LET'S TALK
Times OF OMAN

MINISTRY LAUNCHES SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation yesterday signed a cooperation agreement with Oman Cables Industry SAOG to launch the third edition of the "SHE STEMS" social development programme. The agreement was signed by Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and Erkan Aydogdu, CEO of Oman Cables Industry. >A3

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PHONE CALLS

Iraq, Jordan extend support to Oman over shooting incident

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister and Fuad Hussein, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Iraq on Wednesday reviewed, in a phone call, the growing relations between the two countries.

They also touched on some developments and underlined the two countries' consistent visions that back all means of maintaining regional and global security, stability and peace.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Iraq expressed the solidarity of his country with Oman in regard to the shooting incident that took place in the vicinity of a Mosque in Al Wadi Al Kabir area, Muscat Governorate. He also extended Iraq's condolences over the demise of some civilians and the martyrdom of a police serviceman.

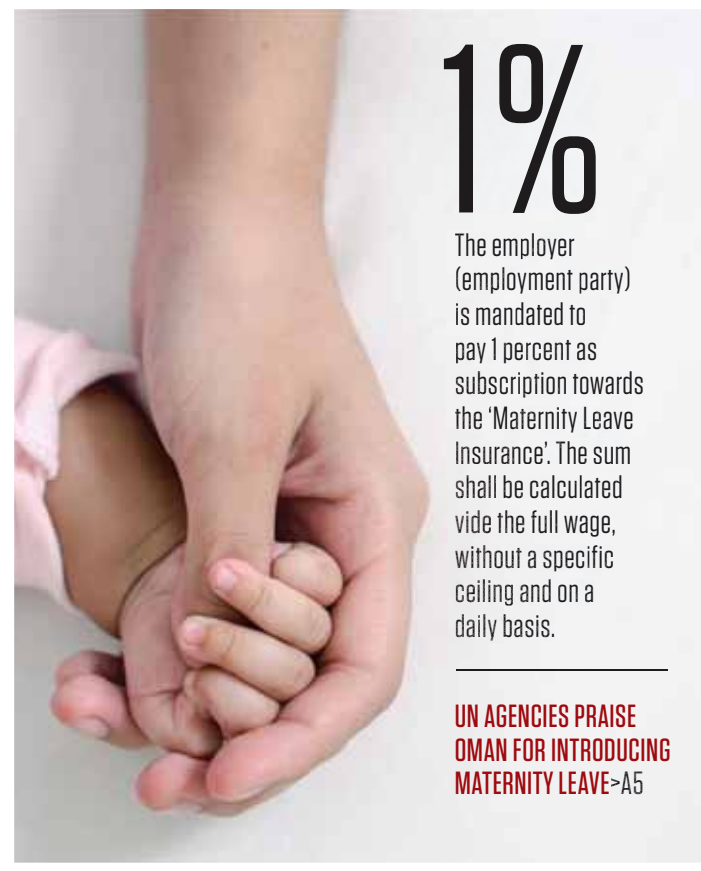
Meanwhile, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, also received a phone call from Ayman Safadi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The Jordanian official expressed his country's solidarity with Oman on the shooting incident which took place in Al Wadi Al Kabir area. He also extended his country's condolences to Oman on the demise of some civilians and the martyrdom of a police serviceman.

During the call, the two ministers underscored the distinguished relations between Oman and Jordan. They also underlined the ongoing fruitful cooperation between the two countries in all fields. – ONA

MATERNITY LEAVE INSURANCE FROM JULY 19 IN OMAN

The scheme will benefit all Omanis working in the country in all sectors under employment contracts of various types



MUSCAT: With effect from 19 July 2024, the maternity leave insurance will be implemented in the Sultanate of Oman, announced the Social Protection Fund during a media briefing organised in Muscat on Wednesday.

The Fund pointed out that the maternity leave insurance mandate was endorsed through elaboration on working papers submitted by a set of institutions concerned, namely the Social Protection Fund, the UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF), the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Social Development.

The maternity leave insurance benefits all Omanis working in the Sultanate of Oman in all sectors. It includes all Omanis working under employment contracts of various types.

It also pertains to temporary contracts, training contracts and retired workers, as well as all non-Omani workers employed in units of the State's Administrative Apparatus and workers in private sector business establishments that are governed by the provisions of the labour law.

The employer (employment party) is mandated to pay 1 percent as subscription towards the "Maternity Leave Insurance". The sum shall be calculated vide the full wage, without a specific ceiling and on a daily basis.

The dues of the "Maternity Leave Insurance" include the maternity leave allowance, the paternity leave allowance, the childcare leave and the maternity leave allowance for past employees/workers whose services have been ended but they are still eligible for a job security allowance. With ONA inputs

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

84,869 people visit Jabal Al Akhdar

1 The number of visitors to the Wilayat of Jabal Al Akhdar in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate during the first half of this year reached 84,869, compared to 79,034 visitors during the same period in 2023, an increase of 7.37 percent, according to the NCSI. >A2

WORLD

UN: Israel continues to block fuel for Gaza

2 The United Nations said that the Israeli authorities are still preventing the provision of fuel to humanitarian aid workers, which is hampering the distribution of food supplies in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli authorities still do not allow the provision of necessary fuel to relief workers. >A6

MARKET

OMR19mn investments in Al Buraimi City

3 The volume of investments in Al Buraimi Industrial City until the end of the first half of 2024 amounted to over OMR19 million, while the overall volume of investment in the city reached OMR277 million. >B1

GAZA DEATH TOLL
as of July 17, 2024

TRAGEDY

Shock and disbelief over Wadi Kabir shooting

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The tragic shooting incident in Wadi Kabir has left the entire nation in disbelief. The event, which occurred on Monday night, has not only dominated social media but has also become the main topic of conversation in offices and homes across Oman.

The incident, which resulted in nine deaths and numerous injuries, has shaken the country's long-standing reputation for peace and security. People are questioning how such an event could occur in Oman, a country known for its wise leadership and non-interference policy.

The expatriate community, in particular, has been deeply affected, prompting several private companies to issue safety advisories for their employees.

The attackers who carried out operation in the Wadi Kabir mosque on Monday night had no connection with Pakistan.

Imran Ali
Pakistan Ambasador to Oman

Indian embassy responds

The Indian Embassy in Oman has been closely monitoring the situation, ensuring the wellbeing of the Indian community affected by the incident.

On Wednesday, Ambassador Amit Narang spoke with Tausif Abbas, the son of Late Shri Basha Jan Ali Hussain, who tragically lost his life. The ambassador assured the family of the embassy's full support in repatriating the deceased's remains and providing any other necessary assistance.

Embassy officials also visited Khoula Hospital, where three injured Indian nationals are receiving treatment. The ambassador communicated with their families, offering reassurance and support. Narang praised the prompt actions of Omani security agencies in managing the crisis and safeguarding civilians.

Pakistan envoy's clarification

In a related statement, Pakistan's Ambassador to Oman, Imran Ali, clarified that the attackers had no connection with Pakistan. He emphasised this point in a message on X (formerly Twitter), reiterating that the embassy is committed to supporting Pakistani citizens and wishing a speedy recovery to the injured.

He said: "The three attackers had no link or connection with Pakistan. We are deeply saddened by the death of innocent people and wish the injured a speedy recovery.

"The embassy has been extending full support to the injured and thanked the Omani authorities for successfully finishing the operation."

Grand Mufti condemns

His Eminence Sheikh Ahmed bin Hamad Al Khalili, Grand Mufti of the Sultanate of Oman has issued a statement on the shooting incident that occurred in Wadi Kabir area, Muscat Governorate on Monday, July 15, 2024.

