



COMMERCE MINISTRY WELCOMES HIS MAJESTY'S ROYAL DIRECTIVES

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion welcomed the Royal directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik for the Industrial Strategy 2040 and the launch of a number of initiatives including the transformation of limited liability companies into joint stock companies (closed). The ministry reaffirmed the role and contributions of the manufacturing sector. **>A3**



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FINnovate

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Date: 27-30 May, 2024 | Time: 10 am to 9 pm
Venue: Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre

Stall No: Z2

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HM CONFERS AL NU'MAN ORDER ON FORMER IRANIAN AMBASSADOR



His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has conferred Al Nu'man Order (first class) on Ali Najafi, former ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Sultanate of Oman, in appreciation for his efforts and contributions in serving bilateral relations between the two countries. The Order was handed over to Najafi by Ibrahim Ahmed Al Muaini, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Islamic Republic of Iran, when he received the former ambassador at the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Tehran. **-ONA**

OMAN'S ECONOMIC OUTLOOK POISED TO REMAIN FAVOURABLE

Growth is expected to further accelerate over the medium term supported by global demand recovery, increased investment in non-hydrocarbons



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's economic outlook remains favourable, with real growth expected to reach 1.5 percent in 2024, driven by increased gas production and diversification efforts, according to a new report.

"These include efforts to further improve the business environment, support the role of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the economy, and accelerate investments in renewable energy and green hydrogen," according to the Spring 2024 Gulf Economic Update (GEU).

Growth is expected to further accelerate over the medium term supported by global demand recovery, increased investment in non-hydrocarbons and renewa-

ble energy, the report further said. "Inflation is forecast to converge to 2 percent over the medium term," the Spring 2024 Gulf Economic Update said.

Elaborating further on the economic growth in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the report said that the region is expected to rebound to 2.8 percent and 4.7 percent in 2024 and 2025, respectively.

The encouraging regional prospects and rebound are not just due to the anticipated recovery in oil output, as OPEC+ gradually relaxes production quotas during the second half of 2024, but also builds on the strong momentum of the non-oil economy, which is expected to continue

to expand at a robust pace over the medium term. "The commitment of the GCC to diversifying their economies highlights their strategic approach to fostering resilience and sustainable development during a volatile global economic period," the report said.

Despite diversification efforts, hydrocarbon receipts will remain crucial in shaping the region's fiscal and external balances in the medium term. As a result, GCC's fiscal surplus will continue to narrow in 2024, reaching 0.1 percent of GDP, while current account surplus is expected to reach 7.5 percent of GDP (compared to 8.4 percent of GDP in 2022).

For the GCC countries to build on their current diversification

momentum and realise their full potential, the GEU report highlights the importance of education quality in fostering long term economic growth in GCC countries.

In her remarks, the World Bank's GCC Country Director, Safaa El-Tayeb El-Kogali indicated that, "Good quality education prepares young people to access better employment opportunities and higher wages, increasing the potential to spur economic growth. Over the last decade, GCC countries have significantly improved learning outcomes. Yet, there is still scope for GCC countries to further improve in learning outcomes as they lag behind international benchmarks." **>A5**

BILATERAL RELATIONS

Recognising Palestine State is a historic move: Ambassador of Ireland to Oman

MUSCAT: Gerry Cunningham, the Ambassador of the Republic of Ireland appointed to the Sultanate of Oman, underscored the firm relations between the two countries, especially in cultural and education fields.

In an interview with Oman News Agency, the Ambassador of the Republic of Ireland said that he is keen to enhance bilateral relations. The two countries, he added, have many opportunities that can be developed in the trade field by utilising the two countries' components in areas of agriculture, energy, renewable energy and green hydrogen.

Oman, the ambassador said, is a "tremendous" destination for tourists from Ireland with its diverse tourist attractions, such as the Royal Opera House Muscat.

GAZA DEATH TOLL

as of May 29, 2024

Deaths
36,960
Injured
81,420

Moreover, the ambassador noted that Ireland's recognition of the State of Palestine is considered a historic step for the people of Ireland. Recognition of the State of Palestine was a matter of time, the ambassador affirmed.

He added that there are ongoing talks in Europe, which could result in more countries recognising the State of Palestine, especially after the recent attack on a refugee camp in Rafah. **-ONA**



Oman denounces Israeli aggression targeting displaced camps in Rafah

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman has expressed its strong condemnation and denunciation of the persistent Israeli aggression targeting camps housing displaced Palestinians in the Gaza Strip's city of Rafah.

In a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry on Wednesday, the Sultanate of

Oman urged the international community to assume its responsibilities, in an urgent manner, by taking necessary measures to stop the systematic and ongoing war crimes and genocide committed by Israeli forces against the Palestinian people.

Oman demanded the immediate implementation of

UN resolutions calling for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip.

Humanitarian aid

It also called for unhindered supply of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip and the application of deterrent international sanctions on Israel in view of its criminal actions. **-ONA**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

SalamAir to launch Muscat-Delhi flight

1 SalamAir, Oman's fastest-growing value-for-money airline, is excited to announce the launch of its newest destination: Delhi, India. Starting from July 2, 2024, SalamAir will operate twice-weekly flights to Delhi, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. **>A2**

OMAN

People can apply for medical leave online

2 Within its participation at the 33rd edition of COMEX Global Technology Show 2024, the Ministry of Health launched an e-service on Wednesday for the approval of sick leaves through the health portal. **>A2**

WORLD

Delhi's temperature tops 52.3° Celsius

3 Reeling under severe heatwave conditions, Delhi's Mungeshpur on Wednesday recorded a maximum temperature of over 52 degree Celsius, the highest temperature in the national capital. Mungeshpur recorded 48.3° on May 26. **>A6**



PRAYER
TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....	12:09pm
Asr.....	3:29pm
Maghrib.....	6:54pm
Isha.....	8:15pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	3:54am

MEETINGS

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Royal Office Minister reviews relations with ambassadors of Iraq and Syria



MUSCAT: Gen. Sultan Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office received in his office on Wednesday Qais Saad Al Amri, Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq to the Sultanate of Oman. The meeting reviewed a set of

current regional and international issues. It also touched on paths of joint cooperation in a manner that achieves mutual benefits for the two countries. Emphasis was laid on the fraternal ties binding the



Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Iraq. Gen. Al Nu'amani also received in his office today Dr. Idris Maya, Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic to the Sultanate of Oman. The Minister of the Royal Office

reviewed the march of relations binding the Sultanate of Oman and the Syrian Arab Republic. The meeting explored means of promoting the joint cooperation between the two countries. -ONA

Citizens, residents can apply for medical leave through online portal

Times News Service

Regarding the process, the Director General of Private Health Establishments, said that the issuance of sick leave starts first through the system by the healthcare provider at the private health institution. He further emphasised that the sick leave issued by the system is considered valid, and the beneficiary can present it to local as well as international authorities. Dr. Al Maslahi added that the targeted beneficiaries of the service are patients, whether citizens or residents, who have received treatment at one of the private health institutions in the country.



Crown Prince of Bahrain, Al Harrasi review bilateral ties

Prince Salman welcomed Dr. Abdullah Al Harrasi at the information ministers meeting

MANAMA: Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Deputy King and Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Bahrain, received on Wednesday Dr. Abdullah Nasser Al Harrasi, Minister of Information. Prince Salman welcomed Dr. Abdullah Al Harrasi when he received ministers who took part in the 54th session of the Arab Information Ministers Council in Manama.

During the meeting, Dr. Abdullah conveyed the greetings of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain, along with His Majesty the Sultan's wishes of good health and happiness for the monarch. He also conveyed His Majesty the Sultan's wishes of further prosperity for the people of Bahrain.

For his part, Prince Salman asked Dr. Abdullah to convey the greetings of the King of Bahrain to His Majesty the Sultan, as well as the monarch's wishes of good health and wellbeing to His Majesty the Sultan. Prince Salman also conveyed King Hamad's wishes of further progress and prosperity for the people of Oman. Prince Salman and Dr. Abdullah discussed issues of concern to the Arab nation, ways to enhance the joint cooperation and means of realising the aspirations of the Arab media. The meeting also touched on topics of the agenda of the 54th session of the Council of Arab Information Ministers. -ONA

COMEX 2024

Ministry launches Ayn Gaming Hackathon

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Information, represented by the Directorate General for Electronic Media yesterday launched "Ayn Gaming Hackathon". The two-day hackathon, held within the framework of COMEX 2024, aims to explore ideas and models of electronic games that fit the Omani identity and culture. During the hackathon, Ayn platform targets presenting several lectures and holding workshops for participants to enhance their game development skills. These events are held in cooperation with Omani and Saudi experts. Winner ideas will be facilitated by the Ministry of Information. -ONA



GAMING SKILLS: The two-day hackathon aims to explore ideas and models of electronic games that fit the Omani identity and culture. -ONA



FROM JULY 2, 2024

SalamAir to launch Muscat-Delhi flight

Times News Service

MUSCAT: SalamAir, Oman's fastest-growing value-for-money airline, is excited to announce the launch of its newest destination: Delhi, India. Starting from July 2, 2024, SalamAir will operate twice-weekly flights to Delhi, with services on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Delhi, the capital of India, is a vibrant metropolis known for its rich history, diverse culture, and modern infrastructure. As a key economic and political hub, Delhi offers a unique blend of ancient monuments, such as the Red Fort and Humayun's Tomb, and contemporary attractions, including shopping malls, markets, and a thriving culinary scene. Introducing flights to Delhi marks another important milestone for SalamAir as they continue to expand our network to meet the growing demand for

affordable and convenient travel options in the Sultanate. This new route is expected to augment connections between Oman and India further enhancing options for the expat community, leisure, and support convenience for business travel. "We are thrilled to add Delhi to our growing list of destinations in India," said Captain Ahmed Al Shidhani, Acting CEO of SalamAir. "Delhi is a city of great historical significance and economic vitality, making it an ideal addition to our network. We look forward to offering our passengers to and from the opportunity to explore this dynamic city, and we will remain committed to providing a high-quality travel experience at competitive prices." With the introduction of flights to Delhi, SalamAir reaffirms its commitment to connecting people and places, offering more choices and greater convenience to its valued customers.



