

OMAN VISION 2040 FOLLOW-UP UNIT INKS ICT AGREEMENT
Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit signed a memorandum of cooperation (MoC) with Omani-Qatari Telecommunications Company (Ooredoo) to enhance joint action mechanisms for exchanging expertise in the fields of information and communication technology (ICT), as well as support for programmes serving society. **>B1**



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FOCUS ON DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT OF WORKING WOMEN, ENTREPRENEURS

Digital empowerment of working women and female entrepreneurs took centre-stage in recommendations issued at the conclusion of the Working Women's Second Arab Forum on Monday. The forum was attended by 170 participants from Oman and abroad. **>A2**



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MORE THAN 59,000 STUDENTS TO BENEFIT FROM ROYAL DIRECTIVES

The directives will help the families of 24,665 students under social security scheme and 34,365 students belonging to limited income group



MUSCAT: The Royal Directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik reflect His Majesty's concern for students of families under social security umbrella and families with limited income. The Royal Directives also reflect His Majesty's belief in the necessity for provision of all educational supplies to them to mitigate the burden on their parents

and to enable them to concentrate on their studies. His Majesty the Sultan has directed provision of school supplies and daily meals to the targeted students at the beginning of the school year. Following the Directive, the Ministry of Finance has approved the necessary amounts/funds in

coordination with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Development. The total number of students benefiting from this kind gesture of His Majesty the Sultan is 59,030, including boys and girls, in all governorates of the Sultanate. The figure includes 24,665 students of families

under social security scheme and 34,365 students of families with limited income. Walis and officials at the Ministry of Education and the Councils of Students' Parents have welcomed the Royal Directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. **>A3**

TOWARDS COMPLIANCE

Oman makes all-out efforts to address climate change

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman has made great effort to address the phenomenon of climate change which poses serious challenges to the entire world. Several departments in Oman shoulder their part of responsibility to manage the phenomenon of global warming.

Laws and regulations

Oman is currently updating climate affairs management regulations to keep pace with local and international developments. The regulations aim to monitor the performance of companies and establishments tasked with climate affairs, either by moderating or adapting to climate change.

Climate change rules

Steps are underway to devise climate change legislations in co-operation with the departments concerned, so that this statute

could serve as a regulatory code for drafting general provisions about climate affairs in all sectors of development in Oman.

Preliminary steps

Preliminary steps include drafting the national strategy for alleviation and adaptation to climate change. This serves as a springboard for action plans and projects across all sectors. The preparation of a database to follow up the realisation of nationally-determined contributions has been among the measures undertaken by Oman towards compliance of the norm envisaging 7 percent reduction in emissions by 2030.

Database

A database has also been prepared to enumerate all projects on adapting with climate change in Oman. This is in addition to the preparation of a greenhouse gases database for basic sectors, which facilitates the annual emissions control process. **>A2**

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Sulphur fertilisers can help farms handle soil salinity

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A new study has shown that with the use of special fertilisers saline-sodic soils in Oman can be reclaimed. Phases 1 and 2 of a research on using special fertilisers for reclamation of saline-sodic soils in Oman with the aim of finding viable solutions to address soil salinity across the Governorate of South Al Batinah has succeeded. The research was conducted by Oman Shell, Shell Agriculture and Forestry and Sultan Qaboos University (SQU). Oman Shell in collaboration with SQU, carried out a research between 2020 and 2022, to study how effective Special-S (a sulphur fertiliser produced using



Shell Thiogro technology) is, in remediating saline-sodic soils through soil acidification. In Phase 1 of the research, incubation trials and column experiments were performed with Special-S on decreasing soil PH (measure of the acidity or alkalinity of the soil), and salt leaching was carried out on five different types of soil collected from different Omani farms. Special-S showed significant acidification of the soil, and was effective in salt leaching, doubling salts leached as compared to control.

Response of plants

Field trials were carried out to evaluate the response of plants to this change. With the application of Special-S, there was a 13 percent increase in yield of Rhodes grass and 59 percent increase in yield of wheat. The calcium and phosphorous uptake by Rhodes grass plants were 75 percent and 14 percent higher, respectively, as compared to the control category. **>A5**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN New book highlights Oman-Sri Lanka ties



1 A book titled "Sri Lanka – Oman Relations: Past, Present and Future" chronicles the relations between Sri Lanka and Oman and foresees its future outlook. The 164-page book, published by the Black & White Media and Services LLC, was launched on Monday at the Diplomatic Institute of the Foreign Ministry of the Sultanate of Oman. **>A5**

WORLD Artemis 1 rocket launch postponed

2 The much-awaited launch of NASA's most powerful rocket Artemis 1, which is to go on a voyage around the moon, has been deferred and teams are working on "an issue with an engine bleed." The countdown clock was put on hold at T-40 minutes. **>A6**

MARKET Real estate deals top OMR213mn in value

3 The value of real estate transactions in the Sultanate of Oman reached OMR213.1 million in July, according to a report issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning on Monday. The traded value of mortgage contracts in July reached OMR136 million. **>B1**



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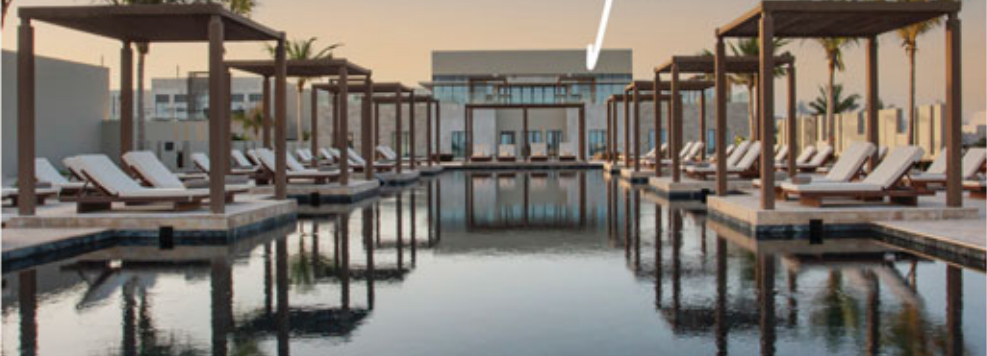


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WOMEN'S SECOND ARAB FORUM

Focus on digital empowerment of working women and entrepreneurs

SALALAH: Digital empowerment of working women and female entrepreneurs took centre stage in recommendations issued at the conclusion of the Working Women's Second Arab Forum on Monday.

Closing ceremony
Organised by the Ministry of Labour in cooperation with the Arab Labour Organisation (ALO), the forum was attended by 170 participants from Oman and abroad. The closing ceremony was held under the auspices of Labour Undersecretary Shaikh Nasr Amer Al Hosni.

Recommendations
The recommendations laid emphasis on achieving equality between men and women in terms of 'digital inclusion' of the fair sex. This entails drafting a legal framework that secures the rights of entrepreneurs (and working women) within the context of digital economy. The forum also recommended the 're-qualification' of the Arab workforce, with special attention to working women, to help address the challenges imposed by artificial intelligence (AI) and technological revolution.

Evaluating policies
This is in addition to developing the system of statistics and social-type-oriented indices with a view to evaluating policies and programmes to enhance women's presence in the digital economy sector. — **ONA**

NEW COMMITTEE

Panel proposes plan of action

<FROM Among the endeavours, a technical team of specialists has been formed, comprising representatives from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), public sector establishments and private sector firms. The team operates under the purview of the Ministerial Committee for Climate Change and Ozone Layer Protection. The panel proposes and executes policies and plans of action to alleviate greenhouse gas emissions and contain their negative impact in line with Oman Vision 2040.

The Ministerial Committee also contributes to determining the Sultanate of Oman's stand on issues discussed as part of negotiations and meetings of countries that are party to climate affairs agreements and protocols. It follows up the implementation of recommendations that stem from the meetings.

The committee also ensures Oman's commitment to the said agreements and the country's preparation of national studies on climate change and ozone layer protection, besides reviewing other studies and reports in accordance with the agreements' dictates.

The National Committee strives to spread awareness about climate change and its impact on different sectors. It trains national personnel and builds capacities in the field of climate change and ozone layer protection. It drafts progress reports and proposes ways to enhance coordination among the departments concerned to remove obstacles that might impede progress. — **ONA**



TENDER NOTICE

Oman Water & Wastewater Services Company hereby announces the following Tenders: -

Tender No.	Description	Eligibility	Tender Fee (RO)	Last Date of Sale Tender Documents	Bid Submission Date
T/2445913-2 /2022 (Re-float)	Design, Supply & Installation of Drum Screen Control System at Al Ansab STP	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned.	R.O 50 (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	15/9/2022	26/09/2022
T/2448952-2 /2022 (Re-float)	Consultancy Services for Sludge Management Strategy Plan	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and International Companies specialized in the works mentioned	R.O 50 (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	15/9/2022	03/10/2022
T/2452158/ 2022	Construction of Remaining Works of Sewerage Networks, TE Pipelines and Sewage Treatment Plant at Wilayat Al Musanaah	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and International Companies specialized in the works mentioned	R.O 2,500 (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	15/9/2022	17/10/2022
T/2452248/ 2022	Supply of Electromagnetic Flow Meters	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned.	R.O 50 (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	15/9/2022	26/09/2022
T/2452252/ 2022	Supply of HDPE Pipes	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned.	R.O 500 (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	15/9/2022	26/09/2022
T/2452256/ 2022	Consultancy Services for Design of Water Supply, Sewer System, TE Networks and Sewage Treatment Plant for Al-Amerat Catchment (A10)	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned.	R.O 500 (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	15/9/2022	17/10/2022

The tender documents can be purchased from Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (OWWSC) e-tendering page (Supplier Login) from the date of publication of this announcement until 15/9/2022. The applicants shall pay the tender fee through electronic payment gateway through Supplier Login.

Applicants who are not registered with OWWSC shall register from <https://owwsc.nama.om/Business-with-Us/Vendor-Registration> to have the login credentials of Supplier portal.

All applicants who have paid the tender fee shall have access to the Tender Documents through OWWSC e-tendering page (Supplier Login).

All participating Companies shall submit a Bid Bond of 1% of the bid value in a sealed envelope to OWWSC's Chairman of Tender Committee not later than 3:00 pm on the bid submission date. Bid Bond must be obtained from a Bank registered in the Sultanate of Oman and it should be addressed in favour of OWWSC.

The bid along with all required documents shall be uploaded through OWWSC e-tendering page not later than 3:00 pm on the date specified above.