The Grand Mufti said: "We were saddened by the event that took place in Wadi Kabir among one of the communities residing in the Sultanate of Oman, killing a group of people, including a security man. This is blatant aggression that only breeds hatred and results in nothing but strife."

"Whatever the difference between the groups of the nation in perception and belief or in the practices of religious rituals, it must not lead to aggression by some against others in their religious sanctities. That the lands of worship and turning to God Almighty be a red line so that mutual respect prevails among everyone and that familiarity becomes an alternative to alienation, so that the souls of the nation are in harmony with each other and cooperate in what is for the good of all."

Corporate safety advisories

In response to the heightened sense of insecurity, several corporate entities have circulated safety advisories to their employees.

The Times of Oman obtained a copy of one such advisory, which has also been shared on social media.

The advisory urges employees to exercise extreme caution, avoid unnecessary outings, and always carry identification.

It advises against visiting malls and shopping centres unless absolutely necessary and emphasises the importance of renewing expired resident cards promptly.

Employees are also instructed not to discuss or share information about current events, avoid hosting guests or allowing acquaintances to ride in their vehicles, and steer clear of large gatherings.

They are encouraged to keep emergency contact numbers accessible, plan travel routes carefully, avoid public transport, and maintain communication with family and friends.

Additionally, the advisory stresses the importance of ensuring home security, using security systems if available, adhering to workplace safety protocols, and remaining vigilant about surroundings, reporting any suspicious activity immediately.

As the nation grapples with this shocking event, the focus remains on maintaining safety and unity in the face of adversity.

PRAYER TIMINGS

Dhuhr	12:18pm
Asr	3:39pm
Maghrib	7:01pm
Isha	8:21pm
Fajr (Tomorrow)	4:06am

More than 84,000 tourists visit Jabal Al Akhdar in 1st half of 2024

The number of Omanis who visited Jabal Al Akhdar during the first half of this year reached 34,125

Times News Service

JABAL AL AKHDAR: The number of visitors to the Wilayat of Jabal Al Akhdar in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate during the first half of this year reached 84,869, compared to 79,034 visitors during the same period in 2023, an increase of 7.37 percent, according to statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information.

Statistics showed that the number of Omanis who visited Jabal Al Akhdar during the first half of this year reached 34,125, the number of Saudi tourists reached 3,012, the number of Emirati visitors reached 566, the number of Bahraini visitors reached 306, the number of Kuwaitis 563, and the number of Qatari visitors reached 279.

Statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information showed that the number of tourists from other Arab nationalities reached 3,700, and the number of visitors from foreign nationalities reached 42,318.

The "Green Mountain Summer" events will start on Thursday, and will continue until September 14, 2024. It will be held at the Dusit Al Jabal Al Akhdar Hotel, and its activities include many cultural, social, sports, entertainment, heritage and popular activities as part of the Al Dakhiliyah Governorate's plan to stimulate local tourism and promote the tourism, heritage and natural components for which the Al Jabal Al Akhdar State is famous.

The Green Mountain Summer activities also include holding an exhibition for productive families and small and medium enterprises, to encourage them to participate in the activities and benefit from opportunities to promote tourism and create temporary job opportunities.

It is hoped that the "Green Mountain Summer" events will contribute to attracting a greater number of tourists from inside and outside the Sultanate of Oman, and coincide with the second edition of the " Rummana " event in the Wilayat of Al Jabal Al Akhdar, which was launched on June 4 and will continue until mid-September, and is part of the agricultural tourism initiatives and projects in the Wilayat.

The event aims to spread the culture of environmentally friendly agricultural tourism, and provide new unique experiences to attract tourists, in addition to contributing to enhancing local added value.

This edition also plays a role in enhancing the agricultural tourism experience for visitors to the Green Mountain, and diversifying tourism offers and products, contributing to enhancing the position of the Green Mountain as a leading tourist, cultural and agricultural destination in the region, and supporting farmers to market their abundant products.

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism is keen to encourage investment in the state of Jabal Al Akhdar by attracting projects that contribute to enhancing tourism demand, such as tourist resorts, hotels, rest houses and guest houses, which contribute to enhancing tourism in Al Jabal Al Akhdar and increasing the local community's benefit from tourism activity.

It is worth noting that the Wilayat of Al Jabal Al Akhdar in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate is one of the most important tourist destinations preferred by many visitors to the Sultanate of Oman during the summer season, due to its moderate climate in the summer and the availability of various hotel facilities. The Wilayat also witnesses an influx of tourists during the summer season to practice various sports such as mountain climbing, hiking in mountain trails and enjoying the moderate

DAYMANIYAT NATURE RESERVE

Diving enthusiasts visit underwater museum

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The tourism and diving company, and diving enthusiasts were allowed to visit the first underwater museum after they obtained the necessary permits to enter the Daymaniyat Islands Nature Reserve, said the Sultanate of Oman's Environment Authority.

The Authority said in a statement: "The EA notes that visiting the military equipment site in the Daymaniyat is an underwater museum currently available to tourism and diving companies and diving enthusiasts. Obtaining necessary permits is mandatory to enter the reserve as followed through the Authority's website, and the necessity of adhering to and following the approved safety procedures for diving activity when visiting the museum."

REVIEW PROPOSALS

State Council Office discusses proposals submitted by standing committees

MUSCAT: The Office of the State Council reviewed a number of studies and proposals submitted by the Council's standing committees. The discussions took place yesterday at the Council's 5th meeting during its first convening in the 8th Term.

The meeting was chaired by Sheikh Abdulmalik Abdullah Al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council.

During the meeting, the office discussed two proposals submitted by the Social and Cultural Committee.

The first proposal dealt with the panel's keenness to explore means of enhancing the financial sustainability of civil society institutions. The second study discussed means of maximising society's gains from cultural edifices and their activities.

The State Council's Office also discussed two more proposals: The first was titled "Mastering competencies and skills gained from school education in the Sultanate of Oman" and the second elaborated on the issues of digital economy and data governance.

Annual report

Later, the State Council's Office reviewed the State Audit Institution (SAI)'s annual report (2023), the reply of the Council of Ministers about a number of studies submitted recently by the State Council, and reports filed by State Council members about their participation in regional and international forums. -ONA

BORDER CHECKPOINTS

ROP launches training programme on operations at land border checkpoints

MUSCAT: The Sultan Qaboos Academy for Police Sciences today launched a training programme that is implemented by the Royal Oman Police for citizens enrolled in divisions tasked with managing handling operations at land border checkpoints.

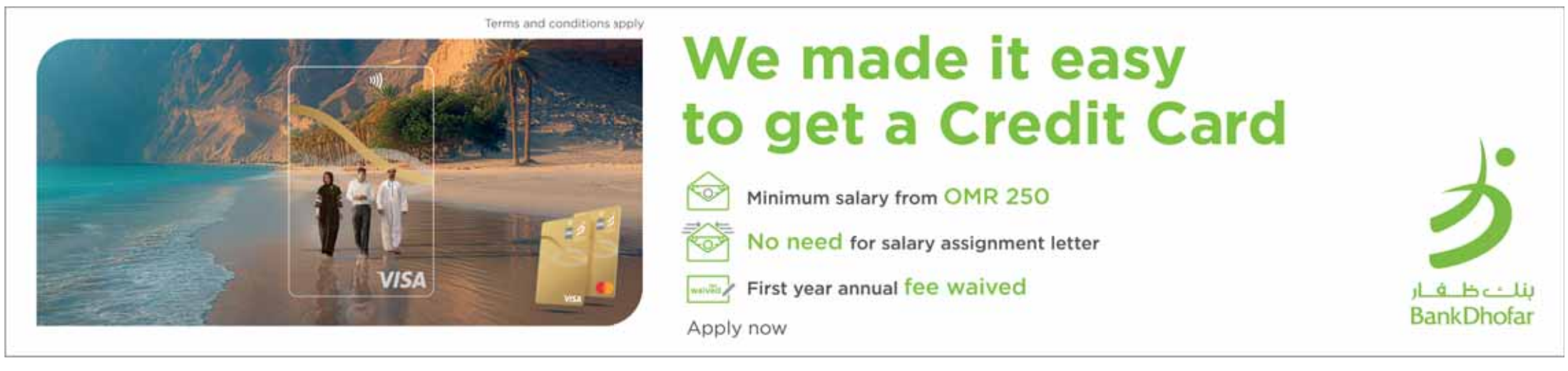
The programme, being carried out in partnership with the private sector, seeks to familiarise the participants about relevant regulations, laws and security systems in force and to empower them with the skills needed for performing their duties.

