

OMAN PERFUME
SHOW 2022 TO BEGIN
ON FEBRUARY 1

Oman Convention and
Exhibition Centre (OCEC)
will organise the "Oman
Perfume Show 2022"
on 1 February 2022. **>A5**



HM RECEIVES THANKS CABLE

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia in reply to His Majesty's condolences cable to him on the death of Prince Nahar Saud Abdulaziz Al Saud. In the cable, King Salman expressed his sincere appreciation for His Majesty the Sultan's heartfelt sympathies and sincere prayers. He prayed to Allah the Almighty to rest the bereaved's soul in peace in paradise and to protect His Majesty against all harm. **-ONA**



Founded 1975 · Volume 46 No. 215 | 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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MEETING

On behalf of HM, Sayyid Asa'ad bids farewell to ambassadors



MUSCAT: On behalf of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, His Highness Sayyid Asa'ad bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs, Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan received separately in his office on Wednesday Mizanur Rahman, Ambassador of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the Sultanate of Oman and Toshinori Kobayashi, Ambassador of Japan to the Sultanate of Oman, to bid them farewell at the end of their tasks.

The two ambassadors expressed their thanks to His Majesty the Sultan for the support extended to them during their tour of duty in Oman from His Majesty, the Government and the Omani people, which had enabled them to carry out their tasks.

They also expressed their best wishes of good health, happiness and long life to His Majesty the Sultan, wishing the Sultanate of Oman further progress and growth under the wise leadership of His Majesty. **>A4**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Omani-Bahraini firm gets OCCI nod

1 The board of directors of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), in its 6th meeting for 2021, gave the go-ahead to the establishment of a joint Omani-Bahraini company. **>A5**

SPORTS

India need 6 wickets to beat South Africa

2 India need six wickets to win the first Test against South Africa as the match enters the final day at SuperSport Park, Centurion. At stumps, the Proteas were 94/4. **>B6**

MARKET Crude terminal to operate from Q2



3 The crude storage terminal at Ras Markaz in the Wilayat of Duqm, Al Wusta Governorate, assumes significance as a vital project undertaken by Oman Tank Terminal Company (OTTTCO) due to its strategic location in the vicinity of nascent markets in Asia and Africa. **>B1**



Royal Air Force of Oman marks graduation of new recruits

A5

DIVORCE RATE IN OMAN DROPS BY EIGHT PERCENT

Muscat recorded the highest number of divorces and was followed by North Al Batinah while Musandam reported the lowest number of divorces

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's divorce rate fell by more than eight per cent in 2020, according to figures released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The divorce rate last year fell by 8.1 percent, reflecting a decrease of 192 divorce cases between Omanis, and 17 cases between nationals of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Omani women, the NCSI revealed in its Marriage and Divorce Bulletin 2021.

3,426 divorce certificates were issued in Oman last year, which

came up to about nine a day. Muscat recorded the highest number of divorces, at 796, followed by North Al Batinah (672), while Musandam had the lowest number of divorces (18).

There has also been an increase in the number of marriage certificates issued, with 2.1 per cent more issued in 2020, compared to 2019. 18,621 marriage certificates were issued in 2020, with 3,938 of them issued in North Al Batinah, an 11 per cent increase compared to the previous year.

Muscat also recorded an increase in the number of marriage certificates issued, climbing 1.9 per

cent to register a total of 3,354 certificates. Musandam Governorate came at the bottom of the list with 104 certificates issued in 2020, a decrease of 31.1 per cent compared to 2019. NCSI data also indicated a decrease of 180 marriages between Omanis and expatriates in 2020. The number of Omanis married to GCC women also declined by 49, compared to 2019.

Additionally, the number of Omani women married to GCC citizens decreased by 65. The number of Omani women getting wedded to expatriates also fell by 53 marriages in 2020.

According to figures from the

NCSI, the number of expatriates in Oman has fallen from 1,745,714 at the start of 2021, to 1,720,955 on 28 December. Expatriates make up about 38 per cent of Oman's population.

During this period of nearly 12 months, the number of Omanis in the country has risen from 2,735,991 to 2,803,608.

Overall, the population of the country has risen from 4,481,705 on 1 January to 4,524,563 on 28 December. The highest proportion of expatriates live in Muscat (737,523, as of November 2021), while the population count for Omanis is in North Al Batinah (562,326), followed by the capital (555,712).



INITIATIVE

Create your Film in Oman campaign launched at Expo 2020

Times News Service

MUSCAT: 15 films were screened by the Oman Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai, between 26 and 28 December, as part of efforts to promote the "Create your Film in Oman" initiative.

The effort aims to get more filmmakers to come to Oman and shoot their productions in the midst of the country's natural beauty and varied terrain, while also providing more technical opportunities for people in the country. The event was organised by the Oman Film and Theatre Society to help showcase all that the country has to offer to filmmakers.

The event also happened to be planned around World Cinema Day, which was also commemorated at the Expo.

"On the occasion of World Cinema Day, a number of Omani directors who won awards at international festivals were honoured during the visit of the members of the Film and Theatre Society to the Sultanate's pavilion at Dubai Expo 2020 to promote the 'Create your Film in Oman' campaign,"

said a statement from the team at Oman's pavilion.

To encourage Omani students to experience the myriad cultures from all over the world that are present in Dubai during the expo, a trip was organised for them to travel to the event, by the Ministry

of Culture, Sports and Youth.

The trip aims to open the doors of communication with Omani youth and provide them with new experiences when they visit the pavilions, which contributes to increasing their knowledge, said Oman News Agency.

On the sidelines of the visit, the students attended the closing of the film festival, which was held under the patronage of His Excellency Saeed bin Sultan Al Bussaidi, Undersecretary for Culture at the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth.



The screening of the films aims to get more filmmakers from across the world to come to the Sultanate of Oman and shoot their film productions in the midst of the country's renowned natural beauty and varied terrain, while also providing more technical opportunities for the country's people

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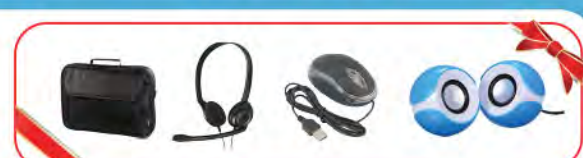
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KHAZAEN

Pact signed to set up home furniture unit

MUSCAT: Khazaen Economic City signed an investment contract with Al Nameer Advanced Enterprises Company to set up the first home furniture factory to the tune of OMR1 million as a first phase.

The contract was signed by Eng. Salim Sulaiman Al Thuhli, CEO of Khazaen, and Mohammed Baqwain, CEO of Al Nameer.

Al Thuhli said that Khazaen Economic City has been selected as venue to the factory due to the prospective growth of the city, which will give the home furniture unit access to markets in the Middle East and Africa. -ONA



PASI

Female contractors allowed to hire expats

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Female contractors in Oman are allowed to hire expatriates, provided they meet certain conditions, the Ministry of Labour has said.

"Female contractors can hire non-Omani workers, provided those contractors are engaged full-time to manage their commercial establishments, are registered with the Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI), and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority," said a ministry official, speaking to *Times of Oman*. The clarification came following the issuance of a circular confirming the hiring capabilities of female contractors, which was issued by Nasr bin Amer bin Shuwain Al Hosani, Undersecretary for Labour at the Ministry of Labour.

The official added, in clarification to this circular, "non-Omani workforce relates to males in construction work, engineering consultancy and the like related to contracting activity. This does not include the recruitment of non-Omani female workforce in contracting roles."

COVID-19

Agreement signed for medical equipment



SALALAH: The Ministry of Health, represented by the Directorate General of Health Services in the Governorate of Dhofar yesterday signed an agreement with Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) to provide medical equipment for Sultan Qaboos Hospital in Salalah.

As per the agreement, the Hospital will be equipped with

oxygen generating machines for respiratory patients, including COVID-19.

The agreement was signed by Dr. Khalid Mohammed Al Mashikhi, Director General of Health Services in Dhofar, and Eng. Mohammed Ahmed Al Ghareebi, PDO's External Affairs and Communications Manager.

-ONA

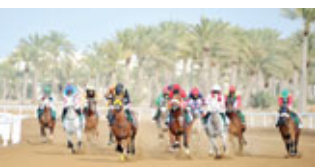
BARKA

Al Rahba Racecourse to witness horse race

MUSCAT: The Royal Horse Racing Club (RHRC) will organise today the 9th horse race of the season on Al Rahba racecourse in the Wilayat of Barka.

The 8 rounds of the race will see the participation of more than 120 horses. Six rounds will be dedicated for pure Arabian horses and two rounds for thoroughbred horses.