For more details refer to Tender Page of our website www.owwsc.nama.om or Email to: tender@owwsc.nama.om

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WELFARE OF STUDENTS

Royal Directives a blessing for students

<FROM Sheikh Mohammed bin Humaid Al Ghabshi, Wali of Al Amirat and Chairman of the Students' Parents Council in the Wilayat said the Royal Directives will come as a blessing to the students of government schools. He said the Directives reaffirm that the His Majesty the Sultan is concerned with the welfare of students with limited means. He said the support for this section would have a great impact on mitigating the burden and commitments of these families and would contribute to an environment appropriate for such students. Dr. Saif bin Muhana Al Hinai, Wali of Sohar and chairman of the Council of Student's Parents in the Wilayat said the Royal Directives of His Majesty the Sultan aimed at meeting the requirements of students coming from this section as also to help them overcome any obstacles that they might face. Sheikh Saif bin Abdullah Al Mamary, Wali of Yanquland and Chairman of the Council of Student's Parents in the Wilayat reaffirmed that the Royal Directives of His Majesty the Sultan reaffirm his commitment to provide a decent life to the students of these families. Sheikh Salim bin Suhail Shamas, Wali of Sala-

lah and Chairman of the Council of Student's Parents in the Wilayat said the Royal Directives touch the needs of the citizens, which is consistent with Oman Vision 2040. Dr. Waleed bin Taib al Hashmi, Director General of the Directorate General for Education in North Al Batinah Governorate said that school supplies and nutrition are two significant elements contributing to the students' welfare. He said the Directorate General for Education in North Al Batinah Governorate, under the instructions of the Ministry of Education, is leaving no stone unturned to implement the Royal Directives of His Majesty the Sultan. Asma bint Salim Al Nahdi, Head of Western Salalah School in Dhofar said the Royal gesture from His Majesty is a testament to His Majesty's care and attention to the requirements of these families. Is'haq bin Yousef Al Harthy, Chairman of the Council of Students' Parents and Mohammed bin Amer Al Shekaili at the school of Rashid bin Al Nadher for Basic Education (5-12) in the Wilayat of Muscat reaffirmed that the Royal Directives represent a motivation for students and contribute to creation of an environment based on solidarity and support of all sections of the society.



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164-PAGE BOOK

Book on Sri Lanka and Oman relations launched

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A new book “Sri Lanka – Oman Relations: Past, Present and Future” chronicles the age-old ties between the two countries and tries to see their future, according to its author, the ambassador of Sri Lanka to Oman, O. L. Ameer Ajwad.

The 164-page book, which is published by the Black & White Media and Services LLC, was launched on Monday at the Diplomatic Institute of Oman’s Foreign Ministry.

Gracing the occasion as the chief guest, Sheikh Khalifa Al Harthy, Undersecretary of Diplomatic Affairs, Foreign Ministry of Oman, officially released the book in the presence of senior officials of the Omani foreign ministry, ambassadors, diplomats, representatives of the Sri Lankan community in Oman, and the media.

Oman-Sri Lanka friendship

This book is a “testament not only to the strength of Oman-Sri Lanka friendship, but also the Sri Lankan ambassador Ameer Ajwad’s strength of character and the enthusiasm and diligence with which he undertakes each and every one of life’s pursuits,” Oman’s foreign minister, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, said in his foreword to the book.



“Sri Lanka and Oman’s diplomatic journey spans just over four decades. However, the tales in this book show that our bonds go back centuries, if not millennia, into the mists of time.”

Ameer Ajwad presents a comprehensive review of collaborations between our countries, from hockey to fruit, international Tea Day to cricket tournaments, fisheries to technology.

Deep-rooted connection

“His book demonstrates that every step of our countries’ journey together has been underpinned by a deep-rooted connection between our peoples,” Sayyid Badr commented.

The objective behind this book is to “reinvigorate the past, highlight the present, and to chart pathways for the future by providing relevant information with a view to fostering deeper economic engagement between the two countries”, Ameer Amjad said in the book’s preface.

“The book sketches Sri Lanka and Oman relationship in five chapters that bring out its past, illustrate its present and forecast its future,” the ambassador added. The book was released to mark the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and the Sultanate of Oman which was commemorated on February 17, 2021.

RESEARCH PROJECT

Survey conducted to know Omani farmers’ perception

In Phase 2 of this research, a socio-economic survey was conducted to understand current Omani farmers’ perception of the soil salinity issue and its management, as well as their willingness to apply new technologies to alleviate soil salinity. Though 62 percent were not currently using any specific techniques to alleviate salinity, 82 percent of the farmers indicated a willingness to purchase soil amendment to manage soil salinity.

Additionally, improving the active management of soil salinity would increase the sustainability of these farms, and mitigate a myriad of social and economic problems associated with the decay of soil quality and productivity. Further studies in Phase 2 testified to Special-S effectiveness in leaching salts compared to agricultural gypsum and control, with Special S being 31 – 37

percent more effective in leaching. Compared with agricultural gypsum, Special-S enables the replacement of Na⁺ ions without the addition of external Ca²⁺ ions that are already abundant in Oman’s soils. With the conclusion of Phase 1 and Phase 2, SQU recommends 1 ton per hectare per year Special-S application on soils with electrical conductivity between 4 – 20 dS/m that experience poor irrigation water quality. Referencing to Oman Salinity Strategy 2012, about 30 - 40 percent of farms in South Al Batinah meet these conditions.

Walid Hadi, Oman Shell’s Country Chairman, said, “Soil salinity is an increasing concern for South Al Batinah. We have worked together with SQU to conduct critical research which has been a big contributor to a productive and sustainable agricultural sector.” He added, “It has

been a privilege to work with the brilliant minds at SQU to meet this real-life challenge facing the industry head-on.”

Zain Hak, Shell’s Global Vice President of Agriculture and Forestry (A&F) said, “Soil salinity puts pressure on existing agricultural communities. As the research with SQU validates, Special-S alleviates soil salinity and increases productivity in farms. This helps address Oman’s food security concerns while empowering Omani farmers to raise their income with more arable land and higher yields.”

He also added, “This research collaboration with SQU is a great example of how Shell A&F continues to look for opportunities to offer sustainable and integrated solutions to meet productivity and emissions related challenges across the agriculture and forestry value chains.”



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Ministry of Social Development

Tender Announcement

The Internal Tender committee of Ministry of Social Development hereby announces the following tender :-

Tender No.	Tender Subject	Grade	Last date for obtainment of tender document	Last date for tender submission	Tender Document Price (non-refundable)
146/2022	General maintenance work for al aman center in the general directorate of persons with disabilities at Al- khoud	Companies specialized in building contracting and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the second degree	Sunday 18-9-2022 02:00 PM	Sunday 9-10-2022 10:00 AM	R.O. 25/=

- ❖ Specialized Companies, registered with the Tender Board may obtain the Tender documents at the Tender Board e-tendering digital portal link (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>), On Tuesday 30/8/2022
- ❖ Tender shall be submitted in compliance with the technical specifications and terms along with a local bank warranty at (1%) of the tender value, valid ninety (90) days from the date of e-submission.
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The Morning Minute video on over 244,000 transactions completed through Invest Easy online portal had 462 views and 20 likes on Instagram.

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728 VIEWS





Midday Update video

The Midday Update video had 728 views and reached 1,400 people on Facebook.

WORLD



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Jaishankar to travel to UAE for meeting

NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will be travelling to UAE from August 31 to September 2 to co-chair the 14th India-UAE Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) and third India-UAE Strategic Dialogue with Foreign Minister of UAE Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan. These meetings will provide an opportunity for the Ministers to review the strategic ties. -ANI

Two Air France pilots suspended for mid-air brawl in cockpit

PARIS: Two Air France pilots were suspended after fighting in the cockpit on a Geneva-Paris flight in June, New York Post reported citing an airline official on Sunday.

Citing a Switzerland media outlet La Tribune, the New York Post stated that the pilot and co-pilot had a dispute shortly after takeoff, and grabbed each other by their collars after one apparently hit the other. Cabin crew was forced to intervene, and one member stayed in the cockpit to babysit the pair for the remainder of the approximately one hour and 15 minute flight to the French capital, the report said further.

However, the mid-air brawl didn't affect the rest of the flight, and the plane landed safely, according to an airline representative.

The suspension comes amid heightened scrutiny of the Paris-based carrier, over safety concerns, as per New York Post.

Last week, the BEA's air investigation agency, BEA has released a report which concluded that the airline's pilots have fostered a culture of not following safety procedures. The report cited by New York Post, centered on a December 2020 flight from Brazzaville, in the Republic of Congo, to Paris, when the crew rerouted the plane to Chad and landed after discovering a fuel leak, but didn't cut the engine or land as soon as possible, per leak safety procedures, which could have resulted in the engine catching fire. ANI



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Chief Executive Officer: Ahmed Essa Al Zedjali

EDITORIAL: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24813153, E-mail: editor@timesofoman.com
ADVERTISING: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24812624, E-mail: advertising@timesofoman.com
CIRCULATION: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24818270, E-mail: circulation@timesofoman.com

LAUNCH POSTPONED

NASA postpones Artemis I moon mission launch

WASHINGTON: The much-awaited launch of NASA's most powerful rocket Artemis I, which is to go on a voyage around the moon, has been deferred and teams are working on "an issue with an engine bleed."

"The launch of Artemis I is no longer happening today as teams work through an issue with an engine bleed. Teams will continue to gather data, and we will keep you posted on the timing of the next launch attempt," NASA said in a tweet. The countdown clock was put on hold at T-40 minutes. The hydrogen team will discuss the plans with Artemis I launch director.

"The countdown clock is on a hold at T-40 minutes. The hydrogen team of the @NASA-SLS rocket is discussing plans with the #Artemis I launch director," NASA added.

NASA had planned to launch the Artemis I mission on Monday from Kennedy Space Center in Florida, sending the Space Launch



System (SLS) rocket and Orion capsule on a more than month-long journey around the moon.

NASA said that the launch is on unplanned hold.

"Launch is currently in an unplanned hold as the team works on an issue with engine number 3 on the @NASA-SLS core stage," the US space agency said.

The teams are evaluating why the bleed test to condition the engines was not successful. Engineers are looking at options to gather as much data as possible. The Artemis I rocket and spacecraft are in stable, safe condition. ANI

BUILDING SET ON FIRE

Four killed, two injured after shooter sets fire to building in US state of Houston

HOUSTON: At least four people were killed and two people were injured on Sunday morning after a man set fire to a building and then shot at people fleeing in Houston, according to city Police chief Troy Finner.

Speaking at a press conference, the police chief informed that among the four killed was the suspect, CNN reported. The suspect was later killed by a Houston police officer. According to Finner, victims were all men, and range in age from 40-60.

"This suspect, unfortunately, and very sadly, and very evilly, set fire to several residents," Finner said during the press conference as quoted by CNN.

The suspect then "laid in wait for those residents to come out and fired upon them," he said. The fire department arrived at the scene first to douse the fire, but had to retreat from the gunman upon arrival, as per the police official.

"The suspect began to fire. I don't know if he was firing in their direction, but they had to take cover," Finner said.

According to him, the suspect was a 40-year-old African American man who was dressed in all



black. Last week, one person was killed and six others sustained injuries in an apparent targeted shooting in the US state of Maryland.

Police said one victim succumbed to his injuries and was pronounced dead by medical personnel. All of the victims are adult males. Witnesses reported that the suspect vehicle is a 4-door silver Lexus sedan.