The ceremony was held under the auspices of Qais Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, in the presence of Lt. Gen Hassan Mohsin Al Shuraiqi, Inspector-General of Police and Customs.

The programme's initiative includes assigning handling tasks (in land border checkpoints) to private sector companies.The operational units will be connected via the Bayan system.

The programme will help accelerate customs clearance using the latest equipment, programmes and technologies. It will also streamline procedures, apply innovation standards and improve institutional performance. -ONA

The ceremony was held under the auspices of Qais Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion



EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Ministry launches 'SHE STEMS' programme for women

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation on Wednesday signed a cooperation agreement with Oman Cables Industry SAOG to launch the third edition of the 'SHE STEMS' social development programme.

The agreement was signed by Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and Erkan Aydogdu, CEO of Oman Cables Industry.

The agreement aims to provide a better and more sustainable future through the empowerment of Omani women in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics and industry. It also

targets boosting strategic partnership in areas of education and vocational training.

Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al-Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research, and Innovation, stated: "The partnership with Oman Cables Industry for the launch of the third edition of the SHE STEMS programme is a significant boost towards creating a future where innovation knows no boundaries. Our combined efforts provide Omani women with the tools required to excel in STEM fields and perfectly align with Oman's Vision 2040. The SHE STEMS program me highlights our ongoing commitment to creating a diverse and resilient economy, driving technological advancement, innovation, and equal opportunities."

Participants are required to undergo rigorous pre-selection assessments in english and mathematics, ensuring they are well-suited for the challenges that await them.

Successful candidates receive a monthly allowance from OCI and benefit from training and coaching provided by the Modern Gulf Institute (MGI), a leader in leadership and management development.

Pre-selection assessments

The programme is open to unemployed Omani women, aged 24-30, who hold a bachelor's degree in engineering and are willing to undergo pre-selection assessments in english and mathematics. OCI continues its partnership with a headhunter consulting company to assist graduates in job placement and soft skills development, ensuring a seamless transition into the workforce.

Erkan Aydogdu, CEO of Oman Cables Industry, said: "We are proud to launch the third edition of the SHE STEMS programme, demonstrating our commitment to empowering Omani women in key industrial sectors. With over 2,000 candidates already applied, the eagerness of Omani women to join the manufacturing industry is clear. In the 2024 programme, we are introducing a special module on Artificial Intelligence (AI) to develop foundational knowledge and leverage its capabilities to reach new professional goals."

Diwan of Royal Court

Tender Notice (1)

Diwan of Royal Court sultanate of Oman,
Muscat, announces the following tenders :

Tender No.	Tender Name	Tender Document Value	Last date of purchasing Tenders	Last date of submitting Tenders
8/2024	Annual requirements for pharmaceutical items	150	14/8/2024	19/8/2024
9/2024	Annual requirements for Dental items	25	14/8/2024	19/8/2024
10/2024	Annual requirements for Surgical ,Medical	25	14/8/2024	19/8/2024
11/2024	Annual requirements for Laboratories items	25	14/8/2024	19/8/2024

- Qualified Companies with previous experience in similar works can obtain the Tender Documents from the Directorate General of Administrative , Financial Affairs and Human Resources (Treasury Department), Diwan of Royal Court, AlKhuwair, ground Floor, from 7:30 am till 12:00 pm right from the date of post by paying the document value.
- The Tender Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the offers.
- Bids must be submitted in an envelope sealed with red wax addressed to His Excellency, the Chairman of the Tender Committee. The Tender name and number should be written on the envelope. Nothing should be written on the envelope to display the identity of the bidder or what refers to him.
- The bids should be deposited in the Tender Box, Seventh floor, Diwan of Royal Court (Purchases Department), Ghala and no bids will be accepted after 12:00pm.
- No Bids will be accepted after the last date of submission shown in the above table.
- The Tender Committee will award the tender to the company that has the largest percentage of Omanisation and possible purchases of national products.

Diwan of Royal Court is not obliged to award the tender to the lowest or any other offer.

For any further clarification and assistance, you may contact the following numbers:

99616715 - 24026308 - 24026307 – 24026309

TENDER NOTICE

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

Tender No.	Description	Eligibility	Tender Fee (RO)	Last Date of Sale Tender Documents	Bid Submission Date
T/2644999/ 2024	Operation and Maintenance Contract for Vacuum Sewer System and Sewage Pumping Stations at A'Seeb for (5-Years)	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and have sufficient experience in the works mentioned	R.O. 2,500 /- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	01/08/2024	26/08/2024
T/2645005/ 2024	Supply, Installation, and commissioning of recirculation chemical pumps for OCU system in Seeb STP	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and have sufficient experience in the works mentioned	R.O. 50/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	01/08/2024	26/08/2024
T/2645003- 2024	Call off contract for Supply & Delivery of TFS Scada spare parts & Electromagnetic Flow meters	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and have sufficient experience in the works mentioned	R.O. 500/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	01/08/2024	26/08/2024
T/2639963/ 2024	Call off contract for Supply & Delivery of Control Panels & Cables For two years	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and have sufficient experience in the works mentioned	R.O. 50/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	01/08/2024	26/08/2024
T/2588960-2 /2024 Re-Float	Call Off Contract For Supply And Delivery Of House Connection Fittings	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and have sufficient experience in the works mentioned	R.O. 2500 (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	01/08/2024	26/08/2024
T/2645006/ 2024	Provide Consultancy Services to implement Oracle Customer to Meter (C2M) System Project	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and have sufficient experience in the works mentioned	R.O. 50/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	01/08/2024	26/08/2024

The tender document can be purchased from Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) e-tendering page (Supplier Login) from the date of publication of this announcement. The applicants shall pay the tender fee through electronic payment gateway through Supplier Login.

Applicants who are not registered with Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) shall register from **https://owwsc.nama.om/Business-with-Us/Vendor-Registration** to have the login credentials of Supplier portal.