The race will be held in accordance with preventive measures against COVID-19 set by the Supreme Committee tasked with tackling developments resulting from coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. -ONA



FAREWELL

FROM A1 Sayyid Asa'ad thanks envoys

In his turn, His Highness Sayyid Asa'ad expressed his utmost thanks to the ambassadors for the efforts they exerted in serving relations between Oman and their countries, wishing them permanent success, and the peoples of

Bangladesh and Japan further progress and prosperity.

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

-ONA



Ministry of Defence

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Defence invites MOD registered suppliers to participate in the following tender:

Subject	Tender Number	Last Date for Inquiries	Last Date to Obtain Tender	Tender Documnet Price per copy (RO)
Supply of refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, and water coolers for modes	39/2021	17/01/2022	24/01/2022	995 RO

- Tenders documents and terms may be obtained on payment from the office of the Secretary of the Tender Committee, gate No. 14 of MAM Camp between 0900 to 1300 hrs on the working days.
- Payment of Tender documents to be made by using of any Visa Electron Cards or "Visa credit" Cards or through Smart Card issued from all the banks are operated in oman

MUSCAT: The Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI) yesterday held its 4th meeting of 2021 under the chairmanship of Dr. Mahad Said Ba'Owain, Minister of Labour, Chairman of PASI Board.

The meeting discussed PASI's institutional performance indicators for 2021 linked to the Authority's 2040 vision, as well as its investment performance indicators. It also approved the investment budget of PASI for 2022. The board also looked into statistical and financial indicators associated with job security. It comprised the number of beneficiaries and their distribution in accordance with the service termination types.



The board approved a number of investment opportunities figuring in the second phase of

execution of the PASI plan of the year. It also studied audit and financial reports about the Authority's activities, besides reports related to enhancing governance.

-ONA

INVITATION TO TENDER (RE-TENDER)

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

Tender Reference	DISC/E/Tender/2021/100
Subject	Emergency & Maintenance and Housekeeping Services for 33/11 kV Primary / Grid Substations
Tender Fee	RO. 105.000 Inclusive VAT (5%) 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	The Service Provider should have performed "Emergency and Maintenance Services for 33/11KV Primary Substations 2 x 20 MVA indoor equipment's , 3 x 20 MVA indoor equipment's and Grid Stations 33kv Gas Insulated Switchgears" Contract with the Owner or any other similar utility in Oman for more than 5 years (For the purpose of evaluation the past experience beyond last 10 years cannot be considered).
Pre-qualification	Contractors participating in the tendering process shall be registered electrical contractor with Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP) Grade – A 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.
Last date for issue of tender documents	03:00 PM on 6 th January 2022
Site Visit	-
Last date for seeking pre-bid clarifications	-
Last date for providing pre-bid clarifications	-
Last date for submission of bids	02:00 PM on 13 th January 2022
Any Queries Please Contact	Phone 23232554, prurchase@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 | ص ب ٢٦٩٠ | الزمر البريدي ٢٨ | شارع ٢٢/٢ بوليفو خلف مركز صلاة العريفة الصحي | صلالة - محافظة ظفار | الرقم المبحاني ٨٠٠٧٧٧٠٠
 P.O. Box: 2609, P.C.: 211, 23rd July Street, behind West Salalah Health Center Salalah, Sultanate of Oman - Toll Free: 80077700
 info@disc.nama.om | www.disc.nama.om



INVITATION TO TENDER (RE-TENDER)

Dhofar Integrated Services Company S.A.O.C (DISC) invites reputable Manufacturer/Supplier/Dealer firm in Sultanate of Oman.

Tender Reference No	DISC/E/Tender/2021/128
Title of the Tender	Supply of Padlocks
Tender Fee	RO. 105.000 Inclusive VAT (5%) Note: Tenderer who wish to participate in the above said tender should collect the tender document from DISC's office or send an e-mail to below mention mail id for tender document.
Experience	The Tenderer should be a Manufacturer or an approved local supplier/ dealer with valid trade license and registered at Chamber of Commerce in Sultanate of Oman to supply padlock and shall have relevant experience in the same field.
Pre-qualification	The intended tenderer shall submit documentary evidence for Manufacturer's agreement/documents with Authorized Dealer/Supplier.
Last date for issue of tender documents	03:00 PM on 13 th January 2022
Site Visit	-
Last date for seeking pre bid clarification	03:00 PM on 17 th January 2022
Last date for response pre bid clarification	03:00 PM on 19 th January 2022
Last date for submission of bids	02:00 PM on 26 th January 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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GRADUATION



Royal Air Force of Oman marks graduation of new recruits

MUSCAT: The Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO) celebrated the graduation of a new batch of recruits at Adam Air Base on Wednesday after completing their military training and qualification process.

The ceremony was held under the auspices of Air Commodore Ali Mubarak Al Ameri, Commander of Ghala Air Base and Commandant of Sultan Qaboos Air Academy.

The graduation ceremony was attended by a number of RAFO senior officers, commissioned and non-commissioned officers, personnel and the graduates' parents. -ONA



Omani-Bahraini firm setting up gets OCCI nod

To be set up with a capital of OMR10 million, the firm will comprise chambers of commerce and businessmen from both countries



MEETING: The meeting was chaired by Eng. Ridha Juma Al Saleh, Chairman of OCCI.

MUSCAT: The board of directors of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), in its 6th meeting for 2021, gave the go-ahead to the establishment of a joint Omani-Bahraini company with a capital of OMR10 million.

The company will comprise chambers of commerce and businessmen from both countries.

The meeting was chaired by Eng. Ridha Juma Al Saleh, Chairman of OCCI.

The Board agreed to provide annual funding of OMR5,000 to the "Made in Oman" campaign.

The move aims to support, develop and expand the presence of Omani products to compete locally, regionally and internationally.

The meeting also discussed the aspirations of the private sector

The OCCI Board also agreed to provide annual funding of OMR5,000 to the "Made in Oman" campaign

about the current circumstances and the decisions taken by government units.

The board is currently prepar-

ing a comparative study on the fees imposed on the private sector in Oman and the rest of the GCC countries, in addition to putting forward some proposals that boost the economy and empower the private sector.

The board also discussed the importance of establishing a centre for exhibitions and conventions in the Governorate of Dhofar.

OCCI will invest in various stock portfolios regionally and internationally.

The meeting also approved initiatives for OCCI members, who hold "Riada" cards, by bearing 50% of the cost of participation in exhibitions organised by the chamber in Oman and abroad. -ONA

Trending ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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The suggestion came during a meeting of the council's Health and Environment Committee.



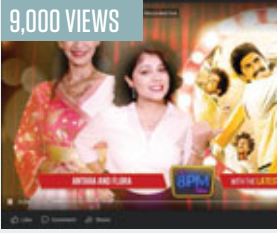


Story on a recommendation by the Shura Council to make PCR tests more affordable

A story on a recommendation by the Shura Council to make PCR tests more affordable reached 38,763 people and had 3,948 engagements on Facebook.

MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

9,000 VIEWS



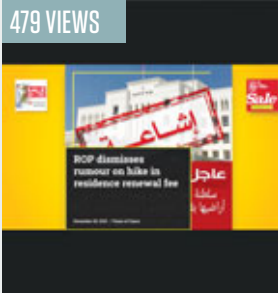


SPM show on the latest updates from Bollywood

The SPM show on the latest updates from Bollywood had 9,000 views and reached 35,600 people on Facebook.

MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

479 VIEWS





Morning Minute video

Oman Perfume Show 2022 to start on February 1



MUSCAT: Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC) will organise the "Oman Perfume Show 2022" on 1 February 2022.

The five-day event is considered one of the prominent exhibitions specialised in perfumes, incense and frankincense products.

In a statement to Oman News Agency (ONA), Eng. Said Salim Al Shanfari, CEO of Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC) said that the "Oman Perfume Show 2022" is an ideal platform for perfume traders to showcase the competitive features of

their brands.

He added that more than 100 local, regional and international trademarks will be present in the exhibition. A fashion show and other live events will be held on the sidelines of "Oman Perfume Show 2022". -ONA



U.S. EMBASSY - MUSCAT

ONLINE AUCTION SALE OF USED ITEMS

The U.S. Embassy Muscat is auctioning used household and office furniture, furnishings, appliances, computers and IT equipment by online auction.

Interested bidders may view the auction items online starting on December 28, 2021 by going to <https://online-auction.state.gov/en-US>. Bidding will open December 30 at 09:00. Bidders must first register on the site before placing a bid.

All items offered for sale will be sold "as is, where is," which means that there is no warranty, either expressed or implied. Bidding closes on January 3, 2022 at 14:00.

Successful bidders will be notified on January 4, 2022. At that point, they must make full payment of all lots won. Payment instructions are listed in the "How to pay for your items" section in the "How it works" link on the auction page. Full and complete payments must be received in the U.S. Embassy bank account no later than January 8.