"On August 24, 2022, at approximately 12:24 p.m., Northwest

District officers were summoned to the intersection of Shirley Avenue and Park Heights Avenue to investigate a reported shooting," the Baltimore police said in a statement posted on Facebook.

Prior to that a man set his car on fire and drove into a US Capitol barricade late night, according to Fox News. The unidentified man reportedly fired a weapon indiscriminately and then shot himself. ANI



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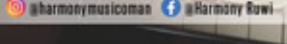
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WORLD



BUILDING RELATIONS

Venezuela and Colombia restore full diplomatic ties after three years

CARACAS: Venezuela and Colombia dispatched ambassadors to each other's capitals on Sunday to rebuild relations between the two countries that have been broken for more than three years.

The new Colombian ambassador, Armando Benedetti, was welcomed in the Venezuelan capital of Caracas by Deputy Foreign Minister



ter Rander Pena Ramirez.

"Relations with Venezuela should never have been severed. We are brothers and an imaginary line cannot separate us," Benedetti said.

His appointment was only made possible by the election of Colombia's first-ever leftist president, Gustavo Petro, who expressed his

intention to normalize diplomatic relations with Venezuela after he took office earlier this month.

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro appointed former Foreign Minister Felix Plasencia as his country's next ambassador to Colombia two weeks ago.

Plasencia arrived in Bogota on Sunday to restore ties and work

to improve "cooperation and integration," according to Venezuela's Foreign Affairs Minister Carlos Faria.

Repairing a relationship

In addition to exchanging ambassadors, the normalization process will include the full reopening of the border, which has remained

largely closed to vehicles.

The relationship between the two South American neighbors soured during the 2015 migrant crisis.

In 2019, Colombia's former President Ivan Duque cut off ties with Caracas altogether after refusing to recognize Maduro's election. **ow**

DEVASTATING FLOODS

Over 5.7 million people hit by flood in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Over 5.7 million people were affected in Pakistan as the country faces the worst rain-induced flooding in its history, according to The News International.

The rescue, relief and rehabilitation in the country continue. According to The News International, the catastrophe has killed around 719,558 livestock. The country's government has made appeals for donations to cope with the devastating impact of floods on both national and international levels.

The flooding has also affected agricultural land and infrastructure in Pakistan leaving 949,858 homes damaged across provinces.

It is to be noted that the death toll from floods has crossed 1,000 in Pakistan and thousands more have been injured or displaced since June.

At least 1,033 people have died while 1,527 have been injured since June 14 from the rains and floods, Geo News reported citing National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).

As per the data, four died in Balochistan, six in Gilgit Baltistan, 31 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 76 in Sindh.

Cumulative data from June 14 from across Pakistan showed that 3,451.5 km of road has been damaged, and 149 bridges have collapsed, 170 shops were destroyed.



A total of 949,858 homes have been partially or fully destroyed. Out of the total, 662,446 homes have been partially damaged, and 287,412 have been fully destroyed. While 719,558 livestock has also been killed.

At least 110 districts of Pakistan have been hit by the floods with 72 of those districts declaring calamity hit, according to Geo News.

Pakistan is grappling with its worst natural disaster in over a decade. The floods affected the lives of millions of people after which the Pakistan government

declared a "national emergency".

The NDMA shared that Pakistan's 30-year average showed that the country has received 134mm of rain and this year it received 388.7mm of rain. 190.07% more than the average.

On 26 August, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) Flood Forecasting Division (FFD) issued a warning that very high to exceptionally high-level flooding is expected in River Kabul at Nowshera in KP province, as well as in tributaries of the Kabul and Indus rivers until 28 August. **ANI**

Invitation to Tender

Dhofar Integrated Services Company S.A.O.C (DISC) invites reputable contractor for carrying out following works in Dhofar Region.

Tender Reference	Title of the Tender
DISC/Tender/2022/131	ESTABLISHMENT OF FIBER CONNECTIVITY AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS OF DHOFAR COMMUNICATION NETWORKS AND ASSOCIATED FOTE / GATEWAY CONFIGURATIONS
Tender Fee	RO. 105,000 Inclusive VAT (5%) each Tender Note: Tenderer who wish to participate in the above tender should collect the tender application form from DISC's office or send an e-mail to below mention mail id for form.
Experience	The Tenderer should have performed similar works (Cable laying, splicing, and testing of Fiber Optic cable activities), Fiber Optic Communication Equipment configurations and Gateway configurations during the last five years successfully with necessary safety requirements and having the work experience in Middle-East/Oman is preferable.
Pre-qualification	Contractors participating in the tendering process shall be registered electrical contractor with Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP) Grade – B or above. Apart from the above, the Contractors participating in the tendering process shall have Competent Electrical Person (CEP) certified by DISC and copy of the valid CEP certificate shall be submitted along with bid without which the bids will not be considered for evaluation. Further, Tenderers will be evaluated as per the HSE qualification criterion specified in the Tender documents.
Tender document sales cut-off date	03:00 PM on 13.09.2022
Tender document published date	03:00 PM on 14.09.2022
Site Visit	10:00 AM on 19.09.2022
Last date for seeking pre bid clarification	03:00 PM on 22.09.2022
response pre bid Last date for clarification	03:00 PM on 27.09.2022
Last date for submission of bids	03:00 PM on 04.10.2022
Any Queries Please Contact	Phone 23232554, purchase@disc.nama.om

Tenderers are requested to note that the bids accompanied with Tender Bond (1% of the quoted bid price and having 90 days validity) shall only be considered for evaluation.



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Dhofar Integrated Services Company
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ELECTIONS

Bolsonaro, Lula spar in Brazil presidential debate

BRASILIA: Brazil's main presidential candidates on Sunday locked horns with accusations of corruption and threats to democracy during their first election debate for the presidential polls slated to be held in October.

Far-right President Jair Bolsonaro accused leftist opponent Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of massive corruption, who in turn laid the blame of "destroying Brazil" on the incumbent.

"Your government was the most corrupt in Brazilian history," said Bolsonaro, taking a jab at Lula over a massive scandal centered on state-run oil giant Petrobras. The probe had landed the 76-year-old ex-president in

prison from 2018 to 2019 on controversial corruption charges, annulled by the country's Supreme Court in 2021.

"It was a kleptocracy, a government based on robbery... What do you want to come back to power for? To do the same thing to Petrobras again?" Bolsonaro said in his fiery attack.

Lula, who held the presidential office from 2003 to 2010, responded with a quick-fire attack of his own and accused Bolsonaro of spreading "untruths."

He said that his government should be remembered for its legacy of economic growth and the measures it took to reduce poverty. **dw**



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Email: isjalan@yahoo.com; www.indianschooljalan.com

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are invited from authorized transporting companies to provide safe transport to the students of Indian School Jalan.

Tender document can be collected from the School office against payment of RO 10/- as a non-refundable fee from 30 August 2022 to 7 September 2022, between 8.00am and 1.00pm. The completed tender addressed to "The Principal" should be submitted to the school office.

Indian School Jalan reserves the right to accept or reject any tender.

Last date of submission: 7/9/2022 before 1.00 pm

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Unnecessary contact ends Al Harthy’s bid for LMGTE podium

Al Harthy took the start of the race but the action fell under Safety Car conditions very quickly

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Mid-race contact during round four of the European Le Mans Series at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya on Sunday, 28th August, ruined realistic hopes of an LMGTE podium return for Ahmad Al Harthy and Oman Racing – the team having to ultimately settle for a frustrating 10th position.

With hopes high for a competitive challenge at the front after Al Harthy qualified the No.69 Aston Martin Vantage LMGTE on pole position with a superb performance on Saturday, 27th August, the damage sustained in hour two of the race – and the resulting pit-stop – ended the podium bid.

Al Harthy took the start of the race but the action fell under Safety Car conditions very quickly following an incident involving an LMGTE Ferrari and two LMP3 prototypes. After having to avoid the troubles, Al Harthy was shuffled back to second behind the No.77 Porsche of Christian Ried.

Racing got back underway on lap six, with 15 minutes elapsed, and Al Harthy made his intent



clear immediately by piling pressure onto his rival. Swarming all over the Porsche, the Oman Racing driver pushed hard to try and regain the lead and into lap 10 he positioned himself for an attack.

Further around the lap, Al Harthy went for the move on the brakes into Turn 10 but unfortunately ran a bit deep. Although able to avoid entering the gravel trap, he did slip to third behind the No.93 Porsche of Michael Fassbender.

As the end of the opening hour neared Al Harthy was queued up behind Fassbender but the Omani had to contend with high tyre degradation. This gave Giacomo Petrobelli a chance to pass the Aston Martin, which he did in the No.66 Ferrari – although not without some contact.

Al Harthy, now fourth of course, aimed to hit back but a couple of laps later Petrobelli tagged Fassbender and Al Harthy was able to sweep through into second place. Into hour two of his double-stint, Al Harthy remained ahead of Petro-

belli and the Omani then made his first pit-stop of the race a few moments later to take fresh tyres.

When the race order settled again Al Harthy was third in LMGTE and swarming all over the No.57 Ferrari with improved pace. Although able to get through, subsequent contact led to big damage for the Aston Martin.

Making an unscheduled second pit-stop around one hour and 20 minutes into the race, the TF Sport mechanics who look after the Oman Racing car did a great job to facilitate a repair to the front-right and fit fresh tyres before Al Harthy rejoined the race – albeit in 10th position and three laps down.

He went on to conclude his eventful double stint around mid-distance, with De Haan climbing behind the wheel for hour three. De Haan did all he could before Sorensen took over the car for the final hour and the run to the chequered flag – taking the finish in 10th place in LMGTE.

“It’s unfortunate how things

played out”, reflected Al Harthy, “We had to avoid the first corner troubles, and then I was behind the Porsche [Christian Ried]. It was always going to be difficult with the high deg on the tyres but things opened up when we were able to regain second position, after the incident between Petrobelli and Fassbender. But that’s when we had real traction issues.

“Our degradation was higher than the rest of our competitors, then we got new tyres at the pit stop and had the pace. Unfortunately, one of our competitors was just too defensive and it resulted in contact. After that and the repairs, the plan was just to finish the race and get some points. These are the highs and lows of racing but hopefully Spa will be better for the Aston.”

Belgium’s Spa-Francorchamps, which this weekend hosted the FIA Formula One World Championship, will be the venue for round five of the European Le Mans Series over the weekend 24th/25th September.

PREMIER LEAGUE



Goals galore in PL as Man City fight back and Liverpool equal their records

LONDON: There were goals galore in the Premier League this weekend as Liverpool thrashed Bournemouth, Manchester City produced an unstoppable fight-back and Harry Kane added to his ever-growing tally.

Erling Haaland scored an 18-minute hat-trick as Manchester City came back from 2-0 down at home to Crystal Palace to win 4-2.

Palace had looked as if they could win at the Etihad Stadium for the second successive year thanks to a John Stones own goal after four minutes and a second from Joachim Andersen after 22 minutes.

Things changed after the break: Bernardo Silva pulled a goal back in the 53rd minute and Haaland leveled the score in the 62nd minute. It was one-way traffic towards the Palace area, and in the 70th minute Haaland’s close range finish from another corner put City ahead and he finished his hat-trick nine minutes from time.