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Commerce ministry welcomes His Majesty’s Royal directives

The industrial sector is one of the key pillars for economic diversification as it contributed 9% of GDP

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion welcomed the Royal directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik for the Industrial Strategy 2040 and the launch of a number of initiatives including the transformation of limited liability companies into joint stock companies (closed).

The ministry reaffirmed the role and contributions of the manufacturing sector which is the second most important sector after the oil and gas sector in terms of contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, said that the industrial sector is one of the key pillars for economic diversification in Oman as it contributed 9% of the GDP at current prices by the end of 2023.

He said that the Industrial Strategy 2040 was approved in partnership with United Nations Industrial Development Organisation to keep abreast of the latest international economic developments and Oman Vision 2040.

He said that the strategy aimed to boost economic diversification through establishment of a well-developed manufacturing base established on modern technology by 2040 through the optimal employment of creative production technologies and with focus on upgrading the quality of Omani industrial products.

Dr. Saleh bin Said Masan, Undersecretary for Commerce and Industry at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, said that the strategy is set through two stages; the first stage is on conducting a detailed study for the manufacturing sector and the second stage includes preparation of tools, procedures and the schedule for the execution of the strategy. -ONA



OMR19.3 MILLION

Tender for construction of roads in Duqm

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones awarded a tender for the construction of main and internal roads in the light and medium industries zone in Duqm at a cost of OMR19.3 million.

The project aims to provide services to the medium and light industries through the construction of main and secondary road networks and the provision of accompanying services.

The scope of the project includes the construction of a modern network of roads, including dual and single use roads with a total length of about 26.10 kilometres, serving a number of projects and factories in the industrial area, in addition to the construction of a number of roundabouts aimed at facilitating traffic movement to and from these projects and linking them to the National 32 road in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm.

It is noteworthy that the project to implement the main and internal roads in Duqm is part of the first phase to serve an area of 2.5 square kilometres of land, having a number of factories and under-construction projects, with the aim of attracting small and medium industries.



WILAYAT OF AL KHABOURA

Murder accused arrested by police

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Royal Oman Police (ROP) was able to make a breakthrough in the murder case of a citizen in the Wilayat of Al Khaboura on May 13, 2024. The murder accused was arrested by the police.

In a statement, the ROP said: “The North Al Batinah Governorate Police Command and the supporting formations, in cooperation with the security services, were able to uncover the plot of the murder of a citizen in the Wilayat of Al Khaboura. The perpetrator has been arrested and legal action is being taken against him.”

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IRES

Integrated Real Estate Service to launch The Gate Duqm

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Integrated Real Estate Service (IRES) is launching its newest gem in the heart of Al Duqm, The Gate Duqm. The project features a versatile complex consisting of 14 retail shops and two floors with a total of 28 offices.

Designed with flexibility in mind, these spaces can be adapted to accommodate a variety of activities, making it an ideal location for a mini shopping mall, business hub for companies, banks, schools, nurseries, and other similar ventures.

"We are thrilled to introduce this new development to Al Duqm," said Ismail Kamel, CEO and Founder of IRES.

"This project represents a significant step in the growth and

This project is a huge step in diversification of the Duqm area

diversification of the Al Duqm's sub economy, providing essential infrastructure for businesses and services that will benefit the entire community," he added.

As the founding partner of The Gate Duqm, Fadi Nasser said, "I am thrilled to announce the official launch of this landmark professional office and retail destination. The Gate Duqm repre-

sents a new era of commercial excellence in Duqm, offering unique architecture, signature office spaces and premium retail opportunities."

"With its strategic location at the entrance to the city and mere minutes away from all of the large industrial projects, The Gate Duqm is set to become the cornerstone of economic growth and innovation in the region," he added.

"To ensure a quality experience to our clients, we are partnering with Integrated Real Estate Services on launching this project, renowned for their expertise and quality commitment. We are excited to welcome businesses and customers to experience the unparalleled environment that The Gate Duqm has to offer," he said.



MINISTRY OF HEALTH



Forum focuses on efforts of government institutions in field of digital transition

MUSCAT: Tasks of the second edition of the Government Digital Transformation Forum 2024 began at Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre on Wednesday.

The two-day forum is organised by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology on the sidelines of COMEX Global Technology Show 2024.

The opening ceremony of the forum was held under the auspices of Dr. Ali Amer Al Shidhani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Communications and Information Technology.

The forum aims to highlight the efforts and achievements of government institutions in the field of digital transition. It showcases the best regional and global practices and anticipates future prospects for maximising benefits from innovative technical solutions and transferring knowledge.

The forum also seeks ways to



empower human resources to keep pace with global developments, provides an opportunity to exchange experiences in the fields of digital transition, enhances government relations and establishes partnership among government and private sectors.

The forum deals with two main themes: (1) the realisation of comprehensive digital transition and (2) success stories in the field of digital transition and related partnerships among public and private sectors in Oman.

Al Shidhani said that organising the Government Digital Transformation Forum underscores the Ministry's commitment to consolidating pillars of sustainable development.

"The forum also reflects the Ministry's keenness to keep abreast of the best regional and global practices in applying innovative technical solutions that contribute to the efficiency and quality of government services rendered to citizens and residents," Al Shidhani added. — ONA

REPORT

Quality of education

< FROM A1 The quality of education is a major factor that is holding back human capital development in the region as well as the ability of GCC countries to compete at the global level with top-performing countries. On average, children in GCC countries are expected to attain 12.7 years of education by age 18. However, when considering actual learning happening in schools, expected years of education falls to 8.6, indicating that GCC countries lose, on average, 4.1 years of learning due to the quality of education.

Furthermore, according to the World Bank's Human Capital Index, a child born today in the GCC is expected to reach only 62 percent of their full potential productivity.

In order to leverage all its human capital potential, the report recommends that GCC countries invest in the most effective strategies to improve learning and education quality, such as building foundational skills starting from early childhood, improving teaching practices, and leverag-

ing learning assessments to inform education policy decisions.

The report also emphasises the critical need for GCC countries to build solid foundational skills from an early age since they are the cornerstone upon which future learning and skills build.

Effective teachers also play a pivotal role in enhancing learning outcomes at all levels, thus providing them with the right knowledge and support mechanisms is essential. GCC countries outlook Bahrain's economic outlook hangs on oil market prospects and the accelerated implementation of structural reforms.

Growth is estimated to pick up to 3.5 percent in 2024 in line with higher oil output, while the non-oil sector remains the main growth driver.

The hydrocarbon sector is expected to expand by 1.3 percent in 2024, far below the non-hydrocarbon sectors' projected growth of almost 4 percent supported by the recovery in tourism and the service sectors, in addition to the continuation of infrastructure projects.



MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No. 14/2024

Muscat Municipality invites interested companies to the following bidding

SI No.	Bidding No.	Bidding description	Document fee	Deadline for obtaining bidding docs.	Deadline for inquires submission	Deadline for submission
1	11/2024	Investing of Plot No. (6013) at Wilayat Al-Amerat	161/- OMR	29/07/2024	03/08/2024	28/08/2024

Registered companies with Muscat Municipality which are Specialized in above bid are invited to participate as per the following procedures:

1. Company registration with Muscat Municipality have to be valid as per note number one below, to be able to get the bid document.

2. Pay the specified document fee for the requested bid via bank deposit to Muscat Municipality's Bank account as follows:

BANK MUSCAT 0423010702710024

3. A copy of the transaction& receipt MUST be send to the following e-mail (MM.PC@mm.gov.om), provided with the company data (name and bid number, delegate name,office phone number, mobile number, email address approved by the company and commerical registration number of the company).

4. The tender document will be provided to the company via email.

5. 2:00 PM on the above mentioned dates, is the last timing for obtaining Bidding Documents. Any bid & document request reciveid after the specified time will not be considered, even if the fee of the document is paid.

Submitted offers must be accompanied with a bond mentioned in the tender document valid for a period not less than (90) days issued by any local bank in Oman addressed to Muscat Municipality. Bidding that do not meet the required bond **will not be accepted**. Documents must be enclosed in a plain closed envelope (without any company information) and drop in the box located in bulding (A) in Muscat Municipality, Head Office, Darsait.

NOTES:

1. Companies which are not registered in Muscat Municipality or their registration has been expired shall register through the municipality& website (www.mm.gov.om). For technical support, please contact Muscat Municipality through this email (crm@mm.gov.om).

2. If the bidders have any inquiries regarding the scope of the work, they have to sent their inquiries through the following e-mail (mais.h.alnofli@mm.gov.om)

3. 10:00 AM on the above submission mentioned dates, is the last timing for receving bids. Offers submitted after the above mentioned date & time shall not be accepted for any reason.

4. Muscat Municipality has the right to accept or reject any offer without assigning any reason.



Ministry of Health

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Health (Al Masarra Hospital) invites specialized companies to participate in the following Tenders: -

Tender Ref.	Description	Last date for Collection of tender Document	Bid Submission Closing Date on/ Before 08:00 am Sunday	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
2196/2024/ MOH/AMH-3	Upgrade or Replacement of PABX DECT System at Al Masarra Hospital	23/06/2024	07/07/2024	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board	R.O 25.000 per set

Notes:-

Tenders should be submitted on line on https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om.

Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any tender.

For any Clarification, you may contact via Telephone: 24402200 , Email id etenderhd@ita.gov.om.

Information ministers’ council discusses media support for Palestinians

Oman’s delegation at the meeting was headed by Dr. Abdullah Nasser Al Harrasi, Minister of Information

MANAMA: Represented by the Ministry of Information, the Sultanate of Oman took part in the 54th session of the Arab Information Ministers Council. The meeting was held in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain on Wednesday.

Oman’s delegation at the meeting was headed by Dr. Abdullah Nasser Al Harrasi, Minister of Information.

The Council discussed media support for the Palestinian cause and the use of modern technologies, like artificial intelligence (AI) in the Arab media.

It also studied the recommendations of the Arab Committee for Electronic Media. The meeting looked into the implementation of an interim plan for the realisation of a joint Arab media strategy to combat terrorism.