Successful bidders with fully paid lots may collect their goods on January 15 at the Ghala warehouse.



**Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Health**

ANNOUNCEMENT

Invitation no	Subject	Eligible company to Participate	Last Date of Purchase	Qualification Submission Closing Date
1/2021	Pre-qualification to participate in Service of Providing Specialized Professionals from outside Sultanate of Oman to work in Various Health Establishments at The Ministry of Health	Specialized Local Companies registered with The General Secretariat of the Tender Board	Thursday 06/01/2022	Wednesday 19/01/2022

Document can be obtain through the Esnad Service on the website <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> until the last date of purchase

Qualification documents must be submitted through the Esnad service on the above-mentioned website before 8 o'clock in the morning of the day specified for bid submission. The document submitted after this date and time will not be considered, whatever the reasons for the delay.

The Ministry of Health is not bound accept any Qualification



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COVID SURGE

Australia to ease testing rules amid COVID-19 surge

SYDNEY: Australia needs “a gear change” to manage testing requirements, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said on Wednesday, announcing that the country was easing its COVID-19 testing rules to cope with an Omicron-fuelled surge in infections.

This change would entail re-defining who qualifies as a close contact and the furlough of virus-exposed workers.



“We just can't have everybody just being taken out of circulation because they just happen to be at a particular place at a particular time,” the prime minister said.

Once the proposed rules on close contacts kick in, most people would not have to get PCR tests or isolate themselves.

This would cut long lines at testing sites and end 72-to-96-hour waits for lab results. **AW**



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



Founder: Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali
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Deputy Editor-in-Chief: Anees bin Essa Al Zedjali
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ADVERTISING: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24812624, E-mail: advertising@timesofoman.com
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Another Hong Kong media company shuts down following police raids

More than 200 national security police officers were deployed to raid the offices of Stand News



HONG KONG: Months after the closure of the pro-democracy newspaper *Apple Daily*, another Hong Kong-based media company-- *Stand News*-- has announced that it is halting operation after seven years and removing all contents.

This comes hours after a police raid and seven arrests on Wednesday. The authorities have frozen the assets worth HK\$61 million, Hong Kong Free Press reported. Earlier in the day, more than 200 national security police officers were deployed to raid the

offices of Stand News.

As many as seven current or former senior staff members of the Hong Kong online media company were arrested on suspicion of breaching the colonial-era Crimes Ordinance by conspiring to publish seditious publications, the publication added.

This development comes a day as Hong Kong media tycoon Jimmy Lai and six other former staff members of the tabloid *Apple Daily* are set to face an additional

sedition charge, under the Beijing-imposed national security law.

Steve Li, senior superintendent of the Police National Security Department has said that the arrested individuals held “important roles in the company’s editorial direction and strategy.”

During the newsroom raid, officers found computers, mobile phones and HK\$500,000 in cash, he said, adding that other arrest warrants have been issued.

Li accused Stand News of pub-

lishing “seditious materials” between the enactment of the security law last June and November 2021 with intent to cause hatred towards the government, the judiciary and cause discontent among the public, which may lead them to disobey the law or the government’s orders.

In recent months, crack-downs against news organisations and pro-democracy activists have intensified.

Early in June, *Apple Daily* witnessed similar actions by authorities. It was later shut down.

Just after the raid on the newsroom of *Apple Daily*, Stand News removed all opinion pieces from their website in June. It also halted donations as six of the board’s eight members stepped down.

“These cases have been to court. Did we see this happening? Is there evidence? These were examples of sedition,” Li said. “There is strong evidence showing that this online media and other so-called ‘international front’ [activists] conspired to incite hatred towards the government, and endangered nationals security through its platform.” **ANI**

Three shipwrecks in Aegean Sea leave dozens dead and many missing

NEW YORK: At least 31 people lost their lives in three separate shipwrecks over the course of four days last week in the Aegean Sea, and an unknown number are still missing, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) said on Tuesday.

According to the UN agency, between 21 and 24 December more than 160 people were rescued by Greece’s UN refugee agency- with support from the navy and air force, as well as merchant and private vessels. Commending those efforts, Maria-Clara Martin, UNHCR’s representative in Greece, said “it is heart-rending that, out of despair and in the absence of safe pathways, refugees and migrants feel compelled to entrust their lives to ruthless smuggler”.

“More resolute action is needed to curb people smuggling and stop those who exploit human misery and despair. It is disheartening to see preventable tragedies like these repeating themselves. We should not get used to seeing bodies being recovered from the sea”, she added.

The first shipwreck took place off Folegandros island on 21 De-



cember, with 13 people rescued and three male bodies recovered.

One survivor told the Hellenic Coast Guard that as many as 50 people may have been onboard the boat that carried them without any safety equipment.

The second shipwreck, north of Antikythera island, resulted in the loss of 11 lives, while 88 people were rescued.

And on Christmas Eve, a boat carrying at least 80 passengers capsized off the island of Paros, claiming the lives of 17 people, including a baby.

Sixty-three survivors were rescued and brought to Paros, where local authorities and island residents rushed to assist them with blankets, food and clothes. **ANI**

CONDOLENCES



Muscat Media Group offer their sincere condolences to our colleague and Managing Editor of *Times of Oman* **RAHUL DAS** on the sad demise of his mother **BANI DAS**

May Her Soul Rest in Peace





MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER
The MSX index closed at 4,136.24 points, down 0.12 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 1.27 per cent at 529.86 points. Al Anwar Ceramics, up 2.86 per cent, was the top gainer while, Oman Flour Mills down 8.12 per cent, was the top loser.

OFFICIAL OPENING

Bank Nizwa financed Khazaen Dry Port commences operations



Times News Service

MUSCAT: As the Sultanate's leading Islamic bank, Bank Nizwa is in strong alignment with the country's diversification plans and has taken several initiatives to contribute to the development of various sectors. The bank celebrated and marked the official opening of the Khazaen Dry Port, which falls under the pillars of the National Logistics Strategy 2040. Bank Nizwa had recently ex-

tended financing facilities to help build the dry port. The agreement was signed by Khalid Al Kayed, CEO of Bank Nizwa and Dr Ahmed Mohammed Al Abri, Chairman of Khazaen Dry Port. The signing ceremony was held in presence of senior members of Bank Nizwa including General Manager- Wholesale Banking Narasimhan. From Khazaen Dry Port, the ceremony was attended in person by Issam Al Lawati, GM of Khazaen Dry Port.

Commenting on the financing of this national initiative, Khaled Al Kayed said, "Offering exceptional connectivity, the Khazaen Dry Port is set to serve as a transshipment point and will be a logistics hub that will link the Sultanate to a number of countries. At Bank Nizwa, we view this as an opportunity to contribute to the socio-economic and infrastructural development goals of the country as the establishment of this dry port will have numerous positive

implications on the economy. By supporting large-scale projects that offer tangible added value to the national economy, Bank Nizwa seeks to highlight the growing preference of Sharia-compliant financing while also establishing its distinct footprint in the country's journey of progression." The primary objective of Khazaen Dry Port would be to serve the Sohar Port while focusing on the trade activities in Muscat and nearby areas such as Nizwa, Sur and Ibra.

Ras Markaz crude storage terminal to start operations by 2nd quarter of 2022

The project seeks to manage and maintain an integrated network of tanks for different types of energy derivatives in the Sultanate of Oman, notably in Duqm



MUSCAT: The crude storage terminal at Ras Markaz in the Wilayat of Duqm, Al Wusta Governorate, assumes significance as a vital project undertaken by Oman Tank Terminal Company (OTTTCO) due to its strategic location in the vicinity of nascent markets in Asia and Africa. The infrastructure of the first phase of the oil storage project is ready to operate by the second quarter of 2022, said Eng. Salim Marhoon Al Hashmi, Director-General of the project. He added that Ras Markaz station has been connected via an 80km pipeline and that the facility constitutes a source of supplies for Duqm Refinery, where 8 mega tanks are dedicated for the purpose. The project has a construction area of 10 square kilometres, while the total area stands at 40 square kilometres, which means the facility has a storage capacity of 200 million barrels of oil. The project seeks to manage

and maintain an integrated network of tanks for different types of energy derivatives in the Sultanate of Oman, notably in Duqm. Ard Van Hoof, CEO of OTTTCO, said that the company has a clear-cut vision aimed to provide high-level storage services for liquid and gas products, including renewable energy products. OTTTCO boasts an infrastructure that is capable of meeting the requirements of the local and international markets. The Ras Markaz Oil Storage Project is owned 100 per cent by the government, represented by OTTTCO and was implemented in August 2019, said Al Hashmi. Al Hashmi pointed out that the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) granted OTTTCO a 40-year usufruct rights to set up an oil storage facility at Ras Markaz with effect from the date of signing the said contract on 5 July 2017. He told Oman News Agency that the Ras Markaz agreement provides for a storage capacity of 26.7 million barrels of oil in the first phase. The company will increase its capacity in tandem with the growth of demand from investors. The project consists of two

streams: The first caters to the maritime business. It is completed and it comprises an import-export floating station situated 7 kilometres from the beach, in addition to two 42-inch pipelines, Al Hashmi explained. He added that the second stream (80 per cent over) features a variety of civil tasks, mountain demolishing, oil pumping systems, water treatment, installing tanks, building a power grid and adding associated systems. The floating terminal can receive very large crude carriers (VLCC) from around the world and it has been connected with four main stations to pump crude upwards, said Al Hashmi. The Sultanate of Oman is currently leaning heavily on Mina Al Fahal for the export of crude oil, so the Ras Markaz station will add a strategic dimension to outbound crude export. The project will generate 130 direct and indirect jobs, 90 of which will be occupied during the period of operation, said Al Hashmi, noting that more employment opportunities will be provided as the facility's capacity keeps expanding. -ONA