Arsenal fought back to keep their 100 percent record and remain leaders after Aleksandar Mitrovic had put Fulham ahead in the Emirates Stadium.

A deflected shot by Martin Odegaard leveled the scores and

Gabriel Magalhaes, whose error had allowed Mitrovic to score, won the game when he scrambled home from close range four minutes from time. Liverpool equaled the record for the biggest ever win in the Premier League when they thrashed Bournemouth 9-0.

Luis Diaz and Roberto Firmino both scored twice, with Harvey Elliott, Trent Alexander-Arnold, Virgil van Dijk, Fabio Carvalho and an own goal piling on the agony for the visitors.

Harry Kane scored his 200th and 201st career goals as Tottenham ground out a 2-0 win away to Nottingham Forest, whose on-loan keeper Dean Henderson gave an impressive display and also saved a penalty to deny the England international a hat-trick.

Spurs move up to third in the table with 10 points from four games.

Wolves’ run without a Premier League win extended to 11 matches when Allan Saint-Maximin’s spectacular 90th minute volley saved his side a point on their visit to Molineux.

Wolves had taken a 38th minute lead when Ruben Neves collected a pass from Goncalo Guedes and fired home from 25 yards. **Xinhua**

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BOWLING FIGURES

Bhuvneshwar Kumar registers best bowling figures by Indian bowler against Pakistan in T20Is

DUBAI: Veteran Indian pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar on Sunday registered the best bowling figures by an Indian bowler against Pakistan in T20I cricket.

He accomplished this feat during his side's blockbuster Asia Cup 2022 clash against Pakistan in Dubai. Kumar gave India an amazing start during the power-play by taking the wicket of star batter Babar Azam for just 10 off 9 balls with a short ball which hit the top edge of his bat and went into the hands of Arshdeep Singh at short-fine leg.

Later during the innings, Kumar would come back to wreak some more havoc in his second spell, taking wickets of Shadab Khan (10), Asif Ali (9) and debutant Naseem Shah (0).

With this, Bhuvneshwar Kumar ended with figures of 4/26 in four overs with an economy rate of 6.50.

With this, Bhuvneshwar has overtaken the brilliant spell by all-rounder Hardik Pandya during the Asia Cup 2016 against Pakistan, in which he took 3/8 in 3.3 overs at an economy rate of 2.28, which proved to be instrumental in bundling out Pakistan for just 83, which India chased down.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar (3/9 in four overs in December 2012),



Irfan Pathan (3/16 in four overs in September 2007) and Lakshmi-pathi Balaji (3/22 in September 2012) are some other notable spells delivered by Indian bowlers against Pakistan in the shortest format of the game.

Coming to the match, Pakistan were bundled out for 148 in 19.4 overs. Opener Mohammed Rizwan (43) and Iftikhar Ahmed (28) were the only ones who could contribute something decent with the bat. The pace and short-length deliveries of Bhuvneshwar Kumar (4/26), Hardik Pandya (3/25) and Arshdeep Singh (2/33) and Avesh Khan (1/19) blew away Pakistani batters and wickets fell at a regular rate.

Chasing 149, India lost KL Rahul for a duck in the very first over. After this, Virat Kohli (35)

anchored the innings and formed a 49-run stand with skipper Rohit Sharma (12), who largely struggled at the other end. Twin strikes from Mohammed Nawaz, who took Sharma and Kohli's wickets restricted India to 3/53.

Following this, a 36-run stand between Ravindra Jadeja and Suryakumar Yadav helped moving the scoreboard, before Suryakumar fell to debutant Naseem Shah for 18. A 52-run stand between Jadeja (35) and Hardik Pandya (33*) followed, which took India close to a win and in-form Pandya finished the proceedings with a six with two balls to spare, giving India a five-wicket win.

Nawaz (3/33) and Naseem Shah (2/27) bowled really well for Pakistan, though not enough to give them a win. **ANI**

ROBBED AND ASSAULTED

Barcelona striker Aubameyang assaulted

MADRID: Armed thieves robbed and assaulted FC Barcelona striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang at his home in the seaside town of Castelldefels in the early hours of Monday morning.

Spanish newspaper El Pais reports that several masked men entered the player's home at around 1:00 a.m. on Monday morning and threatened him with firearms and iron bars, forcing him to open a safe containing jewelry.

Local radio station RAC 1 gives

more details, informing that Aubameyang and his wife were forced to lie on the floor of their home for at least an hour as the thieves searched for valuables.

At least four people carried out the assault in which the 33-year-old was also physically assaulted, before the robbers escaped in a white Audi A3.

Aubameyang's wife then called the police to inform them of the robbery.

The Gabonese footballer is not

the first Barcelona player to suffer a domestic robbery, with Gerard Pique and Jordi Alba also suffering burglaries -- although these usually happen when the players are out of their homes, either travelling to an away game or playing in the Camp Nou.

This robbery takes place with rumors linking Aubameyang (who only signed for the club in January) with a move away from Barcelona as the club looks to lower its wage bill. **Xinhua**

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by October 2022 reaching \$100.46, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by 94 cents from the price of Friday, which was \$99.52. - **ONA**

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POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY
OF AVIATION IN MIDDLE EAST

Oliver Wyman's recent Airline Economic Analysis 2021-2 found that labour shortages and inflation were the two biggest issues facing the aviation sector as it emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, making it difficult for airlines to satisfy growing demand and pushing up operational expenses.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Saudi Arabia
to host Global
AI summit

RIYADH: Riyadh will host the second edition of the Global Artificial Intelligence Summit from September 13 to 15, the largest international AI event, with the participation of global policymakers and heads of technology, communications, and investment companies.

The summit themed 'Artificial Intelligence for the Good of Humanity', is being organised by the Saudi Authority for Data and Artificial Intelligence (SDAIA), and being held under the patronage of HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince, who is the chairman of SDAIA's board of directors and will be held at King Abdulaziz Conference Centre.

In this report, SPA reviews the importance of this summit, in which lies the importance of data and artificial intelligence and their effective roles in building smart cities, improving the quality of life and serving humanity, and reaching limitless horizons in investing data technology and artificial intelligence to make a difference towards a better future. Hence, SDAIA was established to be the cornerstone in empowering young national potentials by creating digital solutions that contribute to facing obstacles, building a future based on data and AI, and achieving the goals of the Kingdom's Vision 2030.

Mankind has invested AI in various life aspects and expanded investments in making difference towards a better tomorrow, and this can be seen clearly in the efforts of "NEOM", where human genius, the beauty of nature, and the diversity of environments come together. - **SPA**

Value of real estate transactions
in Oman tops OMR213 million

The traded value of mortgage contracts in July reached OMR136 million while the traded value of sales collected touched OMR74 and OMR2.1 million was collected as swap contracts



LANDS REGISTERED: As for plots of lands registered for the first time, the total number amounted to 3,216 plots and the number of applications for proof and registration of ownerships reached 1,483, while 484 applications were awarded ownership and other 385 involved site inspection. - **ONA**

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The value of real estate transactions in Oman reached OMR213.1 million in July, according to a report issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning on Monday.

The traded value of mortgage contracts in July reached OMR136 million while the traded value of sales collected touched OMR74 and OMR2.1 million was collected as swap contracts.

The total fees collected for legal transactions amounted to OMR4.2 million, of which OMR996,400 was collected for mortgages, OMR43,500 for swap contracts and OMR1.6 million for sale contracts.

The statement further indicated that the total legal transactions totalled 8,295, including 4,136 sales contracts, 82 swap contracts, 1,349 mortgage contracts, 1,155 grant contracts, 265 inheritance con-

tracts, 615 mortgage release contracts and 693 dividing contracts.

The number of title deeds issued during July 2022 reached 15,087 titles in all governorates of the Sultanate of Oman distributed as 3,075 titles in Muscat, 944 in Dhofar, 129 in Musandam, 337 in Al Buraimi, 2,061 in Al Dakhiliyah, 2,720 in North Al Batinah, 2,399 in South Al Batinah, 899 in South Al Sharqiyah, 1,090 in North Al Sharqiyah, 1,297 in Al Dhahirah and 136 in Al Wusta.

As many as 39 titles were issued for citizens of GCC countries, of which the highest percentage concentrated in the Governorate of Muscat, followed by North Al Batinah and South Al Batinah.

As for plots of lands registered for the first time, the total number amounted to 3,216 plots and the number of applications for proof and registration of ownerships reached 1,483, while 484 applica-

tions were awarded ownership and other 385 involved site inspection.

On the other hand, the ministry witnessed many initiatives last July, most notably the offering of 22 lands under the usufruct system for electronic bidding on the 'Tatweer' platform in 6 different wilayats with investment value and high population density.

The ministry also signed usufruct contracts for the use of commercial and industrial lands and others in the field of food security with more than OMR36 million, as the ministry continued to hand over lands to eligible applicants for years 2022 and 2023 through the "Choose Your Land" service.

With reference to communication and participation, the ministry participated in the Arab Conference on Sustainable Cities in its third session entitled "Cities and the Green Economy" in the Governorate of Dhofar, which aims to present the directions of the na-

tional strategy for urban development, discuss the green economy and its impact on sustainable cities, and promote integration and partnership around upcoming projects with various sectors and achieving common goals for sustainable urban development.

The ministry also signed a memorandum of cooperation between the Directorate General of Housing and Urban Planning in North Al Sharqiya Governorate and the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in Ibra, intending to exchange scientific experiences, develop the skills of students and employees in various fields, promoting education and learning, and scientific training, and benefiting from the results of joint scientific research. On the other hand, the Ministry offered supervisory jobs to upgrade housing services to advanced stages, as well as involving the public in

MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION

Oman Vision 2040 Follow-up
Unit signs key ICT agreement



MUSCAT: Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit signed a memorandum of cooperation (MoC) with Omani-Qatari Telecommunications Company (Ooredoo) to enhance joint action mechanisms for exchanging expertise in the fields of information and communication technology (ICT), as well as support for

programmes serving society.

The MoC was signed by Dr Khamis Saif Al Jabri, Chairman of Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit, and Noor Al Sulaiti, CEO of Ooredoo.

Through the MoC, the two sides seek to exchange solutions on developing electronic programmes towards successful

digital transformation in their establishments.

The MoC opens vistas for exploring new opportunities in the field of ICT, skills of work in administrative and technical spheres in a manner that supports the goals of Oman Vision 2040 and exchanging field visits locally and regionally. - **ONA**

ARAB ORGANISATION OF SUPREME AUDIT INSTITUTIONS

Oman chairs ARABOSAI Institutional
Capacity Building Committee meeting

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman is chairing the 20th meeting of the Institutional Capacity Building Committee affiliated with the Arab Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (ARABOSAI).

The three-day meeting, held via video-conferencing, discusses a variety of issues, including the outcome of this year's training programmes for the ARABOSAI committees' action plan (2022), an assessment report on the committee's meetings between 2019 and 2021 and a briefing about a consultation meeting held to draft ARABOSAI strategic plan through 2023-2028.