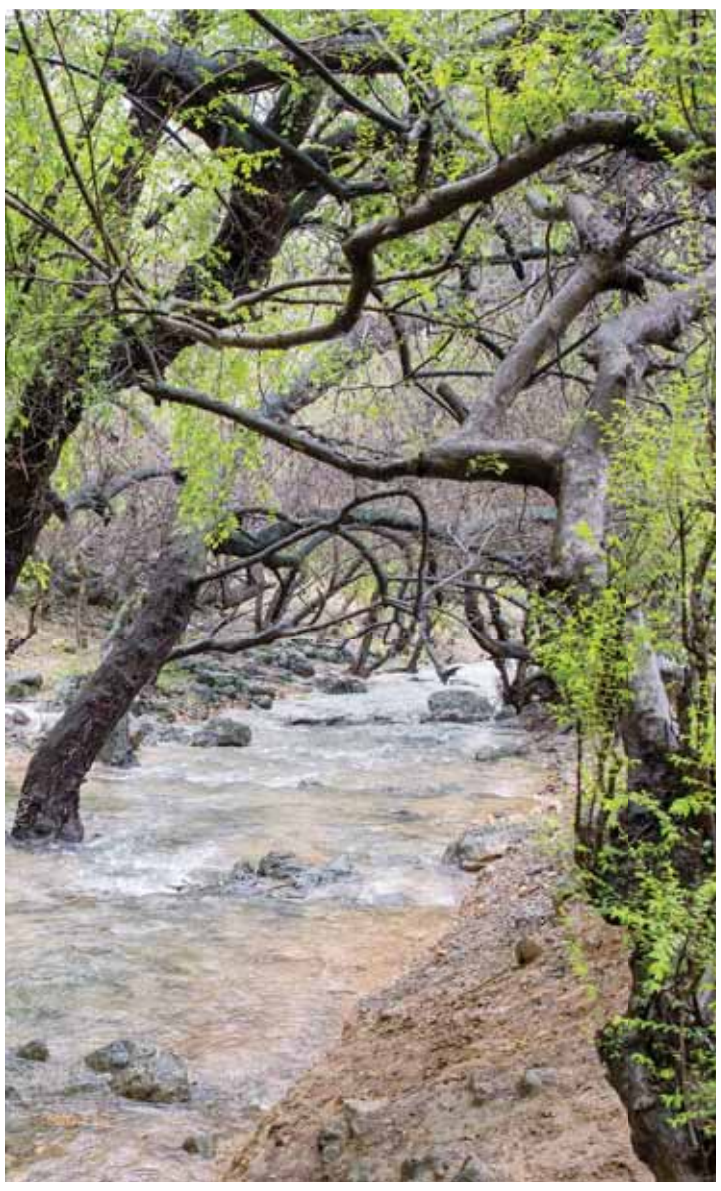
All applicants who have paid the tender fee shall have access to the Tender Documents through Nama Water Services e-tendering page (Supplier Login). All participating Companies shall submit a Bid Bond of 1% of the bid value in a sealed envelope to Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) Chairman of Tender Committee not later than 2:00 pm on the bid submission date.

Bid Bond must be obtained from a Bank registered in the Sultanate of Oman and it should be addressed in favour of Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services). The bid along with all required documents shall be uploaded through Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) e-tendering page not later than 2:00 pm on the date specified above. For more details refer to Tender Page of our website **www.owwsc.nama.om or Email to: tender@owwsc.nama.om**

نماء nama WATER SERVICES

@nws_oman owwsc.nama.om 1442 Call Center

Ayn Hamran: Ideal weather, natural springs attract visitors



Located about 27 km from Salalah, Ayn Hamran has lush green cover and has ideal weather for tourists

Times News Service

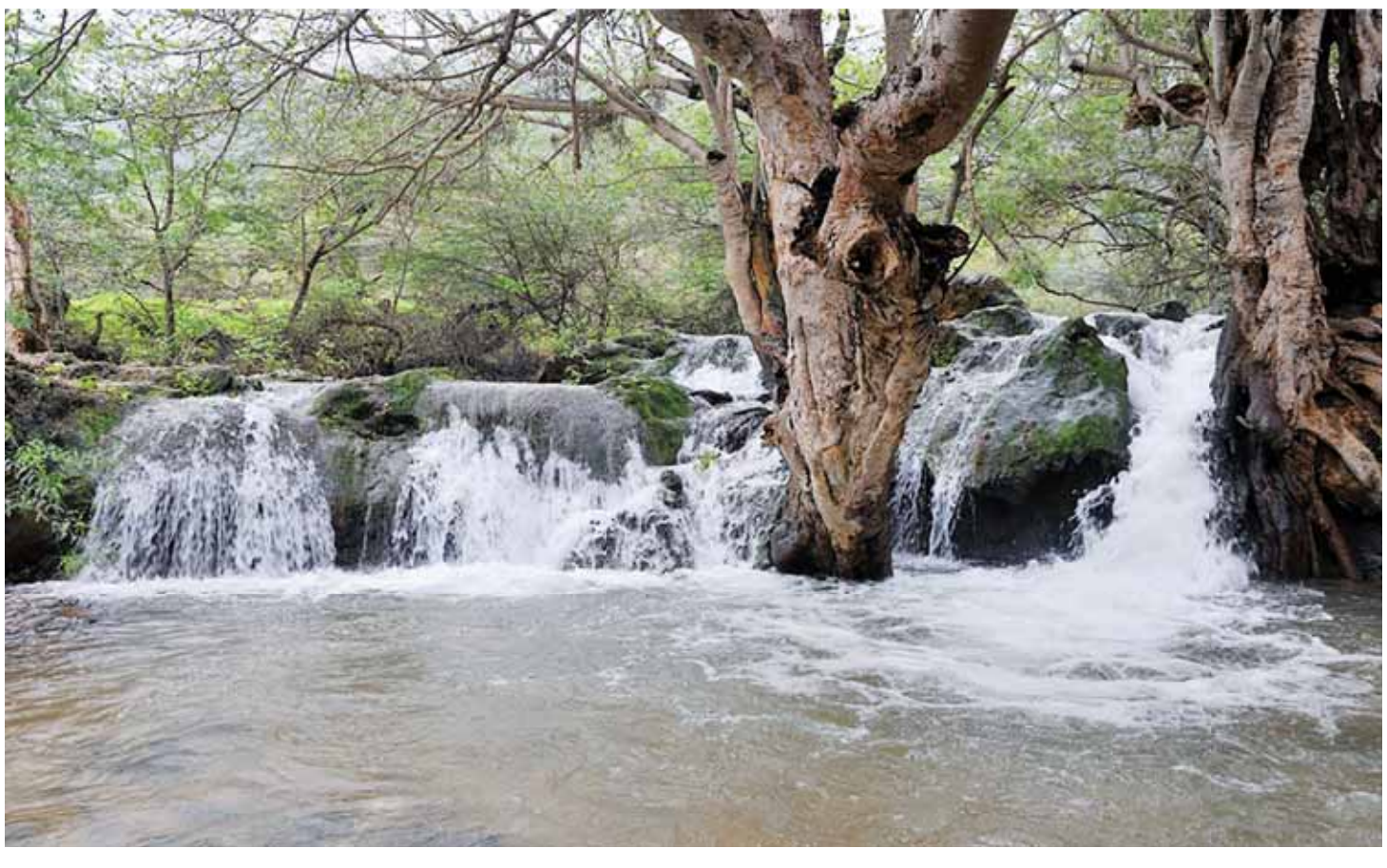
MUSCAT: The beauty of flowing water of springs of Ayn Hamran in the Wilayat of Taqah in Dhofar Governorate brings peace and happiness among tourists. Its picturesque location, green cover and ideal weather woo tourists.

What distinguishes Ayn Hamran from the rest of the springs is the large number of trees found near it, such as Sidr, fig, and hookah trees. Ayn is considered a natural and spacious outlet, which has beautiful locations in the form of plateaus on which tourists spend enjoyable times.

Ayn Hamran is one of the springs of water with lush green shade. Caves are spread throughout this area and there is a garden too. It is about 27 km away from Salalah. Livestock get water from it, in addition to irrigating the surrounding agriculture fields. Trees of different species are found here, and visitors come here throughout the year, especially in the fall season.

The water level is good in Ayn Hamran, and was used in the past for irrigation in the Hamran Plain, according to the accounts of many residents of that region. Farms of corn, sugarcane, sweet potatoes, and many other agricultural products benefited from this water.

With every rainy season, there are well-known places at the top of the valley in Ayn Hamran from which springs of water burst, which continue to flow for several weeks, unlike the other well-known spring. It is full of water throughout the year.



