	0.049	0.048	0.048	0.049	-0.001	-2.041	0.049	0.048	0.049	0.100 -34,291,504
OM0000002281	TANGER FINANCE	32,805	2,632	2	0.080	0.084	0.080	0.081	0.085	-0.004	-4.706	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.100 -20,651,606
OM0000003711	SOHAR POWER	20,655	806	2	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.041	-0.002	-4.878	0.039	0.037	0.041	0.100 -8,619,390
OM0000002028	GULF INT CHEMI	8,000	728	2	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.099	-0.008	-8.081	0.091	0.091	0.099	0.100 -1,911,000
Total		31	22,086,545	1,999,361	687										

DATA

India's exports rise to record high of \$418 billion in Financial Year 2021-22



NEW DELHI: India has crossed \$418 billion of exports in Financial Year 2021-22 which is about five per cent more than the previous financial year, Union Minister Piyush Goyal said on Sunday.

Appreciating India's performance during the COVID-19 pandemic, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said, "For the first time in our country's history, 418 billion export have been done that is 5 per cent more than the target, despite COVID waves. The consistency is such that we exceeded 40 billion dollars in March. It has never happened before."

In his address, Goyal also lauded the success of the movie 'RRR' which has earned over Rs 750 crores. "I have learnt that RRR movie is perhaps country's biggest film, and has earned over Rs 750 crores. Likewise, I feel India's economy is also breaking record after record," he said.



SPIRITUALITY IMPROVES QUALITY OF LIFE

A recent study by American College of Cardiology researchers suggested that spirituality not only helps improve the quality of life for people with chronic diseases like cancer but also impacts heart failure patients.

The study was published in the journal, 'JACC Heart Failure'.

It further concludes that spirituality should be considered a potential target for palliative care interventions to improve patient-centred and clinical outcomes in these individuals.

"Patients who have heart failure experience a poorer quality of life compared to their peers, with high levels of depression, anxiety and spiritual distress," said Rachel S. Tobin, MD, resident in Internal Medicine at Duke University Hospital, and lead author of the study.

"Contributing to diminished quality of life is the fact that heart failure, unlike many other chronic diseases, is very unpredictable and can lead to hopelessness, isolation and altered self-image," he added.

The American College of Cardiology and other major cardiovascular societies recommend palliative care for heart failure patients. Spirituality is a core domain of palliative care, with the goal of identifying and addressing spiritual concerns and providing patients with appropriate spiritual and religious resources.

However, limited research has been conducted on spirituality's impact on patients with heart failure, and there are no known tools designed to measure it.



KEY DATA EXAMINED INCLUDE:

1 In the Palliative Care in Heart Failure (PAL-HF) trial, spiritual well-being improved in patients randomized to a palliative care intervention compared to usual care as evaluated by FACIT-Sp. The FICA spiritual history tool was also used to gather information on spirituality.

2 Patients randomised to palliative care had increased quality of life as measured by the Kansas City Cardiomyopathy Questionnaire (KCCQ) and Functional Assessment of Chronic Illness Therapy-Palliative Care (FACIT-Pal). They were also found to have lower levels of anxiety and depression.

3 Another study found that after a 12-week mail-based psychosocial intervention, patients completing the intervention had higher quality of life as measured by KCCQ, as well as less depression and search for meaning. Out of the 33 patients included, 85.7 per cent felt that the intervention was worthwhile. In a pilot study, spiritual counselling was associated with improved quality of life, although there was no control group to determine if the effect was significant.

According to the researchers, spirituality is hard to define, but they reference several definitions that describe spirituality as how individuals find meaning and purpose in life, which can be separate from religious beliefs.

For instance, the Institute of Medicine defines spirituality as "the needs and expectations which humans have to find meaning, purpose and value in their life. Such needs can be specifically religious, but even people who have no religious faith or are not members of organised religion have belief systems that give their lives meaning and purpose.

