

**OVER 1.5M VEHICLES REGISTERED
IN OMAN BY SEPTEMBER 2022**

The total number of vehicles registered in the Sultanate of Oman reached 1,586,947 by the end of September 2022, according to the latest data issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI). **>A5**



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**OMAN ENCOURAGES INNOVATION
BY YOUTH, SAYS SAYYID BADR**

Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, has said that the 31st Annual Arab-US Policymakers Conference promotes collaboration that is enhanced by a global humanitarian vision. Sayyid Badr made the statement at the conference, organised in Washington by the National Council on US-Arab Relations. **>A4**



Founded 1975 · Volume 47 No. 171 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

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UNITED NATIONS, WORLD BANK PRAISE OMAN



From initiatives in support of peace to economic reforms, Oman's approach wins international applause

UN chief commends peace and stability efforts in Middle East

NEW YORK: The UN Secretary General António Guterres has commended the efforts undertaken by the Sultanate of Oman in backing peace and stability in Middle East and the world at large.

Guterres gave the statement when he visited the premises of Oman's Permanent Delegation to the United Nations at New York. He pointed out that the world is well aware of Oman's history and the role of Omanis in propagating peace in the globe through their culture of tolerance and coexistence.

He added that the landmarks left behind by Omanis stand evidence to this approach in different parts of the world, notably in Asia and Africa. "The respect earned by Oman at the interna-



tional level and the culture of tolerance, coexistence among the Omanis mirror its civilised heritage," Guterres said.

Meanwhile, Dr. Mohammed Awadh Al Hassan, Permanent Representative of the Sultanate of Oman at the United Nations Headquarters, expressed his ap-

preciation for the visit of Guterres. He affirmed that Oman, led by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, is pressing ahead with its initiatives to serve security and peace in the world, consolidate international stability and cooperation and elevate the status of the International Law. — **OMA**

World Bank upbeat on Oman's financial recovery measures

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The World Bank has credited the Sultanate of Oman's fiscal consolidation and public finance reform measures for rapidly putting back on rails the domestic economy after the turmoil unleashed by the global downturn and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Washington DC-based international financial institution noted in particular the contribution made by the Medium Term Fiscal Plan (MTFP) – the centrepiece of the government's fiscal reform programme – for strengthening Oman's overall economic position and growth outlook.

"We support the authorities' reform efforts under the MTFP,



with the objective of transitioning the economy towards stronger and more sustainable growth," said Issam Abousleiman, Country Director of the GCC Countries, Middle East and North Africa at The World Bank.

"The MTFP not only aims to

achieve fiscal sustainability and macroeconomic stability but focuses on other key reform areas such as supporting economic growth and building a comprehensive social safety net. These reforms should strengthen the pace of economic growth by improving the business environment, creating a flexible and agile labour market, and attracting domestic and foreign investments."

In an exclusive interview with *Times of Oman*, Abousleiman underlined the continuing role of the hydrocarbon and non-hydrocarbon sectors as the "driving force" of the economy.

The hydrocarbon sector, he said, is projected to grow by over 8 percent in 2022 and remain strong during 2023-24. **>A3**



CIVIC ISSUES

Shun feeding birds in public squares: Muscat Municipality

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Feeding birds in public squares leaves behind grains and food residue which is coming in the way of Muscat Municipality's efforts to improve public and environmental health and the aesthetic appearance of the city.

The municipality says the leftover grains and food residue gets mixed up with birds' waste, rots and then emits a foul and nauseating stench preventing people from spending their time outdoors or engaging in sporting activities in public squares.

Besides, spreading grains and food remains on walkways or sidewalks for the purpose of feeding birds becomes a perfect environment for breeding of insects, worms and parasites which, in turn, causes an additional burden on the waste sector personnel, the municipality says.

Further, birds usually build their nests in the vicinity of areas where they get their food, particularly nearby buildings or balconies and lobbies, air conditioners and com-



munications devices where their droppings destroy anything that they come in contact with, including steel, iron or wood.

Thousands of pigeons can be seen squatting on the roadside along the wadi in Ruwi area with people feeding food grains to them every day.

When asked about his opinion, a person living in the vicinity said that foul smell pervades the air round-the clock and one cannot pass the area without putting a handkerchief on their nose.

The entire area looks dirty with

rotting food grains and pigeon droppings. Another park in Muttrah also looks filthy due to bird droppings and food leftovers.

Rakesh Ranjan, an expatriate, who lives in the nearby apartment, said, "Whenever I go for a morning walk in this park, I have to hold my breath while crossing this stretch. Look, how dirty this location looks with bird droppings spread around. This feeding of birds in open space is unhygienic and should be stopped immediately. This has become a menace in the city."

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Energy Minister takes part in COP27 Summit

1 Delegated by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Eng. Salim Nassir Al Auli, Minister of Energy and Minerals, took part in the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) 2022. The session is being held in the Egyptian city of Sharm El Sheikh from 6-18 November 2022. **>A4**

WORLD US flies bomber in show of force

2 As part of a combined joint air exercise with South Korea, the United States flew a supersonic bomber in a show of force against North Korea which launched ballistic missiles of continental range in East Sea this week. At least one B-1B aircraft participated from the US side during the joint drills which culminated on Saturday, Al Jazeera reported. **>A6**

MARKET GCC to see more IPOs in coming months



3 The initial public offering (IPO) market has been booming in the region compared to other parts of the world where a significant slowdown took place, according to an industry expert. "The trend in the GCC and Oman was fuelled by the introduction of big state-owned companies in a bid to draw private companies to the stock market and to create a surge in liquidity and interest among investors," Abdelhadi Laabi Chief Marketing Officer, Emporium Capital, said. **>B1**



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PRAYER TIMINGS



Dhuhr.....	11:56pm
Asr.....	3:07pm
Maghrib.....	5:30pm
Isha.....	6:42pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:59am

SAYYID KHALID MEETS QATARI AMBASSADOR

Sayyid Khalid Hilal Al Busaidi, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court received in his office yesterday Sheikh Jassim Abdulrahman Al Thani, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Sultanate of Oman. The two sides reviewed the advance bilateral relations between Oman and Qatar and ways of enhancing them in various fields. — ONA



Somi-Wildan bag grand double in badminton tournament



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Indonesian pair of Somi and Wildan claimed a grand double, sweeping the men's doubles titles in Elite and Open categories at the inaugural Oman Grand Prix Badminton Tournament 2022, which concluded on Saturday.

The two-day tournament turned out to be a grand success with the participation of 155 shuttlers from Oman and neighbouring countries.

Organised by AMM Sports, in association with the Oman Badminton Committee, and held at the newly built indoor courts of the Muscat Badminton Club in Ghala, the prize-money tournament featured six categories.

Besides the Elite and Open in the men's doubles, the other categories included men's singles (Open), men's doubles (Omani nationals), women's doubles (Open) and kids' team event.

It was a dominating display by the Abu Dhabi-based Indonesian duo and the "double doubles" meant that they returned home richer by OMR700 with OMR400 for the Elite doubles crown and OMR300 for the Open title.



In the Elite final, Somi and Wildan defeated Achyut and Asif while in the Open final, the pair beat Roshan and Shijas.

Akash won the men's singles title denying Somi a chance for a hat-trick of titles. The pair of Salim Al Maqbali and Yahya Al Shibli won the doubles crown in the Omani nationals' category with a victory over Thahir and Ahmed Al Barwani.

Elahe and Huda took the top honours in the women's doubles, getting past the duo of Nimita and Christine while Team Fearless Fighters won the kids team event. Team Indian School Muscat finished runners-up.

The Muscat Badminton Club began its operations on 18 November 2021.

The club chairman Mohamamed Jawad said: "In less than a year's time we have attracted badminton lovers as the club provides good facilities for all types of shuttlers, young, aspiring and serious."

Later, Khalifa Al Majrafi, general secretary of Oman Badminton Committee, and Ahmed Essa Al Zedjali, Chief Executive Officer of Muscat Media Group, were the guests of honour and gave away the prizes.



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MONDAY COLUMN

What to do when your back is pinned against the wall



Saleh Al-Shaibany

Have you lost your job or are you running out of money, maybe even going through a divorce? It does not come easy to express yourself when your back is pinned on the wall. Words do not flow out easily. Anger dominates your thoughts and somewhere in the back of your mind, you desperately look for a scapegoat to put the blame on. That is the mental part of it while the physical aspect of the predicament has pushed your blood pressure up and races your heart. It is not an ideal situation to be in but then it is not easy to just shrug it off just because someone said you needed a distraction. Like a boat in rough waters, you feel nothing but the whipping wind and see only dark clouds over the horizons. The worse thing that can happen is that when people interpret the creases on your forehead as a hostile frown. Or for that matter, the difficulty in finding words to describe the turmoil as arrogance. They don't know that you are fighting a battle with undefined enemies in unknown

If the dark clouds start to gather overhead, then build your own shelter before the downpour comes heavily down on you. Instead of staring into space and cover yourself with the blanket of self-pity, find your way out. This is the clue.

war zones. Different people face their problems in different ways. Some people throw tantrums and some just completely break down. These are the two extremes that we normally accustomed to. You get the support when one swings on either side because it attracts more attention. Why, I don't know. Perhaps you need to humiliate yourself first and pass through both thresholds to win attention. It does not have to be that way. **Left alone** It means that people who try to internally rationalise by finding answers in a muted manner to get out of the problem, are left alone to deal with their troubles. They eventually do but it takes them quite a long time

because they are later blamed for "bottling up" what they feel. Loss of jobs, illnesses, deaths and a number of things trigger off fear. They bring up a lot of uncertainties. In the end, one cannot even deal with the simple task of brushing their teeth when the panic strikes. What you usually took for granted in the past now becomes a major issue of a gigantic proportion. When the symptoms are finally detected by people around you, they simply ask you to fight it without telling you how. It is like asking a two year old toddler to climb a hundred step stairs. I am not exaggerating but for those who have been going through that then they know what I am talking about. For those who have not, then perhaps they can pick up clues. Well, as they say, life stops for no one. In the end, one needs to rely on their own resources if other people fail to respond. If the dark clouds start to gather overhead, then build your own shelter before the downpour comes heavily down on you. Instead of staring into space and cover yourself with the blanket of self-pity, find your way out. This is the clue. When the mind is blocked, just use the pen to empty your thoughts in a piece of paper. This will work well when everybody around you is busy to listen. It also works equally well when you record your voice in a tape recorder. You can listen to your own problems after you have poured it out. It is amazing how therapeutic it can be with these two methods. It is also amazing how you find answers when you either read or listen to your own confessions.

WORLD BANK OFFICIAL

Rating upgrades reflect significant improvements in Oman's fiscal metrics

The non-oil economy is anticipated to continue its recovery trajectory and grow by 3 percent annually during the period 2022-24, supported by stronger exports and logistics sectors, increased industrial capacity from renewable energy and resurgence in tourism. "High oil prices forecast, accompanied with steadfast implementation of the MTFP would materially improve the outlook and support advancing climate change agenda, digitalisation and spur a strong, inclusive and green recovery," he noted. Importantly, the windfall from higher hydrocarbon prices, supported by fiscal adjustment measures, has significantly improved fiscal and external balances, the World Bank official said. Both balances turned into surplus in 2022 (5.7 and 6.4 percent of GDP, respectively) and are expected to continue in surplus in the medium term leading to a sharp fall in the debt-to-GDP ratio, he further pointed out. Commenting on the slew of upgrades announced recently by various international rating agencies, Abouleiman said they reflect significant improvements in Oman's fiscal metrics, a lessening of external financing pressures and ongoing efforts to reform public finances, and a sharp

fall in government debt-to-GDP ratio. "This bodes well for the Sultanate's borrowing capacity, and the government indeed raised US \$4 billion in debt from regional and international lenders last April to be used for general sovereign financing and refinancing, according to data compiled by Bloomberg," he said. As mentioned earlier, the economy is projected to continue its recovery and strengthen over the medium-term driven by robust energy prices, expansion of oil and gas production, and wide-ranging structural reforms. **Growth drivers** Accordingly, growth will be driven by both hydrocarbon and non-hydrocarbon sectors, which are expected to grow by over 5 percent and 3 percent over 2022-24, respectively. Expanding non-oil revenue have bolstered economic growth supported by the government's structural reforms, new taxes, and diversification initiatives as per the new five-year plan (2021-25), under the Vision 2040 strategy. In addition, the reforms aimed at increasing the share of the private sector in the economy will have another positive spillover for the non-oil economy.



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GROUND SELF-DEFENCE FORCES

More cultural exchanges in the offing: Japan’s envoy

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The maiden visit of Japan’s Ground Self-Defence Forces (JGSDF) Western Army Band to the Sultanate of Oman is only the start of many more cultural exchanges between the two countries, according to Jota Yamamoto, Ambassador of Japan to Oman.

Around 50 military personnel of the Japan Ground Self-Defence Force’s Western Army Band attended the military tattoo ‘Military Music: Oman and The World’ hosted by the Royal Opera House Muscat over the past three days.

Their performances included drills, singing and Japanese drums that left the audience enthralled over the three days from November 3-5.

Ahead of their performances at the ROHM, a six-member team performed at a concert, organised by the Embassy of Japan, at the



Crowne Plaza Hotel.

Speaking to *Times of Oman*, Yamamoto said: “This year 2022 marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Sultanate of Oman.

“As part of our celebrations we plan to mark this landmark year with a series of cultural exchanges that would spill to next year. These

exchanges will further strengthen the strong ties between the two countries.”

Dr Khalid bin Said Al Jarady, Chief of Protocol Department at the Foreign Ministry was the chief guest.

Yamamoto said: “Japan’s Self-Defence Forces have never attended any tattoos in the Middle East region. We are delighted to



have Lt Col Shiga [Commander of the Western Army Band] and his Western Army Band of the Ground Self-Defence Force perform at the prestigious military tattoo with the Omani and French military bands.