UN organisations commend Oman for introducing maternity leave

Oman Vision 2040 has placed at the top of its priorities the development of the Omani human being through advanced education, a strong health system

MUSCAT: The United Nations organisations in Oman represented by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the World Health organization (WHO) commended the move taken by the Omani government, represented by the Social Protection Fund (SPF) in launching the new Maternity Leave (ML) scheme for the Omani and non-Omani workforce in the public and private sectors.

The newly launched ML scheme provides working mothers in both the public and private sectors with 98 days of fully paid maternity leave, including the option to commence leave 14 days prior to the expected delivery date.

"I applaud the Sultanate of Oman for its strong commitment to the well-being of its workforce and its citizens." commented Sumaira Chowdhury, UNICEF Oman Representative.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Sub-regional office for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) emphasized that reproductive health is fundamental to equal economic and social participation. Prioritizing reproductive health, including maternity and paternity leave, can boost productivity, reduce absenteeism, and enhance the economic empowerment of women and society as a whole.

UNFPA further noted that women comprise approximately 40% of the global workforce, and workplaces that accommodate women's needs benefit everyone.

Oman Vision 2040

It added that Oman Vision 2040 prioritises the development of its citizens through advanced education, a robust health system, the promotion of citizenship, identity, and national culture, and the achievement of well-being and social protection.

The vision also emphasises the importance of a competitive, innovation-driven economy with diversified roles, equal opportunities, and private sector leadership, all contributing to sustainable development goals.

Dr. Jean Jabbour, World Health Organization Representative to the Sultanate of Oman, emphasized "the importance of the mother's presence in the first months of her child's life, as this early period is crucial in shaping the child's future health, emotional, and social wellbeing."

Paid maternity leave is associated with an increase in the number of regular visits for monitoring child growth and a rise in global immunization rates and timely vaccine coverage. It also ensures that mothers have sufficient time for rest and newborn care not only that but also it is linked to higher rates of initiation and continuation of exclusive breastfeeding.

He explained that there are unprecedented opportunities to accelerate the pace of progress made in improving the health of women and children, as improving effective maternity protection supports the health of children and women.

It is worth noting that maternity leave is a social insurance programme that covers the periods of childbirth for working mothers during pregnancy and after childbirth and guarantees them enough time to rest and care for the newborn. The insurance programme also provides paternity leave to allow the father to support the family during this important stage. -ONA

KHAREEF 2024

New entertainment package for tourists in Dhofar region

SALALAH: Dhofar Municipality opened a new package of entertainment and tourism activities at Ateen Square and Awdat Al Madhi sites for visitors within the activities of Khareef Dhofar 2024, organised at different grounds.

Ammar bin Obed Ghawas, Director of Events and Awareness Department in Dhofar Municipality said that the activities at Ateen Square started to receive visitors for different new games, including the light shows, the laser fountains and the drone shows among others.

He said that the challenge ground at Ateen Square hosts a number of amazing games that target the youth, children and families. On the Awdat Al Madhi site, he said that the activities of this site would start on Thursday, for the first time at Al Saada area in Salalah and would include new activities that depict the local environment in Dhofar governorate with other environments of the Sultanate's governorates with traditional arts, heritage/old souqs and different crafts products. -ONA

Sultanate of Oman
The Supreme Judicial Council
Public Prosecution

TENDER NOTICE

The Public Prosecution invites interested companies to the following tender(s):

Tender Number	Description	Deadline for obtaining tender	Deadline for tender submission	GRADE (Group)	Tender document Cost (Non-refundable)
22/2024 Re tender-1	Design & Supply & Install ERP System	31 /07/2024	26/08/2024	Specialized	25

- Companies specialized in such works with a valid registration certificate from the Tender Board can participate and obtain technical specifications and tender documents from the website: **https://etending.tenderboard.gov.om.**
- The bidder shall submit their offers electronically via the above-mentioned website.
- For any inquiries regarding technical support for the e-tender system, you may contact us through this email **(reg@tenderboard.gov.om) or the phone number 24402200.**
- Public Prosecution is not bound to accept the lowest or any other bid.

CONDOLENCES

KSA lauds Oman for dealing with shooting incident

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has praised the measures taken by the Sultanate of Oman in dealing with the shooting incident that occurred in Wadi Al Kabir area, Muscat Governorate.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's praise for the measures taken by the competent authorities Oman, and the speed and efficiency of dealing with the shooting incident in the Wadi Al-Kabir area in Muscat.

The Kingdom affirms its solidarity with Oman and expresses its sincere condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims and wishes for a speedy recovery for the injured.

U.S. EMBASSY - MUSCAT

ONLINE AUCTION
SALE OF USED ITEMS

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

Interested bidders may view the auction items online starting on Wednesday, July 17, 2024 at 10:00a.m. by going to https://online-auction.state.gov/en-US. Online bidding for all items will open on Thursday, July 18 at 10:00a.m. Bidders must first register on the website before placing a bid.

All items offered are sold "As is, where is." There are no warranties, either expressed or implied. Bidding closes on Sunday, July 21, 2024 at 1:00p.m.

After the auction closes, successful bidders will be notified and must make full payment in the **Bank Muscat U.S. Embassy account 0454000188720026 (Swift: BMUSOMRX)** before the payment deadline of July 23, 11:00 a.m. Bidders can view payment instructions in the "How it works" link on the auction website after the auction goes live and successful bidders will receive an email with instructions. **Please note failure to follow payment instructions may result in the forfeiture of your lots and possible bank fees. Please read instructions carefully. Late payments will not be accepted.**

Successful bidders with fully paid lots must collect their items or arrange for someone to collect them on Saturday, July 27 at the Ghala warehouse during the specific scheduled time (BEFORE 2:00pm). If you are unable to arrange pickup on that date, please do not participate in the auction as there are no alternate pickup dates. Directions to the Ghala warehouse will be provided to successful bidders.

CONDOLENCES

With deep sorrow I announce the sad demise of my beloved father

Dr. Ashok Kumar Vishwa Shamboo Nath,
Retd. Sr. Consultant, Radiology, MOH,
on Monday, 15th July 2024, in Muscat, Oman.

Son of Late Dr. Vishwa Shamboo Nath & Late Smt. Shanta Nath.
Brother of Late Mr. Vinod Kumar Nath, Mrs. Ranjan Khanna,
Mrs. Neelkamal Verma, Mrs. Ruby Bidani.
Husband of Smt. Indu Nath Qadam Singh Hukam Singh.
Father of Mr. Arjun Ashok Nath.
Father-in-law of Mrs. Carly Beth Heiser Nath.
Grandfather of Master Bodhi Heiser Nath.

Cremation will be held on:
Date: Friday, 19th July 2024
Time: 1:00 pm
Place: Sohar Crematorium

Prayer meeting will be held on:
Date: Saturday, 20th July 2024
Time: 4.00 pm to 5.00 pm
Place: Motisar Mahadev Temple (Shiva Temple)

Nath Family
Khanna Family
Verma Family
Bidani Family

WORLD

HEAVY DOWNPOURS

Landslides halt traffic in northwest China

BEIJING: Heavy downpours have caused roadside landslides and mudflows, leading to traffic disruptions in Baoji, a city in northwest China's Shaanxi Province.

Local authorities said traffic was interrupted on sections of two highways and an expressway in Baoji, but no casualties have been reported so far, Xinhua news agency reported. The province activated a Level IV emergency response for flood control, the Chinese news agency added.

Baoji received an average precipitation of 67.4 mm, with the highest recorded precipitation reaching 209 mm, according to Shaanxi's metrological observatory. -ONA

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'More children die in US of gunshots than any other reason'

Biden called for taking the weapons out from the 'streets of America' as he criticised Trump's policies

WASHINGTON, DC: Following Donald Trump's assassination attempt, which took place last week, US President Joe Biden said that more children in America die of gunshot wounds than any other reason, describing the situation as stunning and sick.