Researchers conducted a review of 47 articles in order to explore the current knowledge of spirituality in heart failure patients. It described associations between spirituality and quality of life, as well as patient outcomes and propose clinical applications and future directions for spirituality in this population. There were approximately 10 varying instruments used to measure spirituality, some simple, others complex.

"The literature suggests not only can spirituality improve quality of life for the patient, but it can also help support caregivers and potentially help heart failure patients from needing to be re-admitted to the hospital," Tobin said.

"What we have suggested and are now doing is developing a spirituality screening tool, similar to ones used to screen for depression. This can be used to identify heart failure patients in palliative care who are at risk for spiritual distress. However, this is just a start. More research needs to be done," he concluded. -ANI



FEATURES



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GRAMMYS 2022:

Jon Batiste, Silk Sonic, Olivia Rodrigo bag top honours

LAS VEGAS (NEVADA): The 64th Grammy Awards, which was originally scheduled to take place in January this year, was held on April 3 at the MGM Arena in Las Vegas.

Despite being delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the awards ceremony witnessed several renowned artists gather under the same roof to celebrate the biggest night in the world of music. While the Grammys moved to Las Vegas for the first time in its history, Jon Batiste, who led the nominations list with 11 nominations, won five awards, including the Album of the Year.

Bruno Mars and Anderson Paak, popularly known as Silk Sonic, bagged the top honours, while Olivia Rodrigo also registered her name on the winners' list by earning multiple major awards at the 64th Grammy Awards.

- The complete list of winners:**
- Record of the Year: Leave The Door Open - Silk Sonic
 - Album of the Year: We Are - Jon Batiste
 - Song of the Year: Leave The Door Open - Silk Sonic
 - Best New Artist: Olivia Rodrigo
 - Best Rock Performance: Making a Fire, Foo Fighters
 - Best Metal Performance: The Alien, Dream Theater
 - Best Rock Song: Waiting on a War
 - Best Rock Album: Medicine at Midnight, Foo Fighters
 - Best Pop Solo Performance: Olivia Rodrigo (Drivers License)
 - Best Pop Vocal Album: Sour - Olivia Rodrigo
 - Best Pop Duo/Group Performance: Kiss Me More, Doja Cat and SZA
 - Best Traditional Pop Vocal Album: Love for Sale, Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga
 - Best R&B Album: Heaux Tales ,

- Jazmine Sullivan
- Best R&B Performance: Leave the Door Open - Silk Sonic, Pick Up Your Feelings - Jazmine Sullivan
- Best Traditional R&B Performance: Fight for You, H.E.R.
- Best Melodic Rap Performance: Hurricane, Kanye West featuring the Weeknd and Lil Baby
- Best R&B Song: Leave the Door Open
- Best Progressive R&B Album: Table for Two, Lucky Daye
- Best Rap Performance: Family Ties, Baby Keem featuring Kendrick Lamar
- Best Rap Album: Call Me If You Get Lost, Tyler, the Creator
- Best Rap Song: Jail
- Best Improvised Jazz Solo: Humpty Dumpty, Chick Corea
- Best Jazz Vocal Album: Songwrights Apothecary Lab, Esperanza Spalding
- Best Jazz Instrumental Album: Skyline by Ron Carter, Jack DeJohnette and Gonzalo Rubalcaba
- Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album: For Jimmy, Wes and Oliver - Christian McBride Big Band
- Best Latin Jazz Album: Mirror Mirror by Eliane Elias with Chick Corea and Chucho Valdes
- Best Alternative Music Album: Daddy's Home, St. Vincent
- Best Dance/Electronic Recording: Alive - Rufus Du Sol
- Best Dance/Electronic Album: Subconsciously, Black Coffee
- Best Music Video: Freedom, Jon Batiste
- Best Music Film: Summer of Soul
- Best Country Solo Performance: You Should Probably Leave by Chris Stapleton
- Best Country Duo/Group Performance: Younger Me by Brothers Osborne
- Best Country Song: Cold by Chris Stapleton
- Best Country Album: Starting Over by Chris Stapleton
- Best Compilation Soundtrack for