“Oman has long been a precious partner for Japan’s Maritime Self-Defence Force. Our ships make frequent visits to Port Sultan Qa-

boos and Duqm ports. It is a timely visit as this year marks the 50th anniversary of Japan-Oman diplomatic relations. It is personally pleasing too, as the Western Army Band is coming from Camp Ken-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture, which is my birth place and homeland.”

Six members of the 50-member band performed and began the concert with “Hana wa Saku”, a

Requiem for victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011.

The song is a message of sincere thanks from all Japanese people to many people and countries in the world who extended enormous support in the aftermath of earthquake. Yamamoto expressed deep gratitude from Japan to people in Oman, and people in all the countries of today’s guests.

Japan Self-defence Force (JSDF) bands have a variety of missions to include raising the morale of JSDF personnel, providing music for official military functions and ceremonies, and serving public relations. Their activities now have expanded to the international arena, and frequently joined the military tattoo festivals in the world. With their high professionalism, they also provide capacity building assistance of music education to a military band in the Pacific.

Sayyid Badr: Oman backs innovation by youth

Sayyid Badr made the statement at the conference, organised in Washington by the National Council on US-Arab Relations



MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, has said that the 31st Annual Arab-US Policymakers Conference promotes collaboration that is enhanced by a global humanitarian vision.

Sayyid Badr made the statement at the conference, organised in Washington by the National Council on US-Arab Relations.

“The conference contributes extensively to understanding the challenges, opportunities, and uncertainties in the Arab-US relations that we face together today,”

Sayyid Badr explained.

He added that the Council’s contribution comes as a measure to foster elaborate and enlightened cooperation that stems from a global humanitarian vision.

The conference offers serious and objective dialogue aimed to handle issues that emerge within the context of the future of Arab-US relations.

The dialogue envisages the role that the United States wishes to assume in the modern Arab world, bearing in mind the nature of US

commitment towards the security of the region, said Sayyid Badr, noting that GCC states may combine, in a better way, their relations with the United States alongside their ties with other powers.

In his statement, Sayyid Badr laid emphasis on broadlines of the process of reorganisation. He pointed out that transmission requires large investments in renewable energy and that Oman has some of the world’s top potentials to produce solar power and wind power. In this context, he referred to a study

that asserts that green hydrogen resources equate ten multiples of its current oil and gas production.

Sayyid Badr explained that economic diversification and technological development will play a vital role in other areas for the sake of economic diversification and the establishment of partnerships with technology innovators in the future.

Sayyid Badr affirmed that Oman works hard towards encouraging innovation by supporting Omani youth and developing products, services and SMEs. He added that Oman Vision 2040 made this approach a priority which promotes renewable energy, emerging tech startups with government support and reflects a desire to ensure that the new economy is an economy that provides opportunities and prosperity for all,” he said.

Winding up his statement, Sayyid Badr said, “The American participation in the region will support security, stability and prosperity more effectively than it was before through the development and implementation of policies that promote decarbonization, achieve economic diversification and enhance social integration.” -ONA

DELEGATED BY HIS MAJESTY



Oman outlines major steps being taken to cut carbon emissions at Cairo COP27 summit

CAIRO: Delegated by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, Eng. Salim Nassir Al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, took part in the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) 2022.

The session is being held in the Egyptian city of Sharm El Sheikh from 6-18 November 2022.

Al Aufi said that the Sultanate of Oman’s participation in this important event stems from its conviction in the significance of endorsing coordinated measures in partnership with the world to reduce global warming to levels below 2 degrees Celsius, namely the endorsement of the Paris Agreement by 196 countries, which became effective 4 November 2016 at a time the world is set to reach the peak of global greenhouse gas emissions.

He added that the pact also aims to achieve a climate-emission-neutral world by mid-century, as various countries have pledged to provide nationally-determined contributions in order to ensure energy transition and mitigated emissions.

Oman took major steps forward in cutting down carbon emissions by declaring commitment to meet carbon neutrality in 2050 and establishing the Oman Sustainability Centre—based on the outputs of the Carbon Management Laboratory—and announcing the launch of the national strategy for an orderly transition to the carbon neutrality plan, besides launching the National Environmental Policy for Energy, Al Aufi said.

Al Aufi announced the start of the pre-qualification phase for investors wishing to participate in the first round of investment opportunities in green hydrogen production projects through the

Oman took major steps forward in cutting down carbon emissions by declaring commitment to meet carbon neutrality in 2050

platform of Hydrogen Oman (Hydrom) company.

Oman’s pavilion at this conference discussed climate change, carbon neutrality, investment in the green energy sector, and other related topics.

The summit is part of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, an international treaty signed by most countries of the world with the aim of reducing human activity’s impact on the climate. The participating countries pledged to return to the meeting this year, to agree on further reduction of rates of greenhouse gases and carbon dioxide emissions in a manner that keeps the rise in global heat within less than 2°C.

The conference envisages four main goals: mitigation, adaptation, financing and cooperation of countries concerned to help limit global warming within less than 2°C and to keep the 1.5°C target alive.

Oman accords attention to energy transformation in line with the world to reduce carbon emissions.

It is also working to promote local value-added policies, localise industries related to the renewable energy and hydrogen sector, enable strategic studies, research and development and to enhance community awareness of clean energy. -ONA

SESSION

State Council approves study on mental health

MUSCAT: The State Council opened yesterday its fourth convening of the seventh term (2019-2023).

During the session, the State Council approved a study on the system for approval and equation of certificates of students studying abroad and another one on mental health.

Sheikh Abdulmalik bin Abdullah Al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council pointed to the efforts extended during the discussions of the two studies. He also pointed to the roles of the members of the State Council and their proposals supportive to the work of the State Council.

The State Council discussed the agenda of the session, wherein it



approved the study on the system for approval and equation of certificates of students studying abroad.

Dr. Said bin Sultan Al Busaidi, member of the State Council stressed the significance of the study as it discussed the legisla-

tions regulating approval of certificates and identified the challenges and difficulties facing approval of certificates.

He also pointed out that the committee agreed to several recommendations that serve approv-

al and equation of certificates in the Sultanate of Oman.

The State Council also approved the study of the Social Committee on “mental health”. Dr. Ahmed bin Ali Al Ameri, Chairman of the Social Committee said that the committee is in the opinion of acceleration of issuance of a law on mental health in consistent with implementation of the pillars of Oman Vision 2040.

The State Council also acquainted with the reports submitted by the members, the report of the Secretariat General on the activities of the State Council during the past period and approval of the minutes of the last session of the third convening of the seventh term. -ONA

REVIEW MEETING

Majlis Al Shura discusses several key issues

MUSCAT: Majlis Al Shura held its first session of the fourth annual convening of the ninth term on Sunday.

Majlis Al Shura discussed a number of issues including the draft cooperation agreement in sea shipment and ports between the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in light of the draft agreement on air transport between the government of Oman and the government and the draft agreement on avoidance of double taxation of income tax and tax evasion between the Sultanate of Oman and the Arab Republic of Egypt.

Khalid bin Hilal Al Maawali, Chairman of the Shura Council, said that the opening of the fourth regular convening of the ninth term of Majlis Al Shura was based on the Royal Directives of



His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, the provisions of the Basic Law of the State and the Law of the Council of Oman.

Draft law

Majlis Al Shura discussed a proposal on the draft law on amendment of Article (1) of the Law on

Anti-money laundering and financing terrorism.

Majlis Al Shura reviewed the report of the Economic and Financial Committee on the actual condition of mining sector, a draft law on the Law of SMEs and the Draft law on income tax on personnel drawing high incomes, a draft law

of planning, the draft law of public debt, the draft law of school education and the law of higher education among other issues.

The session also acquainted with the draft general budget of the state 2023 and the draft law regulating water and wastewater sector. -ONA



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NCSI SEPT 2022 DATA

Over 1.5mn vehicles registered in Oman

MUSCAT: The total number of vehicles registered in the Sultanate of Oman reached 1.58 million at the end of September 2022, according to the latest data issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

Vehicles with private registration constituted 79.5 percent of the total vehicles registered in Oman, to stand at 1.26 million, while the number of vehicles with commercial registration reached 236,867, constituting 14.9 percent of the total number of vehicles, the data released on Sunday said.

Taxi vehicles

Meanwhile, taxi vehicles reached 28,186, comprising 1.8 percent and the number of rental vehicles stood at 26,932, comprising 1.7 percent. The number of government vehicles stood at 12,158 and motorbikes stood at 6,623.

The number of tutoring vehicles stood at 5,806 and the number of vehicles with temporary registration (temporary inspection, export and import) stood at 7,438.

Moreover, the number of farming tractors stood at 1,284 and vehicles with diplomatic entity registrations stood at 820.

— ONA



British military official received

MUSCAT: Air Vice Marshal Saleh Yahya Al Maskari, Head of the Academy for Strategic and Defence Studies received on Sunday at Bait Al Falaj Garrison Air Marshal Martin Sampson, UK Chief of Defence Staff's Senior Advisor to the Middle East and North Africa.

The two sides discussed several academic topics and exchanged views on various matters of mutual interest.

The event was attended by Brigadier Abdullah Hamad Al Harthy, Director General of Studies and Academic Affairs at the Academy for Strategic and Defence Studies. — ONA

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	Tilte of the Tender
DISC/W/TENDER/MAN/2022/014	OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSMISSION PIPELINES, WELLS, TANKER FILLING STATIONS AND BOOSTER PUMP STATIONS AND TANKS OF TAQA, MIRBAT AND SADAH REGIONS (ZONE - 2)
DISC/W/TENDER/MAN/2022/015	OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSMISSION PIPELINES, WELLS, TANKER FILLING STATIONS AND BOOSTER PUMP STATIONS AND TANKS OF THAMRAIT, MUQSHIN AND SHALEEM (ZONE - 3)
DISC/W/TENDER/MAN/2022/016	OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSMISSION PIPELINES, WELLS, TANKER FILLING STATIONS AND BOOSTER PUMP STATIONS AND TANKS OF RAKHYUT, DHAKUT AND AL MAZYOONA (ZONE - 4)
Tender Fee	RO. 1,575.000 Inclusive VAT (5%) Each Tender Note: Tenderer who wish to participate in the above tender should collect the tender document from DISC's office or send an e-mail to below mentioned mail id's for tender document.
Experience	Proven track record of minimum eight (8) years of experience as an operation and maintenance service provider for a water utility. Turnover higher than Omani Rials Eight Hundred Thousand (800,000) R.O. for each of the last five (5) years. Quality and HSE requirements: The Tenderer may have the following certified systems or equivalent: a) Quality Management System : ISO 9001 series b) Health and Safety Management System : ISO 45001 c) Environmental Management System : ISO 14001
Pre-qualification	The Tenderer should be a registered business owner with proper commercial registration certificate and Oman chamber of commerce and industry certificate in Sultanate of Oman.
Last date for issue of tender documents	03:00 PM on 21 st November 2022
Site Visit	09:00 AM on 22 nd November 2022 (ZONE 2) 09:00 AM on 23 rd November 2022 (ZONE 3) 09:00 AM on 24 th November 2022 (ZONE 4)
Last date for seeking pre-bid clarifications	03:00 PM on 1 st December 2022
Last date for providing pre-bid clarifications	03:00 PM on 8 th December 2022
Last date for submission of bids	03:00 PM on 15 th December 2022
Any Queries Please	Phone 23232554, pruchase@disc.nama.om
Contact	

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.



شركة ظفار للخدمات المدمجة

Dhofar Integrated Services Company

شركة ظفار للخدمات المدمجة
مركز صلالة الغربية الصحي | صلالة - محافظة ظفار | الرقم المكياني: 80077700
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Salalah, Sultanate of Oman - Toll Free: 80077700
info@disc.nama.om | www.disc.nama.om



إعلان مناقصة

Tender Notice

The Internal Tenders Committee at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology In Al Khuwair invites for the following projects:

TENDER NO.	TENDER NAME	DATE OF PUBLISHING	LAST DATE TO PURCHASE TENDER DOCUMENT	SUBMISSION DATE	COMPANIES WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THIS TENDER	DOCUMENT PRICE
MTCIT/HQ 154/2022	CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO STUDY OMAN GOVERNMENT ORACLE LICENSES	06-11-2022	20-11-2022	18-12-2022	EXPERIENCED COMPANIES AND REGISTERED WITH THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF TENDER BOARD (FIRST GRADE)	(57/500) FIFTY SEVEN AND FIVE HUNDRED BAISA OMANI RIAL NON-REFUNDABLE
MTCIT/HQ 155/2022	Consultancy Services for Supervision of Execution of Design and Construction of the Remaining Sections of Al Batina Coastal Road Phase One	06-11-2022	20-11-2022	18-12-2022	EXPERIENCED COMPANIES AND REGISTERED WITH THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF TENDER BOARD (FIRST GRADE)	(150/-) ONE HUNDRED FIFTY OMANI RIAL NON-REFUNDABLE
MTCIT/HQ 156/2022	CONSULTANCY SERVICES OF DESIGN OF DUALIZATION EXISTING ROAD FROM AL KAMIL WA AL WAFI - JALAN BANI BU HASAN - JALAN BANI BU ALI (SOUTH AL SHARQIYYA GOVERNORATE)	06-11-2022	20-11-2022	18-12-2022	EXPERIENCED COMPANIES AND REGISTERED WITH THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF TENDER BOARD (FIRST GRADE)	(62/500) SIXTY-TWO OMANI RIAL AND FIVE HUNDRED BAISA NON-REFUNDABLE

Interested Companies registered with the Secretariat General of Tender Board may obtain Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document. Tenders should be submitted online on given website. The Tenderer should enclose Bank Guarantee issued by local bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of (1%) of the Tender value validity for (90) days, and addressed to (Chairman of the Internal Tender Committee).