Delivering his remarks at the NAACP National Convention in Las Vegas on Wednesday, Biden called for taking the weapons out from the "streets of America," as he went on to criticise Trump's policies simultaneously.

"More children in America die of gunshot wounds than any other reason that is stunning and that is sick and it's sheer cowardice if we do nothing about it. If you want to stand against violence in America, then join me in getting these weapons of war off the streets of America," Biden said.

Criticising Trump for his policies during his previous tenures, Biden remarked, "He (Donald Trump) tried to repeal Obamacare to kick millions, I mean, millions of black Americans off their health insurance. He had a USD 2 trillion tax cut that overwhelmingly benefited the super-wealthy, the biggest corporation, and exploded the federal debt larger than anyone the one president has in one term."

Speaking further, Biden blamed Trump for the "mismanagement of the pandemic" as well.

"He left no room for us to do what we should be doing, invested in things that affect people's lives, like childcare, elder care, and so much more, that grow the economy and help people. This mismanagement of the pandemic was especially devastating to black communities," Biden said.

"As Harry Truman said, I've never delivered giving anyone hell. I just told the truth, and they thought it was hell. Well, here's the truth about why Donald Trump's presidency was hell for black Americans," President Biden said.

As the US presidential elections draw near, Trump made his pick for Vice President, selecting JD Vance as his running mate on Monday. Trump confirmed Vance's candidature through a post on social media.

President Joe Biden launched his re-election campaign in April 2023, describing the contest between him and Trump as a "stark choice" for voters between the continuation of democracy in America and its possible "destruction" under Trump.

Meanwhile, Trump launched his bid to reclaim the White House in November 2022. He aims to reclaim the White House after his bitter exit in 2020, as he looks forward to becoming only the second commander-in-chief to win two non-consecutive terms in office. -ANI

UNSUBSTANTIATED

Iran rejects US media charges in attack on Trump

TEHRAN: Iran on Wednesday strongly denied reports in the US media implicating Tehran in a plot to assassinate former US President Donald Trump.

US broadcasters CNN and NBC reported on Tuesday that the US Secret Service had recently boosted security around Trump after receiving intelligence from an unnamed "human source" that the current Republican Presidential Candidate was the target of a potential Iranian plot.

CNN said there was "no indication" the alleged plot was linked to Saturday's shooting at a Trump campaign rally in Pennsylvania, in which the former president was shot in the ear.

Nevertheless, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani said on Wednesday that Iran "strongly rejects any involvement in the recent armed attack against Trump."

A spokesman for Iran's ambassador to the United Nations called accusations of previous plots to kill the former president "unsubstantiated and malicious."

Tehran has vowed revenge for the 2020 killing of Revolutionary Guards commander Qasem Soleimani in a US drone strike outside Baghdad airport in neighboring Iraq, for which it holds Trump responsible as US President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces at the time.

Foreign ministry spokesman Kanani said that Iran remains "determined to pursue legal action against Trump for his direct role in the crime of assassinating" General Soleimani.

The UN mission spokesman said that Trump "must be prosecuted and punished in a court of law," stressing it "has chosen the legal path to bring him to justice."

A spokesman for the US Secret Service said the agency constantly receives new information about threats and reacts to them accordingly, but declined to comment on the reports. -DW

FOSSILISED SKELETON

Researchers discover dinosaur fossil after heavy rains in Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO: A team of Brazilian scientists has discovered a fossilised skeleton of what they believe is one of the world's oldest dinosaurs after heavy rains in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul accelerated the natural process of erosion.

The fossil found next to a reservoir in the municipality of Sao Joao do Polesine is around 233 million years old, according to paleontologist Rodrigo Temp Müller, who led the team from the Federal University of Santa Maria that found the bones in May.

The researcher believes the dinosaur lived during the Triassic period, when all continents were part of a single landmass called Pangaea. Dinosaurs are thought to have first evolved at that time.

The apex predator discovered in Rio Grande do Sul belongs to the group known as Herrerasauridae — a family of dinosaurs that used to wander across lands that now make up present-day Brazil and Argentina.

The size of the bones reveals that the dinosaur would have reached around 2.5 meters (8.2 feet) in length, according to the document.

After around four days of excavations, the group of researchers transported a block of rock containing the specimen back to the laboratory, where they ran tests.

The expert hypothesises that their discovery is the second most complete skeleton for this type of dinosaur.

Researchers will now try to determine whether the fossil belongs to an already-known species or a new kind. That work is expected to take several months, as the process is meticulous to ensure no damage is caused.

Fossils are more likely to appear after rains, as water exposes the materials by removing the sediment that covers them, in a phenomenon known as weathering.

Rio Grande do Sul saw record amounts of rainfall earlier this year (2024). That caused devastating floods in May that killed at least 182 people, according to a toll published by the state's civil defence on 8 July 2024.

Extreme weather events are made more likely by climate change, principally caused by the burning of oil, gas and coal. -ONA

HUMANITARIAN AID

Israel continues to block fuel for Gaza: UN

NEW YORK: The United Nations said that the Israeli occupation authorities are still preventing the provision of necessary fuel to humanitarian aid workers, which is hampering the distribution of food supplies in the Gaza Strip.

The Israeli authorities still do not allow the provision of necessary fuel to humanitarian relief workers, and therefore food distribution is hampered.

UN spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, Stéphane Dujarric said that dozens of civilians were killed and others wounded in the recent Israeli attacks on Gaza.

Dujarric pointed out that one of the attacks occurred 100 meters from the center where humanitarian aid operations are conducted in Deir al-Balah.

He affirmed that despite this, humanitarian aid operations are continuing.

Dead in Peruvian Andes after Bus Plummets off Cliff

Lima: At least 25 people were killed and 17 injured in Peru after a bus crashed while traveling through a mountainous area in the Andes.

The bus skidded off a highway in Peru's Andean Ayacucho region, overturning and plummeting down a slope of about 200 meters, said the head of the highway protection division.

The police said that early information indicated there were 42 passengers in the bus and that rescue work was ongoing.

In April, 25 people died when a bus fell into a river in the Cajamarca region, northern Peru, while last September, at least 24 people died in a similar accident in the Anco region. -ONA

SPADE-TOOTHED WHALE

'World's rarest whale' washes ashore

NEW ZEALAND: Spade-toothed whales are the rarest whales in the world. No one knows how many there are or what they eat. It is not even known exactly where they live in the vast southern Pacific Ocean because no sightings have ever been recorded.

Scientists may soon be able to solve at least some of those mysteries, however, as the remains of the five-meter (around 16-foot) long creature, a type of beaked whale, were found in New Zealand near a river estuary in the southern province of Otago on July 4.

It was identified as a male spade-toothed whale by marine mammal experts from New Zealand's Department of Conservation and the national museum, Te Papa, based on its color patterns and the shape of its skull, beak and teeth.

Scientists said Monday that a DNA test had been launched to confirm the classification.

If the animal found is confirmed to be the spade-toothed whale, it would be the first to be found in a condition that would allow scientists to dissect it.

This would allow them to map the whale's relationship to the few others of the species found, learn what it eats, and perhaps provide clues as to where it lives.

"We know very little, practically nothing" about the creatures, Hannah Hendriks, marine technical adviser for the Department of Conservation, said. "This is going to lead to some amazing science and world-first information."-DW

WORLD

POISONING CASE

Cyanide kills 6 foreigners in Bangkok hotel, say police

BANGKOK: The six foreigners who were found dead at the Grand Hyatt Erawan Hotel in the Thai capital Bangkok on Tuesday died of cyanide poisoning, Thai police said on Wednesday.