- Visual Media: The United States vs. Billie Holiday, Andra Day
- Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media: The Queen's Gambit and Soul
- Best Song Written for Visual Media: All Eyes on Me, Bo Burnham
- Best Contemporary Instrumental Album: Tree Falls, Taylor Eigsti
- Best Bluegrass Album: My Bluegrass Heart, Bela Fleck
- Best Traditional Blues Album: I Be Trying, Cedric Burnside
- Best Contemporary Blues Album: 662, Christone 'Kingfish' Ingram
- Best New Age Album: Divine Tides by Stewart Copeland and Ricky Kej
- Best Gospel Performance/Song: Never Lost, CeCe Winans
- Best Contemporary Christian Music Performance/Song: Believe for It, CeCe Winans
- Best Gospel Album: Believe for It, CeCe Winans
- Best Contemporary Christian Music Album: Old Church Basement, Elevation Worship and Maverick City Music
- Best Roots Gospel Album: My Savior, Carrie Underwood
- Best Latin Pop Album: Mendo - Alex Cuba
- Best Musica Urbana Album: El Ultimo Tour Del Mundo, Bad Bunny
- Best Latin Rock or Alternative Album: Origen, Juanes
- Best Regional Mexican Music Album: A Mis 80's, Vicente Fernandez
- Best Tropical Latin Album: Salswing!, Ruben Blades y Rodrigo Delgado & Orquesta
- Best Americana Album: Native Sons, Los Lobos
- Best American Roots Performance: Cry, Jon Batiste
- Best American Roots Song: Cry, Jon Batiste
- Best Folk Album: They're Calling Me Home, Rhiannon Giddens with Francesco Turrisi



- Best Regional Roots Music Album: Kau Ka Pe'a, Kalani Pe'a
- Best Reggae Album: Beauty in the Silence, SOJA
- Best Global Music Album: Mother Nature, Angelique Kidjo
- Best Global Music Performance: Mohabbat - Arooj Aftab
- Best Children's Album: A Colorful World, Falu
- Best Spoken Word Album: Carry On: Reflections for a New Generation from John Lewis, Don Cheadle
- Best Comedy Album: Sincerely, Louis CK
- Best Musical Theater Album: The Unofficial Bridgerton Musical, Emily Bear
- Best Recording Package: Pakelang
- Best Instrumental Composition: Eberhard, Lyle Mays
- Best Arrangement, Instrumental or A Capella: Meta Knight's Revenge, Charlie Rosen and Jake Silverman

- Best Arrangement, Instruments and Vocals: To The Edge of Longing (Edit Version), Vince Mendoza
- Best Boxed or Special Limited Edition Package: All Things Must Pass: 50th Anniversary Edition
- Best Album Notes: The Complete Louis Armstrong Columbia and RCA Victor Studio Sessions 1946-1966
- Best Historical Album: Joni Mitchell Archives, Vol. 1: The Early Years (1963-1967)
- Best Engineering Album, Non-Classical: Love for Sale
- Producer of the Year, Non-Classical: Jack Antonoff
- Best Remixed Recording: Pasingenger
- Best Immersive Audio Album: Alicia
- Best Engineered Album, Classical: Chanticleer Sings Christmas
- Producer of the Year, Classical: Judith Sherman

- Best Orchestral Performance: Price: Symphonies Nos 1 and 3
- Best Opera Recording: Glass: Akhnaten
- Best Choral Performance: Mahler: Symphony No 8, Symphony Of A Thousand
- Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance: Beethoven: Cello Sonatas - Hope Amid Tears
- Best Classical Instrumental Solo: Alone Together
- Best Classical Solo Vocal Album: Mythologies
- Best Classical Compendium: Women Warriors - The Voices Of Change
- Best Contemporary Classical Composition: Shaw: Narrow Sea
- Hosted by Trevor Noah, the awards ceremony was attended by Doja Cat, Olivia Rodrigo, K-pop group BTS, Justin Bieber, Billie Eilish, Lady Gaga, Jared Leto, John Legend, and many more. **ANI**