The ministers also discussed steps to finalise negotiations with international media companies, the dissemination of a media cul-



ture focusing on the environment and the consolidation of the role of Arab women in the media sector.

The Arab Information Ministers Council commended the efforts made by Arab media organizations as they covered the brutal Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip and other Palestinian territories.

They valued the Arab media’s documentation of the crimes committed by the occupation forces against defenceless civilians, including media and medical teams.

The Council approved recommendations issued at the 5th meeting of the group of experts entrusted with evaluating and updating the Arab media action plan.

The ministers supported the Arab League (AL) Secretariat-General’s assigning AL missions to continue media coverage of the Palestinian cause abroad, notably



through media forums and conferences to confront stereotypes staged against Arabs and Muslims. The Council also approved the compilation of a documentary film titled “The Arab League’s Journey to Destiny”. The documentary, circulated to the Arab League’s centres and missions abroad, was propagated via the AL websites and social media platforms.

It was agreed that the 100th regular session of the Permanent Committee for Arab Media be named “Martyrs of Gaza and the Palestinian Media.”

The Arab Information Ministers Council reviewed the development of media education programmes to encourage young people to produce content that focuses on issues of sustainable development, awareness about environmental risks and developmental problems.

The content is envisaged to be compiled in partnership with official establishments and civil society organisations.

It was also agreed to allocate a theme titled “Crisis, Disaster and Risk Media” in the current session of the Council, and to encourage the use of AI in producing purposeful media content. —**ONA**



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Thailand’s former PM Thaksin to be indicted

BANGKOK: Thailand’s attorney general is set to indict former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra for allegedly insulting the monarchy, an official said on Wednesday.

“The attorney-general has decided to indict Thaksin on all charges,” spokesperson Prayuth Bejraguna told reporters, adding that the former premier will need to appear before a court on June 18.

While Thaksin was not present at the court on Wednesday due to a COVID-19 infection, his lawyer, Winyat Chartmontri, said he would fight the allegations. “He is ready to prove his innocence in the justice system,” Winyat told reporters.

The indictment is a setback for the political heavyweight who still has loyalists in the current Thai government. It is only the latest in a long list of legal battles he has faced in Thailand.

The complaint refers to remarks in an interview that Thaksin gave to foreign media in 2015 while he was in self-exile. It was lodged by the royalist military

which ousted the government of his sister Yingluck Shinawatra in 2014.

The 74-year-old tycoon has repeatedly pledged his loyalty to the crown, criticism of which is forbidden under Thailand’s lese-majeste law.

Thailand has some of the world’s strictest royal defamation laws protecting King Maha Vajiralongkorn and the core royal family. Each charge brings a potential 15-year prison sentence.

This comes mere months after Thaksin was granted parole after he was jailed on corruption charges since returning home from exile in August 2023.

The former prime minister and Pheu Thai party founder was ousted in a coup 17 years ago, driving him into self-imposed exile.

He returned to Thailand for the first time in 15 years in August, only to be quickly arrested and taken to the Supreme Court, which sentenced him to eight years on charges of graft and abuse of power. —**BW**

INDIAN SCHOOL WADI KABIR

ISWK pioneers with the Business and Entrepreneurship Club

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The month of May, 2024, marked a momentous landmark in the history of Indian School Wadi Kabir (ISWK) and the Business and Entrepreneurship Club.

The B&E Club invested its 21 officials for the year 2024-25 by giving badges of office and job profiles to the newly elected club officers in the positions of President, Vice-Presidents, Senior Managers and Junior Managers for different departments namely Operations, Accounting & Finance, Marketing & Design, PR & Editorial.

Kiran Asher, founder and group

managing director of the Al Ansari Group of Companies, added grandeur to the event by graciously attending as the Chief Guest, among other dignitaries of the School Management Committee.

The Club also launched its first edition of ‘Business Communique’, the first high-school business magazine in the Sultanate of Oman with numerous riveting articles, quizzes, comic strips and engaging toons on financial literacy, designed by the students, for the students.

The B&E Club lives by its motto, “Profit with care is the aim, business is the game.”

The Club also organised a seg-

ment for the unsung heroes of every organisation, the support staff. With a fun filled red-carpet entry, engaging games and energetic dances for the support staff, this day was the Club’s way of saying a heartfelt thank you to the people who give their everything to make sure that the schools function efficiently.

The nation’s fastest growing club has begun the new academic year with a spark that has ignited its followers with fervent excitement. With promising students and most importantly, the right mentor, AVP Commerce H.S. Bagga to take them to unimaginable heights.



IMD ISSUED HEATWAVE WARNING

Delhi temperature hits highest ever in India at 52.3° Celsius

NEW DELHI: Reeling under severe heatwave conditions, Delhi’s Mungeshpur on Wednesday recorded a maximum temperature of over 52 degree Celsius, the highest temperature in the national capital.

Mungeshpur recorded 48.3 degree Celsius earlier on May 26.

According to Kuldeep Srivastava, Head, Regional Weather Forecasting Centre, the highest temperature of this season was recorded today in Mungeshpur area of North Western Delhi at 52.3 degrees at the automatic weather station.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a heat-wave warning for several states in the northern part of the country including Delhi on Wednesday and Thursday.



Severe heat wave

As per the IMD, heat wave to severe heat wave conditions are likely over most parts of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, many parts of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, East Madhya Pradesh, parts of West Madhya Pradesh, isolated parts of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and Jammu division.

Heat wave conditions are likely over isolated parts of Himachal Pradesh, Vidarbha and Chhattisgarh on May 29 and 30.

Executive Director of Interventional Cardiology Fortis Escorts

Heart Institute in Delhi, Dr Atul Mathur warned of cardiovascular system issues and advised drinking water to keep the body hydrated amid IMD’s heatwave warning in the national capital.

“Our country is facing aggressive temperatures. Due to this, even a normal person can have issues with the cardiovascular system. If you have not been drinking water, you will be dehydrated. For those who have pre-existing heart issues, their BP becomes high. The main concern is dehydration. So, everyone should regularly drink water to keep themselves hydrated. Senior citizens should

avoid going out during extreme heat hours,” Dr Atul Mathur told ANI on Wednesday.

Also, the IMD has predicted light intensity rain/drizzle and winds with a speed of 20-30 km/h would occur over and adjoining areas of isolated places of Delhi and NCR, Kharkhoda, Jhajjar, Sohana, Palwal, Nuh, Aurangabad, Hodal (Haryana) Jattari, Khair (U.P.) during the remaining part of the day.

Earlier on May 28, Rajasthan’s Churu posted a record-high temperature in the state of 50.5 degree Celsius, which is 7.5 degrees above normal. —**ANI**



TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Nama Dhofar Services invites the specialized companies to participate in the below said Tenders

EOI Number	EOI Name	Last Date for Collection of Documents	Time & Last Date for Proposal Submission	Tender Fee (OMR) Including VAT (5%)
DISC/2024/M/003	NTA - Emergency & Maintenance Services for Zones – A & B	13 June 2024	30 th June 2024	2’625/-
DISC/2024/M/004	NTA - Emergency & Maintenance Services for Zone – C	13 June 2024	30 th June 2024	2’625/-

- To purchase the tender document, send Email to purchase@dhofarservices.nama.om
- Contractors shall be submitted the price proposal in separate cover and technical proposal in separate cover with heading “COMMERCIAL OFFER & TECHNICAL OFFER”.
- The proposal document should be deposited in the tender box located at our main office.
- In the event of receipt of the EOI document on behalf of another company, the interested in the above EOI document should provide details of the person’s name and the company details.
- The Contractor shall be registered with NDS, meeting HSE qualification criteria.
- Valid “CEP Authorized card copy issued by NDS” Shall only consider for assessment.
- The Contractor shall be registered electrical contractor with Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP) Oman (B-Grade or above), a valid “DCRP Registration Certificate” are to be attached along with the technical documents.
- For any clarifications contact us on: **Tel No. 23232563**, - email: riyamm@dhofarservices.nama.om, nasrings@dhofarservices.nama.om



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T20 WORLD CUP OFFICIAL WARM-UP GAME

Warner shines as Australia flex muscle with dominant win



TRINIDAD: Australia have issued a warning to opposition teams at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup with a clinical seven-wicket victory over Namibia in their opening warm-up fixture in Trinidad on Tuesday.

Despite having a host of stars that have failed to arrive in the Caribbean as yet and being forced to use a group of their coaches in the field as substitute fielders, the 2021 T20 World Cup champions looked in good touch as they chased down Namibia's total of 119/9 in dominant fashion with 10 overs remaining with a quickfire half-century from David Warner (54*).

Warner smashed six fours and a trio of massive sixes at the Port of Spain venue, facing just 21 deliveries in an excellent sign for the Aussies after the left-hander struggled for consistency and battled injury during the recent IPL.

Seamer Josh Hazlewood was impressed with what he saw from Warner and expects the veteran to contribute strongly during next month's event.

"When it comes to these tournaments he always stands up as we know so I expect nothing but big things again from the Bull (Warner)," Hazlewood told Cricket Australia post-match.

"He looked good out there on what looked like a pretty tough wicket and he timed the ball pretty

well from the outset.

"So we always expect big things from Davey."

Hazlewood (2/5) set the tone with a superb opening spell that netted three maidens, while first-choice spinner Adam Zampa (3/25) bowled well yet again as Namibia only snuck past 100 courtesy of some decent late hitting from Zane Green (38).

Australia openers Mitchell Marsh and Warner had 39 on the board inside three overs in reply and the loss of Marsh for 18 and stand-in No.3 Josh Inglis (5) allowed Tim David (23) to arrive at the crease as the Aussies kept the runs flowing by scoring boundaries at ease.

David fell in the ninth over to Bernard Scholtz (2/16), but Matthew Wade (12*) and Warner kept the momentum going as Australia claimed the victory with ease.

Earlier in the day, the warm-up fixture between the USA and Bangladesh in Dallas was cancelled due to rain and the Netherlands registered an impressive 20-run triumph over Sri Lanka in Florida.