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

China unveils plan to boost raw materials industry

BEIJING: Chinese authorities on Wednesday unveiled a plan to facilitate the development of the country's raw materials industry during the 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025). By 2025, a new development pattern for China's raw materials sector that features higher quality, better profitability and distribution, low carbon, and more security will take shape, said the plan. It was issued jointly by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and two other government bodies. The sector will become a highland for the research and development, production, and application of the world's vital raw materials. The industrial system will be safe, independent, and controllable, the plan said. Including steel, nonferrous metals, building materials, the raw materials sector has long served as the bedrock for the real economy. -Xinhua



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MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Al Anwar Ceramics, up 2.86 per cent, was the top gainer while, Oman Flour Mills down 8.12 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,136.24 points, down 0.12 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 1.27 per cent at 529.86 points. Al Anwar Ceramics, up 2.86 per cent, was the top gainer while, Oman Flour Mills down 8.12 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of OIFC were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded while Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 553 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR3.14 million, with more than 15.1 million shares changing hands. Out of 45 traded securities, 10 advanced, 10 declined and 25 remained unchanged. At the session close, foreign investors were net sell-

ers for OMR62,000 while Omani investors were net buyers for OMR62,000 followed by GCC & Arab investors for OMR0.3000 worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 6,596.46 points, down 0.13 per cent. Muscat Finance, United Finance and Global Investment Holding were up 1.75 per cent, 1.69 per cent and 1.64 per cent, respectively. Al Anwar Investment, Al Sharqia Investment and Bank Muscat were down 2.11 per cent, 1.09 per cent and 0.81 per cent respectively. Industrial Index closed at 6,024.67 points, down 0.93 per cent. Al Anwar Ceramics and NAPI were up 2.86 per cent and 0.76 per cent respectively. Services Index was up by 0.29 per cent before closing at 1,628.50 points. — **United Securities**

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,156.50	4,129.55	4,136.24	4,141.09	-4.85	-0.12
FINANCIAL INDEX	6,613.88	6,585.98	6,596.46	6,605.23	-8.77	-0.13
Industry Index	6,121.93	6,014.99	6,024.67	6,080.99	-56.31	-0.93
Services Index	1,630.26	1,625.61	1,628.50	1,623.94	4.56	0.28
MSX Shariah Index	537.13	528.38	529.87	536.69	-6.82	-1.27
MSX TR INDEX	5,011.74	4,969.32	4,977.37	4,983.20	-5.83	-0.12

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
15,096,090	3,145,990	553	22,114,732,697	10	10	25	45

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29

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

OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	547,812	236,291	72	0.450	0.450	0.416	0.432	0.420	0.012	2.857	0.430	0.422	0.440	0.100	95,040,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	285,000	15,378	11	0.058	0.058	0.057	0.058	0.057	0.001	1.754	0.057	0.057	0.058	0.100	17,814,487
OM0000002236	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	70,450	24,699	16	0.358	0.358	0.350	0.350	0.346	0.004	1.156	0.350	0.346	0.380	0.100	21,421,496
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	58,176	43,971	17	0.748	0.760	0.748	0.756	0.748	0.008	1.070	0.752	0.752	0.760	0.100	567,000,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SER	269,007	118,028	21	0.438	0.440	0.436	0.438	0.434	0.004	0.922	0.436	0.428	0.440	0.100	103,547,580
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST& FIN	3,110,000	460,288	7	0.147	0.149	0.147	0.148	0.147	0.001	0.880	0.149	0.143	0.150	0.100	35,076,000
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	743,290	282,450	22	0.380	0.380	0.380	0.380	0.378	0.002	0.529	0.380	0.380	0.380	0.100	247,358,807
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	5,000	1,200	1	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.248	0.248	0.000	0.000	0.240	0.242	0.250	0.100	49,600,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	107,893	33,407	6	0.308	0.310	0.308	0.310	0.310	0.000	0.000	0.310	0.310	0.316	0.100	207,193,282
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD	56,467	20,722	14	0.368	0.368	0.366	0.366	0.366	0.000	0.000	0.366	0.366	0.366	0.100	45,712,653
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	415,000	48,970	12	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.000	0.000	0.118	0.118	0.120	0.100	230,059,581
OM0000003986	SOHAR INT BANK	324,825	37,355	13	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.000	0.000	0.115	0.115	0.116	0.100	343,857,163
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	2,443,237	1,203,222	97	0.500	0.500	0.490	0.492	0.496	-0.004	-0.806	0.490	0.490	0.490	0.100	175,641,598
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	172,922	42,225	13	0.245	0.245	0.244	0.244	0.246	-0.002	-0.813	0.244	0.244	0.245	0.100	80,732,941
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INV	413,305	37,631	22	0.091	0.092	0.088	0.091	0.092	-0.001	-1.087	0.092	0.087	0.092	0.100	8,190,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	6,764	860	3	0.130	0.130	0.127	0.127	0.129	-0.002	-1.550	0.127	0.125	0.130	0.100	10,795,000
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	447,500	41,440	24	0.095	0.095	0.092	0.095	0.095	-0.002	-2.105	0.092	0.092	0.093	0.100	18,600,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	41,775	19,262	11	0.474	0.474	0.456	0.462	0.478	-0.016	-3.347	0.460	0.450	0.460	0.100	25,410,000
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	24,228	17,586	3	0.712	0.760	0.712	0.724	0.788	-0.064	-8.122	0.760	0.712	0.760	0.100	114,030,000
Total		19	9,523,651	2,684,985	377											

Parallel Market

OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	2,932,522	174,750	49	0.060	0.060	0.059	0.060	0.059	0.001	1.695	0.059	0.059	0.062	0.100	20,948,665
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV H	24,000	1,484	2	0.061	0.062	0.061	0.062	0.061	0.001	1.639	0.062	0.060	0.065	0.100	12,400,000
OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD	21,000	2,802	4	0.132	0.134	0.132	0.133	0.132	0.001	0.758	0.133	0.133	0.134	0.100	4,465,003
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	525,200	103,014	15	0.196	0.197	0.196	0.196	0.196	0.000	0.000	0.196	0.196	0.196	0.100	318,685,486
OM0000001517	HSCB BANK OMAN	864,187	90,172	23	0.104	0.105	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.000	0.000	0.105	0.104	0.105	0.100	208,032,530
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	82	5	1	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.000	0.000	0.056	0.056	0.059	0.100	8,873,000
OM0000001889	SALALAH MILLS	89	89	1	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	1.070	0.100	54,959,370
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INV	50,000	2,400	2	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.048	0.050	0.100	3,390,000
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	46	6	1	0.129	0.129	0.129	0.129	0.129	0.000	0.000	0.129	0.126	0.130	0.100	374,543,500
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	10,386	758	1	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.000	0.000	0.073	0.072	0.076	0.100	14,818,011
OM0000003661	VOLTAP ENERGY	741	83	1	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.000	0.000	0.112	0.106	0.112	0.100	8,117,108
OM0000003711	SOHAR POWER	1,899	74	2	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.000	0.000	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.100	8,619,390
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	263,901	25,749	14	0.097	0.098	0.097	0.098	0.098	0.000	0.000	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.100	219,221,397
OM0000005693	MADINA TAKAFUL	7,000	965	3	0.050	0.050	0.048	0.049	0.049	0.000	0.000	0.049	0.049	0.050	0.100	71,667,472
OM0000004925	ALBATHAH POWER	352,159	16,904	13	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.100	32,394,597
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	9,306	1,489	1	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.000	0.000	0.160	0.162	0.160	0.100	267,105,600
OM0000005983	PHOENIX POWER	5,7719	2,821	7	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.000	0.000	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.100	71,667,472
OM0000007084	MCT DESALINATE	714	64	1	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.090	0.081	0.090	0.100	13,999,536
OM0000007407	DHOAFAR GENERATING	30,900	2,070	3	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.000	0.000	0.067	0.065	0.067	0.100	14,800,080
OM0000007910	AMMAN REAL ESTATE	4,500	417	3	0.092	0.093	0.092	0.094	0.094	0.000	0.000	0.092	0.093	0.094	0.100	18,800,000
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	44,536	3,652	4	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.000	0.000	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.100	53,690,233
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	332,252	15,947	16	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.049	-0.001	-2.041	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.100	34,291,504
OM0000002804	ASAFYA FOODS	6,000	1,140	1	0.190	0.190	0.190	0.190	0.198	-0.008	-4.040	0.190	0.189	0.190	0.100	22,800,000
Total		23	5,539,082	446,555	168											

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

E-vehicles will be a game-changer for courier and logistics sector

AHMEDABAD: Fuel rates directly affect sectors such as courier and logistics as fuel accounts for a significant share of their costs. In this situation, the growing prevalence of electric vehicles is raising a great deal of hope.