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ROUND-UP



Khedmah recognised as Top Omani Brand

Khedmah received this prestigious award for its instrumental role in contributing to the financial online payment ecosystem in the Sultanate

MUSCAT: Attesting to its innovative digital services and efficient solutions, Oman Investment and Finance Company (OIFC), Khedmah, was recently recognised as the “Top Omani Brand” in the ‘Digital Payments’ category at the Alam Al-Iktisaad Top Omani Brand Awards ceremony.

The event took place in the Majan Ballroom at Al Bustan Palace, Muscat and the guest of honour, His Highness Sayyid Fahr bin Fatik Al Said, presented the award to Said Ahmed Safrar, Chief Executive Officer of OIFC.

Khedmah received this prestigious award for its instrumental role in contributing to the financial online payment ecosystem in the Sultanate. Through harnessing innovation and insights, Khedmah has been on a path of digital trans-



formation in its services keeping abreast with the latest technological advancement in the industry. Today, it caters to a large customer base providing efficient and smart solutions to its clients that save their time, effort and money.

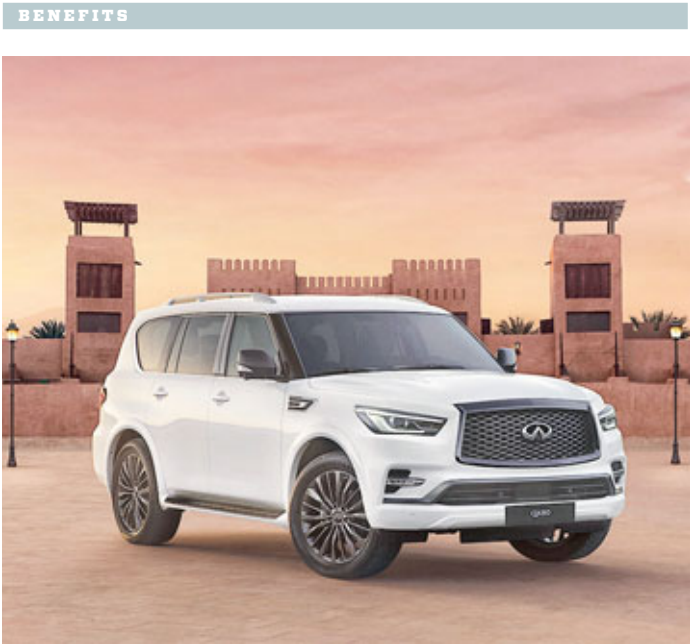
With features that accentuate OIFC's top customer service standards, Khedmah mobile app complements the company's digital transformation strategy through its seamless and innovative services. Through the app, users can easily pay and check electricity, water and telecom-munications bills as well as make payments to the Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI). Additionally, they can top up their phones, and pre-paid electric-

ity and entertainment recharge for top international merchants. Commenting on this success, Said Ahmed Safrar said, “We are proud of this accomplishment, which reflects the company's constant efforts in enriching the digital payments field in the Sultanate through its high-end solutions. This milestone will bolster our leading position in the market. It is also a testimony to our employees’ innovative efforts in implementing Khedmah's strategy towards excellence in services provided to customers. Such achievements will encourage us to deliver more to our customers and realise more successes at various levels.”

The winners of these prestigious awards were selected based on the

results of a survey conducted by Alam Al-Iktisaad, Oman's premier Arabic business magazine, in collaboration with Arab House Research. The survey witnessed the participation of a large number of senior officials from a cross-section of industries and government bodies in the Sultanate.

Established in 1979, OIFC is one of the leading Investment and services companies and specialises in billing, collection and debt factoring for electricity, water and telecom services in the Sultanate. The company's 68 branches and e-payment channels allow customers to easily pay their electricity, water and telecommunications bills and avail of other value-added services as well.