Australia play their second warm-up game against hosts West Indies on Thursday. Australia is placed in Group B along with arch-rivals England, Namibia, Scotland and Oman. They will be starting their tournament against Oman on June 5 in Barbados. - Agencies

West Indies storm to fourth spot in latest T20I Team Rankings

Co-hosts of the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup are now ahead of New Zealand and S Africa



Jos Buttler has inched up to seventh position, Jonny Bairstow is up eight places to 36th while Pakistan opener Fakhar Zaman has advanced from 57th to 51st.

In the bowling rankings, Shaheen Afridi is up three places to 11th while Imad Wasim is another Pakistan player to gain, up 14 places to 38th.

For the USA, Steven Taylor has made big gains, progressing 28 places to 109 in the batting rankings while for Bangladesh, Rishad Hussain has moved up 38 places to 52nd in the bowling rankings.

The results bode well for the co-hosts and the Men in Maroon, who will be looking for a record third title during their home T20 World Cup. They are placed in Group C along Afghanistan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and Uganda.

They start their campaign against Papua New Guinea in Guyana on 2 June. - Agencies

after topping the series aggregate with 159 runs and Johnson Charles, who hammered 69 off 26 balls to be named Player of the Match in the third T20I, is up 17 places to 20th.

Kyle Mayers is another batter to move up, gaining 12 places to reach 31st position with an aggregate of 102 runs while left-

arm spinner Gudakesh Motie has advanced a whopping 84 places to 27th after finishing with eight wickets in the series.

In the latest weekly update that also considers performances in the last two matches of the Bangladesh-USA series and the ongoing series between England and Pakistan, England captain

ICC T20 WORLD CUP

Kohli yet to arrive as India start training in New York

NEW YORK: Most members of the India team had their first training session after reaching New York City ahead of the 2024 T20 World Cup on Tuesday at a local facility.

Virat Kohli is the only one to not have reached New York yet, and could be a doubt for India's only warm-up fixture ahead of the main tournament, against Bangladesh on June 1 at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium. There has been no update on his travel status from the BCCI yet. The team has travelled to New York in batches, with players from teams eliminated after the league stage of IPL 2024 travelling first, except Hardik Pan-



nya, who reached after a break, followed by players as and when their teams were eliminated from the playoffs.

Soham Desai, the team's strength and conditioning coach provided an idea of the routine being followed by the players, who

have all been part of the grind at IPL 2024 over the past couple of months and are easing into match-readiness. "Eased into our routines here, the idea was to just get used to the time zone," he said in a video posted by the BCCI on social media. - Agencies

Royal Oman Police

ANNOUNCEMENT

Royal Oman Police - Directorate of Public Relations and Security Information – announces a public auction to sell used ROP vehicles at the Directorate General of Transport at the Airport Heights at **5:00 pm on Sunday 09 June 2024**. Vehicles can be inspected during official working hours **from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm** during the period **from 2 to 5 June 2024**. The successful bidder must abide by the following terms and conditions:

Horses may be inspected during the period from **26 to 30 May 2024 from 08:00 am to 12:00 pm**.

- The buyer must pay the vehicles' value and the auctioneer fees at 3% by e-payment.
- The buyer must move the vehicle within a period of 3 days from the selling date; otherwise they shall pay a fine of RO 5/- per each day of delay.
- The buyer must pay the fees of vehicle registration in their name in the traffic system before receiving the vehicle.

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OMANTEL'S INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS CONTRIBUTE TO OMAN'S DIGITAL ECONOMY

Establishment of the first sovereign cloud services centre in the
Sultanate of Oman in cooperation with Amazon Web Services



Omantel & Amazon



Omantel & Google



Omantel & MERP



Omantel & Virtusa



Omantel & Ministry of Health



Omantel & the Supreme Judicial Council

MUSCAT: Omantel, the leading provider of integrated telecommunication services in the Sultanate of Oman, has a packed calendar for COMEX, dominated by new signings with global technology giants, showcasing its diversified products and services portfolio and media interaction events. Omantel stands out with a slew of new signings, involving global and local companies.

Talal Al Mamari, Chief Executive Officer of Omantel said on the sidelines of the agreements signing ceremony that these agreements reflect Omantel's strategic transformation from a telco into a technology company. These agreements will also solidify our position as the enabler of digital transformation in the public and private sectors.

Localization of new technologies

Omantel signed a key strategic partnership with Amazon Web Services to establish a sovereign cloud services center and build and operate an integrated e-commerce platform in Oman. The partnership also includes the setting up of a center of cloud excellence and providing solutions in generative Artificial Intelligence.

Omantel also signed another strategic partnership with Google Global to set up the first-ever edge cloud computing services center in the region (Middle East, Africa, and Asia) and provide generative AI and data analytics services.

The third agreement was signed with MERP and Microsoft for a strategic framework. MERP is a leader in innovative technology solutions. This collaboration aims to revolutionize digital infrastructure and services by leveraging Microsoft's AI solutions to drive digital transformation across Omantel's departments and subsidiaries. The agreement marks a significant milestone in the partnership between MERP Systems and Omantel, focusing on enhancing operational efficiencies, improving customer service, and developing new digital products to meet the evolving needs of consumers and businesses in the Sultanate of Oman.

Emphasizing digital innovation, the agreement will utilize AI to create innovative solutions that enhance data analytics, cloud computing, and customer interface systems. It also aims to strengthen Omantel's digital infrastructure, supporting high-speed connectivity and advanced services for businesses and customers alike. Additionally, the partnership commits to developing local talent through training programs designed to equip Omani professionals with advanced AI technological skills, furthering the nation's digital transformation goals.

The agreement was signed by Talal bin Said Al Mamari, CEO of "Omantel" and Prem Nair, partner and co-founder of MERP, and Sheikh Saif bin Hilal Al Hosni, General Manager of Microsoft Oman.

Also, in the same field, Omantel announced its strategic consulting partnership with Virtusa, a global provider of digital strategy, digital engineering, and IT services and solutions, aimed at organizational enablement and development, marked by the signing of an innovative IT Operating Model contract. This collaboration represents a significant advancement in Omantel's adoption of Agile/DevOps methodologies, ensuring a swift market presence and the highest standards of service delivery. Guided by Virtusa's Engineering First approach, the partnership will leverage advanced engineering practices to drive efficiency and innovation. The agreement encompasses a broad range of services, including the provision of commercial and organizational enablement applications, along with robust operational support for IT applications and infrastructure.

The agreement was signed by Talal bin Said Al Mamari, CEO of "Omantel" and Vasudev Telikicherla - Senior Vice President | Head - Middle East.

Local Partnerships to boost digitization in Oman

Partnering with Omantel, the Ministry of Health is implementing an innovative asset management and IoT cybersecurity solution. This partnership comes to align with Oman Vision 2040, the Sultanate of Oman is transforming its healthcare sector through digitization and enhanced connectivity. The Ministry of Health, adopting advanced medical and IoT devices, robust infrastructure, and IT systems, aims to improve patient care and healthcare outcomes. This initiative will streamline operational insights, enhance care delivery, and fortify cybersecurity.

The agreement was signed by His Excellency Dr. Hilal Ali Al-Sabti, Minister of Health, and Talal Said Al Mamari, CEO of Omantel.

In local partnerships, and as part of enhancing digital transformation locally, the Supreme Judicial Council and Omantel have signed an agreement to provide telecommunications services and a digital switchboard for the Council. This will boost productivity and improve the efficiency of internal and external communications. Additionally, the agreement aims to offer an exceptional experience for reviewers and provide high levels of security through advanced digital systems. The agreement was signed by His Excellency Issa bin Hamad Al Azri, Secretary-General of the Supreme Judicial Council, and Talal Said Al Mamari, CEO of Omantel.

Moreover, Omantel announced its strategic agreement with Oman Housing Bank to provide Full Banking migration to cloud, making it the first bank in Sultanate of Oman to migrate its complete Data Center to Cloud. This agreement sets the stage for seamless and efficient access to cutting-edge cloud services aim-



Omantel & Oman Housing Bank



Omantel & Bank Nizwa



Omantel & PDO

ing to strengthen and empower Oman Housing Bank in processing customer data with unprecedented speed and efficiency, while also delivering innovative solutions tailored to the banks and customers' needs. The agreement was signed by Aladdin Bait Fadhil, Chief Commercial Officer of Omantel and Arif Al Zaabi, general manager at Oman Housing Bank.

Omantel unveiled a digital cooperation agreement with Bank Dhofar to carry out First Islamic Core Banking migration to cloud. Bank Dhofar becomes the first major Bank in Oman to migrate its Islamic Core Banking platform to Cloud. The agreement was signed by Aladdin Bait Fadhil, Chief Commercial Officer of "Omantel" and Dr. Tariq Taha, General Manager of IT at BankDhofar.

As part of the ongoing cooperation between Omantel and Bank Nizwa, Omantel being the digital partner of Bank Nizwa will pro-

vide the Bank with innovative cloud solutions that will enable the bank to save costs, optimize efficiency and enhance cyber security. The agreement also entails providing 5G, smart mobile app and IoT solutions.

The agreement was signed by Talal Said Al Mamari, CEO of Omantel and khalid al Kayed, CEO at Bank Nizwa.

In relation to the gas sector, Omantel and OQ Gas Networks – the exclusive operator of Oman's Natural Gas Transmission Network, have penned an awarding ceremony to recognize the successful leverage of the satellite technology for surveillance purposes through Eteo. Eteo Space will provide satellite images from the Omani satellite "Aman-1" under its strategic partnership with Omantel. This collaboration will offer space imagery and related data analytics along with AI-powered monitoring and surveillance solutions.

The agreement was signed by



Omantel & Bank Dhofar



Omantel & OQGN



Omantel & Oman airports

Talal Said Al Mamari, CEO of Omantel and Mansoor Al Abdali, Managing director of OQGN.

Omantel and Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) have signed a project completion certificate, marking the start of a five-year contract to provide Dedicated Internet Access (DIA) and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) Protection services. This agreement, featuring a managed, dedicated, high-availability service with a fully diverse FOC route, will enhance PDO's corporate communication and operational efficiency. This partnership significantly boosts Oman's economy and supports PDO in achieving its business objectives more effectively.