CORRESPONDANCE:

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

INTERNAL TENDER COMMITTEE

www.mtcit.gov.om



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JOINT AIR EXERCISE

US flies bomber in show of force against North Korea

SEOUL: As part of a combined joint air exercise with South Korea, the United States flew a supersonic bomber in a show of force against North Korea which launched ballistic missiles of continental range in East Sea this week.

At least one B-1B aircraft participated from the US side during the joint drills which culminated on Saturday, Al Jazeera reported

citing South Korea's defence ministry. North Korea fired four short-range ballistic missiles into the sea, the ministry added.

The Vigilant Storm exercise involved about 240 warplanes, including advanced F-35 fighter jets from both countries.

Earlier on Thursday, it was reported that Pyongyang had fired an unknown ballistic missile on the Sea of Japan. Media reports had

said that the missile is believed to be an intermediate- or long-range missile, reported Al Jazeera.

During large-scale joint air drills between the US and South Korea, Seoul scrambled approximately 80 fighter jets after detecting North Korean warplanes on Friday.

Notably, the region's situation has been tense since the joint drills began on Monday, triggering an angry response from Pyongyang.

South Korea's military earlier said that an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) was launched from the Sunan area in Pyongyang at around 7:40 am on Thursday. This latest launch marked the country's seventh firing of an ICBM in 2022.

However, South Korea's defence source told Yonhap that Thursday's missile seems to have failed in a routine flight. **ANI**



Printed and published by:
Muscat Media Group
Post Box 770,
Postal Code: 112



Founder: Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali
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PLANE CRASH

Tanzanian passenger plane crashes into Lake Victoria

DODOMA: A Precision Air plane crashed into Lake Victoria killing at least three people on Sunday before landing in the northwestern Tanzanian city of Bukoba, police said.

According to the police, "bad weather" caused the crash as the plane was flying at about 100 metres (328 feet).

"It was raining and the plane plunged into the water. Everything is under control," regional police commander William Mwampaghale told reporters.

Several people rescued
Mwampaghale said rescuers "managed to save quite a number of people."

The AFP news agency reported, citing a regional official, that 39 passengers, two pilots and two cabin crew were aboard the flight.

"As we speak, we have managed to rescue 26 people who were taken to our referral hospital," regional commissioner Albert Chalamila was quoted as saying. "The rescue operation is still ongoing and we are communicating with the pilots." The domestic passenger plane had departed from the financial capital Dar es Salaam. **AW**

NEW FEATURE

Twitter to soon launch long-form text sharing feature

WASHINGTON: Elon Musk's newly acquired micro-blogging platform Twitter has announced that the application will soon allow users to add long-form text to their tweets.

Taking to Twitter, Musk said, "Twitter will soon add ability to attach long-form text to tweets, ending absurdity of notepad screenshots." He further added that this will be followed by creator monetisation for all forms of content.

In another cryptic tweet, Elon Musk took a dig at the search feature of Twitter and said that it will get better in future.

"Search within Twitter reminds me of Infoseek in '98! The will also get a lot better pronto," Musk added.

Earlier, Twitter updated its iOS app for Apple iPhone users, including the new \$7.99 per month Blue subscription.

In the Apple App store, Twitter writes, "Get Twitter Blue for \$7.99/month if you sign up now Blue checkmark: Power to the people: Your account will get a blue checkmark, just like the celebrities, companies, and politicians you already follow."

Soon after the news went viral, Esther Crawford, a product manager at a micro-blogging site said



that the new blue "isn't live yet".

"The new Blue isn't live yet -- the sprint to our launch continues but some folks may see us making updates because we are testing and pushing changes in real-time. The Twitter team is legendary. New Blue... coming soon!" she tweeted.

Twitter also said that some of the features are still not available in the app but will soon be added.

"Coming soon... Half the ads & much better ones: Since you're supporting Twitter in the battle against the bots, we're going to reward you with half the ads and make them twice as relevant."

"Post longer videos: You'll finally be able to post longer videos to Twitter. "Priority ranking for quality content: Your content will get priority ranking in replies, mentions and searches. This helps lower the visibility of scams, spam, and bots." Twitter writes in the Apple app store. **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 Number	Title of the Tender
DISC/Tender/2022/181	Construction of 11kV Outgoing Feeders from Al Saadah-II PSS (Tx-3)

Tender Fee	RO. 525.000 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 in the last three (3) years in Sultanate of Oman.
Pre-qualification	Contractors participating in the tendering process shall be at least Grade-C registered electrical contractor with Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP), Sultanate of Oman. 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 21 st November 2022
Tender document published date	03:00 PM on 22 nd November 2022
Site Visit	N/A
Last date for seeking pre bid clarification	N/A
Last date for response pre bid clarification	N/A
Last date for submission of bids	03:00 PM on 29 th November 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.

شركة ظفار للخدمات المدمجة
Dhofar Integrated Services Company
شركة ظفار للخدمات المدمجة، أ.م.ش. ٢٦٩، الدور الرابع، شارع ٢٣، بونو خلف مركز صلاة العروبة، المبنى ١، ص.ب. ٢١١، ٢٣، شارع ٢٣، خلف مستشفى صلاح، سلطنة عمان - ت.ف. ٨٠٠٧٧٧٠٠
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POPE FRANCIS HOLDS PRAYER MEETING AT SACRED HEART CHURCH, THANKS KING OF BAHRAIN FOR EXQUISITE HOSPITALITY



“With a heart full of gratitude I bless all of you, especially those who worked to prepare for this journey. Since these are my last public words, I thank His Majesty the King and the authorities for their hospitality”

MANAMA: His Holiness Pope Francis has expressed gratitude for the days spent in Bahrain and thanked His Majesty the King and the government for the hospitality. “I would now like to say ‘thank you’ for these days together,” Pope Francis said in his prayer meeting and Angelus with bishops, priests, consecrated persons, seminarians and pastoral workers at the Sacred Heart Church in the capital Manama. “With a heart full of gratitude I bless all of you, especially those who worked to prepare for this journey. Since these are my last public words, I thank His Majesty the King and the authorities of this country for their exquisite hospitality.” The Pope also hailed the variety he encountered during his

four-day historic visit to Bahrain on November 3-6 at the invitation of HM the King, coinciding with the Bahrain Dialogue Forum: East and West for Human Co-existence. “The variety – as I have seen in these days – is a mirror of this country, of the people who dwell here in it, but also of its landscape that, though mostly desert, boasts a rich variety of plants and living creatures,” he said in his final public appearance of his visit to Bahrain, his 39th Apostolic Journey. In his meeting, Pope Francis stressed the importance of credibility and respect while dialoguing with the others in multi-religious and multi-cultural societies. “In order to be credible when we dialogue with others, let us live in fraternity among ourselves. Let us do so in our com-

munities, valuing the charisms of each person without humiliating anyone,” he said. “Let us do so in our religious houses, as living signs of harmony and peace. Let us do so in our families, so that the sacramental bond of love is seen daily in service and forgiveness. Let us do so in the multi-religious and multi-cultural societies in which we find ourselves, as tireless promoters of dialogue and weavers of fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other creeds and confessions.” Chris Noronha, one of the numerous attendees, said that they have been eagerly anticipating the Pope’s arrival ever since the news of his visit to Bahrain was announced. “I know that I have been blessed to grow up here in the Kingdom of Bahrain, a country where religious tolerance and freedom is a way of life,” she said. Sister Rose Celine, a member of the Sisters of the Apostolic Carmel, said that they have been active for the last two decades. “We began our missionary journey in the Kingdom of Bahrain on 3 January 2003. Bahrain known as the ‘land of smiles’ welcomed us warmly,” she said. -BNA

SHARM EL SHEIKH

UAE President to attend COP27 in Egypt

ABU DHABI: President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan will attend the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27), which is being held in Sharm El Sheikh in the Arab Republic of Egypt. The conference will welcome world leaders, heads of government, and representatives of international bodies and civil societies, who are set to engage in constructive dialogue aimed at tackling climate change. His Highness Sheikh Mohamed will lead a high-level delegation at the conference, which provides an opportunity for the UAE to strengthen existing sustainable development partnerships and support international climate action initiatives. The delegation accompanying



His Highness during the visit will include H.H. Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Presidential Court; H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan; Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad bin Tahnoun Al Nahyan, Advisor for Special Affairs at the Ministry of Presidential

Court; Ali bin Hammad Al Shamsi, Deputy Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for National Security; Dr. Sultan bin Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology and Managing Director; and Mariam bint Mohammed Almheiri, Minister of Climate Change and the Environment. -WAM


Read online
timesofoman.com



UAE, US SIGN \$100 BILLION INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP IN RENEWABLE ENERGIES, CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES

UAE President His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan attended the signing of a comprehensive strategic partnership between the UAE and the US to accelerate the energy transition, advance shared climate goals and strengthen global energy security.»

“CAT WALK” EVENT FOR RAISING AWARENESS OF ARABIAN LEOPARD PROTECTION LAUNCHED IN MADINAH

The event of “Cat Walk”, organized by the Municipality of Madinah region was launched to raise awareness of the importance of conserving the wild cats and Arabian leopard from extinction. »

SAUDI ARABIA’S GDP RISES BY 8.6% IN Q3 2022



The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia registered real GDP growth of 8.6% y/y in the third quarter of 2022, reports Saudi Press Agency (SPA). Inflation was also contained at 2.9% – one of the lowest rates among the G20 nations, according to the new version of the economic report issued by the Economy and Planning. »

AUTO SECTOR

Saudi Crown Prince launches Ceer, first Saudi electric vehicle brand

RIYADH: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Prime Minister and Chairman of the Public Investment Fund (PIF) announced today the launch of Ceer, the first Saudi electric vehicle brand that will contribute to Saudi Arabia’s automotive manufacturing sector. According to Saudi Press Agency (SPA), the launch comes in line with PIF’s strategy to focus on unlocking the capabilities of promising sectors locally that can help drive the diversification of the economy, to help achieve the objectives of Vision 2030. In addition, the company will contribute to Saudi Arabia’s efforts towards carbon emissions reduction and driving sustainability to address the impact of climate change. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said: “Saudi Arabia is not just building a new automotive brand, we are igniting a new industry and an ecosystem that attracts international and local investments, creates job opportunities for local talent, enables the private sector, and contributes to increasing Saudi Arabia’s GDP over the next decade, as part of PIF’s strategy to drive the economic growth in line with Vision 2030.” Ceer is the first Saudi automo-



tive brand to produce electric vehicles in Saudi Arabia, and will design, manufacture and sell a range of vehicles for consumers in Saudi Arabia and the MENA region, including sedans and sports utility vehicles. A part of PIF’s strategy to diversify Saudi Arabia’s GDP growth by investing in promising growth industries, Ceer will attract over US\$150 million of foreign direct investment, and create up to 30,000 direct and indirect jobs. Ceer is projected to directly contribute US\$8 billion to Saudi Arabia’s GDP by 2034. The company, which is a joint venture between PIF and Hon Hai Precision Industry Co. (“Foxconn”), will license component technology from BMW for use in the vehicle development process. -SPA



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(Factory Al Mifah West, Bausher, Tel. # 00968 24437070 ext. 102, Fax # 00968 24437777)

TENDER

The company invites offers for the following tender:

Sl. #	Tender ID	Description	Tender Fee	Deadline for Purchasing of Tenders	Deadline for Submission of Offers
1.	28758	HIRING OF MANPOWER FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF LONG BELT CONVEYORS	RO. 52.500	24th November 2022 1700 hours	29th November 2022 2359 hours
2.	28700	HIRING OF HEAVY EQUIPMENT DRIVERS LIMESTONE TRANSPORT	RO. 52.500	24th November 2022 1700 hours	29th November 2022 2359 hours
3.	28660	HIRING OF DOZER WITH OPERATOR	RO. 52.500	24th November 2022 1700 hours	29th November 2022 2359 hours
4.	28570	HIRING OF AIR-CONDITIONED BUS FOR OCC EMPLOYEES	RO. 52.500	24th November 2022 1700 hours	29th November 2022 2359 hours
5	28741	CRUSHER ROTOR HARDFACING AND BUILD UPS	RO. 52.500	24th November 2022 1700 hours	29th November 2022 2359 hours

- All specialized and interested companies that are registered with the Tender Board participate and get the specifications and conditions of the tender from the website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>.
- Tenders Bond to be applied electronically as per Esnad system procedure on the given website before the specified time of Submission. Electronic Tender Bond will be of not less than (1%) of the Total Tender Value of the highest offer (incase have multiple offers), valid for (120) days from the offers submission date and addressed to Chairman of the Tender Committee. Please note that without Tender Bond will not complete the submission of tender process as per Esnad procedure.
- The tender clarification and queries will be directly on the on tender itself on Esnad system.
- OCC is not bound to accept the lowest or any other bid, and reserves the right to accept or reject any offer without giving reason.

For Clarifications on e-Tendering, you may contact via
Telephone : 24402200
Email id: etenderhd@mtc.it.gov.om

Invitation to Tender

Dhofar Integrated Services Company S.A.O.C (DISC) invites reputable contractor specialized in Wastewater Operation and Maintenance Works for carrying out following works in Dhofar Region.