Make your dream of owning INFINITI QX80 come true this Ramadan

MUSCAT: INFINITI Oman, from the house of Suhail Bahwan Automobiles, is offering a plethora of rewards for customers buying the full-size luxury SUV INFINITI QX80 as part of its special promotion announced to mark the holy month of Ramadan.

The new INFINITI QX80 features added equipment, innovative new technologies and stylish attributes befitting its luxury status. The INFINITI QX80 is a full-size luxury SUV – the flagship of the INFINITI range. It combines bold proportions and a commanding exterior design with a spacious, high-quality cabin with room for seven or eight passengers. Effortless performance, advanced drive-assist technologies and taut yet refined dynamics allow for a relaxing and confidence-inspiring drive.

The range of offers on INFINITI QX80 includes free registration, assured gifts vouchers, periodic vehicle maintenance, manufacturer's warranty, AAA/ Road assistance card, digital promotion, INFINITI loyalty programme and reference programme.

The special offer will be available till May 19. The scheme is applicable for all the customers purchasing INFINITI vehicles for personal use only. Vehicles purchased with commercial registration will not be eligible for the scheme. Vehicles bought for taxi, driving school, ministries, fleet, and rent-a-car usage will not be eligible for this scheme. The scheme is applicable for retail billing only.

A senior spokesperson at INFINITI Oman, said, “We are pleased to announce an attractive offer to our flagship QX80 model for our customers in Oman. This is a good time to buy the QX80 which features a range of available drive-assist technologies. The INFINITI QX80 presents drivers with style and luxury.”

All customers purchasing INFINITI QX80 during the scheme period will be eligible for free first year vehicle registration.

All customers purchasing INFINITI QX80 during the scheme period will be eligible for Value Added Service (VAS) gift vouchers of OMR 400. Voucher can be redeemed for vehicle service, purchase of value-added service products at SBA workshop, purchase of parts/accessories at SBA workshop and purchase of service contracts from SBA workshop. VAS voucher will have to be utilized fully in one go and cannot be fragmented. Any additional expenses on top of the voucher amount will be paid by the customer separately. VAS Voucher will have a limited valid-

ity period and will have to be used before October 31, 2022. VAS Voucher is transferable and will be in denomination of OMR 50. Multiple vouchers will be issued for OMR 400. VAS Voucher can be redeemed only at SBA Workshop and the amount cannot be discounted in cash.

Customers purchasing INFINITI QX80 in the scheme period will get free Periodic Vehicle Maintenance of two years or 30,000 kms (whichever is earlier). This offer excludes battery and wear and tear components. This offer includes only the service intervals of 10,000Kms.

INFINITI QX80 purchased during the scheme period will have a 3 years / 100,000 Kms Manufacturer's Warranty.

Free AAA / Road Assistance card will be given on the purchase of INFINITI QX80 for the first year only and as supported by AAA Oman & UAE.

Two winners from all the social media users who will participate in the Ramadan campaign, Contest and other online challenges on Instagram (@sbainfinitioman) and Facebook (@sbainfinitioman) will get BOSE Ear Buds.

All INFINITI existing owners and their immediate family members [father, mother, son(s) & unmarried daughter(s)] will be eligible for the following additional benefits on purchase of another INFINITI vehicle. Diamond members will get a loyalty Bonus on trade-in price of Infiniti vehicle of OMR 300 and platinum will get OMR 400. Special in-house finance rate for diamond members is 3.75% and platinum is 3.50%. Diamond members will get a special accessories package of window tinting and platinum members will get window tinting and paint protection.