The agreement was signed by Eng. Aladdin Baitfadhil, Chief Commercial Officer at Omantel, and Hasan Al Barwani, General Manager of Information Technology at Petroleum Development Oman (PDO).

In addition, Oman Airports

signed a partnership agreement with Omantel to provide "Wi-Fi 7" service at airports in the Sultanate of Oman, making it the first airport company in the world to use this advanced technology.

This agreement comes at a time when the Sultanate's airports are witnessing significant growth, necessitating the adoption of the latest technologies and modern services. It aims to develop the wireless network infrastructure in all Oman's airports with the latest global technologies, as part of the ongoing proactive steps by "Oman Airports" to enhance the digital infrastructure and provide advanced technological solutions that contribute to achieving Oman Vision 2040 for digital transformation and the development of the aviation sector. The agreement was signed by Sheikh Aimen bin Ahmed Al Hosni, CEO of "Oman Airports", and Sheikh Talal bin Said Al Mamari, CEO of Omantel, in the presence of Huawei Global.

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by July 2024 reaching \$85, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by 69 cents from the price of Tuesday, which was \$84.31. - ONA

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,825.60 points, down by 0.07 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.14 per cent at 458.29 points. Al Maha Marketing, up 6.37 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Madina Investments, down 9.88 per cent, was the top loser.

Commerce ministry signs pact to host Oman Business Platform

The move seeks to establish a competitive business environment and provide integrated services to operate alongside the smart government scheme

MUSCAT: On the sidelines of Comex 2024, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion yesterday signed an agreement with ITHCA Group to relocate and host Oman Business Platform (OBP) in the cloud service. The move seeks to establish a competitive business environment and provide integrated services to operate alongside the smart government scheme.



The agreement was signed by Dr Saleh Said Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry, and Eng. Said Abdullah Al Mantheri, ITHCA Group. The ministry also signed an

agreement with ITHCA Group to conduct a consultative study on the business environment in Oman and draw out a roadmap for digital transition at the Directorate General of Standards and Metrology. OBP constitutes an outstanding government model in utilising

prominent international practices and standards to develop a digitally innovative business environment that motivates users through a set of electronic services. The services offered via OBP continue right from the inception of a company until the licensing of its activities.



Through the OBP, the ministry seeks to direct investors to one platform and provide options for self-service to start any business. The ministry also offers a 'Certificate of Origin Service' and a 'New License Request Service' through the OBP application for

smartphones. The app supports the "Know Your Customer" feature and offers top-rated services like starting a business, initiating a commercial register, searching for commercial registers, an investment guide and options to follow up on the progress of applications. -ONA

INTEGRATED GEOGRAPHICAL MAPS



Opaz showcases OMAP platform

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) introduced the OMAP platform during its participation in the Comex Technology Show 2024, taking place from May 27 to 30, This platform comprises integrated geographical maps of all broad plans for special economic zones, free zones and industrial cities overseen by Opaz. Visitors interacted with the OMAP platform during Comex 2024, as its simplicity of use and availability of geographic data attracted interest. There was an increase in both the quantity and frequency of users interacting with the platform, according to data collected through the third day. The interaction indicated the satisfaction of users with the platform's experience and reiterated that the OMAP platform could fulfil their needs. Najia bint Sultan Al-Hajriya, Head of Opaz Geographic Information Systems, stated that the Omap platform offers much functionality that facilitate the search for certain sites or plots for investment. The platform provides detailed information on vital landmarks and facilities such as hospitals, restaurants, schools, shops, and hotels, which users can find based on their current location or the location chosen. The details of the plots, including the type of activity, usufruct rates, Location coordinates, the area, and the surrounding public services such as electricity, communications, water, and public and private transport networks that are in the vicinity can also be enquired about by users. With this platform, one can measure the distances between various locations, for example,

the distance between a plot and the transportation networks that transport goods and products to international markets. The measurement tool, the planning and sketching tool, and the map writing tool are just a few of the many tools that users can utilize on the platform, according to Al-Hajriya. These tools also include the Location Selection Tool, the Print Map Tool, the Sketch Creation Tool, and the Nearby Services Search Tool. With the help of these technologies, users can digitally capture coordinates, and the platform will interactively drop the spot on maps. She emphasised the many benefits the platform offers users, including the ability to locate various sites for biodiversity, natural reserves, tourist destinations, and camping areas. Because the platform is integrated with the systems of local climate monitoring stations, users may also view the weather and climatic conditions. Access to soil investigation data for various sites in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm—a testing ground for AI and future technologies—is also made possible via the platform. Significantly, the platform was introduced in September 2023 as part of the Authority's efforts to improve the quality of services offered to investors by expediting and streamlining procedures, cutting down on time and effort, offering opportunities to all investors and beneficiaries, and making sure that plans do not overlap. With the help of intricate interactive maps of every area under the Authority's supervision, the system guarantees simple access to precise and comprehensive spatial data. It also helps identify areas that are available for investment and other relevant economic activity.

FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

Forum discusses key challenges facing regulators of securities market

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman represented by the Financial Services Authority participates in the 49th Annual Meeting of the International Organization of Securities Commission, hosted by the Greece Capital Athens, with an official delegation chaired by Ahmed Ali Al Maamari, Executive Vice President of FSA. The participation comes to discuss the key issues in the global and regional arena in the securities markets and the key challenges facing the regulators and supervisors of such markets. FSA also participates in the meetings or the regional committees of IOSCO such as the Africa and Middle East Regional Committee (AMERC) and the Growing and Emerging Markets Committee (GEMC). The AMERC meeting discussed a number of issues related to the developments in the securities markets including financial sustainability in the region as it is important to discuss furnishing a sustainable investment environment.

Virtual assets

The meeting deliberated about virtual assets and their challenges and the role of regulators in setting out regulatory frameworks to enhance the protection of investors and to reduce potential risks to ensure the financial markets are fair and efficient. On the other hand, the meeting discussed Fintech and its role in facilitating access to financial markets. The meeting of GEMC discussed issues related to enhancing the capabilities of the employ-



ees of the regulators and investor protection. The conference accompanying the annual meeting highlighted the issue of climate change and its impact on national economies, the roles of regulators in enhancing sustainability practices in line with transformation and financing plans in response to climate change and its direct consequences on investments in financial markets as well as reviewing the international standards adopted by international organizations in this regard and proposed recommendations.

FSA is keen to participate in such meetings to enhance the Sultanate of Oman's presence in international organisations which contribute to the exchange of expertise and information among the members to develop the markets, protect investors and upgrade the level of regulations for the highest standards of integrity, fairness and transparency beside emphasising on the efforts exerted by the FSA to enhance its role within the IOSCO. IOSCO was established in 1983 to set the standards for the securities commissions and comprises a

number of subcommittees for co-operation and implementation of international standards for regulation, supervision and enforcement to protect investors and for fair, transparent and efficient markets, and to address systemic risks as well as investor protection by increasing confidence in the soundness and integrity of the financial markets through exchange of information and cooperation in enforcement against unsound practices to develop the infrastructure of the markets and implementation of the laws and regulations.

TECHNOLOGY

Microsoft unveils new features to increase overall performance of Edge

WASHINGTON: Microsoft announced new features to its Edge browser to improve overall performance and speed up user interface response, the company said on its official website. The company said that with the release of 122 browsers released in late February 2024, the speed of user interface response in the "browser fundamentals" section increased by 42 percent in Edge, and this percentage has risen to 76 percent for users whose devices do not have an SSD, or run with a random memory of less than 8GB.

They noted that the advantage of favourites in the 124 version released in mid-April was an increase in response speed by 40 percent compared to pre-update, and this improvement is reflected in the expansion or folding of favourites. Microsoft reported that these improvements were the result of the collection of data from browser users regarding the speed of user interface response. The company found that the UI code was insufficiently fragmented, as some parts of the code "shared data unnecessarily", slowing performance.

In a related context, the Edge team worked on a new project called WebUI 2.0, in which Microsoft created new internal user interface architecture for high performance on modern web engines. Microsoft has set up the WebUI 2.0 project to operate in the "Browser Fundamentals" section interface which has seen a significant increase in speed, and plans to upgrade other user interfaces in the browser to WebUI 2.0, which means further improvements in performance and response over the coming months. - ONA



MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Al Maha Marketing, up 6.37 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Madina Investments, down 9.88 per cent, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,825.60 points, down by 0.07 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.14 per cent at 458.29 points. Al Maha Marketing, up 6.37 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Madina Investments, down 9.88 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of OQGN were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover. A total number of 755 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR2.03 million, with more than 12.93 million shares changing hands. Out of 57 traded securities, 14 advanced, 18 declined, and 25 remained unchanged. At the session close, foreign investors were net buyers for OMR326,000 while GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for OMR187,000, followed by domestic investors for OMR139,000 worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 7,950.48 points, up 0.17 per cent. Prices of Oman Arab Bank, Oman & Emirates Investment, DIDIC, Bank Nizwa were up by 4.11 per cent, 3.66 per cent, 1.81 per cent,

0.90 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Madina Investments, Al Batinah Development Company, National Finance, United Finance, Global Financial Investments were down by 9.88 per cent, 8.89 per cent, 3.03 per cent, 1.72 per cent, 1.45 per cent respectively. Industrial Index closed at 5,922.74 points, up 0.05 per cent. Prices of Oman Cement, Al Anwar Ceramics, Raysut Cement, A'Saffa Foods, Al Maha Ceramics were up by 1.35 per cent, 1.11 per cent, 0.81 per cent, 0.76 per cent, 0.60 per cent respectively. Prices of Gulf International Chemicals, Oman Refreshment, Voltamp Energy were down by 2.22 per cent, 2.16 per cent, 0.69 per cent respectively. Services Index was up by 1.09 per cent before closing at 1,816.78 points. Prices of Al Maha Marketing, Renaissance Services, National Gas, Sembcorp Salalah, Abraj Energy were up by 6.37 per cent, 4.00 per cent, 2.60 per cent, 0.99 per cent, 0.68 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Batinah Power, Al Suwadi Power were down by 1.30 per cent, 1.25 per cent respectively. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
Industry Index	5,946.32	5,915.89	5,922.74	5,919.51	3.23	0.05
Services Index	1,817.67	1,802.99	1,816.78	1,797.20	19.58	1.09
FINANCIAL TRIDX	9,043.04	8,966.77	9,012.57	8,997.17	15.41	0.17
SERVICES TR IDX	2,100.28	2,083.32	2,099.25	2,076.63	22.62	1.09
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	0.00	0.00
MSX Shariah Index	458.63	456.73	458.29	457.64	0.65	0.14
MSX TR INDEX	6,706.59	6,671.22	6,695.72	6,700.64	-4.92	-0.07
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,977.36	7,910.07	7,950.48	7,936.89	13.59	0.17
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,860.64	6,825.53	6,833.44	6,829.15	3.73	0.05
MSX 30 INDEX	4,833.44	4,807.94	4,825.60	4,829.15	-3.55	-0.07