The meeting reviews the ARABOSAI training project for the period 2023-2025 and the organi-



sation's capacity-building project on communicating with stakeholders to establish the concept of institutional independence.

The committee discusses the ARABOSAI e-learning plan, the organisation's Operation Plan 2023 and opportunities for hold-

ing a training meeting on 'compliance control'. It also explores the activities of think tanks tasked with introducing new audit techniques fit for exceptional conditions, as well as the organisation's plan for monitoring extractive industries. - **ONA**



Al Mouj Muscat's marine leisure
tour operators win Tripadvisor
Travellers' Choice Award

MUSCAT: Two of Al Mouj Muscat's sea tour operators have earned Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Award status for the second and third years running, demonstrating their consistently high standards and the leisure destination's ongoing success as a base for international marine tourism.

MolaMola Diving Centre and Daymaniat Shells have each been awarded the accolades which place them in the top 10 per cent of attractions worldwide, MolaMola for the third consecutive year and for Daymaniat Shells it is the second year it has achieved recognition.

They are among 15 sea tour enterprises to be based at Al Mouj Marina, a 400-berth facility surrounded by luxury homes, from which residents, visitors and tourists can enjoy ocean-based adventures.

MolaMola offers daily snorkelling and diving trips to the nature reserves of the Daymaniat and Fahal islands, and this year they also received the PADI 5 Star Dive Centre Award for the courses they run for novice and experienced divers. Daymaniat Shell's experiences include dolphin and whale shark watching, snorkelling trips and sunset cruises as well as overnight camping and

private charters.

The sea of Oman is rich with an abundance of underwater life and all of Al Mouj's marine tour operators (SMEs) provide safe and environmentally responsible trips matched by high standards of customer service. It is an ethos shared by Al Mouj Marina which is one of only four in the Gulf to have earned Five Gold Anchors which is a benchmark for quality of service, and it is the first to earn International Marine Cleanliness status.

Al Mouj Muscat was established in 2006 as Oman's first integrated tourism complex and today it attracts around 4 million people a year, with marine leisure opportunities integral to the appeal and the sea tour SMEs able to capitalise on high daily footfall all year round.

Nasser bin Masoud Al Sheibani, CEO of Al Mouj Muscat, says: "I would like to congratulate both Daymaniyat Shells and MolaMola for once again earning these important accolades, demonstrating the consistency of their service and presenting them and Al Mouj so positively to global audiences."

"Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Awards come from the people who matter most, the customers, so others may book with

confidence, safe in the knowledge that they can expect a high-quality experience all of which helps to grow marine tourism in the Sultanate.

"Creating a place where SMEs can thrive is central to our philosophy that supports the growth and diversification of Oman's economy and where tourism is a key priority.

"Whilst our country has the most incredible natural resources, it is the people with local knowledge and sea-going expertise who make our beautiful environment accessible to others. We are proud to be part of their ongoing success and delighted to have helped establish marine tourism as a new area of growth and employment within the local economy.

"What is also rewarding is that our commitment to sustainable eco-friendly tourism supports wider conservation efforts whilst making it possible for people from all over the world to enjoy our ocean."

Set along 6 kilometre of beautiful coastline, Al Mouj Muscat is the Sultanate's leading leisure and lifestyle destination, a joint venture between Majid Al Futtaim Properties, OMRAN, and Tanmia and home to 8,000 people from 85 nationalities.



MARKET



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Despite challenges, Middle East’s aviation sector trying to revive

Every downturn in the global economy has proven to be the time for new market entrants in the airline industry

Times News Service

DUBAI: Labour shortages and inflation were the two biggest issues facing the aviation sector as it emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, making it difficult for airlines to satisfy growing demand and pushing up operational expenses, according to Oliver Wyman’s recent Airline Economic Analysis 2021-22.

As summer school holidays begin in the Middle East and airlines get busier, we look at what the findings mean from a regional perspective.

According to André Martins, Partner – Head of IMEA Transportation and Services at Oliver



Wyman, “Airlines have been at the receiving end with the fuel price hikes and personnel shortage impacting their bottom-line.”

Key insights for the Middle East include:

Labour shortages are across the board, from pilots to baggage han-

dlers, to ticket agents, to flight attendants, to aircraft mechanics.

The rise in the price of fuel is the main factor in rising costs.

The conflict in Ukraine has exacerbated existing stress on commodity markets and supply chains and meant flight restrictions due to closures of airspace and sanc-

tions. In January 2022, just before the conflict began, Middle East countries represented the second largest destination for air travellers from Russia, at 28 per cent measured by scheduled seats (behind Europe with 42 per cent). In the other direction, the UAE represented 9 per cent of the share of

international seats headed to Russia at the same point in time, second only to Turkey.

Compared to the spike in demand for leisure travel, business travel is recovering slowly.

Sustainable aviation is still a way off, with battery-operated and hydrogen-propelled commercial

airliners facing technological and regulatory hurdles, and sustainable aviation fuel too expensive and too scarce to be a viable option. The aviation sector is likely to see an increase in emissions before they fall. Qatar Airways and Dubai Airports have both signed a pledge to work towards 10 per cent sustainable aviation fuel by 2030, reflecting regional momentum.

Air cargo is a bright spot, driven by growth in e-commerce during the pandemic, and the shortage of truckers.

On a more positive note: “Every downturn in the global economy has proven to be the time for new market entrants in the airline industry. This time around, it has been no different – we have seen multiple airline start-ups just launch or prepare for an upcoming launch such as Akasa Air in India, the proposed new airline in Saudi Arabia, and Avelo in the US, among many others,” according to Martins.

The Airline Economic Analysis is produced by Oliver Wyman on an annual basis and is aimed at providing the aviation industry with data and commentary to help it address evolving industry challenges. It looks at global and regional demand and capacity trends in major world markets.

INDIAN STOCK MARKET

Sensex slumps 861 points; IT stocks crash amid weak global cues

MUMBAI: The Indian stock market’s key indices, Sensex and Nifty, crashed by around 1.5 per cent on Monday dragged by heavy selling in IT stocks after the US Federal Reserve signalled aggressive rate hikes.

The 30 stock S&P BSE Sensex slumped 861.25 points or 1.46 per cent to close at 57,972.62 points against its previous session’s close at 58,833.87 points. In the pre-open session, the Sensex crashed by over 1,400 points. The Sensex started the day sharply down at 57,367.47 points. This is the lowest level for the benchmark Sensex in the intra-day. The Sensex recouped part of the losses later in the day. It touched a high of 58,208.30 points in the intra-day.

The broader Nifty 50 of the National Stock Exchange slumped 246 points or 1.4 per cent to

17,312.90 points. The Nifty started the day at 17,188.65 points and crashed to a low of 17,166.20 points in the intra-day.

IT stocks crashed amid negative cues from the global markets. The Nifty IT sectoral index crashed 3.53 per cent.

Tech Mahindra tumbled 4.57 per cent to Rs 1036.05. Infosys dipped 3.93 per cent to Rs 1462. Wipro slumped 3.06 per cent to 404.45. HCL Technologies crashed 2.98 per cent to Rs 917.65. The country’s largest IT firm Tata Consultancy Services tumbled 2.73 per cent to Rs 3133.70.

Kotak Bank, Tata Steel, State Bank of India, Axis Bank, ICICI Bank and Power Grid Corporation were among the major Sensex losers.

Maruti Suzuki jumped 1.30 per cent to Rs 8832.75. **ANI**

GLOBAL FINSERV

Lulu Financial Holdings opens its 250th branch at Dubai Silicon Oasis

DUBAI: The numbers speak volumes about the ambitious rise of Abu Dhabi-based Lulu Financial Holdings (LFH) – a global leader in the financial services industry, which today opened its 250th global branch in Dubai’s Silicon Central Mall.

The milestone branch, which adds to the company’s growing network across the UAE and nine other nations, was inaugurated by Dr Aman Puri, Consul General of India, in the presence of the holding company’s Managing Director, Adeeb Ahamed, and other senior management.

Trusted brand

Congratulating the team on their achievement, Adeeb Ahamed said, “Today’s opening is a celebration of the amazing journey we have had as a team, and the many opportunities we have converted to emerge as a trusted brand.

“As one of the leading players



in the financial services sector, not just in the UAE but also in our other markets, we have been credited for being attuned to the sector’s needs. Our efforts to bridge the gap between our con-

sumers and our various physical and digital touchpoints are a key part of our growth story, and the 250th branch is a mark of our determination and perseverance to disrupt the global pay-

ments ecosystem.”

The opening of the milestone branch was followed by two more branch openings on the same day, in the Al Majaz and Maaza regions of Sharjah in the UAE.



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OIL PRICES

Oil climbs on prospect of Opec supply cut, demand growth

VIENNA: Oil prices rose 1 per cent on Monday, as expectations that Opec would cut output if needed to support prices, coupled with conflict in Libya and rising demand amid soaring natural gas prices in Europe, helped offset a dire outlook for US growth.

US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures jumped \$1.09, or 1.2 per cent, to \$94.15 a barrel by 05:19 GMT, adding to a gain of 2.5 per cent last week.

Brent crude futures rose 71 cents, or 0.7 per cent, to \$101.70 a barrel, extending last week’s gain of 4.4 per cent.

“Oil prices are inching higher on hopes of a production cut from OPEC and its allies to restore market balance in response to the revival of Iran’s nuclear deal,” said Sugandha Sachdeva, vice president of commodity research at Religare Broking.

Strong oil exports from the US and a bigger-than-expected draw of oil inventory in the last couple of weeks have also eased some demand concerns amid slowdown fears, Sachdeva added, Reuters reported.

Both benchmark contracts had traded lower earlier in the day as the dollar climbed after Friday’s blunt comments from Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell that the United States faced a prolonged period of slow growth



amid further rate hikes.

“While a strong dollar restrains broad commodity prices, the undersupply issue in the oil markets will probably continue to support the upside bias,” said CMC Markets analyst Tina Teng.

Oil prices have been buoyed by hints from Saudi Arabia and other members of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies, together called

Opec+, that they could cut output in order to balance the market.

The United Arab Emirates is aligned with Saudi thinking on output policy; a source told Reuters on Friday, while the Omani oil ministry also said it supported Opec+ efforts to maintain market stability.

Sources said last week Opec would consider cutting output to offset any increase from Iran,

should oil sanctions be lifted if Tehran agrees to revive a nuclear deal.

Heavy clashes in Libya’s capital could slide into a conflict, leading to disruption in the supply of crude from the OPEC nation.

“Besides, soaring gas prices are likely to result in gas-to-oil switching, which remains a positive trigger for prices,” Sachdeva said. **BNA**



LIFESTYLE

STUDY FINDS NEW APPROACH TO PREVENT DEMENTIA

Researchers have discovered a new mechanism that could help prevent dementia



Amyloid beta accumulation in the brain is the first step in the development of Alzheimer's dementia. Scientists have poured countless hours and millions of dollars into finding ways to clear amyloid away before cognitive symptoms arise, with largely disappointing results.