Reference Number Tender	Title of the Tender
DISC/Tender/2022/178	Operation and Maintenance of Dhakut, Mazzyoonah and Shaser Wastewater Treatment Plants along with TSE Lines and Sewer Network at Mazzyoonah and Shaser
Tender Fee	RO. 1,575.000 Inclusive VAT (5%) Note: Tenderer who wish to participate in the above tender should send an e-mail to below mentioned mail id for tender fee process.
Experience	10 Years of experience in Wastewater Operation and Maintenance Works
Pre-qualification	Registered with tender board under excellent Grade and with expertise in Wastewater Operation and Maintenance Works.
Tender document sales cut-off date	03:00 PM on 21 st November 2022
Tender document published date	03:00 PM on 22 nd November 2022
Site Visit	10:00 AM on 23 rd November 2022
Last date for seeking pre bid clarification	03:00 PM on 30 th November 2022
Last date for response pre bid clarification	03:00 PM on 7 th December 2022
Last date for submission of bids	03:00 PM on 14 th December 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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Quote of the Day



ROHIT SHARMA, INDIA SKIPPER

“A very good all-round performance, something we were looking for. We had qualified, but we wanted to come out and play the way we wanted to play, which we achieved.”

Points table

GROUP 1									
Team	P	W	L	N/R	T	NRR	PTS		
New Zealand	5	3	1	1	0	+213	7		
England	5	3	1	1	0	+0.473	7		
Australia	5	3	1	1	0	-0.173	7		
Sri Lanka	5	2	3	0	0	-0.422	4		
Ireland	5	1	3	1	0	-1.615	3		
Afghanistan	5	0	3	2	0	-0.571	2		

GROUP 2									
Team	P	W	L	N/R	T	NRR	PTS		
India	5	4	1	0	0	+1.319	8		
Pakistan	5	3	2	0	0	+1.028	6		
South Africa	5	2	2	1	0	-0.874	5		
Netherlands	5	2	3	0	0	-0.849	4		
Bangladesh	5	2	3	0	0	-1.176	4		
Zimbabwe	5	1	3	1	0	-1.138	3		

INDIA, PAKISTAN IN SEMIS

Suryakumar Yadav dazzles in India's win over Zimbabwe to set up last-four clash against England

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA: Fifties from Suryakumar Yadav and KL Rahul and a fine bowling performance powered India to a massive 71-run win over Zimbabwe in their final Super 12 match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup at the MCG in Melbourne on Sunday. India already qualified for the semifinals following South Africa's loss to Netherlands earlier in the day. But their win against Zimbabwe helped them in finishing at the top of Group 2 and set up a semi-final clash against England in Adelaide on November 10.

Suryakumar Yadav played yet another breathtaking knock of 61* from 25 deliveries to guide India to a massive total of 186/5. Yadav smashed six fours and four sixes during his majestic knock. Earlier, KL Rahul also played an excellent knock of 51 from 35 deliveries.

Zimbabwe suffered an early collapse, losing half of their side for just 36 runs. But Sikandar Raza and Ryan Burl put on an excellent stand of 60 runs to lead Zimbabwe's recovery. Burl's innings was cut short on 35 from 22 deliveries when R Ashwin cleaned him up. Raza also departed three overs later for a well-made 34 from 24 deliveries and Zimbabwe were bowled out for 115. - **icc**



India vs Zimbabwe		Scoreboard	
INDIA		C Ervine c & b Pandya	13
KL Rahul c Masakadza b Raza	51	R Chakabva b Arshdeep Singh	0
Rohit Sharma c Masakadza b Muzarabani	15	S Williams c Kumar b Shami	11
Virat Kohli c Burl b Williams	26	S Raza c Yadav b Pandya	34
Suryakumar Yadav not out	61	T Munyonga lbw b Shami	5
R Pant c Burl b Williams	3	R Burl b Ashwin	35
H Pandya c Muzarabani b Ngarava	18	W Masakadza c Sharma b Ashwin	1
A Patel not out	0	R Ngarava b Ashwin	1
Extras: (lb 5, nb 1, w 6)	12	T Chatara c & b Patel	4
TOTAL: 186/5 in 20 overs (RR: 9.30)		B Muzarabani not out	0
Fall of wickets: 1-27, 2-87, 3-95, 4-101, 5-166		Extras: (lb 3, nb 1, w 7)	11
Bowling: R Ngarava 4-1-44-1, T Chatara 4-0-34-0, B Muzarabani 4-0-50-1, W Masakadza 2-0-12-0, R Burl 1-0-14-0, S Raza 3-0-18-1, S Williams 2-0-9-2		TOTAL: 115 in 17.2 overs (RR: 6.63)	
		Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-2, 3-28, 4-31, 5-36, 6-96, 7-104, 8-106, 9-111, 10-115	
ZIMBABWE		Bowling: Bhuvneshwar Kumar 3-1-11-1, Arshdeep Singh 2-0-9-1, M Shami 2-0-14-2, H Pandya 3-0-16-2, R Ashwin 4-0-22-3, A Patel 3.2-0-40-1	
W Madhevere c Kohli b Kumar	0		

Pakistan beat Bangladesh to finish second in Group 2

ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA: Shaheen Afridi's four-wicket haul helped Pakistan clinch a semifinal spot at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup with a five-wicket victory over Bangladesh in Adelaide on Sunday. Pakistan came second in Group 2 and will now play New Zealand in the first semifinals on Wednesday.

Afridi's impressive figures of 4/22 restricted Bangladesh to just 127/8 and Pakistan found the victory target with two overs remaining despite a few wobbles in reply.

Babar (25) and Mohammad Rizwan (32) put on 57 for the opening wicket to set the chase on the right track. However, their departure did create a wobble but Shan Masood and Mohammed Haris took Pakistan to safety with Masood, unbeaten on 24, leading the team into the semifinals. - **icc**

Bangladesh vs Pakistan		Scoreboard	
BANGLADESH		3-0-15-0, M Wasim 2-0-19-0, H Rauf 4-0-21-1, Shadab Khan 4-0-30-2, I Ahmed 3-0-15-1	
N Hossain Shanto b Ahmed	54	PAKISTAN	
Litton Das c Masood b Afridi	10	M Rizwan c Shanto b E Hossain	32
S Sarkar c Masood b Shadab Khan	20	Babar Azam c Rahman b N Ahmed	25
Shakib Al Hasan lbw b Shadab Khan	0	M Nawaz run out	4
A Hossain not out	24	M Haris c N Ahmed b Shakib Al Hasan	31
M Hossain b Afridi	5	S Masood not out	24
N Hasan c Haris b Afridi	0	I Ahmed c Shanto b Rahman	1
T Ahmed c Azamb Afridi	1	Shadab Khan not out	0
N Ahmed c Wasim b Rauf	7	Extras: (lb 7, nb 2, w 2)	11
M Rahman not out	0	TOTAL: 128/5 in 18.5 overs (RR: 7.04)	
Extras: (b 2, lb 3, w 1)	6	Fall of wickets: 1-57, 2-61, 3-92, 4-121, 5-126	
TOTAL: 127/8 in 20 overs (RR: 6.35)		Bowling: Taskin Ahmed 3-0-26-0, N Ahmed 4-0-14-1, Shakib Al Hasan 4-0-35-1, M Rahman 4-0-21-1, E Hossain 3.1-0-25-1	
Fall of wickets: 1-21, 2-73, 3-73, 4-91, 5-107, 6-107, 7-109, 8-126			
Bowling: Shaheen Afridi 4-0-22-4, N Shah			

Semifinal lineup



**November 9
12:00pm**
New Zealand vs Pakistan



**November 10
12:00pm**
India vs England



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MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,418.10 points, up by 0.38 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.80 per cent at 468.17 points. Oman & Emirates Investment, up 6.67 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Jazeera Services, down 8.70 per cent, was the top loser.

GCC to see more IPOs in coming months

In Saudi Arabia, 18 listings are planned while a total of 70 applications are being explored. In the UAE, the Dubai authorities have already announced 10 potential IPOs

VINOD KUMAR PK
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MUSCAT: The initial public offering (IPO) market has been booming in the region compared to other parts of the world where a significant slowdown took place, according to an industry expert.

"The trend in the GCC and Oman was fuelled by the introduction of big state-owned companies in a bid to draw private companies to the stock market and to create a surge in liquidity and interest among investors," Abdelhadi Laabi Chief Marketing Officer, Emporium Capital, said.

"The new listings have so far



been successful and were able to attract large inflows of capital and have been largely oversubscribed," he added.

Speaking about the new IPOs planned in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), he said that several share sales are planned or expected in the region like Empower in the Dubai Financial Market (DFM) which will start its subscription period by the next month.

The listing of other state-owned companies in the UAE could soon be announced as well and we can mention Bayanat in Abu Dhabi while Tadawul (Saudi stock market) is expecting 18 IPOs in the next three months, Laabi said.

So far the GCC region as a whole witnessed strong IPOs this year with the likes of DEWA, Borouge, or Salik, drawing interest from lo-

cal and international investors. The success of these listings has created an impetus for private companies to follow suit and for governments to take steps to incentivise such operations, creating a spillover effect in the surrounding countries as well like in Egypt, he further pointed out, he added.

Elaborating further regarding the GCC IPOs, Laabi said that many share sales are expected in the coming months in the region. In Saudi Arabia, 18 listings should see the light of day while a total of 70 applications are being explored. In the UAE, the Dubai authorities have previously announced 10 potential IPOs, of which less than half were introduced on the DFM. "In this regard, we could see more listings in the coming months," he added.

The current uncertainty in economic conditions has put investors on edge, Laabi said, adding that as a result, they are closely monitoring economic developments and changes in financial markets. From economic publications to governmental decisions, all types of data are used to build expectations. "However, the slowing economic output worldwide, the tightening monetary policies and sliding energy prices have effectively eroded confidence and fuelled a cautious atmosphere," he added.

Like in other stock markets, equities in the GCC and Oman are exposed to a number of factors like inflation, slowing economic growth, tighter monetary policy

and more cautious investors, Laabi said. "The first three factors could have a direct effect on local companies' performance and results while the latter could lead to diminished liquidity overall and a migration of capital towards safer assets. Additionally, stock markets in the region are exposed to volatility in energy markets. The Gulf is a large exporter of oil and natural gas and could see negative effects from the currently declining prices," he added.

This year's IPOs were topped by the introduction of Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) which raised \$6 billion in the DFM followed by the listing of Borouge in the Abu Dhabi stock market with \$2 billion. Other notable listings include Salik which raised \$1 billion, Tecom with \$1.7 billion and Adnoc drilling with \$1.1 billion.

At a time when uncertainty is rife and economic conditions are deteriorating, Laabi said that investors could find opportunities in strong companies that harbour solid business models and competitive products.

"In this regard, companies with strong brands and superior pricing power could be more resilient against inflation as they can raise their selling prices when input costs increase, saving their margins in the process. Defensive stocks like utilities could also be resistant to the slowing economy thanks to the nature of the services," he added.

OMAN OIL MARKETING COMPANY



Pact signed to expand OOMCO service stations across Saudi Arabia

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Oil Marketing Company (OOMCO) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tamiyoz, a leading real estate investment and development company based in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to facilitate the expansion of OOMCO service stations across the Kingdom.

The pact was signed by Tariq Al Junaidi, Chief Executive Officer of Oman Oil Marketing Company, and Yousif Al Saadi, Chief Executive Officer of Tamiyoz.

OOMCO currently operates 10 sites in eastern and western Saudi Arabia, with 16 stations in the pipeline across the country. The agreement will see further growth of OOMCO's footprint in the eastern and western, and southern regions of Saudi Arabia. Earlier this year OOMCO opened its newest facility in Mecca, as well as plans for five additional sites within the greater Jeddah area, offering an exciting range of on-the-go shopping, branded food and beverage offerings, in addition to essential automotive services as OOMCO continues to go 'beyond the pump'.

Tariq Al Junaidi, Chief Executive Officer of Oman Oil Marketing Company, said, "We're delighted to partner with Tamiyoz to grow our footprint in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This is an important step in our global expansion and in advancing our plans to operate a total of 26 fuel stations across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by the end of 2023. We look forward to working with Tamiyoz to create new employment opportunities and rewarding business ventures for local suppliers, as well as offering customers innovative products that provide them with convenience, variety and joy, and offer much more than only fuel to become a highly-anticipated element of each journey."

OOMCO continues to expand its global footprint and strengthen bilateral ties with Oman's neighbouring countries. In addition to the 10 service stations in operation in Saudi Arabia, the company also operates nine sites in Tanzania, and a comprehensive network across the Sultanate of Oman, as OOMCO continues to prioritise customer-centricity to become one of the top five fuel marketers in the GCC by 2027.

STATE AUDIT INSTITUTION

Training programme on detecting fraud organised



MUSCAT: Tasks of a training programme on detecting cheating and fraud kicked off here. Organised by the State Audit Institution (SAI), the four-day event is being held in cooperation with supreme audit institutions and the Arab Organisation for Supreme Audit Institutions (ARABOSAI).

It is attended by 35 participants from Arab regulatory bodies and

the State Audit Institution.

The programme, which comes in the implementation of the ARABOSAI training and research plan, seeks to enable participants to understand the specifications and control procedures for fraud risk assessment.

It also aims to provide the participants with the skills needed to identify risks and detect fraud

when conducting audit tasks.

The programme includes an application exercise summarising audit institutions' role in detecting cases of deception and fraud. It provides an overview of legal procedures undertaken after the detection of fraud and reviews working papers submitted by the participants presenting their experiences. -ONA

TWO-DAY EVENT



Regional Cybersecurity Week kicks off

MUSCAT: A Regional Cybersecurity Week kicked off. The event is being held simultaneously with the 10th Regional Cybersecurity Drill for Arab States and Member States in the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The two-day event is organised by the Arab Regional Cybersecurity Centre in cooperation with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Informa-

tion Technology. As many as 400 specialists from 45 countries are taking part in the event, themed 'Overview of Rapidly Developing Cybersecurity Threats'.

The event aims at enhancing communication and honing the skills of cyber-emergency response teams. The drill includes a simulation of four scenarios developed by the Arab Regional Cybersecurity Centre and the In-

ternational Telecommunication Union. This drill is tailored for national centres for cybersecurity and info-emergency, as well as cybersecurity teams at vital establishments in Arab countries and OIC centres.