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap.	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
12,934,326	2,028,119	755	24,432,900,454	14	18	25	57

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 29

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF. RD.	DIFF %	LAST PD.	LAST BD.	LAST OFF.	PREV. VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	35,300	13,765	15	0.390	0.390	0.388	0.390	0.375	0.015	4.000	0.390	0.380	0.389	0.100	92,199,900
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	48,702	4,009	8	0.080	0.085	0.080	0.085	0.082	0.003	3.659	0.085	0.082	0.090	0.100	10,359,375
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	6,123	2,296	2	0.375	0.375	0.375	0.375	0.375	0.000	1.351	0.375	0.375	0.375	0.100	124,077,266
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	7,838	1,427	2	0.182	0.182	0.182	0.182	0.180	0.002	1.111	0.182	0.175	0.182	0.100	40,040,000
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	40,300	4,111	5	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.101	0.001	0.980	0.102	0.101	0.102	0.100	97,966,539
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	16,014	6,322	7	0.394	0.398	0.394	0.398	0.395	0.003	0.759	0.398	0.385	0.398	0.100	47,760,000
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	212,928	65,044	28	0.296	0.298	0.296	0.298	0.296	0.002	0.676	0.298	0.289	0.304	0.100	229,519,600
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	10,000	2,500	1	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.000	0.000	0.250	0.250	0.255	0.100	25,000,000
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	98,706	11,252	9	0.114	0.114	0.114	0.114	0.114	0.000	0.000	0.114	0.114	0.124	0.100	17,100,000
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	3,730	1,026	2	0.275	0.275	0.275	0.275	0.275	0.000	0.000	0.275	0.276	0.285	0.100	447,135,248
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	61,220	17,142	6	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.000	0.000	0.280	0.280	0.306	0.100	54,971,429
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	72,320	76,159	23	1.054	1.058	1.052	1.056	1.056	0.000	0.000	1.056	1.054	1.056	0.100	792,000,000
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	185,137	14,823	14	0.080	0.081	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.100	14,000,000
OM0000009072	QI GAS NETWORKS	4,506,084	638,185	133	0.141	0.142	0.141	0.141	0.141	0.000	0.000	0.141	0.141	0.143	0.100	610,617,973
OM0000005398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	762,488	107,444	25	0.141	0.141	0.140	0.140	0.141	-0.001	-0.709	0.140	0.135	0.141	0.100	789,814,478
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	19,880	7,589	9	0.390	0.390	0.375	0.387	0.390	-0.003	-0.769	0.387	0.380	0.387	0.100	258,657,420
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	570,213	146,340	54	0.258	0.258	0.255	0.255	0.258	-0.003	-1.163	0.255	0.255	0.258	0.100	1,914,131,251
OM0000004693	AL SUWADI POWER	941,570	97,149	39	0.081	0.081	0.079	0.079	0.080	-0.001	-1.250	0.079	0.079	0.079	0.100	56,438,101
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	200,789	15,260	11	0.076	0.076	0.076	0.076	0.077	-0.001	-1.299	0.076	0.074	0.077	0.100	51,291,445
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO.	108,915	8,165	4	0.075	0.075	0.074	0.074	0.075	-0.001	-1.333	0.074	0.074	0.076	0.100	6,660,000
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	163,677	11,196	11	0.069	0.070	0.068	0.068	0.069	-0.001	-1.449	0.068	0.068	0.069	0.100	13,600,000
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	1,054	60	2	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.058	-0.001	-1.724	0.057	0.057	0.058	0.100	20,299,256
Total	22	7,972,988	1,219,303	410												

Parallel Market

OM0000003000	AI MAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING	470	506	3	1.075	1.085	1.075	1.085	1.020	0.065	6.373	1.085	1.019	1.085	0.100	74,865,000
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	241,868	36,287	29	0.146	0.153	0.146	0.152	0.146	0.006	4.110	0.152	0.151	0.152	0.100	252,750,320
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	1,276	101	1	0.079	0.079	0.079	0.079	0.077	0.002	2.597	0.079	0.078	0.079	0.100	6,715,000
OM0000001509	DHOFAIR INTERNATIONAL DEV & INV HO.	9,621	2,130	2	0.221	0.225	0.221	0.225	0.221	0.004	1.810	0.225	0.225	0.200	0.100	92,080,421
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	472,859	52,811	39	0.109	0.112	0.109	0.112	0.111	0.001	0.901	0.112	0.111	0.112	0.100	250,538,740
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	1,398	233	4	0.167	0.167	0.167	0.167	0.166	0.001	0.802	0.167	0.167	0.170	0.100	9,185,000
OM0000001020	OMAN CHROMITE	100	415	1	4.150	4.150	4.150	4.150	4.150	0.000	0.000	4.150	0.000	4.150	1.000	13,695,000
OM0000001368	CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES	14,705	618	2	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.000	0.000	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.100	2,625,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	961	45	1	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.000	0.000	0.047	0.047	0.048	0.100	14,435,877
OM0000001608	OMAN PACKAGING	971	75	1	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.000	0.000	0.210	0.000	0.210	0.100	6,811,531
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	1,777	4,798	1	2.700	2.700	2.700	2.700	2.700	0.000	0.000	2.700	2.650	2.700	0.100	242,190,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	2,405,711	394,048	97	0.162	0.165	0.162	0.163	0.163	0.000	0.000	0.163	0.163	0.164	0.100	33,088,791
OM0000004778	TAKAFUL OMAN	10,000	500	3	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.050	0.048	0.052	0.100	12,500,000
OM0000005662	PHOENIX POWER	412,980	24,366	26	0.059	0.059	0.059	0.059	0.059	0.000	0.000	0.059	0.057	0.060	0.100	86,293,486
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	11,000	814	4	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.000	0.000	0.074	0.073	0.079	0.100	11,510,730
OM0000007407	DHOFAIR GENERATING	48,000	3,440	6	0.072	0.072	0.070	0.072	0.072	0.000	0.000	0.072	0.072	0.078	0.100	16,001,280
OM0000007910	OMAN REAL ESTATE	500	48	2	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.000	0.000	0.085	0.084	0.088	0.100	19,900,000
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	100,000	7,500	7	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.100	36,812,729
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REEF	5,109	598	1	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.000	0.000	0.117	0.116	0.117	0.100	59,448,115
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAIR	200,000	30,800	2	0.154	0.154	0.154	0.154	0.155	-0.001	-0.645	0.154	0.154	0.165	0.100	461,438,121
OM0000003961	VOLTAMP ENERGY	52,644	15,029	9	0.292	0.292	0.284	0.288	0.290	-0.002	-0.690	0.288	0.288	0.288	0.100	23,443,992
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	455,910	40,206	25	0.090	0.090	0.088	0.088	0.089	-0.001	-1.124	0.088	0.088	0.090	0.100	18,128,000
OM0000001426	OMAN REFRESHMENT	34,718	47,999	11	1.350	1.350	1.350	1.350	1.350	-0.030	-2.158	1.350	1.350	1.390	0.100	68,000,000
OM0000002028	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	3,409	300	1	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.090	-0.002	-2.222	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.100	1,544,000
OM0000006248	NATIONAL FINANCE	12,500	2,000	2	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.165	-0.005	-3.103	0.160	0.000	0.160	0.100	97,792,685
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	11,000	803	3	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.081	-0.008	-8.877	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.100	6,205,000
Total	36	4,508,877	666,473	283												

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SPORTS

Djokovic begins title defence with victory; Sabalenka wins

Serbian star says ‘moving in positive direction’ after defeating Herbert in French Open

PARIS: Novak Djokovic began his French Open title defence with a solid if not spectacular victory over home hope Pierre-Hugues Herbert.

Serbia's Djokovic, 37, upped his level when it mattered to win 6-4, 7-6 (7-3), 6-4 in Tuesday's night session at Roland Garros.

The 24-time Grand Slam champion will take sole ownership of the record of most major titles with a fourth victory on the Paris clay.

But he has come into the event in uncertain form.

Djokovic has endured a turbulent season, having been far from his lofty heights and not yet reaching a final.

Playing in Geneva last week was a sign he wanted to build rhythm and confidence before heading to the French Open, saying when he arrived that he had "low expectations but high hopes".

Therefore, it was intriguing to see how Djokovic would perform against 142nd-ranked wildcard Herbert.

Djokovic's movement at the baseline did not always look comfortable and lacked some sharpness in his returning.

However, he generally served well and was still able to pick his moments to strike - most notably in a commanding tie-break.



This year, Djokovic has appeared to lack some of the fire which has often fuelled his success but his demonstrative celebrations as he clinched the two-set lead indicated his pleasure.

Chances were rare in the third



started, the way I felt on the court," said Djokovic, who plays Spain's world No.63 Roberto Carballes Baena in round two.

"Compared to the previous weeks of tournaments I played [recently], I felt better. I'm moving in a positive direction."

Elsewhere, two-time French Open finalist Casper Ruud moved into the second round of the 2024 tournament with a routine 6-3, 6-4 6-3 win over Brazil's Felipe Meligeni Alves.

Norwegian Ruud, 25, lost to Rafael Nadal in the 2022 final at Roland Garros and Novak Djokovic in the 2023 showpiece.