The logistics sector is relying heavily upon E-vehicles and it

will be a game-changer for the whole industry, believes Ajay Mokariya, Managing Director, Shree Maruti Courier Services Pvt. Ltd, India.

It is estimated that by the year 2030, 30-50 per cent of the country's vehicles will be converted to electric vehicles. Commercial

use of electric vehicles has always been welcomed by the logistics sector. Large logistics companies are making active efforts to build a green supply chain in the next 5-10 years. More and more companies are adding electric vehicles to make transportation pollution-free. **ANI**

20 CITIES

US home prices surge 18.4% in October 2021

WASHINGTON: US home prices surged again in October as the housing market continues to boom in the wake of last year's coronavirus recession.

The S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller 20-city home price index, out Tuesday, climbed 18.4 per cent in October from a year earlier. The gain marked a slight deceleration from a 19.1 per cent year-over-year increase in September but was about in line with what economists had been expecting. The Associated Press reported.

All 20 cities posted double-digit annual gains. The hottest markets were Phoenix (up 32.3 per cent), Tampa (28.1 per cent) and Miami (25.7 per cent). Minneapolis and Chicago posted the smallest increases, 11.5 per cent each.

The housing market has been strong thanks to rock-bottom mortgage rates, a limited supply of homes on the market, and pent-up demand from consumers locked in last year by the pandemic. Many Americans, tired of being cooped up at home during the pandemic, are looking to trade up from apartments to homes or to bigger houses.

"Home price growth will slow further in the year ahead, but continue to go up,said Danielle Hale, chief economist at Realtor.com. **-BNA**

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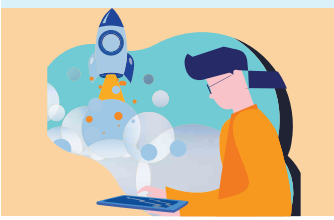
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LIFESTYLE FROM BAGGY PANTS

TO BOLD PRINTS,

HERE ARE THE FASHION TRENDS THAT RULED 2021

While some fashion trends go out of style, some make a comeback, leaving their impact on society, something we have observed time and again. 2021 wasn't quite the triumphant return to normalcy as we all hoped for, but that didn't really stop fashion-lovers to experiment with a slew of new fashion trends.

The lifting of lockdown restrictions sparked a surge in the sale of 'comfy' trousers as people returned to work after a long break.

Any fashion lover will know that the impact of fashion has been influenced by the trends in society. 2021 was an eventful year for fashion. From adhering to safety norms to setting up fashion goals, fashion-lovers did it all!

From saying goodbye to skinny jeans to scouting faux leather pants for our wardrobe, the rollercoaster of the fashion cycle was indeed incredible this year. Here are some of the 2021 fashion trends that re-structured the pre-pandemic fashion diary.

1. VIBRANT COLOURS

Sunny hue, Poppin Pink, Purple Red, Vibrant Orange, and not to forget--the Lime Green! The fashion enthusiasts goaded themselves to these mood-lifting colours after the jinx of pandemic came to some rest.

2. BOLD PRINTS

Floral, botanical and psychedelic statement prints surged this year as they acted as a mood-uplifting way to raise people's spirits amidst the pandemic.

3. IVORY SHADES

Off-white, cream, ivory — the tusk-white shades also had a huge impact on the fashion industry, mid-way through the year. These shades don't only reflect warmer temperatures, but also exude versatility, and a certain vision of luxury.

4. ANIMAL PRINT

Animal print is a trend that never goes out of style. However, it has a certain period when it gets popular — usually during the winter/fall season. The wildlife pattern prints include leopard, cheetah, snow leopard, zebra, tiger, snake, and more. This print usually signifies independence and confidence.

5. TIE-DYE PRINT

This was a major fashion trend that indeed had a 'splashy' comeback in 2020. This style has its roots in the 1960s. This fashion trend signifies comfort, nostalgia, cheeriness, and youthfulness.

6. FUNKY PANTS

Mom jeans were the number one denim silhouette fashion-lovers used to include in their wardrobe. We said goodbye to the millennial-beloved skinny jeans and welcomed the boot cuts, 70s wide-legged jeans, '90s skater jeans. Bold printed pants also made their structured place in our wardrobes.

7. FAUX LEATHER PANTS

With flares and baggy jeans in trend, we also saw the rise of faux leather pants in 2021. Leather pants did go out of fashion for some time, but to bring the glamour back — dramatic faux leather pants were seen in full swing this year; and if you are also somebody to go with the trend, you must have at least three to four pairs of leather pants in your closet.

8. CORSET TOPS

This body-hugging silhouette has been one of the major fashion trends for the year 2021. The corset tops were not fully out of trend but became much more popular in late 2021.

9. CUSTOMISED FUNKY JEWELLERY

Mismatched jewellery, chunky monochrome rings, thick chains, stone necklaces, golden jewellery, scrunchies, whimsical beads, colourful chunky bangles — were some of the popular jewellery trends of 2021.

10. CHUNKY LOAFERS

When it comes to footwear, sneakers and killer heels were almost nowhere to be seen and instead were replaced with chunky and thick chained sandals, also called loafers. Bringing back the Charlier Chaplin times, the dramatic chunky loafers were popping everywhere, becoming the most popular shoes of 2021.

These are the most popular fashion trends of the year 2021. While some fashion enthusiasts and celebs made style statements with comfy fashion, many opted to outshine the 'power' dressing inclusive of shimmer and shine to compensate for all the lost time on the red carpets and on-screen drama. -ANI



S

SPORTS

SOUTH AFRICA VS INDIA

SA need 283 runs to win first Test against India

CENTURION: South Africa need 283 runs to win the first Test against India with four sessions left for the Boxing Day game. After India were folded in the second session on Wednesday, in nine overs bowled, South Africa lost a wicket in the tricky phase. The Proteas went into Tea at 22/1 with 283 runs more required to win. In the second session, India lost seven wickets as South Africa folded the visitors for 174 in the second innings. **ANI**

ICC UNDER-19

Oman umpire picked to officiate in ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup



MUSCAT: Senior Oman umpire Rahul Asher has been nominated to officiate in the 50-over ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup, scheduled to be held in the West Indies from January 15 to February 5, 2022. Sixteen teams will play a total of 48 matches in the 14 th edition of the tournament which is being hosted by The Caribbean for the first time. A regular at ICC and ACC competitions for quite some time now, Rahul is excited to be officiating at the highest level. “Firstly, I would like to thank Oman Cricket and ICC for believing in me to officiate at such a higher level. I would also like to thank my mentors for shaping me to this level. It is indeed the biggest opportunity so far for me and it feels immensely proud to represent Oman in such a prestigious event. This is the platform every umpire wants to reach,” said Rahul. When asked how did he prepare for such top level events and were they any different to standard cricket matches, he said one had to be a good person to be a good umpire.

CRICKET ROUND-UP

Latif powers Ghubrah to another win, Hammad’s last-ball six lifts Azaibah

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Ghubrah Giants’ talisman Imran Latif led his side to yet another victory, this time a 6-wicket thriller against Khuwair Warriors, in a D20 Cricket League clash at Oman Cricket Turf 1 in Amerat on Tuesday. Latif picked up three valuable wickets to help Ghubrah restrict Khuwair to 161 for 9. Ghazanfar Iqbal and Aqil Khan claimed two wickets each. Sean Novak top-scored with a solid 44 whereas Amir Kaleem struck a whirlwind 40 off 20.

Building on the blazing opening start of 47 in less than four overs in which Ghazanfar smashed 40 off only 17 balls including 4 huge sixes, Latif (50 not out off 41) made sure Ghubrah stayed on course to seal a memorable win.