The inaugural ceremony of the drill was held under the auspices of Dr Ali Amer Al Shidhani, Communications and Information Technology. -ONA

Indus Novateur LLC takes pride in announcing start of productive usage of SAP at Saeed Bin Masoud International (SBMI), Oman.



Implementing of SAP to one of the biggest service providers and distributors in Oil & Gas, Industrial, Marine and Infrastructure development sectors is a great feat to achieve in a record period of time.

SAP was implemented across the entities with around 35 users for services and trading of the products. The explicit goal was to implement the new ERP software as a holistic and integrated system and to harmonize the process landscape.

Mr. Said Masoud Said Al Mughairi, the managing director of SBMI, is optimistic that this transformation would not only facilitate the organic growth but also the in-organic growth of the organization. While explaining



on why Indus, he said, it was due to their name being synonymous with quality implementation services and they did offer a solution to our requirements.

Ms. Raji Sriram, GM of Indus Novateur, specified on the digital transformation that has happened on the basic processes of Procurement, Inventory, Sales, Service, Project Management and Finance at SBMI. She was also mentioning on the additional personalization

of the application to incorporate the specific requirements of SBMI in the areas of Rental, Maintenance and Payroll. She was complimenting the team from both the sides for their effort to put the major project into successful and smooth productive use in Sep, 2022.

It was a silent change of systems with a considerable increase in the experience of SBMI users and the management. We already received positive feedback from the users: "Everything is more than fine!" Both companies look back with satisfaction on a successful major project and are looking forward for a fruitful relationship as business partners.

MARKET



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MSX index ends higher

Oman & Emirates Investment, up 6.67 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Jazeera Services, down 8.70 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,418.10 points, up by 0.38 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.80 per cent at 468.17 points. Oman & Emirates Investment, up 6.67 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Jazeera Services, down 8.70 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 457 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR2.15 million, with more than 7.96 million shares changing hands. Out of 37 traded securities, 16 advanced, 7 declined, and 14 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for OMR429,000 while domestic investors were net buyers for OMR403,000 followed by foreign investors for OMR27,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,092.29 points, up 0.46 per cent. Prices of Oman & Emirates Investment, Taageer Finance, Ominvest, Ahli Bank, and Al Anwar Investment were up by 6.67 per cent, 6.52 per cent, 2.94 per cent, 1.52 per cent and 1.28 per cent respectively. Prices of DIDIC, Al Madina Takaful and Oman Qatar Insurance, were down by 3.57 per cent, 3.30 per cent and 1.02 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,012.00 points, up 0.36 per cent. Prices of Raysut Cement, Gulf



Mushroom Products, Oman Fisheries and Galfar Engineering were up by 3.57 per cent, 3.32 per cent, 1.96 per cent and 0.63 per cent respectively. Prices of Dhofar Cattle Feed was down by 2.53 per cent.

Services Index was down by 0.02 per cent before closing at 1,537.51 points. Prices of Renaissance Services, Al Batinah Power, National Gas, OIFC, and Ooredoo were up by 3.08 per cent, 2.63 per cent, 0.89 per cent, 0.78 per cent and 0.51 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Jazeera Services, Dhofar Generating and Oman Telecom, were down by 8.70 per cent, 4.17 per cent and 0.47 per cent respectively. — United Securities

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,421.16	4,390.74	4,418.10	4,401.57	16.53	0.38
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,092.29	7,040.39	7,092.29	7,059.75	32.54	0.46
Industry Index	6,038.22	5,995.30	6,012.00	5,990.73	21.27	0.36
Services Index	1,541.99	1,530.37	1,537.51	1,537.85	-0.34	-0.02
MSX Shariah Index	473.89	468.08	468.17	471.93	-3.76	-0.80
MSX TR INDEX	5,576.11	5,537.74	5,572.25	5,551.41	20.85	0.38
FINANCIAL TR IDX	7,421.29	7,366.98	7,421.29	7,387.25	34.04	0.46
SERVICES TR IDX	1,612.04	1,599.89	1,607.36	1,607.71	-0.36	-0.02
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,266.65	6,222.12	6,239.45	6,217.37	22.08	0.36

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
7,961,958	2,147,021	457	23,000,799,294	16	7	14	37

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST RD	LAST OFFR	PRV VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET															
OM0000003281 TAAGEER FINANCE	10,000	980	1	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.092	0.006	6.522	0.098	0.091	0.098	0.100	25,348,856
OM0000003224 RENAISSANCE SER	15,000	7,020	1	0.468	0.468	0.468	0.468	0.454	0.014	3.064	0.468	0.458	0.468	0.100	110,639,880
OM0000001533 OMINVEST	150,115	51,040	4	0.340	0.350	0.340	0.350	0.340	0.010	2.941	0.350	0.340	0.350	0.100	225,927,899
OM0000002200 AHLI BANK	500,277	67,037	10	0.134	0.134	0.131	0.134	0.132	0.002	1.515	0.134	0.132	0.134	0.100	261,254,100
OM0000001525 OMAN INVSTR FIN	175,642	22,984	11	0.132	0.132	0.130	0.130	0.129	0.001	0.775	0.130	0.128	0.130	0.100	30,810,000
OM0000003968 OOREDOO	14,620	5,819	4	0.398	0.398	0.398	0.398	0.396	0.002	0.505	0.398	0.392	0.398	0.100	259,075,804
OM0000001483 NATIONAL BANK OMAN	225,000	57,520	5	0.256	0.256	0.252	0.256	0.255	0.001	0.392	0.256	0.252	0.256	0.100	416,242,267
OM0000002796 BANK MUSCAT	1,994,965	1,183,330	122	0.594	0.596	0.590	0.594	0.592	0.002	0.338	0.594	0.594	0.594	0.100	228,399,927
OM0000001707 OMAN CABLES INDSTR	8,000	12,880	7	1.610	1.610	1.610	1.610	1.610	0.000	0.000	1.610	1.500	1.610	0.100	144,417,000
OM0000001749 OMAN CEMENT	38,663	10,832	4	0.282	0.282	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.000	0.000	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.100	92,644,359
OM0000002168 AL ANWAR CERAMIC	10,000	3,440	1	0.344	0.344	0.344	0.344	0.344	0.000	0.000	0.344	0.340	0.344	0.100	75,680,000
OM0000003398 SOHAR INT. BANK	832,000	79,728	18	0.094	0.096	0.094	0.096	0.096	0.000	0.000	0.096	0.095	0.096	0.100	440,645,804
OM0000003026 OMAN TELECOM	71,722	61,113	10	0.852	0.856	0.844	0.844	0.848	-0.004	-0.472	0.844	0.836	0.852	0.100	633,000,000
OM0000007407 DHOFAR GENERATING	1,000	46	1	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.048	-0.002	-4.167	0.046	0.000	0.046	0.100	10,223,400
OM0000002226 ALJAZEERA SERVICES	8,805	1,929	3	0.220	0.220	0.210	0.210	0.230	-0.020	-8.696	0.210	0.208	0.225	0.100	12,852,897
Total	15	4,055,809	1,565,699	202											

Parallel Market

OM0000001681 OMAN EMIRATES HO	1,400	103	2	0.073	0.080	0.073	0.080	0.075	0.005	6.667	0.080	0.073	0.080	0.100	9,750,000
OM0000001418 RAYSUT CEMENT	632,746	91,994	68	0.143	0.148	0.143	0.145	0.140	0.005	3.571	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.100	29,000,000
OM0000002267 GULF MUSHROOM P	44,060	10,377	12	0.235	0.249	0.235	0.249	0.241	0.008	3.320	0.249	0.240	0.249	0.100	10,359,712
OM0000004925 ALBATINAH POWER	410	16	1	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.038	0.001	2.632	0.039	0.035	0.039	0.100	26,320,610
OM0000001568 OMAN FISHERIES	308,833	32,513	36	0.106	0.110	0.104	0.104	0.102	0.002	1.961	0.104	0.104	0.109	0.100	18,938,153
OM0000001772 OMANWAR INVESTMENT	100,119	7,740	12	0.077	0.079	0.077	0.079	0.079	0.001	1.292	0.079	0.077	0.079	0.100	15,800,000
OM0000001160 NATIONAL GAS	36,530	4,147	9	0.114	0.114	0.113	0.114	0.113	0.001	0.885	0.114	0.114	0.114	0.100	9,690,000
OM0000003521 GALFAR ENGINEER	1,832,362	303,055	52	0.164	0.168	0.161	0.161	0.160	0.001	0.625	0.161	0.161	0.164	0.100	32,680,818
OM0000001319 ALUMINIUM PROD.	45,400	3,643	7	0.081	0.083	0.080	0.081	0.081	0.000	0.000	0.081	0.080	0.081	0.100	2,719,287
OM0000001426 OMAN REFRESHMENT	2,500	3,750	1	1.500	1.500	1.500	1.500	1.500	0.000	0.000	1.500	1.500	1.500	0.100	75,000,000
OM0000001517 HSBC BANK OMAN	337,257	51,263	6	0.152	0.152	0.152	0.152	0.152	0.000	0.000	0.152	0.150	0.153	0.100	304,047,544
OM0000001590 MUSCAT FINANCE	84,930	4,804	13	0.057	0.057	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.000	0.000	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.100	17,200,194
OM0000002275 SHELL OMAN MKK	20,000	16,400	1	0.820	0.820	0.820	0.820	0.820	0.000	0.000	0.820	0.806	0.820	0.100	77,700,000
OM0000002549 BANK DHOFAR	175,084	25,387	3	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.000	0.000	0.145	0.145	0.146	0.100	434,470,958
OM0000004248 SMN POWER HOLDING	52,000	1,664	5	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.000	0.000	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.100	6,388,339
OM0000004420 BANK NIZWA	101,028	9,497	5	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.000	0.000	0.094	0.094	0.095	0.100	210,273,585
OM0000001493 AL SUWADI POWER	17,900	680	4	0.038	0.038	0.038	0.038	0.038	0.000	0.000	0.038	0.036	0.038	0.100	27,147,441
OM0000005963 PHOENIX POWER	8,500	359	4	0.042	0.044	0.042	0.044	0.044	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.042	0.044	0.100	64,354,464
OM0000006979 OMAN QATAR INSUR	30,000	5,625	5	0.180	0.185	0.180	0.185	0.197	-0.002	-1.015	0.195	0.185	0.195	0.100	19,500,000
OM0000001301 DHOFAR FOODS AND INVESTMENT	1,000	77	1	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.079	-0.002	-2.532	0.077	0.000	0.079	0.100	6,225,450
OM0000004788 MADINA TAKAFUL	28,200	2,462	5	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.091	-0.003	-3.297	0.088	0.085	0.091	0.100	15,400,000
OM0000001509 DHOFAR INT	45,900	5,738	3	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.131	-0.006	-4.560	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.100	51,155,790
Total	22	3,906,149	581,322	255											

STATE BANK OF INDIA

SBI posts 74% jump in profit

MUMBAI: The country's largest lender - State Bank of India - has said it posted a surge of 74 per cent in its net profit to Rs 13,264 crore, against Rs 7,627 crore in the year-ago period. In the lender's statement, SBI said its net interest income grew 12.8 per cent to Rs 35,183 crore. -ANI

FIRST OMANI WOMAN AT ZUBAIR GROUP LEVEL

Zubair Corp appoints Sharifa Al Balushi as Group Head of Human Capital Centre of Excellence

MUSCAT: The Zubair Corporation announced the appointment of Sharifa Al Balushi as the Group Head of the Human Capital Centre of Excellence.

This appointment is in line with The Zubair Corporation's (TZC) vision and strategy to empower promising Omani talents and high-potential employees to take over leadership, supervisory and specialised positions in line with their potential and expertise in various fields.

Supported by the Taskforce for empowering high-potential Omani talents that was launched in 2021, this appointment continues the commitment of TZC and its various business sectors to provide talented employees with career advancement opportunities across the group.

Sharifa, the first Omani woman to lead the Human Capital (HC) Department at The Zubair Corporation, will be responsible for managing all human capital activities, workforce planning, talent management, performance man-



agement and all other HC-related projects and initiatives. Sharifa will also oversee the development and enrichment of employees' experience through the optimal investment of any HC digital solutions and maximise the use of the new HC system from Success Factors in collaboration with all HR departments and sections across the group.

Adil Ali Al Rahbi, Group Chief Transformation Officer (GCTO), said, "We congratulate Sharifa on her appointment as the Group Head of Human Capital Centre of Excellence, as the first woman to

hold this position at The Zubair Corporation." He also pointed out, "TZC, as always, endeavours to provide opportunities for career advancement for the promising Omani cadre across the group."

Sharifa is one of the leading female professionals in the field of human resources as she joined the Zubair Investment Group in 2019, after having worked in several prominent companies in various sectors throughout her career of more than 16 years in the field. Sharifa has actively participated with the human resources team at TZC working on several strategic projects such as digital transformation and a comprehensive review of policies and procedures related to human resources. She holds a master's degree in Global Human Resources Management from Liverpool University, UK in 2015 and a bachelor's degree in Commerce & Economics from Sultan Qaboos University in 2006 in addition to several professional certifications in the field of Human Resources Management.



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SWISS MINISTER

Economic situation means difficult years ahead



ZURICH: The threat of recession in the eurozone and beyond, an energy supply squeeze and the eroding effect of inflation on purchasing power mean Switzerland faces difficult years ahead, Justice Minister Karin Keller-Sutter told the Neue Zuercher Zeitung.

"I consider this mixed situation to be very difficult," she said in comments published on Saturday. "We will feel this in Switzerland too. Economically difficult years await us." Keller-Sutter sits on the seven-member executive Federal Council.

In September, the Swiss government significantly cut its economic growth forecasts, citing growing risks from a "tense energy situation and sharp price increases", Reuters reported.