The match took place under the roof on Court Philippe Chatrier on a day when wet weather in Paris meant no play on any of the outside courts until late afternoon on Tuesday.

Sabalenka makes swift progress in Paris

Elsewhere, Aryna Sabalenka dropped just three games against teenager Erika Andreeva to start her French Open campaign in emphatic style.

The second seed was never truly troubled in a 6-1, 6-2 win over her 19-year-old opponent, who is ranked 98 places below her.

Belarus' Sabalenka defended her Australian Open title in January and reached back-to-back finals on the clay courts of Madrid and Rome, losing both to Iga Swiatek.

Rain delayed much of the day's play at Roland Garros, which Sabalenka jokingly acknowledged when thanking the crowd for watching her.

"I know you guys didn't have a choice [of court] because it's raining outside so you had to be on this one," she said.

"I'm super happy to see all of you tonight supporting us." - Agencies

SPANISH LA LIGA

Germany's Flick named as new Barca manager



BARCELONA: Barcelona have appointed former Bayern Munich boss Hansi Flick of Germany as their new boss on a two-year contract on Wednesday.

Flick, who was sacked by Germany in September 2023, takes over from Xavi, who was sacked last week.

Flick's stint with Germany came after he guided Bayern Munich to a treble in 2020, winning the Bundesliga, German Cup and Champions League.

Barcelona forward Robert Le-

wandowski, 35, played under Flick at the Allianz Arena for two seasons.

Flick's Bayern Munich completed the treble in 2020 by winning the Bundesliga, German Cup and Champions League.

Departing Barcelona boss Xavi, who was sacked a month after the club confirmed he would stay, said his successor will "suffer" in the role.

He guided Barcelona to La Liga and Spanish Super Cup glory in his first full season in charge but this

season the Catalan giants finished 10 points short of La Liga champions Real Madrid.

In a statement on Wednesday, Barcelona said it had "chosen a man well known for his teams' high pressing, intense and daring style of play which has brought him great success at club level and international level, winning pretty much all there is to win in the world of football".

Flick has been out of work since he was sacked by Germany eight months ago. - Agencies

SPANISH LA LIGA

Real Madrid's Bellingham voted Player of the Year

MADRID: Real Madrid and England midfielder Jude Bellingham was voted La Liga's Player of the Season in his first year in Spain on Wednesday.

Bellingham, 20, scored 19 times in the league to help Real win the title by 10 points.

The Stourbridge-born player also scored four times in the Champions League as Carlo Ancelotti's side reached the final, where they will meet Borussia Dortmund at Wembley on Saturday.

Bellingham edged out teammate Vinicius Jr, Antoine Griezmann (Atletico Madrid), Artem Dovbyk (Girona) and Robert Lewandowski (Barcelona) in votes cast by fans, club captains and a panel of experts.

He also won the 2022-23 Bundesliga Player of the Season playing for Dortmund before moving to Real for an initial 103m euros (£88.5m).

"I would like to dedicate it to my team-mates, the coaching staff and, most importantly, to the fans of the best club in the world," Bellingham, who was unable to attend Tuesday's ceremony as he is getting ready for Saturday's final, said in a message.

"It's a pleasure every time I play for this team. Hala Madrid."

Bellingham has 29 England caps and has scored three goals



for his country.

He is expected to play a key role for Gareth Southgate's team at Euro 2024 in Germany,

which starts on 14 June.

England's first game is against Serbia in Gelsenkirchen on June 16. - Agencies

BOXING



‘Usyk vs Fury rematch set for December’

RIYADH: Undisputed heavyweight champion Oleksandr Usyk and Tyson Fury are set to meet in a rematch on 21 December, according to the chairman of Saudi Arabia's general entertainment authority.

Usyk beat Fury by split decision to become the first undisputed champion of the four-belt era on 18 May.

A rematch was said to be in the works for October but Turki

Alalshikh says the date has been pushed back to December.

"The world will watch another historical fight again," Alalshikh added on X.

"Our commitment to boxing fans continues. We hope you enjoy it."

Usyk, the first undisputed heavyweight champion since Lennox Lewis in 1999, added Fury's WBC belt to his WBA, WBO and IBF collection when they fought in

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia earlier this month.

The 37-year-old Ukrainian has won all 22 of his professional fights.

Alalshikh did not name a venue or destination for the rematch but stated it would take place "during Riyadh Season".

Riyadh Season is an entertainment festival held every winter since its launch in 2019 which has hosted a number of high profile

boxing events.

The contest would give Briton Fury, who is aged 35, the opportunity to gain revenge after tasting defeat for the first time recently in his 16-year professional career against Usyk.

It is unlikely that all four belts will be on the line in the rematch in December with the IBF planning to strip Usyk as he will not be facing its mandatory challenger next. - Agencies

ROUND-UP

Step into serenity where every moment is #15DegreesCooler

Nestled at an elevation of 2,000 metres, Alila Jabal Akhdar enjoys temperatures that are on an average 15 degrees cooler than the lowlands, providing an exceptional summer escape in the cool, invigorating climate of Jabal Akhdar

MUSCAT: As the summer sun blazes and temperatures soar, Alila Jabal Akhdar emerges as the ultimate oasis for those seeking a refreshing retreat. Nestled at an elevation of 2,000 metres, the hotel enjoys temperatures that are on an average 15 degrees cooler than the lowlands, providing an exceptional summer



escape in the cool, invigorating climate of Jabal Akhdar. With azure skies, breathtaking sunlit vistas, and the serene valleys of the Al Hajar Mountains,

this is the perfect spot to revel in the beauty of the season. We have designed a plethora of unique summer experiences tailored to delight all our guests. For

the adventurous, explore the stunning, rugged landscape of Jabal Akhdar through an array of trails, from peaceful hikes to the exhilarating Via Ferrata. For those seeking re-

laxation, we offer rejuvenating yoga sessions, indulgent spa treatments at an arbor perched on the edge of a ravine, and a refreshing dip in our infinity pool with spectacular views.

General Manager Puneet Singh shares, “As the summer heat intensifies in the GCC region and the Indian sub-continent, many residents look for quick getaways. Jabal Akhdar, consistently on an average 15 degrees Celsius cooler than major Gulf cities, is the ideal destination. We aim to provide experiences that allow our guests to savor the best of summer in a delightfully cool climate. Our team has meticulously curated an itinerary that highlights the finest our resort has to offer.”

#15DegreesCooler escape
Enjoy our exclusive summer package, which includes:
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Complimentary Alila activities scheduled weekly
Play Alila kids’ club and adventurous activities scheduled weekly

Terms and conditions
Room rates are quoted exclusive of 23.27% taxes and VAT. Per room per night, Rates are inclusive of breakfast for upto two adults and two children below 12
Valid for stays until September 30, subject to blackout dates.

SIGNIFICANT



Zubair EDC honoured as key partner at Sohar University’s Business Partners Gathering

MUSCAT: Zubair Enterprise Development Centre (Zubair EDC) was recently honoured as a key partner at the highly anticipated ‘Business Partners Gathering’ event held at Sohar University campus. This significant occasion was held under the auspices of Mohammed Sulaiman Al Kindi, Governor of North Al Batinah. Aligned with Zubair EDC’s strategy to foster and maintain strategic partnerships with pivotal players in Oman’s entrepreneurial landscape, Zubair EDC’s collaboration underscores its commitment to the ecosystem’s growth and development. The gathering commenced with an inspiring address by the University Vice Chancellor, followed by a dynamic dialogue that focused on addressing key challenges and uncovering new opportunities to advance the entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovation in Oman, in alignment with Oman’s Vision 2040. The event also featured the signing of collaboration agreements and a comprehensive tour of the university’s facilities. The primary objective of the ‘Business Partners Gathering’ was to fortify collaborations among essential stakeholders within the entrepreneurship ecosystem amongst Omani youth. Additionally, the event aimed to identify further areas of cooperation to provide enhanced value to young entrepreneurs and students, leveraging the latest advancements and international standards. Amer Elias, Administrative Managreat Zubair EDC, ex-

pressed the centre’s dedication, stating, “At Zubair EDC, we strive to reach various Wilayats across the Sultanate, consistently collaborating with our partners. We have a long-standing history of successful initiatives with Sohar University, and we are committed to continuing our support for their entrepreneurship programmes. We aim to provide advisory services and workshops to their students and actively participate in their future entrepreneurship programmes.” Sohar University extends its gratitude to Zubair EDC for its unwavering support and looks forward to a continued partnership that will drive innovation and entrepreneurial growth in Oman. Mariam Al Shibli, Head of Career Guidance Services at Sohar University said, ““We are deeply grateful to the Zubair Enterprises Development Centre for their steadfast partnership and invaluable contributions to our entrepreneurial initiatives. Z-EDC’s support significantly enhances our efforts to cultivate a vibrant entrepreneurial network, and we look forward to many more years of fruitful collaboration.” Established in 2013, the Zubair Enterprises Development Centre (Zubair EDC) is a growth initiative of The Zubair Corporation. It highlights the important role of enterprise development in an increasingly diversified economy. The centre provides and inspiring, supportive and professional environment for young Omani entrepreneurs and enterprises of all sizes to accelerate sustainable businesses.

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

Europcar Oman and Bahrain’s three-day expedition to Abu Dhabi

MUSCAT: Last year the management at Europcar Oman and Bahrain, a leading mobility services company made a commitment to their frontline staff in Muscat, Salalah, and Bahrain by promising them an incredible adventure to Yas Island in Abu Dhabi if they secured the Customer Favourite Award with Rentalcars.com and Booking.com. Emerging victorious, around 20 members of their exceptional team embarked on a thrilling 3-day road trip to Abu Dhabi to commemorate their staff’s outstanding achievements. This trip celebrated their recognition as the ‘Customer Favourite’ car rental company at Muscat, Salalah, and Bahrain Airports, by Rentalcars.com as well as Booking.com’s commendation for Muscat Airport. The adventure began with a drive in luxurious four-wheelers, taking pit stops to visit Abu Dhabi’s iconic attractions. After checking into Crowne Plaza, the team enjoyed heart-pounding rides at Ferrari World, splashed around at Yas Waterpark, and had fun at Warner Bros. and Sea World. The staff from all departments – Front Office, Ac-



counts, Operations, Sales, Marketing, and the Airport participated in this memorable getaway. “Europcar Oman and Bahrain is passionate about employee well-being. Our staff consistently goes

above and beyond, and recognising their achievements is key to our holistic approach to employee satisfaction,” said Nitin Sapre, CEO of Europcar Oman and Bahrain. The Abu Dhabi expedition was

a resounding success, filled with adventure, celebration, and appreciation. Europcar continues to prioritise staff well-being, ensuring a positive and fulfilling work environment.