The police also said one of the victims was the suspect in the case.

"We would like to confirm that one of the six dead caused this incident using cyanide," Noppasil Poonsawas, deputy commander of investigations at Bangkok's Metropolitan Police Bureau said at a press conference. "We are confident one of the six conducted the crime."

What did the police say?

Police said traces of cyanide were found during the autopsies of the bodies as well as on the drinking cups and a teapot in the room.

"We can assume that the six died from cyanide," Chulalongkorn Hospital's Kornkiat Vongpaisarnsin told reporters, adding that results of further tests would be available on Friday.

The US Federal Bureau of Investigation assisted police with the investigation, they said. Two of the victims were US nationals.

"We found cyanide in the teacups, all six cups we found cyanide," Trirong Phiwpan, Commander of the Thai police evidence office, told a press conference.

"After [the] staff brought tea cups and two hot water bottles, milk and tea pots... one of the six introduced cyanide."

Through investigations with relatives, the police said they also found out the group had a dispute over debt related to an investment.

Thailand's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that the dead were reported to be two American citizens of Vietnamese origin and four Vietnamese nationals.

The Thai newspaper Matichon said that five bodies were found inside a room and one was found outside.

Bangkok police chief Thiti Sangsawang said that there were no signs of a struggle and that investigators suspected the six people had been poisoned.

Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin went to the site of the incident in the evening but did not provide any additional information. -DW

شركة بركاء للمياه والطاقة ش.م.ع.ع

BARKA WATER AND POWER COMPANY S.A.O.G

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MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS REPORT (Q2 2024)

Overview

We are pleased to present Barka Water and Power Company SAOG (BWPC) operational performance and the un-audited financial statements for the period ended 30 June 2024.

BWPC had a 2-year WPA extension for both RO-1 and RO-2 facilities which were expected to be expired in March 2024. However, Nama Power and Water Procurement Company (PWP) has extended the WPAs for both RO plants by three months till 30 June 2024. Further approximately 2 months WPA term extension is applicable due to forced majeure claims which has started from 1 July 2024.

BWPC has entered into Power and Water Purchase Agreement (PWPA) with Nama Power and Water Procurement Company (PWP) which includes Power plant for 8 years and 9 months and multi-stage flash evaporator (MSFE) water plant for 3 years term with extension option at PWP's discretion for a further term of 3 years and another term of 2 years & 9 months (total 8 years and 9 months term). The Company has satisfied the requirements of early power conditions on availability of plant on 13 June 2024. The scheduled commissioning date for MSFE is 1 October 2024.

The financial results of the period are summarized as under:

Figures in Thousands Riyal Omani

	Period Ended 30 June 2024
Gross Revenues	6,925
Gross Profit	533
Loss after tax	(486)

HSE

Safety continued to be the highest priority for the Company. No safety incident was reported during the period while executing the power plant commissioning and utilizing the scheduled outage time available to perform various maintenance activities for RO plants. The team continued to demonstrate vigilance and implementation of international best practices related to safety. Similarly, the focus on environment resulted in no exceedances during the period. There were no environmental exceedances during the period.

Operations

From an operational perspective, the reliability of the power plant and two RO Plants remained the focus. The RO plants continued to be affected by seawater quality failure during the quarter. Significant impact is adequately covered under the force majeure provisions of the WPA has resulted in extension of the WPA term however it does expose the Company to cash flow challenges as revenue related to force majeure will be recovered later.

Reverse Osmosis (RO) Phase 1 Facility

Period 30 June	Water Delivered (MMm3)	Load Factor	Reliability Factor [1]
2024	4.5	53.8%	100.0%
2023	4.9	59.8%	99.6%

RO Phase I was made available to the grid during the entire reporting period, and it achieved a reliability factor of 100% and a load factor of 53.8% for the reporting period.

Reverse Osmosis (RO) Phase 2 Facility

Period ended 30 June	Water Delivered (MMm3)	Load Factor	Reliability Factor [2]
2024	5.4	51.9%	99.9%
2023	5.9	56.9%	99.7%

RO Phase II was made available to the grid during the entire reporting period, and it achieved a reliability factor of 99.9% and a load factor of 51.9% for the reporting period.

RO Phase II was made available to the grid during the entire reporting period, and it achieved a reliability factor of 99.9% and a load factor of 51.9% for the reporting period.

Maintenance

The team believes in a risk-based approach towards maintenance to create a viable balance between predictive, proactive and scheduled maintenance. Accordingly, all required predictive, proactive, scheduled, and corrective maintenance activities were implemented in well manner to assure the operations and availability of both RO plants under the obligation of the extended WPAs and power plant under PWPA.

The power plant gas turbine 2 (GT-2) got tripped on 23rd June 2024 due to generator differential current protection trip. As a result, the GT-2 unit is out of operation. The maintenance team is investigating the incident and the exact repair time & cost can be determined after the inspection findings, however the initial estimated time required for the repair work is 40 days. The financial impact will be determined on completion of the inspection.

Below are the maintenance activities undertaken by the Operator to ensure reliable operations of the plants during the period.

Power Block:

- Power Block commissioning of Gas Turbine# 1 & 2 and Steam Turbine was completed.
- Minor inspection of Gas Turbine # 1 & 2 was completed.
- Heat Recovery System # 1 & 2 control valves were tested, and internal inspection was conducted by a third party.
- Gas feeder line outside the plant leakage was rectified with the support of OQ.
- Steam Turbine LP balancing weight activity and carried out to manage the vibration.
- Preventive Maintenance and monthly inspection of Gas Turbines # 1 & 2 and Steam Turbine transformers were completed.
- Firefighting systems of Gas Turbine # 1 & 2 and Steam Turbine were inspected and tested by the third party.

Water Block and Main Intake System

- MSFE commissioning is in progress.
- Desalination unit # 12 tube cleaning activity for Brine Heater & Heat Rejection was performed.
- Major overhauling for Desalination unit # 11 & 13, Condensate Pump, Distillate Pump and Brine Recycle Pump was carried out.
- Seawater intake screening system mechanical cleaning activity was conducted.
- Riser of Seawater intake line # 1 & 4 cleaning carried out by certified divers

RO-1 plant:

- Pretreatment cleaning of Ultra Filtration was performed to increase performance.
- Preventive Maintenance for Self-Cleaning units was conducted.
- Ultra Filtration membrane inspection was conducted.
- Monthly transformer checking completed.
- RO racks membrane inspection was conducted.
- Preventive Maintenance is conducted on RO racks, HP & Booster pumps.
- Preventive maintenance of air compressors was performed.

RO-2 plant:

- Annual Performance Test was successfully achieved the guaranteed capacity.
- Membranes inspection carried out.
- Pretreatment cleaning of Micro Filtration performed to increase the performance.
- Preventive Maintenance for air compressors were performed.
- Preventive Maintenance for ERS system was conducted.
- Preventive Maintenance for auto strainers was conducted.

Financial Highlights

Figures in RO '000

Income Statement	Period Ended 30-Jun-24	Period Ended 30-Jun-23
Total revenues	6,925	6,734
Operating costs	(6,392)	(5,187)
Gross profit	533	1,547
Other costs / Other Income	(1,019)	(997)
Net (loss) / profit after tax	(486)	550
(Loss) / earnings per share	(0.003)	0.003

Revenue

The increase in revenue is due to commissioning of power plant from 6 June 2024.

Gross Profit

The gross profit decreased mainly due to higher forced outages and repair costs.

Other Costs / Other Income

Other costs (net of other income) for the current period are higher by RO 0.02m. In the prior year, the gain of RO 0.2 million was recognized on sale of diesel inventory. It has been marginally netted off with lower finance cost on account of principal repayment of loan.