It now expects the country's economy to expand 2.0 per cent this year, down from its June forecast for 2.6 per cent growth. In 2023, the economy is expected to expand by 1.1 per cent. -BNA



PEOPLE INTERPRET FACIAL EXPRESSIONS DIFFERENTLY



THE RESEARCHERS USED 3D AVATARS TO ENHANCE THE TOOLS AT THEIR DISPOSAL IN A REPORT THAT WAS PUBLISHED IN THE JOURNAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.

Researchers in the UK recently used an algorithm to let individuals change their perceptions of what a particular emotion should appear like on the face. The results showed substantial individual variation, suggesting that different people may interpret the same facial expression differently.

Due to the overly simple experimental techniques used to describe facial expressions, research into the understanding of emotional expressions has hitherto been restricted.

The researchers used 3D avatars to enhance the tools at their disposal in a report that was published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. Users may gradually improve the facial expressions of the avatars by applying genetic algorithms so that they resem-

“
Our study indicates that we can’t assume that there is a consistent knowledge of what emotions different facial expressions reflect,” said Isabelle Mareschal, professor of visual cognition at Queen Mary University of London and study co-author.

ble what they believed a certain emotion should look like.

The avatars were then employed by a total of 336 individuals to create face emotions that stand in for happiness, fear, sadness, and anger. The researchers discovered that people’s expressions varied widely, which may indicate that people relate various facial expressions to the same emotional state.

The individuals who had created the avatars’ expressions were subsequently subjected to a common emotion recognition test. The degree to which the standard test expressions matched the expressions people had produced with the avatar, the researchers discovered, explained variances in people’s performance.

“Our study indicates that we can’t assume that there is a consistent knowledge of what emotions different facial expressions reflect,” said Isabelle Mareschal, professor of visual cognition at Queen Mary University of London and study co-author. It seems that rather than how they inwardly process and react to emotions, people’s specific responses to various facial expressions are more likely to be influenced by their particular understanding of the facial expression. This may have significant ramifications for the therapeutic understanding of disorders when individuals exhibit ‘atypical’ reactions to facial expressions.

The researchers advise that future research on emotion processing should favor ways that account for more variation and richness of expression and move away from employing procedures and stimuli that match stereotypes. -ANI

Dutch delight as South Africa crash out of T20 World Cup

There were heroes all round for the Netherlands, as they successfully defended their decent total of 158/4

ADELAIDE: The Netherlands pulled off one of the biggest upsets in the history of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup and sent South Africa tumbling out of semifinal contention at the tournament with an impressive 13-run victory over the Proteas in Adelaide on Sunday.

There were heroes all round for the Netherlands, as they successfully defended their decent total of 158/4 by restricting the Proteas to just 145/8 in reply.

Inexperienced seamer Brandon Glover (3/9) was superb with the ball, while 37-year-old veteran Roelof van der Merwe pulled in a contender for catch of the tournament to dismiss the dangerous David Miller.

Bas de Leede (2/25) also bowled well and it was the all-



rounder that was entrusted to bowl the final over, with South Africa unable to score the 26 required from the last six deliveries to clinch victory.

Questions surround Proteas' tactics

If South Africa thought they would cruise through this match and waltz into the semi-finals they were badly mistaken as the Netherlands took it right up to their more fancied

opponent throughout.

Keshav Maharaj (2/27) and Anrich Nortje (1/10) were in good touch with the ball, but some late hitting from Colin Ackermann (41 from just 26 deliveries) gave the Proteas a decent total to try and chase down.

And that total proved too much, with no South Africa batters able to make it past 25 in reply as the Netherlands pulled off one of the biggest upsets in the history of the T20 World Cup.

Catching talent on show

It may be mentioned that van der Merwe had pulled a screamer during South Africa's run chase, but there was also a superb grab taken in the crowd during the Netherlands innings.

Ackermann sent two into the stands to propel the Netherlands' total past 150 in the final over of their innings and it was a volunteer at the ground that showed some magnificent poise to pull in an excellent one-hander. **icc**

ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM



Bavuma is 'elephant in the room' for Proteas: Tom Moody on SA skipper's form

ADELAIDE: Former Australian player Tom Moody called captain Temba Bavuma a concern for the South African team, labelling him the "elephant in the room" after the Proteas' exit from the T20 World Cup.

While speaking on ESPN-cricinfo's T20 Time Out show, Moody said that the Proteas need to review their decision to play Bavuma at the top of the order after the team's shocking defeat to the Netherlands. "Without a doubt. That's [Bavuma's form] the elephant in the room. There are better form players for this format sitting on the bench that should be playing on that side. That will be a discussion, that has to be a discussion in South Africa's review because you cannot afford to carry key personnel. Particularly at the top of the order. That is the critical point," said Moody on ESPN-cricinfo's T20 Time Out show.

Bavuma has scored 635 runs at a strike rate of 116.08 and an average

of 22.67 in 33 T20Is. His performance had been questioned leading up to this World Cup, and as the tournament's opener, he only managed to score 70 runs in five innings at a strike rate of 112.90. In the crucial match between South Africa and Netherlands, Bavuma scored a run-a-ball total of 20.

After that, Moody compared Bavuma's circumstances to that of Aaron Finch and Australia.

"They [Australia] had a similar issue. Once you have one wheel that's not spinning like it should be spinning, it affects the direction you all go as a unit. That's what was happening with South Africa. The rest were sort of covering up for a clear deficiency up top. We totally respect their situation and what they're achieving and you have to admire everything that's happening. But there's another way you can make up to be more effective with what's happening at the top of the order," added the former Aussie. **ANI**

T20I SERIES

Oman to host four-nation T20I series from November 14

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Cricket fever would continue in the Sultanate of Oman after the ongoing ICC Men's T20 World Cup as Oman Cricket is set to host a quadrangular T20I series from November 14. A day after the T20 World Cup winners will be crowned at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, Oman will host Canada, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain for a T20I series at the picturesque Oman Cricket Academy grounds in Al Amerat.

Oman Cricket's chief development officer Duleep Mendis said: "It would be a good platform to have upcoming cricket nations like

Saudi Arabia and Bahrain play quality cricket against teams like Oman and Canada. Though our national team do not have an

immediate international assignment as we have completed the ICC World Cricket League (WCL) 2 engagements, we would like to have our boys in good form and in match-playing mode."

The T20I series will be played



from November 14-21 with the top two teams in the round-robin format playing the final.

The four-nation tournament will be followed by a bilateral

50-over-a-side three-match series against Canada, a formidable side with a long history of international participation. The team qualified for the 1979 World Cup and

then in 2003. A leading Associate team, the T20I and ODI matches between Canada and Oman are expected to be competitive and intense, providing a good opportu-

nity for the domestic fans to enjoy the game.

Canada also took part in the 2007 and 2011 World Cup but has since then struggled to be at the global stage. The team has never made it to the ICC T20 World Cup.

On the contrary, Oman's record in the T20 format is noteworthy, having qualified for the ICC T20 World Cup twice, first in 2016 and then in 2021 though they have yet to play in the ODI World Cup.

The inclusion of young Associate cricketing nations like Saudi Arabia and Bahrain is an initiative of Oman Cricket to help promote the game in the region.

"We would like national teams of Saudi Arabia and Bahrain to get good exposure by playing against stronger teams. There are not many matches with other international teams for them. So, we decided that it will be a positive step to get them play against us and Canada," said Mendis, who is also Oman national team chief coach.

Oman are currently on top of the

ICC World Cricket League (WCL) 2 that features seven nations.

The top three from the ongoing league with qualify for the ICC World Cup Qualifier. The other teams in fray are Namibia, USA, Papua New Guinea, UAE, Nepal and Scotland. Oman are leading the table with 44 points after finishing their quota of all 36 games. At this stage, Scotland are next with 40 points from 28 games, USA are third with 29 from 32 matches followed by UAE (27 points from 26 matches), Namibia (26 pts from 22), Nepal (17 from 20 games) and PNG (5 from 24 games).

Oman's fate on their qualification is likely to be known by the end of December.

The ICC World Cup Qualifier will feature ten teams - bottom five of the Super League, three from WCL 2 and top two of Qualifier playoff (bottom four of WCL 2 and top-two of Challenge League).

The top two teams of the ICC World Cup Qualifier will secure a berth in the 2023 World Cup in India.

CRICKET

Suryakumar Yadav becomes first Indian to smash 1,000 T20I runs in a calendar year

MELBOURNE: Star Indian batter Suryakumar Yadav on Sunday became the first Indian player to score 1,000 T20I runs in a calendar year.

The batter accomplished this feat in his side's final Super 12 stage match against Zimbabwe at Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). In the match, Suryakumar put his perfect finishing touches to make sure India finished their innings on a high. He scored 61* off just 25 balls, consisting of six fours and four sixes. He was striking at a strike rate of 244.00.

In 28 innings this year, Suryakumar has scored 1,026 runs at an average of 44.60. One century and nine half-centuries have come out of his bat, with the best score of 117. These runs have come at a strike rate of 186.24.

Suryakumar is only the second player in T20I history to score 1,000 runs in a calendar year.

In 2021, Pakistan wicketkeep-



er-batter Mohammad Rizwan scored 1,326 runs at an average of 73.66. Rizwan scored a century and 12 half-centuries that year, with the score of 104*.

After playing a match-winning unbeaten knock of 61 runs against Zimbabwe, 'Man of the Match' Suryakumar Yadav said that he and Hardik Pandya started hitting the ball and never stopped as the star batter played till the end

to post 186/5 in a tense situation.

"I think the plan was very clear when me and Hardik were batting together. He said we should take a positive route and we started hitting the ball and never stopped. I think the atmosphere in the team is really nice and so is the build-up towards the knockout, really looking forward to that game," said Suryakumar Yadav in a post-match presentation. **ANI**

OMAN SAILING

Free training on offer as Oman Sailing Festival heads to Salalah

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Oman Sailing Festival gets underway in Salalah this week with professional instructors from Oman Sail offering free sessions to free Try Sailing, Try Windsurfing and Try Kitesurfing.

Kicking off on 8 November at the Beach Front, Dahariz Beach, the festival runs until 12 November with a showcase of local SMEs and local craftspeople also on offer every day.

Musab Al Hadi, Oman Sailing Festival Project Manager, said, "The ancient trading port city of Salalah has a long history on the water. As one of the most important ancient cities in the region, its prosperity was dependant on the sailing skills of generations of mariners and traders. The Oman Sailing Festival aims to reintroduce competitive sailing to this area and inspire a new generation of sailor to head out onto the water and learn the basics. We have free Try Sailing, Try Windsurfing and Try Kitesurfing sessions on offer during the festival and look forward to welcoming the commu-



nity to discover a new hobby.

"We are also carrying an important environmental message with us at every stop during the Oman Sailing Festival. Each of us has a responsibility to care for the local environment and preserve the beaches and seas so that they can be enjoyed for years to come and have a positive impact on the native plant and marine life our beautiful country is blessed with," he added.

The Oman Sailing Festival returns on 24-26 November at the Barceló Mussanah Resort offering Try Sailing, Try Windsurfing, Try Kitesurfing, a showcase of local

SMEs and a beach clean-up.

The event coincides with the RS Venture Connect World Championships, Oman's first exclusively-para sailing event, and will also feature the chance to learn how to sail using the versatile RS Venture boat designed for people with disabilities. The festival will be supported by Office of the Minister of State and Governor of Dhofar Directorate General of Heritage and Tourism in Dhofar, Beach Front, Oman Air, National Mineral Water Company (Tanuf), Environment society of Oman (ESO), and National University Science and Technology (International Maritime College).



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ROUND-UP



Al Ahlia receives ‘Most Innovative Insurer - Oman’ award at IntlBM

The ‘Most Innovative Insurer’ award not only commemorates best-in-class business achievements and technology disruptions; but also recognises the brand’s vision for the insurance industry, the focus on customer-centricity throughout the organisation, and the leadership influence it has for others to follow suit

MUSCAT: Al Ahlia Insurance, one of Oman’s leading insurance companies, has added another prestigious award to its list of growing accolades by winning “Most Innovative Insurer - Oman” at this year’s International Business Magazine (IntlBM) Annual Awards, held in Dubai on October 29.

The IntlBM awards are considered a hallmark of excellence and

outstanding achievements from across industries internationally.

The ‘Most Innovative Insurer’ award not only commemorates best-in-class business achievements and technology disruptions; but also recognises the brand’s vision for the insurance industry, the focus on customer-centricity throughout the organisation, and the leadership influence it has for



others to follow suit.

With over three decades of expertise, Al Ahlia insurance has established itself as Oman’s trust-

worthy insurer. It has launched several cutting-edge propositions and is committed to improving the overall customer experience by

tapping into insights and investing in technology to provide customers with unmatched service support.

Some of the leading proposi-

tions that have earned Al Ahlia this prestigious award are “Claim registration through WhatsApp”, “Bot-assisted sales journey”, “On-line policy transfer” and the “One-click renewal link”.

Hanaa Al Hinaï, Chief Executive Officer – Al Ahlia Oman, said, “It gives us great pleasure to have been granted this global award that recognises Al Ahlia as a leader in innovation across international business and finance sectors.

“The recognition is a testament to the outstanding efforts that our team takes to enhance the customer experience, and the willingness to think outside the box to achieve that.”

Speaking on the eve of the awards night, Arif Al Zadjali – IT Director, Al Ahlia Insurance said: “Digitisation and technology have always been important areas of strategic focus at Al Ahlia, we always look at new innovative ways to create a seamless and easy experience for our customers. Our goal is to continuously find new propositions and technologies that make the insurance process more accessible and more approachable.”