Azmatullah (36 not out of 20) joined him for an unbroken 59-run partnership for the fifth wicket as they reached 164 for 4 in 18.5 overs. Danish Mohammad bagged 2 for 36.

Brief Scores (D20): Khuwair Warriors 161 for 9 in 20 overs (Sean Nowak 44 – 1x4, 4x6, Amir Kaleem 40 – 4x4, 3x6, Imran Latif 3-45, Ghazanfar Iqbal 2-30, Aqil Khan 2-36) lost to Ghubrah Giants 164 for 4 in 18.5 overs (Imran Latif 50 – 4x4, 1x6, Ghazanfar Iqbal 40 – 3x4, 4x6, Danish Mohammad 2-36) by 6 wickets.

Hammad’s last-ball six lifts Azaiba

In another D20 League game on Tuesday, Hammad Mirza’s blazing 85, including a magnificent last-ball six and Imran Muhammed’s fantastic 4 for 24 were the highlights of Azaiba XI’s sensational 7-wicket win over Bousher Busters.

Veteran Adnan Ilyas whacked a belligerent 66 off 44, including 7 hits over the fence, while Ajay Lalcheta contributed 42 off 30 as Bousher posted 155 for 8 on the board. Imran’s four-wicket spell was the major reason Bousher could not set a bigger target. Azaiba found the going tough



and was struggling at 43 for 3 in the 9 th over before Hammad (85 not out off 44) joined Rao Waqar (40 not out off 37) for a match-winning 105-run partnership. Requiring 13 to win in the final over, Hammad finished the game with a six off the last ball to secure a thrilling victory.

Brief Scores (D20): Bousher Busters 155 for 8 in 20 overs (Adnan Ilyas 66 – 1x4, 7x6, Ajay Lalcheta 42 – 4x4, 1x6, Imran Muhammad 4-24) lost to Azaiba XI 158 for 3 in 20 overs (Hammad Mirza 85 – 2x4, 7x6, Rao Waqar 40 – 4x4, Fawad Ali 2-26) by 7 wickets.

Other Oman Cricket League results

Brief Scores (D Division): Safara International 218 for 2 in 20 overs (Yasir Mohammad 67 – 6x4, 2x6, Sandesh Pusalkar 54 – 7x4, Adeel Anwar 46 – 6x4, 1x6) beat Oct Al Mabela 100 all out in 20 overs (Muhammed Nadim 25 – 4x4, Mushir Nazir 4-17, Syed Uzair 2-13, Amol Dhotre 2-14) by 118 runs. Brief Scores (E Division): Aflag Group Ct 185 for 5 in 20 overs (Junaid Iqbal 117 – 15x4, 2x6, Sagheer Muhammad 2-33) lost to Israr Ghala 187 for 5 in 19 overs (Ali Gul 83 – 12x4, Sagheer Muhammad 49 – 4x4, 1x6, Syed Osama 2-17) by 5 wickets.

MAJIS INDUSTRIAL SERVICES SAOC (Majis)
P.O. Box No. 553, Falaj Al Qabail, Postal Code 322, Sultanate of Oman
Tel No. 26852421 Email: Tender@miscoman.com
(Office Location: Administration Building, Opposite Sohar Aluminium and Sohar Power co. at Sohar Industrial Port Area)

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Majis Industrial Services SAOC (Majis) is a closely held joint stock company fully owned by the Government of Oman. Majis is engaged in providing various water utility services at the Sohar Industrial Port Area and Sohar Free Zone .

Tenders are invited from local and international qualified firms for the following (Note: small description of TOR is available in our e tendering system).

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Tender Description	Bids fees In R.O.	Last date for paying bid fee	Last date for tender
1.	Majis/52/2021	Design, build GFS Potable water Storage Tanks (6000 m3) at Majis RO plot 21A	262.500 incl. 5% VAT	Monday 10th January 2022	Submission Tuesday 8th February 2022

Bidders who have made electronic transfer of bid fee will be issued soft copy of the tender document through the e tendering system on or before Monday 10th January 2022. The companies participating must be registered with Majis’ in e-tendering system (<http://tendering.majis.om/VendorLogin.aspx>) during the tendering stage. The payment of bid fee should be made by direct transfer to the following bank account of Majis. **(Account Name: Majis Industrial Services SAOC, Bank : Bank Muscat SAOG, Account Number: 0423010783830018).**

Note: the registered companies who can upload the tender fee transfer receipt into our e-tendering system under the above referred tender section. Tender documents will be issued to such firms only through the system.

The Tender should be delivered in sealed envelopes, addressed to the **EXECUTIVE, NOMINATION & REMUNERATION COMMITTEE “ENRC”**, Majis Industrial Service SAOC, P.O. Box No. 553, Falaj Al Qabail, Postal Code 322, Sultanate of Oman (at Majis’ reception).

Tenderers must not display their identities on envelopes. Majis is not bound to accept the lowest or any other tender.

Questions regarding this procurement process shall be directed to **tender@miscoman.com**.

REF: OFM/TD-21-043
Tender For Digital Marketing.

Oman Flour Mills SAOG, (OFM) invites specialize vendor to participate in our tender for “digital marketing” as per the scope of work and specifications.

Tender Ref no.	OFM/TD-21-043
Tender subject	Digital Marketing Contract
Start date for tender collection	29/12/2021
Last date for tender collection	05/01/2022
Last date for receiving the technical queries	09/01/2022
Closing date of the tender	10/01/2022
Email address for communication	tender3@omanflourmills.com
Mode of submission	All bidders are required to submit their proposals addressed to the Chairman of Tender Committee to the email tender3@omanflourmills.com by 10 th January 2022.

- To get the tender documents please send us an email to the address mentioned above.
- Vendor selection will be based on “best and final offer”. OFM is not bound to select the lowest bidder.
- All tender communication must be addressed to: tender3@omanflourmills.com.
- Bids submittal shall consist of two separate files (Technical) & (Commercial), with bidder name on each and tender reference number (OFM/TD-21-043).

شركة إسمنت عمان (S.A.O.G.)
Oman Cement Company (S.A.O.G.)

P.O. BOX 560, RUWI, POSTAL CODE 112, SULTANATE OF OMAN
(Factory Al Misfah West, Bausher, Tel. # 00968 24437070 ext. 102, Fax # 90968 24437777)

TENDER

The company invites offers for the following tenders:

Sl. #	Tender No.	Description	Tender Fee	Closing Date
1.	31794/21	CRUSHER ROTOR HARDFACING & BUILTUP WORK, OCC FACTORY SITE.	RO. 52.500/-	25, JANUARY - 2022, 11 AM
2.	82901/21	DESIGN, FABRICATION, INSTALLATION OF INSTRUMENTATION WORKSHOP, OCC FACTORY SITE	RO. 52.500/-	25, JANUARY - 2022, 11 AM

Tender documents can be obtained by paying the above amount online to Company’s account detailed below:

Account name: Oman Cement Company SAOG
Bank name: Bank Muscat SAOG
Account number: 0423 01086 3070 017
Account Type: OMR
SWIFT Code: BMUSOMRX

Copy of deposit transaction of a non-refundable amount of RO. 52.500 (Rial Omani Fifty Two and Baisa Five Hundred Only) as tender fees to be emailed to **CFOSecretary@omancement.com & Treasury@omancement.com** with the Subject showing “Tender No.” and “Tender Description” enabling Company to provide tender document through email to your company. The above payment is a non-refundable amount.

Contact details: Office number: +968 244 37803, Mobile number: +968 97932277

The last date for purchasing of Tender Documents shall be on the 20th January 2022.

Last date for submission of offers is on Tuesday, 25th January 2022 by 11:00 AM, accompanied by a bid bond issued by any local bank in Oman (equivalent to 1%) of the total tender value. The bid bond must be valid for 90 days from the last date of submission of offers.

Any tenders received beyond the above closing time and date or not being supported by a tender bond will NOT be considered. This publication is part of the tender documents

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- Experience: minimum 15 years in gulf countries.
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ROUND-UP

Nissan Navara pickup: Versatile and efficient

Merging a tough, working pedigree, with premium ride comfort, smart technologies and modern styling, the economical Nissan Navara pickup pushes the boundaries of innovation further



on and off the road. With its go anywhere capabilities and built-in technology, the Nissan Navara is built on over 80 years of Nissan pickup heritage and reliability.

Owners of Nissan Nissan Navara vouch for the high standards of the world-class aftersales service centres that are available across the Sultanate.

A senior official of Nissan Oman, from the house of Suhail Bahwan Automobiles (SBA), said, "The multi-award-winning Navara has set a new benchmark in the pickup sector. Nissan Navara is a combination of the powerful, square design of a traditional pickup and sophisticated and modern details, meeting all customer demand, off-road to urban mobility."