In this study, published Aug. 24 in the journal *Brain*, researchers found a way to increase the clearance of waste products from the brains of mice by ramping up a genetic quirk known as readthrough. This same strategy also may be effective for other neurodegenerative diseases characterised by the buildup of toxic proteins, such as Parkinson's disease, the researchers said.

Every once in a while, the brain protein aquaporin 4 is synthesized with an extra little tail on the end. At first, Darshan Sapkota, PhD — who led this study while a post-doctoral researcher at Washington University but is now an assistant professor of biological sciences at the University of Texas, Dallas

“

The researchers studied mice genetically engineered to have high levels of amyloid in their brains.

— thought this tail represented nothing more than an occasional failure of quality control in the protein-manufacturing process.

“We were studying this very wonky basic science question — ‘How do proteins get made?’ — and we noticed this funny thing,” said senior author Joseph D. Dougherty, PhD, a Washington University professor of genetics and of psychiatry, and Sapkota's former mentor. “Sometimes the protein-synthesizing machinery blew right through the stop sign at the end and made this extra bit on the end of aquaporin 4. At first, we thought it couldn't possibly be relevant. But then we looked at the gene sequence, and it was conserved across species. And it had this really striking pattern in the brain: It was only in structures that are important for waste clearance. So that's when we got excited.”

Scientists already knew that the cell's protein-building machinery occasionally fails to stop where it should. When the machinery doesn't stop — a phenomenon known as readthrough

— it creates extended forms of proteins that sometimes function differently than the regular forms.

Sapkota and Dougherty created tools to see whether the long form of aquaporin 4 behaved differently in the brain than the regular form. They found the long form — but not the short one — in the so-called endfeet of astrocytes. Astrocytes are a kind of support cell that help maintain the barrier between the brain and the rest of the body. Their endfeet wrap around tiny blood vessels in the brain and help regulate blood flow. Astrocytic endfeet are the perfect place to be if your job is to keep the brain free of unwanted proteins by flushing waste out of the brain and into the bloodstream, where it can be carried away and disposed of.

Thinking that increasing the amount of long aquaporin 4 might increase waste clearance, Sapkota screened 2,560 compounds for the ability to increase readthrough of the aquaporin 4 gene. He found two: apigenin, a dietary flavone found in chamomile, parsley, onions

and other edible plants; and sulphaquinoxaline, a veterinary antibiotic used in the meat and poultry industries.

Sapkota and Dougherty teamed up with Alzheimer's researchers and co-authors John Cirrito, PhD, an associate professor of neurology, and Carla Yuede, PhD, an associate professor of psychiatry, of neurology and of neuroscience, to figure out the relationship between long aquaporin 4 and amyloid beta clearance.

The researchers studied mice genetically engineered to have high levels of amyloid in their brains. They treated the mice with apigenin; sulphaquinoxaline; an inert liquid; or a placebo compound that has no effect on readthrough. Mice treated with either apigenin or sulphaquinoxaline cleared amyloid beta significantly faster than those treated with either of the two inactive substances.

“There's a lot of data that says reducing amyloid levels by just 20 percent to 25 percent stops amyloid buildup, at least in mice, and the effects we saw were in that ballpark,” Cirrito

said. “That tells me that this could be a novel approach to treating Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative diseases that involve protein aggregation in the brain. There's nothing that says this process is specific for amyloid beta. It may enhance, say, alpha-synuclein clearance, too, which could benefit people with Parkinson's disease.”

Sulphaquinoxaline is not safe for use in people. Apigenin is available as a dietary supplement, but it's not known how much gets into the brain, and Cirrito cautions against consuming large amounts of apigenin in an attempt to stave off Alzheimer's. The researchers are working on finding better drugs that influence the production of the long form of aquaporin 4, testing several derivatives of sulphaquinoxaline and additional compounds.

“We're looking for something that could be quickly translated into the clinic,” Sapkota said. “Just knowing that it's targetable at all by a drug is a helpful hint that there's going to be something out there we can use.” -ANI



ROUND-UP



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Nissan Sunny: Perfect car for sophisticated driving experience

The fully upgraded model comes with an expressive exterior featuring Nissan’s V-motion grille and combines a spacious interior design with harmonious materials and colours to give a fresh and renewed feel to the car

MUSCAT: Nissan Sunny has been receiving excellent reviews from customers in the Sultanate for its modern, expressive design, fresh interiors and confidence-inspiring performance.

Praising Nissan Sunny for its advanced powertrains, Waleed Sultan from Muscat who is a long-time Nissan Sunny owner says, “Nissan comes with an expressive exterior featuring Nissan’s V-motion grille and combines a spacious interior design with harmonious materials and colours to give a fresh and renewed feel to the car.”

A spokesperson for Suhail Bahwan Automobiles (SBA) said, “Nissan Sunny is the perfect car for customers looking for a sophisticated driving experience. The car continues to be a popular choice amongst customers in the segment because of its outstanding design, intelligent technology and remarkable performance.”

Rashid Mohammed from Ni-zwa likes Nissan Sunny for its great design, smart technological upgrades and best-in-class spacious interiors. He says, “These features make it an ideal car for customers looking for a superior driving experience.”

Younis Al Balushi from Salalah believes Nissan Sunny continues to be a popular choice amongst customers in the segment because of its outstanding features, intelligent technology and remarkable performance.

He says, “The new generation Nissan Sunny builds on this solid foundation and reinforces Nissan’s presence in the increasingly popular B-Sedan segment that



is loaded with technology and safety features not usually found in the segment.”

Amna Khalid from Soharsays, “With its emotional design, large roominess and advanced Nissan Intelligent Mobility technology, Sunny brings a new level of style, excitement and refinement to entry-level buyers at a highly affordable price.”

Nissan Sunny: Advanced powertrains

The latest Sunny is an addition to the growing line-up of Nissan’s renewed sedan models and features a bold new look, advanced powertrains and technology features.

The fully upgraded model comes with an expressive exterior featuring Nissan’s V-motion grille and combines a spacious interior design with harmonious materials and colours to give a fresh and renewed feel to the car.

Practical safety features

Safety and technology remain a top priority at Nissan and the Sunny features Nissan Intelligent

Mobility technology that helps provide front, side and rear safety monitoring and intervention technologies to enhance awareness on the road. This model also makes for an easier and more confident driving experience with seamless smartphone sync options and driver assist technology. This is bolstered by mechanical innovations including an advanced engine design, upgraded Xtronic transmission and an electric power steering system – all of which come at a highly affordable price, making it ideal for entry-level buyers. The all-new model comes in three trim levels, models - S (MT or Xtronic), SV (Xtronic) and the sporty SL (Xtronic).

‘Emotional Geometry’

Under Nissan’s “Emotional Geometry” design language, Sunny adapts key elements – such as the V-motion grille, boomerang-shaped headlamps and tail lamps, kick-up C-pillars and floating roof. The result is an entry-level car that the designers describe as an energetic,

provocative, and engaging modern compact sedan. The wheels are pushed out, there’s an imposing grille presence, everything about it says lower, wider, longer.

The exterior dimensions are 3 mm longer and 45 mm wider (than the previous generation Sunny) – along with a 44 mm lower height. Contributing to the new Sunny’s dramatic stance are reduced gaps between the fenders and tires. The new dimensions also help provide easy ingress and egress through all four doors. In addition, the new body offers a wider, more user-friendly trunk opening and 14.3 cubic feet of cargo space. Halogen headlamps with auto on/off features are standard, with the Sunny SV and SL featuring LED low and high beam headlights, LED signature lamps and fog lights. Other available exterior features include heated side mirrors with integrated turn signals and body-colour exterior door handles and a camera on SL grade.

Colour is another carefully considered element of Sunny’s appeal.

Seven exterior colours help accent the sleek body design: Electric Blue Metallic, Brilliant Silver Metallic, Gun Metallic, Super Black, Scarlet Ember Tintcoat, Aspen White TriCoat and Radiant Red.

Signature elements

Sunny’s interior also represents a reimagining of the previous generation design with signature elements found in Maxima and Altima – including the “Gliding Wing” instrument panel that expands the feel of the space through the use of light and sleek “wingspan.” The effect of the design’s spatial symmetry is an enhanced sense of togetherness. The horizontal architecture, open spaces and use of harmonious materials and colours add a fresh, up-level quality to the entire cabin.

Nissan Sunny features a roomy 5-passenger interior with a comfortable rear seat with ample rear legroom and knee room. Its large interior volume of 88.9 cubic feet is matched with 14.3 cubic feet of trunk volume (split rear seat).

Other equipment, standard on SL grade and optional on SV, include a 7.0-inch colour display with touch screen capability (resistive type), Bluetooth® Hands-free Phone System and Streaming audio via Bluetooth®, a 12-volt power outlet, three USB ports (two charge only), interface for iPod® and other compatible devices, Siri® Eyes Free and AM/FM audio system with 6 speakers.

Nissan Sunny also comes complete with a long list of standard convenience features, including front and rear power windows with driver’s one-touch auto up/down, speed-sensing auto door locks, front map lights, front door map pockets with bottle holder, dual front and rear cupholders, and remote keyless entry with fobs.

The Sunny SL grade adds Nissan’s Intelligent Key System with Push Button Ignition, Around View Monitor and, Cruise Control. Three interior colours are offered: Charcoal (S grade), Graphite Premium Cloth and Grey Premium Cloth (SV & SL grade).

ALIZZ ISLAMIC BANK

Bushra savings account: First choice for returns on savings

MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank continues to enhance the lives of the bank’s customers by providing them with the ability to save their money and receive expected cash profits on their savings with the Sharia-compliant ‘Bushra’ savings account.

Currently, Alizz Islamic Bank offers Bushra Savings Account based on the Sharia principle of unrestricted ‘Mudarabah’, where the customer is the owner of the money, and the bank manages the ‘Mudarabah’ by investing the pool of customer funds in joint ‘Mudarabah’ transactions.

All profits are divided between the customer and the bank, based on a profit-sharing ratio determined by the bank. Profit rates based on each category will be applied to the deposit balances kept in the Bushra Account with profits of up to 3.5% according to the amount deposited in the Bushra savings account.

Based on each customer’s account balance, the bank will deposit their profit shares every month. Customers can get more details on profit rates by visiting the bank’s official website or by walking to their nearest bank branch across Oman.

For 2022, Bushra has been restructured to keep up with the changes in customer lifestyles, making the account bigger to secure the best possible profits for the customer.

Alizz Islamic Bank continues to tailor-make products and services



to suit the expectations and requirements of customers.

Bushra customers, whether Omanis or expats, will enjoy many advantages and benefits including monthly profit payment, same-day debit card issuance and collection, free online and mobile banking, and SMS alerts, to name a few.

Mohammed Al Ghassani, Chief Consumer Banking Officer at Alizz Islamic Bank, said: “We are always keen on paying attention to what customers want in terms of prod-

ucts and services, and at the forefront of our priorities is to provide them with all credibility and transparency. They can be achieved through the deposits they keep in their Bushra account. Bushra has witnessed high demand because it is by the provisions and principles of Islamic Sharia and is a tier-based saving account with the goal of encouraging the habit of saving in a way that achieves the customers’ needs with the maximum amount of satisfaction.”