INFINITI will generate references of people looking to buy a car. This reference will be generated from existing INFINITI customers. The same person cannot refer himself but can refer multiple names. If any of the referred persons buy an INFINITI car, then the person who referred him will get OMR 100 gift voucher. This gift voucher can be redeemed during vehicle service at the SBA workshop, purchase of consumables from SBA counters, and purchase of parts and accessories from SBA counters. All such gift voucher winners will be declared on an ongoing basis. This gift voucher is non-transferable and cannot be redeemed for cash or exchanged for credit. The gift voucher will be valid for six months from the date of issue. The voucher needs to be redeemed fully all at once. Part redemption will not be allowed.

RECOGNITION



Lulu Financial Group head Adeeb Ahamed receives Bahraini golden visa

MUSCAT: Adeeb Ahamed, Managing Director of Lulu Financial Group, has received the Bahraini golden residency visa.

Adeeb Ahamed was awarded the honour by Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister of Bahrain.

“I am humbled and delighted to receive this honour today. I thank His Majesty King Hamad bin Eisa Al Khalifa, His Royal Highness Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Bahrain and the government and people of Bahrain, for bestowing this recognition on me,” Adeeb Ahamed said, after receiving his Golden Visa.

Launched in February this year, the Golden residency visa for non-Bahrainis is part of the country's economic recovery plan to attract global talent and boost investment in Bahrain.

“The Golden Visa is a benchmark of recognition that will boost Bahrain's image as a business hub, in traditional and new-age sectors,” Adeeb added.

ACCOLADES

United Securities wins big at Top Omani Brand and Oman Forum Sustainability Awards

MUSCAT: The Sultanate's leading financial investment advisory and securities business, United Securities (US) has won two prestigious accolades at the Oman Forum Sustainability Awards that was presided over by Dr Rahma bint Ibrahim Al Mahrouqiyah, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation; and the Top Omani Brand Awards, held under the auspices of His Highness Sayyid Fahr bin Fatik Al Said.

United Securities was recognised as a ‘Top Omani Brand’ in the Investments category and also bestowed with the ‘Oman Forum Sustainability Award’ for Leadership in Financial Investments at glitterati awards ceremonies organised at the Al Bustan Palace - A Ritz-Carlton Hotel.

The Top Omani Brands and Sustainability Awards (Part of the Oman Forum) provide recognition and celebrate the achievements of Oman's leading business entities, shining the spotlight on those that build smarter, more effective and more efficient brands and solutions. The ceremonies recognise businesses who demonstrate a resolute commitment in the pursuit of business excellence and sustainability in their respective fields, contributing to the evolving business landscape in the sultanate and beyond.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Awards ceremony, Mustafa Ahmed Salman, CEO of United Securities mentioned, “Our victory at both award ceremonies indicates that we are on the right track. We are delighted to have won them as they are recognition of our leadership in the financial investment advisory and securities domain. I am very proud of the US team for continuously upholding our commitment to the highest standard of work! It is our tradition of ser-



vice excellence, sustainability and investment expertise at a regional and international level that continues to keep us in a strong position to play a pivotal role not only in our customers' growth but at the forefront of the country's development as a global investment and trading hub.”

He added, “In line with the Sultanate's economic vision, the ongoing era focuses on enhancing the role of all kinds of enablers in various sectors of the economy, with finance and allied sectors becoming an important pillar to the nation. Consistent with our long-term commitment to the Sultanate's investment and trading ecosystem, United Securities will continue to provide financial advisory and multi-sector expertise, including securities solutions to

support the growth of businesses of all types and sizes, enabling them to succeed and flourish.”

The Top Omani Brand Award is conducted in a partnership with the Arabian Research Bureau, wherein the nation's most trusted and preferred industry names emerge as winners for enjoying a high brand recall among consumers, as part of a survey.