SPONSOR

Oman Airports to host World Travel Awards grand final gala ceremony

MUSCAT: To support the efforts of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism to promote the country and position Oman on the global tourism map as a key player, Oman Airports is once again sponsoring the WTA Grand Final Gala Ceremony 2022, now in its 29th edition, which will be held at the Al Bustan Palace, A Ritz-Carlton Hotel on November 11.

The event will be attended by hundreds of senior airline, hotel, and tourism industry officials.

Commenting on this important step, Sheikh Aimen Ahmed Al Hosni, Chief Executive Officer of Oman Airports, said, “Having hosted the 26th edition of this prestigious global event with great success, we are pleased to once again invite major players in the tourism industry to visit the Sultanate of Oman and attend the WTA grand final gala ceremony.”

He added, “Hosting this global event falls within the framework of our role in supporting the efforts of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism in placing Oman on the map of major global events. We are confident that the presence of the best travel and tourism companies from around the world, and the accompanying media coverage, will reflect positively on these efforts.”

Graham Cooke, Founder of WTA, said, “It is an honour to host our grand final gala ceremony in



Muscat for the second time. Our first ceremony in Oman, in 2019, was a great success that prompted us to repeat the experience and return to this beautiful country again. In recent years, the Sultanate of Oman has emerged as one of the top destinations for millions of travellers, as well as a major regional hub. It will be an honour for me to welcome top decision-makers from major travel and tourism companies to the beautiful capital city of Oman.”

Established in 1993 in England, the World Travel Awards celebrates its 29th anniversary this year. Its annual programme is renowned as the most prestigious and comprehensive in the global

tourism industry. Travel and tourism-related companies and hotels the world over are always keen to participate for a chance to win one of their illustrious awards. Doing so is an achievement that provides them with the ideal marketing tool to promote their winning products and services.

Sheikh Aimen Al Hosni concluded, “With the FIFA World Cup taking place in the region this year, and Muscat being one of the satellite cities to host fans, I am sure our participants will have a wonderful experience. We guarantee that every participant attending the gala ceremony will be left speechless by the beauty of our city; right from the very first mo-

ment they step through the gate at Muscat International Airport, all the way to the Al Bustan Palace, one of the most beautiful hotels in Muscat, and with every other tourist attraction the capital has to offer, they are in for a mesmerising experience from start to finish.”

Each year WTA covers the globe with its Grand Tour – a series of regional gala ceremonies to recognise excellence within each continent, culminating in a Grand Final at the end of the year.

The winners of these regional ceremonies are going head-to-head at the grand final in Oman on November 11 when the winners of the prestigious World categories will be unveiled.

PROMOTION



BankDhofar picks Fifa World Cup Qatar 2022 package winners

MUSCAT: BankDhofar, announced the winners of the Fifa World Cup Qatar 2022 package, courtesy of Visa.

The bank had announced the offer earlier where customers who spent a minimum of OMR 50 got the chance to be one of the 2 winners of a covered expense trip to attend the Fifa World Cup Qatar 2022, courtesy of Visa.

The winners of the offer are Al Moatasim Khalfan Al Zakwani, from the Izki branch, and (S.A.S.) from the Muscat Grand Mall branch. The package includes two guests per package, tickets for two to the Fifa World Cup with pre-match hospitality,

2-night stay at a 5-star hotel in Doha – all courtesy of Visa.

On the winner announcement, Bilal Faiz Al Raisi, AGM- Cards and Bancassurance at BankDhofar, said: “The offer was well received by our Visa credit card holders. At BankDhofar, we always keep up with various events and customise our products and services for our customers.

“We were glad to work with Visa to introduce this special offer for our customers, and we would like to congratulate the two lucky winners who will get the chance to attend the mostly awaited global sports event, courtesy of Visa.”

APPOINTMENT

Majed Yehya named Director of Sales and Marketing of Grand Hyatt Muscat



MUSCAT: Majed Yehya has been appointed Director of Sales and Marketing of Grand Hyatt Muscat and will be overseeing the Sales and Marketing of the property’s 278 rooms and 8 outlets.

A highly experienced hotelier across Middle East markets, Majed has enjoyed more than 22 years of working in luxury hospitality across the Middle East, experienced in food and beverage, sales, marketing, revenue management,

and business development.

He began his career with Starwood as a Maitre d’hôtel in his hometown Beirut, where he worked in several five-star hotels, gaining experience across hospitality roles, from food and beverage to meetings and events to the front desk, to housekeeping, sales and marketing, and revenue management. Majed Joined IHG in 2006, where he had 12 years of experience in sales, marketing, revenue

A highly experienced hotelier across Middle East markets, Majed has enjoyed more than 22 years of working in luxury hospitality across the Middle East

management and preopening across the GCC.

Majed joined the Hyatt family in 2018 as Director of Sales to open the Hyatt Regency Kuwait where he was overseeing the sales and marketing department acting as commercial leader. This October, he continues his exciting career journey with Hyatt as the newly appointed Director of Sales and Marketing of Grand Hyatt Muscat.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

ahlibank participates in 18th Annual Walkathon of Omani Cancer Association

MUSCAT: In line with its Corporate Social Responsibility, and as part of its ‘ahlicares’ initiative, ahlbank joined the Oman Cancer Association in its 18th annual Walkathon to raise awareness on cancer prevention in general and breast cancer in particular under the slogan (towards life), aiming to support cancer patients, survivors and their families.

Since its inception in 2013, the walkathon has garnered the support of more than 8000 participants who walk together to raise funds and awareness on cancer prevention in support of the association, encouraging volunteerism and community engagement, giving a sense of togetherness to those affected by cancer; the event saw participation from companies from various sectors, schools, universities, families, social clubs, and many other individuals and organisational volunteers.

Speaking on the sidelines of the walkathon, Jumana Aflah Al Hashmi, ahlbank’s Deputy Head of Marketing & Corporate Communications, said, “We are proud of the ahlbank team members who joined this noble cause and



also encouraged each other to participate in the walkathon, seeing the community come together and garner support in an uplifting and beneficial way is inspiring.”

“Annually, a large number of ahlbank employees participate in various initiatives to showcase our commitment to the community in which we operate. Such support for community impact programs falls under the bank’s “ahlicares” initiative and is in line with our values and a people-first

approach. We are honoured to be able to be a part of the walkathon demonstrating our support for the cause,” she added.

From its suite of corporate social responsibility initiatives, ahlbank has always been committed to giving back to the community through its ahl cares initiative which aims to enhance social values and serve humanitarian causes, while bringing about positive change through multi-sectoral partnerships.



ROUND-UP



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Meethaq celebrates 10 years of success in Islamic banking sector

Through multiple steps and initiatives, Meethaq today offers a full suite of Sharia-compliant retail, corporate banking and wholesale banking products and services to its wide range of customers whether they are individuals, corporates or government and private sector institutions

MUSCAT: Meethaq Islamic Banking from Bank Muscat is the most popular and leading Islamic banking services provider in Oman and since its launch in 2012, it has been contributing to changing the landscape in the Omani banking sector.

Through multiple steps and initiatives, Meethaq today offers a full suite of Sharia-compliant retail, corporate banking and wholesale banking products and services to its wide range of customers whether they are individuals, corporates or government and private sector institutions. Meethaq has been actively supporting Oman's economic development with its ever-growing suite of Islamic finance products and services, which provides banking solutions for sectors ranging from real estate and housing to manufacturing, energy, retail and food production. The many successes and achievements of Meethaq in partnering in the growth and development of Oman was highlighted during the media visit organised by Meethaq at the Bank Muscat Head Office to celebrate its 10th anniversary. Journalists and media professionals from over 30 different media houses attended the event, which was held in the presence of Shamzani Mohammed Hussain, General Manager – Meethaq Islamic Banking. During the media visit, the journalists were introduced to the world class Islamic banking products, services and facilities offered by Meethaq to its wide range of customers.

Modern banking products and services
Speaking on the occasion, Sami Arfah Bait Rashid, Assistant General Manager – Meethaq Personal Banking, explained about the products, services and banking facilities that Meethaq offers to its retail customers. He explained how Meethaq has been delivering world class innovative Islamic banking products and services in the Sultanate driven by its strong customer-centric vision. Meethaq products include savings accounts, current accounts, debit and credit cards, Hafawa Premier Banking, takaful options including motor, life and critical illness coverage plans as well as financing solutions for homes, cars, education, travel, household goods, and personal finance.



In line with its excellent customer-centric vision and full commitment to offer a world-class Islamic banking experience, Meethaq has established the largest Islamic branch network in Oman consisting of 12 branches in Muscat and 12 branches across other governorates. In addition to its already excellent network of branches, Meethaq has a dedicated network of over 40 ATMs/CDMs while also providing free access to about 800 ATMs and CDMs of Bank Muscat across the country for customers to conduct their banking transactions with ease. Customers can also benefit from the world-class Mobile and Internet banking facilities as well as access to a state-of-the-art call centre, which is easily reachable at 24656666.

Sami Bait Rashid explained that Meethaq is committed to continuous investments in the latest technologies to increase the efficiency of services, products and improved customer services, with a focus on a multi-channel approach to enhance efficiencies and to launch new products and services which meet both the current and future needs of its customers.

Supporting institutions and corporates
Speaking about Meethaq's contributions to the Corporate Banking space Ali Ahmed Al Lawati, Assistant General Manager - Meethaq Corporate Banking, explained how Meethaq is playing an essential role in supporting the economic sector in general, and the industrial sector in particular, as it is the preferred choice for companies whether in the investment side or benefiting from the banking facilities. He added that Meethaq's large suite of cutting-edge Islamic banking offerings include project financing, working capital facilities, trade financing, access to the largest Islamic banking branch network in the Sultanate, and digital banking facilities.

Meethaq strongly believes in the tremendous investment prospects and opportunities for growth that the Sultanate of Oman provides and hence, it constantly develops new solutions, products and services to support Oman's economic development. Today as part of its alignment to Oman Vision 2040 and the 10th 5-year plan, Meethaq is providing banking and financial services and facilities to diverse and vital sectors of the Sultanate including manufacturing, agriculture, fisheries, mining, logistics, education, and scientific research. Throughout the past, Meethaq has been continuously working on improving its services and supporting the corporate sector in enhancing its competitiveness by providing a variety of banking facilities. Meethaq's services include capital finance, term and project finance, contract finance, trade services, currency exchange services and tailored financing solutions for corporates based on their business needs. Other essential solutions offered by Meethaq include bank guarantees to third parties as well as Letters of Credit. These solutions facilitate the import and export of goods and the completion of various contracts for large entities.

Meethaq's services also cover accounts like current accounts, deposits and call accounts and corporate purchase cards. Moreover, it offers special services related to transfers, collection of cheques,

digital services, payment and currency services. All of these are designed in accordance with Islamic Sharia-compliant contracts such as Murabaha, Musharaka, Ijarah and Wakala amongst others. The products and services are available through the extended network of 24 Meethaq branches across the Sultanate. Meethaq Islamic Banking also offers a variety of banking solutions including the Ijarah financing solution and Diminishing Musharaka. Other essential solutions offered by Meethaq include bank guarantees to third parties as well as Letters of Credit, liquidity management solutions and Foreign Exchange services.

Ali Al Lawati also stressed on the importance of SMEs and sustainable development for Oman. Meethaq's Shariah-compliant SME solutions are well designed by keeping in mind the essential role that SMEs play in supporting the Sultanate's economy and Oman's 2040 vision. From this point of view, Meethaq's SME solutions, products and services are highly innovative helping its customers to grow their businesses. Recently, Meethaq launched dedicated desks for SMEs and Corporates at its branches in Ruwi, Al Khuwayr, Al Khoudh and the Head Office. Before concluding his presentation, he thanked corporate customers for their strong trust and confidence and explained how Meethaq continued to use their feedback and suggestions as well as global financial trends to develop new cutting-edge products that meet customer aspirations.

Exclusive benefits and offers
Meethaq is keen to provide added value to its different customer segments through various exclusive benefits and privileges. In this regard, Meethaq's Hafawa Visa Signature Credit Card, which is based

on the Sharia-compliant concept of Ujrah, offers up to 52-days profit-free credit period and is accepted worldwide at more than 30 million locations. Cardholders are also provided coverage against accidental damage or loss and this coverage extends to goods purchased online. In addition, Hafawa Visa Signature Credit cardholders have access to value-added benefits at over 900 luxury hotels around the world including automatic room upgrades (subject to availability), free in-room Internet and valet parking, complimentary continental breakfast, late check-outs, VIP Guest status and vouchers for free food and beverages. Meethaq's various credit cards are compliant with the principles and provisions of Islamic Sharia, whereby the cardholder pays a fixed fee for the various services and benefits offered by the card and does not pay any interest. Cardholders enjoy up to 52 days of credit, 24x7 cash withdrawal facility from ATMs worldwide and access to secure online shopping. Other benefits include travel takaful for tickets purchased with the card, excellent discounts and offers at a number of merchant partners across the globe, contactless POS transactions and wide acceptance at more than 30 million points of sale. Customers also benefit from Meethaq's Easy Payment Plan (EPP), wherein they can pay for their high-ticket purchases at selected merchant partners over a period of 12 months without having to pay any additional fees for the extended credit facility.

Social responsibility
Meethaq has also been playing an active role in the field of social responsibility over the years. In 2022, Meethaq extended its strong support to Siraj Education Endowment Foundation by providing the necessary facilities for collecting contributions, donations and aid from the public through its various channels including its large network of branches, ATMs, CDMs and FFM as well as Internet and Mobile Banking platforms. Earlier, in partnership with the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Meethaq also launched an awareness campaign to encourage the public to participate in the development of society through their individual contributions. Meethaq continues to use all the media channels available at its disposal, including print, radio, television and social media, to promote to the public the role of endowments in societal development and harmony. Meethaq's initiative is very much in line with its commitment to enhance Public-Private Partnership in various fields and sectors in Oman.