RECOGNITION

Sohar International awarded Best Wealth Management Bank in Oman

MUSCAT: With a passion to serve customers by bringing the best of the world to Oman and taking the best of Oman to the world, Sohar International has carved a niche for itself by offering unparalleled wealth management advisory services for customers.

In recognition of its ongoing achievements, the World Economic Magazine recently awarded Sohar International the coveted title of ‘Best Wealth Management Bank in Oman 2022’. Following a selection process that is based on core competencies, the World Economic Magazine awards provide a benchmark for excellence across different domains. It recognises organisations that are driven by values of innovation, progression, and dynamism and who also reserve the capacity to effectively drive sustainable impact in society.

Commenting on the award, Khalil Salim Al Hedaifi, Chief Retail Banking Officer at Sohar International said, “This award comes as a testament to Sohar International’s inherent culture to provide clients with a comprehensive suite of financial services that are tailored to suit their dynamic needs and help them navigate their investments in the right direction. Our wealth management advisory services delivered by a highly capable team reflect the same organisational values of excellence, transparency, and efficiency that our clients have grown increasingly familiar with.



At Sohar International, we continue to deliver with the sole purpose of enabling people to win, each in their own respective way.”

Going beyond just offering astute financial advisory services, Sohar International’s Wealth Management offers highly customised financial and related products and services, covering customer saving, borrowing, insurance, investing and day-to-day banking needs with a complete ecosystem of supporting tools and benefits; all delivered with commitment and personalised attention. With a team of certified wealth management advisers who possess the needed industry insights on international market trends, Sohar International also provides its clients with access to investment options in global markets in a risk-controlled environment through strategic long-term tie-ups with well-renowned international entities.

“Despite the global economic

challenges, Sohar International has evolved to provide its customer not only product-based advice but also goal-based advice. We use our in-depth understanding of the market, and our expertise to play an advisory role across multiple assets, liabilities and client experiences that include intangibles such as trust, security and access to exclusive networks for their long-term benefit. Through our network of international partnerships, we bring international markets and opportunities much closer to our clients in Oman and can cater to a wide variety of investor needs,” added Khalil Salim Al Hedaifi.

While such prestigious awards act as a continuous testament to Sohar International’s superior quality services, its persistent stance on providing enhanced levels of customer service has helped it to further cement its position as a preferred financial partner in the country.



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ROUND-UP



Motoring comfort unleashed with new 2022 Chevrolet Traverse RS



Capable of comfortably seating a total of seven passengers, the RS offers an unbeatable combination of roominess and motoring pleasure – an attribute that also makes it the favourite of adventure-minded customers

MUSCAT: Spacious, stylish and feature-rich, the 2022 Chevrolet Traverse RS is rapidly gaining a reputation for itself as the mid-size SUV of choice of a niche segment of customers: predominantly large families for whom every journey is a celebration of togetherness while on the move.

Capable of comfortably seating a total of seven passengers, the RS offers an unbeatable combination of roominess and motoring pleasure – an attribute that also makes it the favourite of adventure-minded customers.

After all, this popular model of the 2022 Chevrolet Traverse range resonates with those who see in the RS an invitation to explore, experience and challenge themselves on or off-road.

With its full-size seats, everyone travels together as a family in utmost comfort and safety, thanks also to the variant's array of segment-leading technology and infotainment features.

This imposing and roomy family SUV is now available in the Sultanate of Oman with an EMI starting at OMR235, which includes VAT, registration for the first year, service for three years / 50,000 kilometres (whichever comes first) and an extended warranty for six years.

The product of a refreshed styling enhanced wireless connectivity and a range of active and passive safety technologies, the 2022 RS radiates robustness, albeit with a sporty edge. This aura is reflected in the model's all-new front fascia and grille design.

As an all-wheel-drive (AWD) model ideally suited for Oman road conditions, the RS is powered by a naturally aspirated 3.6L V6 engine rated at 310 horsepower with 351 NM of torque. It's a considerable amount of power channelled to the front or all four wheels through a nine-speed shiftable automatic transmission. These capabilities enable the RS to perform commendably well even with a full passenger and cargo load.

A standout feature of the 2022 Chevrolet Traverse RS is its cabin capacity.

Stretching 5230mm in length, the RS is technically a full-size SUV although it competes in the mid-size segment. The length attests to the expansiveness of the cabin, laid out in three rows with ample legroom.

A distinctive feature is the slide seat capability of the second row, which allows easy access to the third row.

In keeping with the Traverse's market positioning as a mid-size family SUV, the RS bristles with advanced amenities to ensure a pleasurable ride for the driver and passengers alike. A tri-zone automatic air conditioning system, complete with air filtration and rear air conditioning, is a notable feature of the RS's interior amenities. Infotainment features abound as well, anchored by an 8-inch Driver Infotainment Centre that provides convenience through technology by having control of your vehicle right at your fingertips. In addition to a Bose 10-speaker system, superior connectivity is assured through a plethora of USB ports available in every row.

With Apple CarPlay and Android Auto capability, you can connect with your compatible smartphone to gain access to your favourite apps, music and messages from the comfort of the touchscreen display.

Complementing the stunning exterior is a host of features that embellish the overall persona of the RS. Notable is the Gloss Black Front Grille, Black Roof Rails, LED Intellibeam Auto Hi-beam Control Headlamps, LED Tail-lamps, Rear Power Liftgate, Hitch Guidance with Hitch View, and of course, the striking Dual SkyScape 2-panel power sunroof.

Safety, while an enduring hallmark of the Chevrolet brand, is further enhanced in the RS. This is exemplified in the array of airbags installed all around the cabin – front and seat side impact airbags for driver and front passenger, head curtain airbags and mounted side impact airbags in the driver in-board seat.

Also offered as standard with the RS are Rear Park Assist, Rear Cross Traffic Alert, Rearview Mirror with Camera, HD Surround Vision, Front Collision Alert, Automatic Emergency Braking, Front Pedestrian Braking, Lane Change Alert with Side Blind Zone Alert, Stabilitrak system for Traction Control, Theft Detection System and Tyre Pressure Monitor.

The RS, along with the rest of the Chevrolet Traverse range, is marketed exclusively by OTE Group in the Sultanate of Oman. Check out the RS is a diverse selection of colours at OTE showrooms distributed across the country.

OFFICIAL MEDICAL SPONSOR



Aster Royal Hospital supports Strong Kids

MUSCAT: Aster Royal Hospital is supporting kids from the Oman community to live healthier lives – the official medical sponsor of Strong Kids – a dedicated activity programme for children that took place recently in Al Qurum Park.

This event counted the presence of around 150 children and challenged them through the execution of funny circuits, that support the improvement of their general health, speed, agility, balance and muscle strength.

As a token of gratitude for Aster Hospital's gesture, the organisation gifted the Hospital's CEO an appreciation award. Dr Ashendu Pandey, the Hospital's group CEO stressed: "It is part of Aster Hospi-

tal's mission and vision to keep active participation in social responsibility events. This recognition is dedicated to our Nursing team for their unconditional commitment and enduring dedication towards Strong Kids."

Ibrahim Obidani reinforced the importance of the hospital's presence in such an event: "It was an honour and a privilege for us to count on the support of Aster Royal Hospital in our event, at some days of the opening. This demonstrates the staff dedication and commitment towards social initiatives and we look forward to future collaborations with Aster Group."

Aster Royal Hospital shall go for a soft launch on August 31.

MODERN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND SCIENCE

Extracurricular activities at MCBS encourage creativity, innovation

MUSCAT: Extracurricular activities have always been the haven that students escape away from the challenges of academia. It is through this outlet that students find the means to rejuvenate themselves and refresh their minds to face the challenges and ordeals that come along with their academic journey.

As a critical element in the journey of learning, extracurricular activities don't only function as a source of entertainment, but also serve as a means by which individuals can acquire transferable life skills, many of which would be useful for a lifetime. Important skills such as critical thinking, memory, problem-solving, and creativity can be acquired through such activities that can boost students' academic performance as well as their personal development. Since not everything can be taught through books, these activities are important to further develop the student's interests and talents.

This is a key reason the Modern College of Business and Science is keen on conducting such activities to promote great interest and encourage remarkable talents to surface. In MCBS, students can channel their creativity and find an outlet that would enable them



to stand out as individuals.

MCBS provides an array of extracurricular activities to choose from including entrepreneurship clubs, arts clubs, student body unions and sports. An example of this was the launch of a project called "Future Entrepreneurial Leadership" that was launched.

This initiative took place on the college campus in May and June of 2022, to support MCBS students and alumni business owners by providing a platform to showcase and sell their products on campus.

As we gradually go back to the pre-pandemic life, videotelephony and online chat services such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and Google Meet continue to enable students to have a variety of ways to take part in these activities. In addition, thanks to modern technology, additional alternatives are always a click away and the database team at MCBS dedicates great time and effort to ensure that students have all the technical support they need.

Numerous other activities were conducted through the virtual world such as debate tournaments which allowed students to debate and discuss many of the current issues that are happening

in the world.

One thing the pandemic managed to teach the world is resilience. In the face of all the challenges that the pandemic hurled at us and with the optimism that accompanies the return to normality, MCBS continues to strive to provide the highest quality of education and lifelong skills. Extracurricular activities are a pivotal aspect of learning and with the ever-evolving feature of technology, the possibilities are endless.

The writer Arwa A. Alhinai is the lecturer at the Department of General Education - MCBS



ROUND-UP



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Skechers ‘back to school’ collection offers smart and comfortable shoes

Each pair of Skechers kids’ shoes provide ease and comfort for kids who will be on their toes, enjoying fun-filled activities at school

MUSCAT: With schools re-opening for the new academic year, everyone is slowly gearing up to return to school and while you're stocking up on backpacks and notebooks (amongst other things), finding the right school shoes for your little one is every parent's top most priority. Look to footwear giant Skechers



for an array of smart, and comfortable back to school shoe styles that your child will actually want to wear. Each pair of Skechers kids’ shoes provide ease and comfort for kids who will be on their toes, enjoying fun-filled activities at school. With a huge range of footwear styles to choose from, kids will enjoy stylish and trendy pair of shoes that will surely reflect their own fashion sense.

Skechers gets you back to school fully loaded with its incredible bundle offer: Buy 2 pairs of kids shoes at Skech-

ers for just OMR35. What's more? You could also choose to buy any 2 pairs of Skechers shoes for OMR55 only.

Whether it's walking through the school halls, running on the playground, getting to lunch, or doing activities in the classroom, kids are on their feet a good amount of the day.

They need a shoe that will keep up with both their school day and beyond for after-school activities. Skechers school shoes will make sure that their growing feet are protected while they learn & play in comfort.

Discover our wide selection of machine washable shoes featuring Skechers comfort technologies.