A dependable partner for work or travel, the Nissan Navara comes with many best-in-class technologies, including an array of Nissan Intelligent Mobility features and safety systems, making it among the most advanced yet. Nissan has a long history of building strong, dependable pickups. With each new model, the boundaries of innovation have been pushed, providing drivers with everything they need to get the job done. Nissan Navara pickup helps get the job done.

The Nissan Navara is powered

by the latest generation of Nissan engines and is designed to give the right amount of power when and where you need it most. The legendary Nissan Navara is available with two transmission options with both 2-wheel drive and 4-wheel drive options. The 2.5 L engine used in the Navara has a displacement of 2488 cc producing upto 168hp/244nm torque.

Reliability and durability Navara also comes with a diesel engine option.

This has been developed for excellent fuel efficiency and emissions ratings, yet with impressive power output and acceleration. Diesel engine option is available with YD25 engine, a 2.5L unit producing 161hp/403nm torque. This variant comes with PDO specifications for use in desert operations.

Being a pickup one can trust right down to its core, Nissan Navara's full-length fully boxed ladder frame provides solidity and strength one can rely on. With its steel double-wishbone front suspension and rigid leaf suspension, drivers and owners are sure to experience a smooth and comfortable ride on and off the road.

Enclosed on all four sides, the fully boxed ladder frame is reinforced in strategic areas with high-

tensile strength steel for improved structural rigidity. Stronger than conventional steel, it provides increased torsional stiffness, offering a marked improvement over traditional steel C-section frames. All of which ensures it performs impressively in the toughest driving conditions. In addition, all cross members are welded, not riveted, which helps resist flexing and increases durability.

The 4WD system is electronically controlled via an easy-to-reach rotary switch on the dash. At the driver's command is the shift-on-the-fly 4WD system that switches between 2WD and high range 4WD (4H) with the twist of a dial at speeds of up to 100 km/hr. Its Limited Slip Differential (LSD) controls each of the four wheels to optimise traction in challenging conditions.

When 4WD isn't enough, drivers can push the button to activate the Electronic Locking Rear Differential (LSD), which delivers equal power to both rear wheels to boost traction and helps keep you moving forward.

The Hill Start Assist feature can help keep from rolling backwards when accelerating up a hill from a stop and Hill Descent Control helps maintain a steady speed and braking, so one can get down a steep grade more safely.

CSR PROGRAMMES



Bank Muscat celebrates International Day of Persons with Disabilities

MUSCAT: Celebrating the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Bank Muscat participated recently in the event the Ministry of Social Development organised on this occasion. Bank Muscat is keen to support persons with disabilities through CSR programmes and initiatives in partnership with government institutions and NGOs.

During the event, the Ministry of Social Development honoured Bank Muscat for its constant support. The event was held under the patronage of Her Highness Sayyeda Dr Mona bint Fahad bin Mahmoud Al Said, Assistant Vice Chancellor for International Cooperation at Sultan Qaboos University, where Afaf Ali Moosa, Assistant General Manager - Large Corporates, Bank Muscat, received the honour from Her Highness.

On this occasion, Afaf Ali Moosa, Assistant General Manager - Large Corporates, Bank Muscat, said: "We are proud of all the tremendous efforts that various government and private institutions, NGOs and individuals are keen to put into the development of services and facilities for persons with disabilities. The bank values its longstanding partnership and co-operation with the Ministry of Social Development to best serve the community. The bank pays great attention to activities, events and social responsibility programmes

especially those targeted at developing facilities and services for persons with disabilities.

"This recognition of the bank's efforts further motivates us to continue working on developing sustainable programmes that provide support to the community in general and ensure the welfare of persons with disabilities."

On this occasion, Afaf bint Ali bin Musa, Assistant General Manager for Large Corporate Banking at Bank Muscat, expressed her happiness to participate in this celebration, adding that we are proud of all the efforts made by various government and private institutions, NGOs and individuals in service of our brothers and sons with disabilities.

In line with its commitment to deliver long-term benefits for the disabled and helping them integrate into mainstream society, the bank contributed this year several wheelchairs, including powered and non-powered versions, electric beds, laptops and BrailleSense devices visually-impaired students, and hearing aids. Bank Muscat had earlier supported the construction of a playground at the Al Aman Rehabilitation Centre for children with severe disabilities and is also at present helping provide a sports field at the Al Wafa Centre for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities.

PRESTIGIOUS

BankDhofar receives awards for excellence in customer experience

MUSCAT: In recognition of its efforts to ensure the best customer experience, BankDhofar received three international Awards from Live Show Middle East 2021 Awards, 'Best CX Transformation Project' - BFSI, 'Best Customer Journey Mapping' - BFSI, and 'Best Change Management' - BFSI.

The awards were handed over during the Customer Experience Live Show Middle East held at The Meydan Hotel in Dubai last month. Receiving the awards on behalf of the Bank was AbdulAziz Ali Saar, Head of BankDhofar Experience and Change Management. The event brought together CX practitioners and leading brands that were recognised for their exceptional customer services.

On receiving the award, Abdul Aziz Ali Saar, Head of BankDhofar Experience and Change Management said, "We are honoured to receive these prestigious awards that add to our achievements and reflect our vision to be the best bank in customer experience. At BankDhofar, we have invested significantly in our customer experience, as part of our transformation journey, making sure to provide services that exceed their expectations. We have always been coping with the trends, to ensure providing what is suitable for the various segments of our customers, through the various customer touchpoints."



Providing a convenient banking experience has always been the top priority for BankDhofar since its inception, putting technology and innovation at the core of its strategy to improve the experience of its customers.

BankDhofar exerts its efforts to enhance the overall customer experience and journey by modernising several branches nationwide. The modernised branches are equipped with the latest technologies and are designed to provide a convenient banking experience, reflecting both the traditional Omani culture of hospitality, with the latest trends in customer experience. Placing customer experience at the heart of the branch design, all BankDhofar branches offer privacy, hos-

pitality and a personalized experience in one package.

The bank has also introduced Drive-Thru Banking Services with the aim of providing the utmost convenient banking experience with state-of-the-art digital channels. This service, the first of its kind in Oman, enables customers to conduct transactions without stepping out of their vehicle to complete a bundle of transactions including; cash deposit and withdrawal, cheque deposit, instant debit card issuance, bank transfers, and request for account statements. This unique outlet is now available in the Al Seeb Town branch and Al Saada branch in Salalah, yet the bank plans to expand it across other branches.

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ROUND-UP

Experience high levels of comfort in spacious Toyota Granvia

The Granvia's elegant design, luxurious interior, powerful engine, and advanced safety features enable customers to travel in optimal comfort while enjoying total peace of mind

MUSCAT: The Toyota Granvia is designed to be spacious, offering passengers an impressive and relaxing space on every drive.

The Granvia's elegant design, luxurious interior, powerful engine, and advanced safety features enable customers to travel in optimal comfort while enjoying total peace of mind.

The Granvia is equipped with a fancy front grille with headlights, additional chrome trim, as well as an attractive set of alloy wheels.

There are even additional taillight garnishes at the back which give the Granvia a flashier finish. For the interior, the Granvia has faux wood trim, along with darker materials that reward it with a sleeker and luxurious look. To heighten on-road experiences is the availability of captain seats that provide a comfortable and relaxing touch for the passengers. The Granvia is equipped with a 3.5 Litre V6 engine with 268 HP and 34.9 Kg-m of torque, powerful enough to keep



journeys exciting and memorable. The Granvia is available in 6 seater & 7 seater configuration.

In keeping with Granvia's luxurious exterior, Toyota's engineers have created a space with a modern design aesthetic that delights guests as soon as they enter the vehicle. The rear cabin is available with four individual reclining quilted leather captain's chairs with armrests and power adjustment for the backrests. Each

chair also offers a power fold-out Ottoman leg-rest and individual reading lamp with three levels of brightness adjustment.

A combination of wood grain and satin decoration adorns the back of the front seats, while the side-trim decorations flow seamlessly to envelop passengers in a comforting ambience. The subtle, indirect cabin-side illumination perfectly complements the interior, with its positioning at waist

level helping to create a calm and relaxing environment.

The front and rear climate control system incorporate ion generators with nanoe technology that helps to remove bacteria and odours. A rear control panel is available, enabling passengers to adjust the airflow volume, airflow vents, and temperature. Additional cabin amenities include dual-side power sliding doors, LED-type illumination for the side step, and six rear USB ports to keep devices fully charged for business or entertainment. Passengers also benefit from ample luggage space, with the rear of the vehicle easily accommodating four large suitcases or four golf bags.