A part of the Oman Forum, the Sustainability Awards honour private sector companies, public sector organisations, and non-profit organisations, with extraordinary accomplishments in areas of social, economic and environmental sustainability in alignment with the Sultanate's commitment toward meeting the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



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ROUND-UP



A’Saffa Foods named Top Omani Brand

The award is not only a testament to the brand’s popularity and success, but also demonstrates its commitment to delivering true quality and value to the customers in Oman

MUSCAT: A’Saffa Foods was recently presented with the ‘Top Omani Brands’ award in the ‘Food & Beverages’ category at the 2022 edition of the Alam al-Iktisaad Wa l’Amal (AIWA) Top Omani Brands Award. The awards are presented every year by AIWA, a leading Arabic business magazine published by United Media Services. The nominations were based on a survey conducted in partnership with the Arabian Research Bureau. This survey was then used to determine which brands enjoyed the



highest brand recall amongst their consumers. This award is therefore a clear demonstration of the trust and confidence the public has in A’Saffa Foods and its products. The AIWA Top Omani Brands Award 2022 ceremony was held at Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel, on March 30, under the patronage of His Highness SayyidFahrbin Fatik Al Said. Receiving the award at the event on behalf of A’Saffa Foods was the company’s CEO, Eng. Mohamed Suhail Al Shanfari. On receiving the award, Al Shanfari said, “We are honoured

to have been ranked as the ‘Top Omani Brand’ in the ‘Food & Beverages’ category. The award is not only a testament to our brand’s popularity and success, but also demonstrates our commitment to delivering true quality and value to our customers in Oman. This award further endorses the trust our customers have put in us over the past two decades. As such, we would like to thank them for their continued loyalty to our brand. We would also like to thank UMS and AIWA for the award as well as everyone who named us as their preferred brand during the survey.”

Founded in 2001, A’Saffa Foods Processing is a state-of-the-art poultry and meat processing plant with an advanced farm and slaughterhouse in Thumrait, Dhofar. Over the past two decades, the brand has continually strived to live up to the trust its customers across the country and the GCC have placed in the brand and its products. In fact, since its very inception, the company has been committed to producing nothing but the very best poultry products, both in terms of food safety and quality.

Meethaq extends support to Siraj Education Endowment Foundation

MUSCAT: In line with its pioneering role in providing Islamic financial services and products in the Sultanate of Oman, Meethaq Islamic Banking from Bank Muscat has extended its support to Siraj Education Endowment Foundation. Under the terms of the partnership, Meethaq will provide the necessary facilities for collecting contributions, donations and aid from the public through its various channels including its large network of branches, ATMs, CDMs and FFMs as well as Internet and Mobile Banking platforms. The partnership will further enhance Meethaq’s role in Public-Private Partnership in various fields and sectors. Since its inception in 2019, the Siraj Education Endowment Foundation has been working tirelessly to achieve its goals, including the development of a Waqf to support and sponsor educational programmes and supporting talented students in need, through mobilising the public donations. Siraj also focuses on enhancing social solidarity by spreading awareness about the importance of educational Waqf. The donations to the Siraj Education Endowment Foundation can be made through the Meethaq account 0631500571440001 by both the bank’s customers and the general public through branches and various e-channels. Meethaq will implement a special awareness campaign to reach out to its customers and the general public through various media channels including radio and social media, text messages, emails and social messages on ATMs and CDMs.

research and innovation and enhancing the quality of education at different levels, which is very much in line with the strategic goals of Oman Vision 2040.” Sheikh Waleed K. Al Hashar, Chief Executive Officer, Bank Muscat, said: “We are pleased to partner with the Siraj Education Endowment Foundation to provide facilities that will support the development of a Waqf that contributes to higher education, scientific research and innovation in the Sultanate. This will be particularly helpful for talented students who require financial support to achieve their goal of contributing to the National Economy through effective participation in the job market. “As the pioneer of Islamic banking in the Sultanate, Meethaq is always keen to strengthen its partnership with government institutions and corporates in Oman to provide services and facilities, which are compliant and in accordance with the principles of Islamic Sharia. We wish Siraj all the success in achieving their worthy goals, and request everyone to contribute to the success of the Foundation through their valuable donations and support.” The establishment of different Waqf institutions in the Sultanate is an important step to promote social development and the good of Omani society. Meethaq has been a pioneer in supporting charitable endowments and will work to further strengthen its partnership with different Waqf institutions to achieve economic, social and philanthropic development in the Sultanate. Earlier in 2017, Meethaq had extended support to the Organisation of a Waqf launched by the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs. The initiative was the first of its kind, reflecting the preparedness for innovative utilisation of Waqf for the good of the nation and opened new horizons with a modern vision for philanthropy. In 2018, the Ministry of Awqaf and Meethaq conducted a joint campaign through the media, lectures, workshops and social media to spread awareness of the Waqf and its importance for the people of Oman. Meethaq Islamic Banking is one of the first institutions in the Sultanate which has been spreading awareness of the importance of Waqf. Meethaq is keen to interact and participate in various activities and events, which contribute to social development across various fields and sectors.