Recognition and accolades
Every Meethaq product goes through the process of Shari'a compliance certification by its Shari'a Supervisory Board and is created in line with the guidelines of the Central Bank of Oman. Meethaq's adoption of AAOFI standards (Accounting & Auditing Organisation for Islamic Financial Institutions) further distinguishes Meethaq Islamic banking practices in terms of standardisation of its products and services complementing its world-class Islamic banking experience. Meethaq groundbreaking role continues to be well recognised with it garnering a number of international and local awards and accolades. Meethaq recently won the GIFA Market Leadership Award (Islamic Banking Window Operations) at the Global Islamic Finance Awards and the Best Islamic Digital Bank in Oman from Global Finance. Earlier, Meethaq was also recognised as Oman's Most Trusted Islamic Banking brand.



Offer valid from 14th August to 13th November 2022.
Existing Oman Oasis 5 Gallon returnable bottle customers and Oasis Water Company employees are not eligible for the offer.

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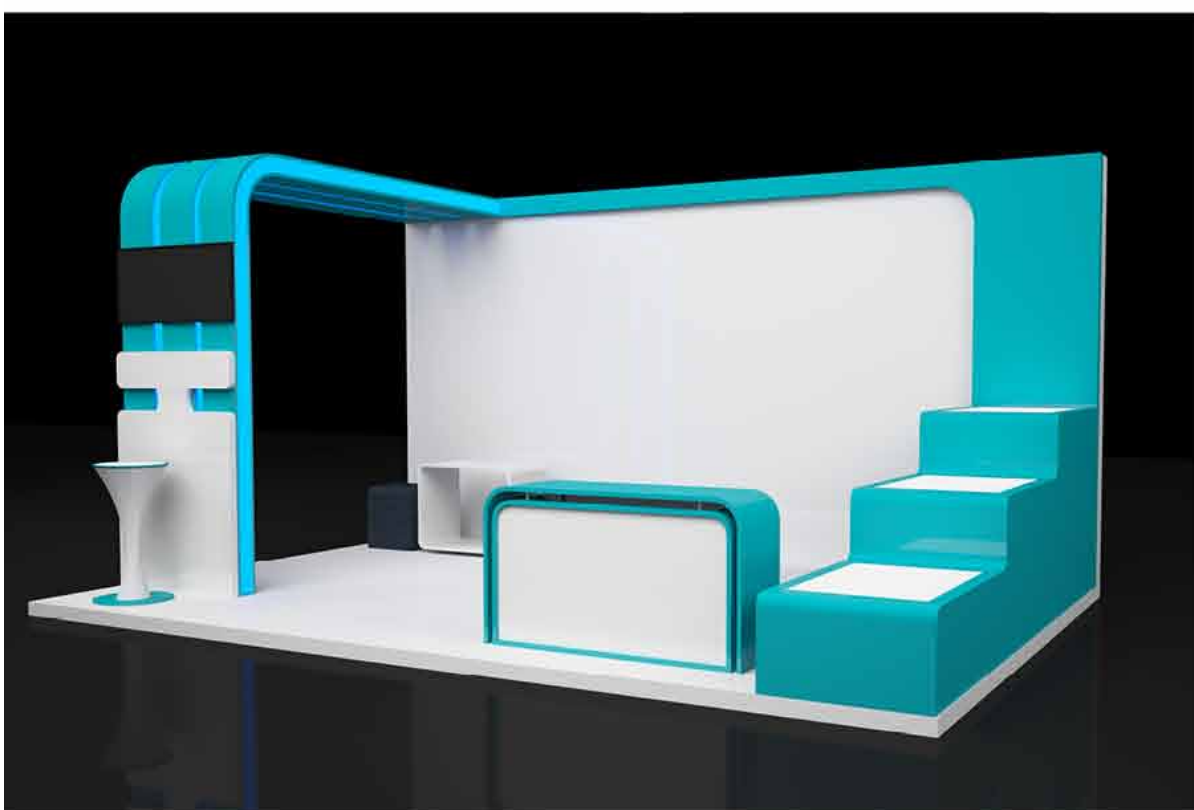
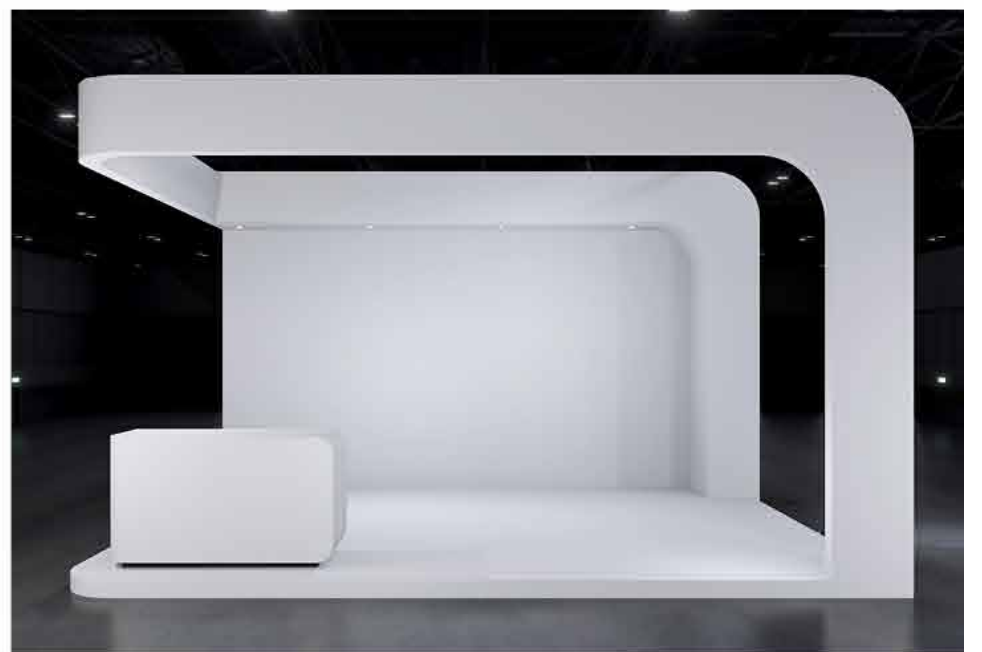
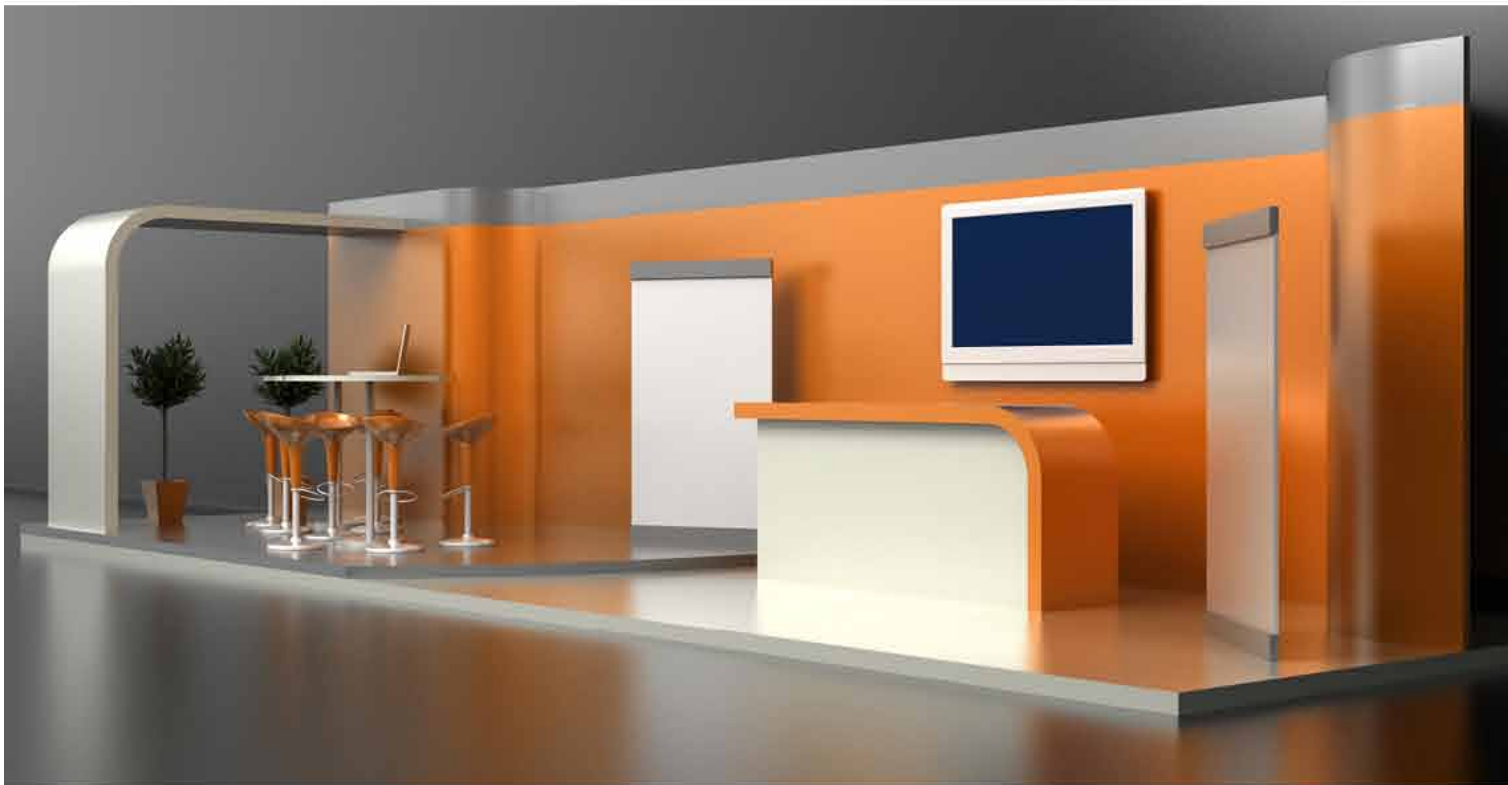
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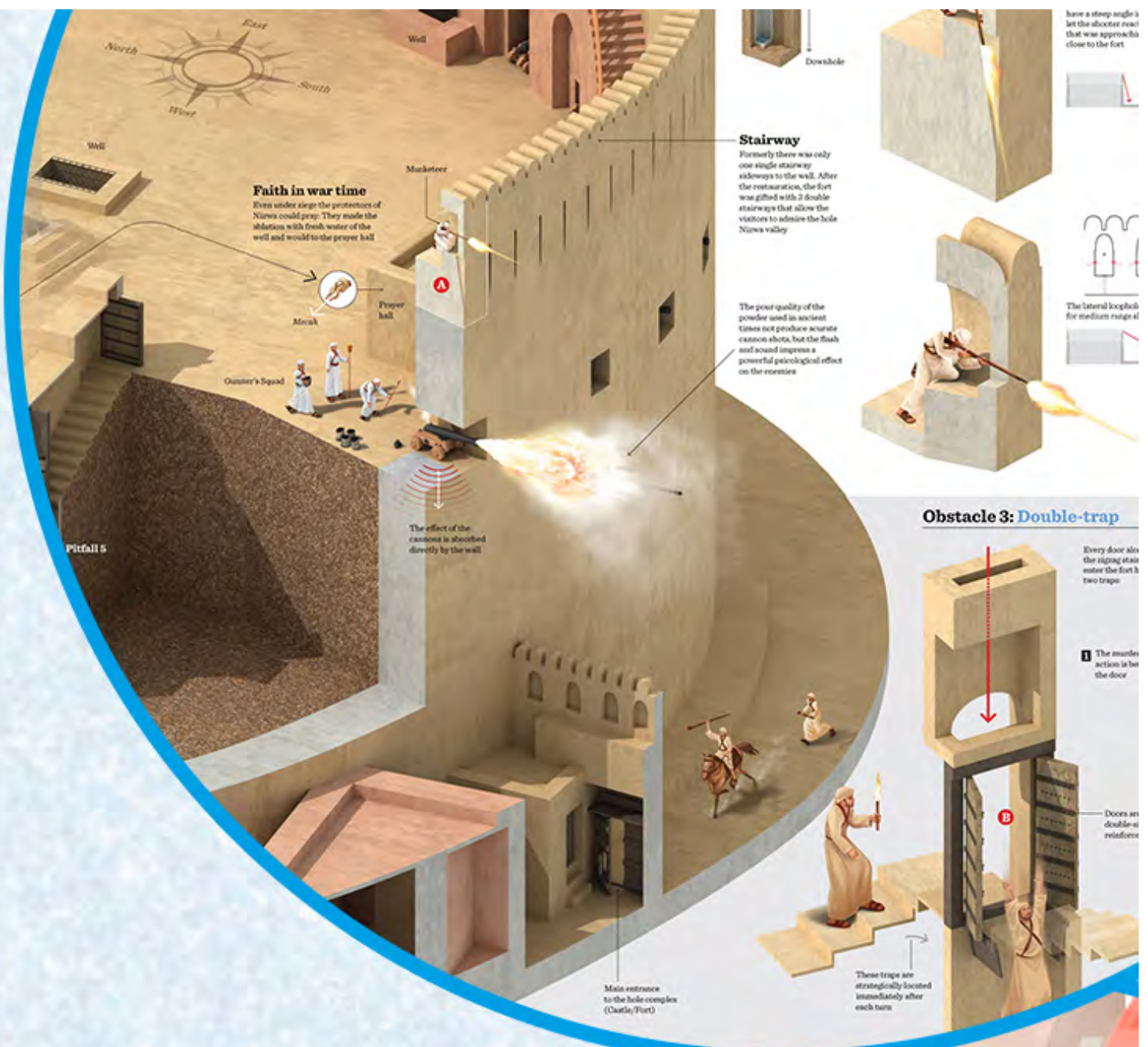
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