Along with the high level of comfort and convenience for passengers, the Granvia features an array of driver assistance features such as a 4.2-inch colour TFT (Thin Film Transistor) Multi-information Display, a 7-inch colour

multimedia display and back monitor with guidelines. The steering wheel switches can be used to switch between tabs and change various settings, while the digital rear-view mirror ensures drivers have a clear view behind the vehicle regardless of how much luggage is stored in the back, increasing safety and reducing the stress of reversing. A 6-speaker audio system is also available, providing superior sound quality.

As with any Toyota model, safety remains a top priority for Granvia. The Granvia offers a comprehensive array of features designed to protect its occupants, including three SRS airbags, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), Brake Assist (BA), Emergency Stop Signal (ESS), Blind Spot Monitor (BSM), Tyre Inflation Pressure Warning, Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA) and Lane Change Assist Control, among many others.

COVID-19

EXCLUSIVE BENEFITS

Living with the pandemic: Where we stand today

MUSCAT: Almost 2 years into the pandemic, mankind has never been blessed more. We could for the first time since the beginning of this once-in-a-century pandemic that has altered our lives beyond recognition managed to come up with the first vaccine for COVID-19 in less than a year. This will go down in history as one of science and medical research's greatest achievements, perhaps the most impressive. We currently have about 8 peer-reviewed vaccines which can give reasonable protection against the severe form of COVID infection. We have two novel oral antivirals which are active against all variants assessed.



Alpha and Delta caused major damage. Others fizzled away. The 4 countries with the highest documented Omicron burden have each exceeded their pandemic record for new cases, and still ascending rapidly which being the major worry.

The data from South Africa and the United Kingdom shows that there are higher rates of reinfections and breakthrough infections with this new variant. Many people have got infected for a second and even a third time with this variant in SA. The risk of reinfection with the Omicron variant is 5.4 times greater than that of the Delta variant which was 2-4 times more severe than the original Wuhan 1.0 strain. As SARSCoV2 evolved to Omicron, transmission and immune escape reached new levels, fortunately, 3 independent studies from top labs, including one in a well-regarded in vivo model, all show reduced lung infectivity vs Delta virus infection.

Omicron's immune evasiveness across all vaccines and prior Covid infectees is due to the marked decline in neutralising antibodies which is seen with all vaccines. Besides studies remarked a waning immunity and reduction in vaccine effectiveness with time after the second vaccine dose. Hence a booster shot is now advocated, and a third shot restores it to around 70%. It is given as early as 3 months for all above 18 years from the second shot to protect well against the Omicron variant. Protocols including the administration of booster doses within a reduced time frame that keep up with the latest evolving science should be implemented to win over this pandemic.

Though less severe illnesses related to Omicron are reported from the world over for now it doesn't mean our hospitals and healthcare workforce will not be overrun. Despite the "omicron is milder" observation, hospital visitations and admissions for COV-

ID-like illnesses are on record pace in New York City currently. When case numbers go high suddenly, hospitals overburden and there will be a shortage of beds and that ultimately leads to an increase in mortality numbers especially with this Omicron variant which can double in 1.5 to 2 days.

We have a vaccine in abundance thanks to the MOH, so as citizens it is our collective responsibility to make sure the hospitals don't get overburdened by ensuring triple vaccine mandate, mask mandate and ensuring COVID appropriate behaviour everywhere. As a parent or teachers, we can protect our unvaccinated children or students better if we ensure the above. We can further guide our loved ones to vaccinate if they are eligible for the third booster shot as a responsible citizen or help an unaffordable person to take the third shot.

Child vaccination& school

COVID-19 is also a childhood infection. About 6 million children had been infected in the United States before the Omicron wave. Almost 700 children have died from COVID-19 infection in the US to date making SARS COV-2 infection among the top 10 causes of death among US children. No child has died from vaccination. Vaccine-associated myocarditis in the young has been rare, relatively mild, and self-limited.

Pfizer has started vaccinating children aged 5-11 years with paediatric dose vials in the US. Adult vaccine stock cannot be used for this age group without tricky extra double dilution. It is colour coded with orange caps, to avoid mix-ups with purple-capped vials of adult vaccine.

The FDA examined more children, a total of 3,100 who were vaccinated, in concluding the shots are safe. The younger children experienced similar or fewer reactions -- such as sore arms, fever, or achiness. According to the data for Pfizer vaccination in the US for children aged 5-11 years dated December 20th, more than 6 million children got their first doses and >2.5 million with their 2nd dose and there are no major complications reported.

Children must go to school, meet their friends, actively play, and participate in extracurricular activities for their social and emotional development. This is their life. Cloth masks are not enough. Triple vaccine mandate for all school employees, vaccination for children, mandatory mask

mandate using high-grade masks and Covid appropriate behaviour should be practised strictly in schools with proper distancing allowing classes like singing and eating lunch practised out in the open is the current trend among many European countries.

CDC released indoor air guidance for schools during COVID-19, which emphasises: "Opening windows, using portable air cleaners, improving building-wide filtration are ways to increase ventilation in school or childcare programme."

If possible, there must be air filtration with Corsi-Rosenthal boxes and ventilation, at least of MERV-13 standard or even portable HEPA filter for larger classrooms or high-density rooms which is currently practised as a standard of care in many countries. Also important is CO2 sensors. We want CO2 levels as close to the fresh air as ~400 and it needs to be monitored. Such practices are common in many European schools and gyms and spike up over 1000--meaning poor indoor air. Or lastly if the above is not possible, practice common man's resort- open windows and cross ventilate the room frequently.

Vaccinating all children against COVID-19 could be among the most impactful public health efforts. However, a choice not to get a vaccine is not a risk-free choice; rather it is a choice to take a different and more serious risk.

The way forward

Vaccinate and get boosted, avoid indoor crowded spaces as much as possible, use KN-95 or N95 masks at high-risk public indoor spaces if no choice, take air travel only, if necessary, use rapid tests before gatherings. If gatherings are unavoidable have them outdoors with a strict mask mandate and distancing. Wash your hands before touching your eyes or nose and before meals.

(Inspired Source - Articles, opinions, views and write-ups by Dr EricTopol, Dr Michael Mina, Dr Eric Feigl-Ding, Dr Vincent Rajkumar, Dr Faheem Younus, Dr Anthony J Leonardi and other profound Infectious disease specialists and epidemiologists worldwide, Newspaper articles from US & UK, CDC & NHS updates.)

The writer Dr Dilip Abdul Khadar is a specialist physician (Intensivist), Head of Quality & Patient Safety at Aster Al Raffah Hospital, Muscat.

ahlibank's 'Al Nukhba' banking account enhances its premium banking portfolio

MUSCAT: In a bid to deliver more innovative and value-added services to its premium customers, ahlibank offers 'Al Nukhba' banking account, with a range of exclusive benefits. Al Nukhba brings with it an advanced and personal banking experience that keeps pace with customers' lifestyles and expectations.

"Al Nukhba Account aims to provide many exclusive privileges and benefits to our premium customers. The account reflects our commitment to truly understand the individual needs of our customers and accordingly enhance our product and service offerings. Our premium banking customers can take advantage of a range of financial and non-financial privileges that suit their banking needs and enhance the value of their wealth," Suhaila Al Busaidi, Head of Premium Banking, ahlibank, said.

Muneer Al Balushi, AGM, Head of Retail Distribution, says, "At ahlibank, we recognise that premium customers need special solutions to manage their accounts. In this context, we work as partners for our customers by offering distinctive and innovative offers that live up to their expectations. We are also aware of the growing need for smart solutions that keep pace with today's premium lifestyles and evolved choices. The market and customer insights that we gather help us understand customers' feedback and work towards addressing them, which enhance our position as one of the most preferred banks in Oman."

Al Nukhba account holders can conduct their banking transactions in dedicated Al Nukhba service centres; enjoy free SMS, Internet and mobile banking services, 24-hour call centre support. A dedicated relationship manager is available at all times to provide the highest level of services that meet the banking needs of this category.

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Al Nukhba Account aims to provide many exclusive privileges and benefits to our premium customers. The account reflects our commitment to truly understand the individual needs of our customers and accordingly enhance our product and service offerings

Suhaila Al Busaidi
Head of Premium Banking, ahlibank

12 times free of charge, receive personalised concierge service, free travel insurance, purchase protection and extended warranty. They gain many opportunities to enjoy discounts and offers from selected premium merchants, special discounted tariffs on bank charges, and preferential pricing on deposits and loans.

Alongside ahlibank's commitment to continuously offer new products and services or enhance its existing ones, are its ongoing initiatives to invest in improving its digital capabilities and boosting its traditional products and services to offer better customer experiences, reflecting its commitment to being a vibrant and an innovative centre for banking.

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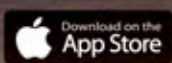
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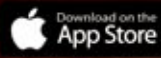


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Founded 1975 · Volume 46 No. 215 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

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