COLLABORATION

Ozatal Metals and Solution enters into agency agreement with Trade Links

MUSCAT: Ozatal Metals and Solution Pvt Ltd from India, specialized in architectural hardware manufacturing, signed an exclusive agency agreement with Trade Links & Services Co. (TLS), Oman for the supply of all kinds of glass fittings, architectural hardware systems, railing system, space frames, automated louvres and skylights on March 24 at Trade Links head office. The Executive Director of Ozatal, Joshi Babu and on behalf of TLS, CEO Magdy Abu Farag signed the distributor agreement. Raj Utture, COO of TLS received the distributor certificate from Joshi Babu. Joshi Babu said, “We are looking forward to developing this close working relationship between



OZATAL & TLS. This is a great opportunity to work together, this partnership will help us deliver value and access to new growth

markets for our portfolio companies as we continue to help them scale.” He wished OZATAL Business Development Manager Jijo

Jose and TLS Div. Manager Emam Khan and his team to develop a successful market existence in the Oman region.

PROMOTION

Toyota Yaris now available with ‘Biggest Excitement’ benefits

MUSCAT: The Toyota Yaris is available with exclusive benefits like Service 2 Years/20,000km, (whichever is earlier) and 1-year insurance or cash gift in lieu of insurance OMR125. The campaign is valid until May 19. (Prospective buyers may be advised that the benefits vary between model variants, model year and manufacturing year. Terms & Conditions apply. Visit the showroom for exact details. The Toyota Yaris, one of the most popular sedans, is exciting and rewarding to own and enjoy. Equipped with impressive power, fuel efficiency, features and more, the Yaris is a great choice for those looking for a mid-size sedan. Delivering a dynamic driving experience, the Yaris sedan and Yaris Hatchback are equipped with a 1.5L engine. The 1.5-Litre four-

cylinder engine can churn out a maximum output of 106 hp and 14.3 kg-m of torque and is mated to the CVT transmission to offer a smooth shifting experience with excellent fuel efficiency. Cutting-edge design defines the exterior of the Yaris, with its dynamic angles as well as sleek headlamps and clearance lamps. The front of the Yaris has a horizontal grille for a wider yet more aerodynamic appearance, while rear combination taillights adorn the rear of the car with a unique look. The Yaris hatchback is adorned with a stylish radiator grille, colour keyed front and rear bumpers, 14” steel wheels, halogen headlamps, rear combination lamps, stylish shark fin antenna, high mount stop lamp, a sporty lower radiator grille in the front.

With an exciting interior featuring a distinctive design and offering convenience and comfort with a layer of luxury, the Yaris sedan’s cabin has an exclusive profile. The centre console of the Yaris has been designed to create a greater sense of integration. The cabin has been adorned with a range of enhanced features, including keyless entry, cruise control, as well as a four-speaker audio system with AUX and USB. As with any other Toyota model, safety remains a top priority for the Yaris sedan and hatchback, which includes a comprehensive array of safety features to protect its occupants, such as driver and front passenger airbags, vehicle stability control, anti-lock braking system, electronic brake-force distribution, brake assist, traction control, among many others.







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