Here are our top picks from the Skechers Back to School collection: Durable for active young feet, these classic black slip-on school shoes take flexibility and comfort to an entirely new level.

The Skechers Elite Flex Shoes. This sporty slip-on features a Stretch Fit knit fabric upper and Air-Cooled Memory Foam cushioned insole.

Let your little girl take on the day in groovy comfort wearing Skechers Jumpsters - Sweet Kickz. This

colourful slip-on features a sweet scented theme, swirl print mesh and synthetic upper with stretch laces, cushioned comfort insole and an instep strap closure.

Step up your pace in easy-wearing comfort with Skechers Nitro Sprint - Karvo. This lightweight slip-on sneaker features an athletic mesh and synthetic upper with a cushioned comfort insole.

With its innovative design, the Boys GOrun 400 V2 Sport Shoes offers active kid's little feet all the versatility and support they need with a slip on stretch laced front and an Air-Cooled Memory Foam

cushioned insole.

Building up fun is awesome in these comfy easy-to-wear Skechers Mega-craft 2.0 sneakers. Plus, every pair has grip for fast action. And with several cool, colourful and collectible styles to choose from, this shoe is the ultimate gamer swag!

Brighten your little girls steps with heart-filled style wearing Skechers Flutter Heart Lights - Simply Love. This lightweight slip-on features an ombre print fabric upper with synthetic glitter heart overlay and a fun 3-D heart-sculpted light-up midsole.

OFFICIAL VISIT



Japanese envoy impressed by facilities at Aster Royal Hospital

MUSCAT: Ambassador Extraordinary and plenipotentiary, Japanese Embassy Jota Yamamoto had an official visit to upcoming quaternary care Aster Royal Hospital at Ghubra, Muscat.

Aster Royal Hospital, the newest super speciality hospital in Al Ghubra, welcomed Jota Yamamoto, the Japanese Ambassador to Oman for an official facility visit as part of its Zuwarat Aster program. During the tour, which was guided by the Hospital's CEO, Dr Ashendu Pandey and COO Dr Shinoop Raj along with the HR Director Nadiya Azghar Al Balushi, Jota Yamamoto acknowledged the information about all the departments, cutting-edge technology and unique services that the Hospital will provide to the Oman community. Jota Yamamoto visited various departments, including the state-of-the-art Intensive Care Unit, radiology and physiotherapy department, Modular Operation Theatres, Cath-Lab and Aster centre of excellence.

Jota Yamamoto said, "I was impressed at a nice package of cutting-edge technologies and human hospitality here, and it will further enhance the sense of safety and secureness both

among resident people and inbound visitors. Indeed, this facility will attract the timely attention of many people in many countries. Your hospital, with this new facility, will strengthen the reputation of Oman in taking care of our health and personal life, and protecting the sound environment for business and social activities."

Aster Royal Hospital will have a centre of excellence for gastroenterology, urology, orthopaedics, obstetrics & gynaecology and interventional radiology & stroke unit in addition to other super specialities equipped with all the advanced equipment and services. The hospital will feature state-of-the-art operation theatres and a cardiac catheterization lab. It is a purpose-built hospital that adheres to global standards of healthcare and has an expert panel led by Omani consultants and aptly supported by an international panel of doctors. Compared to other hospitals, this hospital is a quantum leap forward in healthcare quality. Aster Royal Hospital will be the largest Private Hospital in the Sultanate of Oman with 200 inpatient beds. Aster Royal Hospital will be open to the public from September 1.

NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

BankDhofar celebrates new school year with ‘Back to School’ campaign

MUSCAT: Coinciding with the new academic year, BankDhofar launched its 'Back to School' campaign. The campaign translates BankDhofar's interest and supports to school students who represent one of the important segments in society, as well as the teachers.

Commenting on that, Aziz Sulaiman Al Harrasi, Head of Marketing and Corporate Communications at BankDhofar, noted: "We would like to congratulate all the teachers and students and we wish them all the best. With the new academic year, we opted to engage with the community through the "Back to School" Instagram competition. Additionally, we encourage our customers to make a difference for the students who are in need of support by donating through our mobile banking app."

As part of the campaign, BankDhofar encourages the community to make a difference for the students by donating through BankDhofar's Mobile Banking App. Additionally, the Bank launched a competition through its Instagram page, providing the participants with a chance to win valuable cash prizes. The competition, which was launched on 26 August, runs through 31 August 2022. All the participants need to do is to follow



low BankDhofar's Instagram page, mention 3 accounts on the competition post, and get the chance to win valuable cash prizes. At the end of the competition, 10 winners will be selected randomly to win OMR 50 each.

BankDhofar is one of the best banks in the region, catering to customers' needs and requirements,

and setting the standard for the best customer experience within the banking industry in the Sultanate through innovative products and creative solutions. Following best international banking practices, the provision of outstanding customer experience, in addition to its commitment to community development

and contribution to the growth of the national economy, has placed BankDhofar at the top of the list of best banks in the region.

The bank endeavours to promote positive communication and retain a sustainable relationship with its customers through various channels including its social media accounts.

SPECIAL SPIRITUAL CEREMONY

Exclusive Cacao Manifestation ceremony at Jumeirah Muscat Bay



MUSCAT: Performed for thousands of years by the indigenous tribes of Central America, Jumeirah Muscat Bay will be hosting a special spiritual Cacao Manifestation ceremony in the magnificent surroundings of its Pearl Ballroom on Wednesday, August 31.

A facilitator of self-reflection and spiritual awakening, join renowned philanthropists Juan Pablo Barahona and Regan Hillyer as they gracefully bring this ancient healing practice to life, providing a unique, stimulating way to explore

spirituality and benefit from the opportunity for emotional and energetic healing.

Details: Wednesday 31st August | 7pm - 9pm | Pearl Grand Ballroom, Jumeirah Muscat Bay | Tickets: OMR 15 per person.

Spaces are available on a first-come basis so book early to avoid disappointment.

Please visit <https://www.salaamspace.com/retreat-workshop> to book your spot online. For more information, please contact +968 9421 5946 via phone or WhatsApp.



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JABAL SAMHAN,

is one of the highest mountain ranges in Oman with its peak at 2,100 metres. The deserted plateau at the summit is punctuated by a solitary yucca tree. At this elevation, only plants native to semi-arid climates can be found. It is one of the major mountain ranges of Dhofar, whose highest peak reaches 2,100 metres and has many levels that are traversed by deep and narrow mountain passes, some of which are up to a thousand feet deep. On the plain of Jabal Samhan different plant species such as acacia and frankincense trees grow.

The Jabal Samhan Nature Reserve in the Dhofar region en-

compasses a track of limestone highlands, rising steeply from the coastal plain and sloping more gently towards the north. The Jabal, or mountain, has a 1,500m escarpment which overlooks the Zalawt foothills and the plain of the Mirbat — Sadh peninsula. Jabal Samhan Nature Reserve consists of an array of barren, scalloped peaks separated by deep wadis and canyons,” ESO went on to say. “These deep wadis contain rare and unique plants such as Caralluma and Anogeissus dhofarica. Most of the wadis contain water pools where the rare wild animals like the leopard, ibex, gazelle, striped hyena, foxes and wolves come to drink.





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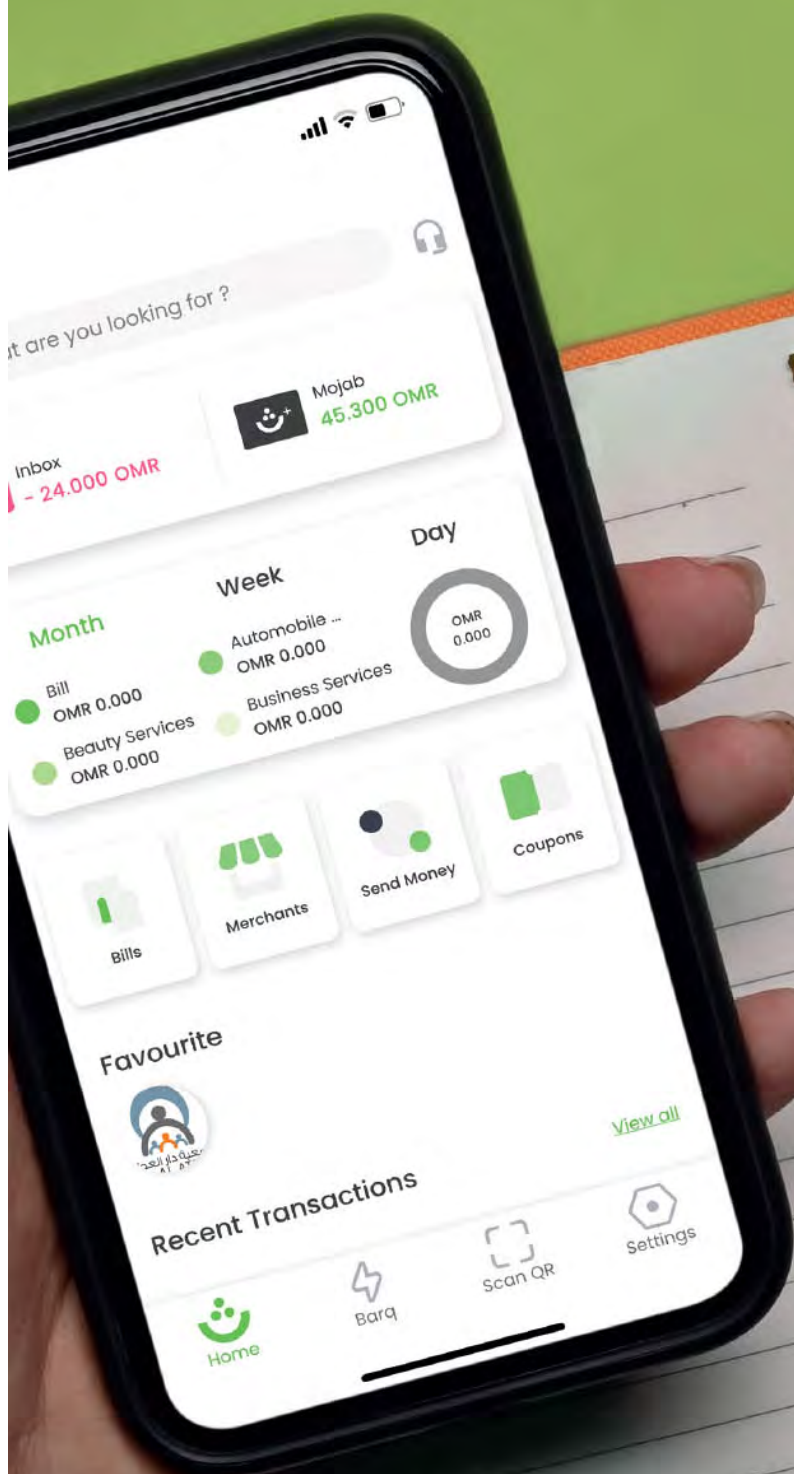


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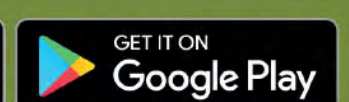
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