INDIAN SOCIAL CLUB OMAN

ISC Sports Division hosts karate grading event



MUSCAT: The Indian Social Club (ISC) Sports Division conducted a Karate Grading event at the ISC Hall on May 20. The event saw enthusiastic participation from numerous students who were evaluated for their skills and dedication to karate. **Belt achievements**
Yellow Belt: Sandrah Ann Byju, Mohammed Kaif, Minnah Khulus, Rana Nowshad, Raizel Mariam, Stanvin Christoph, Johan Jobu, Rohan Jobu, Siddharth Subhramanian, Sanjay Subhrama-

nian, Charan Tej, Anshil Prakash, Dhanajay V.S.
Orange Belt: Aiswarya Das, Sreenandana Sreejesh, Shradha Sreejesh, Danel Vargheese, Husriya J. S, DeeJay J. S, Lakshmi Ranjith, Arjun Ranjith, Ananya-Tummuri, Taruniika Kishore, Vygha Manoj, Vihaan Manoj, Dona Manoj, Aaditya Ramanathan, Prethinka K, Ajay Sai Selvan, Mythrey M. Nair, Shreyansh Nair, Rufus Roy.
Green Belt: Kashi Abi, Jalaja Abi, Sreebhagya Sunil, Sowmya Jeyaganesh, Niranjana Sivan

Sreedevi, Duaa Bint Mubashir, Haripriya Umesh, Hrishikesh Umesh, Navya Kamdar, Ahil Kumar Behra.
Blue Belt: Devcharan Marun. Kharthick Vasudev Marun, Jivanthika S, Jishnu Sachin Toprani, Stephina Anna Vineesh.
Purple Belt: Katharine Treasa Binu.
Brown Belt: Alen Paul, Helen Mary, Parthip M, Siyona Mariyam Vineesh
Suhail Khan, the Entertainment & Cultural Secretary and Joint General Secretary, distributed

certificates to the participants, recognising their achievements and hard work. The event was a testament to the dedication of the students and the supportive environment fostered by the Indian Social Club Sports Division. The efforts of instructors, parents, and the students themselves culminated in a successful grading event that not only recognised individual achievements but also underscored the importance of discipline and perseverance in martial arts.

ROUND-UP

Bank Muscat wins global ‘Best Places to Work’ award for 2024

The bank scored highly on the majority of the award parameters, qualifying for this award, which recognises international organisations that play an important role in areas that encompass continuous work environment development, enhancing employee experience, employee engagement, and workplace culture

MUSCAT: In recognition of its pioneering role in the field of developing human resources and cultivating an ideal work environment, Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in the Sultanate of Oman, was honoured with the global prestigious award “Best Places to Work for 2024” presented from “Best Places to Work”, a prestigious global institution in the United Kingdom.

This distinguished award was given to the bank based on the re-



sults of an evaluation assessing work culture and employee satisfaction, as well as a thorough review of HR policy and processes. The bank scored highly on the majority of the award parameters, qualifying for this award, which recognises international organisations that play an important role in areas that encompass continuous work environment development, enhancing employee experience, employee engagement, and workplace culture.

On this occasion, Sheikha You-suf Al Farsi, Chief Operating Officer, Bank Muscat, said: “We are proud of this recognition, as it reflects the tremendous effort dedicated to developing human resources and establishing an inclusive and collaborative working environment in which the Bank’s

employees are empowered and supported. The Bank is developing specialised plans for employment and training processes in order to stay up with current and future changes while also improving the institutional culture in the Bank’s several connected business areas. Employees at Bank Muscat form a basic core that contributes significantly to the Bank’s continuing growth and development. To preserve this development, we are keen to improve transparency and governance while working with a clear vision and values.”

Sheikha Al Farsi commented: “I would like to take this opportunity to thank the bank’s employees; whose dedication and passion enabled this recognition. To achieve our common goal, we always work together to maintain an innovative

working atmosphere in which every employee feels respected and empowered to succeed.”

Said Salim Al Aufi, General Manager – Human Resources and Administration, Bank Muscat, stated: “We are honoured to be named the Best Place to Work, which demonstrates our dedication to strengthening the bank’s leading position by attracting talent and cultivating an outstanding work environment that provides the resources needed to assist individuals and support their career growth.”

“The bank’s work approach is underpinned by a set of principles that enhances its vision “To Serve You Better, Everyday,” which is expressed equally for customers as well as employees.

“We are proud of the contribu-

tion played by Omani human resources, who demonstrated their capacity to take on responsibility and strengthen the Bank’s pioneering position in the country. This achievement reflects the efforts of all of our employees; their cooperation and dedication to translating the bank’s vision and values are significant factors for establishing a healthy work environment.”

Bank Muscat has worked tirelessly for over four decades to create an inclusive and collaborative work environment in order to provide customers with the best services and facilities possible. As a result, the Bank has become recognised as a desirable employer for many job seekers in the Sultanate. Over 4000 employees work in the Bank’s several branches throughout Oman.

Bank Muscat established a strategic plan for developing the capabilities of Omani human resources across different specialties and disciplines. It strives to ensure a professional work culture that is based on fair and equal opportunities for all employees, cutting-edge technology, and global best practices. Up until February 2024, Jadara Academy organised training programmes, utilising 48,800 training seats, totaling 57,536 training man-days. The academy also facilitated tuitions for 51 professional certifications, attended by 365 employees in their respective fields. Further, the bank offers the necessary services and facilities required either in the Head Office, which is considered an architectural masterpiece, or in the various branches across Oman.

TECHNOLOGY SHOW

Sohar International showcases innovative digital solutions at Comex

MUSCAT: Sohar International - Oman’s Best Bank, announced its participation in Comex 2024 - Global Technology Show, taking place at the Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre (OCEC).

From May 27 to 30, 2024 attendees are invited to visit our interactive stall where the bank will showcase its latest financial and beyond financial digital solutions, designed to enhance customer experience and drive innovation. In addition to showcasing digital innovations, the bank has planned a series of exciting activities and attractions where attendees can engage with the technology through live demonstrations and hands-on experiences, attend insightful sessions with our experts who will share their vision on the future of banking and digital transformation, and participate in on-site competitions for a chance to win exciting prizes.

On the bank’s participation at Comex 2024, Ahmed Al Musalmi, Chief Executive Officer of Sohar International, said, “As a leading digital bank within the local banking landscape, Sohar International has embarked on a digital transformation journey. As we continue to innovate and enhance our digital offerings, Sohar International remains steadfast in its



commitment to providing exceptional value to both our retail and corporate clients. Our initiatives are designed to align seamlessly with Vision Oman 2040, driving forward the nation’s digital transformation agenda. Comex 2024 serves as a pivotal platform for us to showcase these advancements, demonstrating our dedication to pioneering solutions that contribute to the economic and technological growth of Oman.”

With several milestones in the digital sphere, visitors to Sohar International’s booth have the opportunity to firsthand experi-

ence the myriad of innovative digital services offered by the bank. A key highlight is the bank’s mobile banking apps, which integrate an ecosystem of financial and non-financial services under the ‘My Life’ and ‘My Goals’ features. These features allow users to book travel, make hotel reservations, purchase gift vouchers, and more, demonstrating Sohar International’s commitment to delivering comprehensive and convenient digital banking solutions to its customers.

For business clients, Sohar International’s booth will showcase

its Unified Transaction Banking Platform, designed for Wholesale Banking clients.

This platform provides a convenient one-stop solution with services such as auto reconciliation, supply chain finance, liquidity management, receivables management, digital trade finance, and payment processing. Additionally, Sohar International’s API Banking Portal offers advanced financial management solutions for government bodies, corporations, and fintech companies, revolutionizing their operations with innovative tools. The bank will also present its secure payment gateways, efficient soft POS, and robust corporate mobile banking app through its corporate digital banking platform, enhancing operational flexibility for business clients.

Revered as a leading exhibition in information technology, communications, and technology in Oman, Comex brings together local and international trade visitors from both government and private sectors, including top ICT elites, innovators, and entrepreneurs. The national-level event highlights cutting-edge trends and serves as a sourcing and networking hub, showcasing new products and technologies.

UNMATCHED SAVINGS

OTE Electronics & home appliances commences mega warehouse sale

MUSCAT: The highly anticipated annual Warehouse Sale by OTE’s Electronics & Home Appliances started yesterday, offering unbeatable discounts on a wide range of products. From May 29 to June 2, visit the Ghala Warehouse in Muscat and experience unmatched savings on all your favourite brands.

This five-day event is the perfect opportunity for both residents and expats to prepare for the upcoming Eid celebrations and upgrade their homes with top-quality electronics and appliances at incredible prices. Whether you’re furnishing a new apartment, refreshing your existing space, or preparing to travel back home during the vacation season, this sale offers the chance to find exactly what you need at unmatched prices.

OTE’s vast selection caters to every need and budget. Discover amazing deals on top brands like LG, Bosch, Admiral, ChiQ, and Prolux. From televisions and refrigerators to air conditioners, washing machines, dishwashers, and more, you’ll find everything



you need to enhance the comfort and convenience of your home.

As the exclusive distributor for leading home appliance brands in Oman, OTE Group boasts an extensive and diverse business portfolio spanning global automotive brands, auto ancillaries, electronics, home appliances, manufacturing, financing, and training institutes. With a dedicated team and expansive network, OTE provides comprehensive sales, service, and after-sales support to its discerning clientele. The group maintains a global presence across 15 business verticals through over 30 companies.



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