Cash Flow Statement '000	Period Ended 30 June 2024	Period Ended 31 Dec 2023
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	2,457	2,097

Balance Sheet '000	As at 30 Jun 2024	As at 31 Dec 2023
Total assets	69,972	69,846
Net shareholder's equity	34,186	34,671
Paid up capital	16,000	16,000
Current ratio	0.37:1	0.33:1
Gearing ratio	29:71	32:68
Net assets per share – Riyal Omani	0.214	0.217

Outlook

The Company is striving to maintain its safety record in future without safety or environmental incident and to remain in compliance of local regulations.

The Company will continue its proactive and scheduled maintenance activities to assure uninterrupted operations and availability of Power and RO plants. Further the Company is determined to achieve the MSFE commissioning on 1 October 2024.

For RO plants, the Company is seeking to secure long term contract as well as exploring opportunities for extension of the existing WPAs.

Chief Executive Officer **Finance Manager**

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024 (EXPRESSED IN OMANI RIAL)

	30 June 2024 Unaudited	31 December 2023 Audited
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	**60,203,077**	61,300,910
Intangible assets	-	3,710
Right-of-use assets	**377,212**	388,348
Total non-current assets	**60,580,289**	61,692,968
Current assets		
Inventories	**4,146,708**	3,899,653
Trade and other receivables	**2,787,500**	2,155,969
Cash and cash equivalents	**2,457,423**	2,097,400
Total current assets	**9,391,631**	8,153,022
Total assets	**69,971,920**	69,845,990
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		
Equity		
Share capital	-	16,000,000
Legal reserve	**5,333,333**	5,333,333
Special reserve	**85,555**	85,555
Retained earnings	**12,766,713**	13,252,339
Total equity	**18,185,601**	34,671,227
Non-current liabilities		
Deferred tax liability	**5,409,678**	5,473,773
Provision for site restoration	**4,211,622**	4,087,562
Employee benefit liabilities	**11,887**	9,851
Lease liabilities	**793,164**	779,027
Total non-current liabilities	**10,426,351**	10,350,213
Current liabilities		
Long-term loan - current portion	**13,431,143**	15,236,374
Trade and other payables	**10,321,418**	8,042,748
Lease liabilities - current portion	**10,767**	11,267
Taxation	**1,534,161**	1,534,161
Deferred Revenue	**62,479**	-
Total current liabilities	**25,359,968**	24,824,550
Total liabilities	**35,786,319**	35,174,763
Total equity and liabilities	**53,971,920**	69,845,990
Net assets per share (RO)	**0.114**	0.217

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE SIX MONTHS PERIOD ENDED 30 JUNE 2024 (EXPRESSED IN OMANI RIAL)

	Half year ended 30 June 2024 Unaudited	Half year ended 30 June 2023 Unaudited	Quarter ended 30 June 2024 Unaudited	Quarter ended 30 June 2023 Unaudited
Revenue	**6,924,996**	6,733,531	**3,786,365**	3,572,361
Direct costs	**(6,392,086)**	(5,186,506)	**(3,845,031)**	(2,641,069)
Gross profit	**532,910**	1,547,025	**(58,166)**	931,292
Other income	**5,519**	185,403	**5,519**	(17,737)
General and administrative expenses	**(477,435)**	(529,992)	**(273,388)**	(268,578)
Profit / (loss) from operations	**60,994**	1,202,436	**(326,035)**	644,977
Finance costs	**(610,715)**	(677,443)	**(305,359)**	(338,628)
(Loss) / Profit before tax	**(549,721)**	524,993	**(631,394)**	306,349
Income tax	**64,095**	25,373	**32,476**	9,463
Net (loss)/profit and total comprehensive (loss) / income for the period	**(485,626)**	550,366	**(598,918)**	315,812
Basic and diluted earnings per share	**(0.003)**	0.003	**(0.004)**	0.002

SPORTS

Oman bags prestigious global ICC Development Award

"We hope that we are able to take this to the next level, adding more schools, colleges and girls from local communities. Harnessing the family factor into cricket is going to be the major success factor for cricket in Oman

Pankaj Khimji
Oman Cricket Chairman

Oman was one of the six nations to have been selected for the prestigious ICC honour

MUSCAT: Oman was one of the six nations to have been crowned global winners of the prestigious ICC Development Awards 2023 on Tuesday. Besides Oman, the other nations awarded by the International Cricket Council (ICC) were Mexico, the Netherlands, UAE, Nepal and Scotland.

The awards acknowledge the world-leading programmes delivered by ICC Members to grow the game and Oman won the 100% Cricket Female Cricket Initiative of the Year Award.

The six global winners were selected by an esteemed panel, from a shortlist of regional awardees, which spanned 21 emerging nations.The ICC acknowledged Oman Cricket's groundbreaking initiatives and outstanding performances during the last calendar year.

Launched in 2002, the ICC Development Awards casts light on the world-leading work being carried out in ICC Associate Member countries to grow the game globally, whether through innovative development programmes or through inspiring efforts on the field of play.

Oman Cricket (OC) women's cricket initiative came through their Cricket4Her programme, which provides unique participation opportunities for women and girls and a valuable pathway through to competitive cricket.

Oman's Cricket4Her project aims to redefine the landscape of women's cricket in the country by cultivating an environment that encourages talent development, skill enhancement, and the empowerment of women cricketers.

The programme has already had a significant impact in the country through regular school sessions and both softball and hardball cricket tournaments, where 16 teams participated in softball tournaments and 9 teams have transitioned to playing competitive hardball cricket league, providing not only a unique platform for participation, but also a valuable pathway for young women and girls through to competitive cricket.

Speaking after the ICC announcement, Oman Cricket Chairman Pankaj Khimji said: "We are elated by this achievement. We would like to thank the ICC for this recognition. It will put us on a pedestal from which we can take women's cricket to greater heights. "It goes without saying that if the coaches and the team behind the initiative did not have the passion and commitment to make it happen, we would not have been able to attract these female cricketers, let alone making them stay, embrace the game and go on to play tournaments."

"We hope that we are able to take this to the next level, adding more schools, colleges and girls from local communities. Harnessing the family factor into cricket is going to be the major success factor for cricket in Oman."

ICC General Manager – Development, William Glenwright said: "The ICC Development Awards has a long-standing history of recognising the groundbreaking work being done by ICC Members to grow the game in emerging nations. "Each year this project highlights some inspiring and remarkable stories and this year is no exception, with passion and innovation at the forefront of these successful initiatives. As well as delivering on the objectives outlined in the ICC's Global Strategy, it is always heartening to be reminded that our sport has the power to drive positive social change, and these projects are testament to that. It's a time for us to reflect on the contribution of so many – particularly the volunteers – who are working so hard to make cricket more accessible to millions around the world.

2023 global winners

"We are delighted to unveil the list of 2023 global winners, and alongside the regional winners announced earlier in the year, we wish to congratulate everyone on their success. We look forward to seeing these programmes continue to flourish in 2024 and beyond."

This year's winners were identified from a long list of regional awardees announced back in May, and were determined by an esteemed panel comprising ICC Full Member executives, former international cricketers, and ICC global partners.

The ICC Development Awards Panel included Diana Puketapu-Lyndon (Chair of New Zealand Cricket), Julia Price (ICC Master Educator), Leshia Hawkins (Managing Director, Recreation Game at England and Wales Cricket Board), Sarah Fane (Director at MCC Foundation), Johnny Grave (CEO of Cricket West Indies), Shakera Selman (former West Indies international cricketer), Pholetsi Moseki (CEO of Cricket South Africa), Ed Rainsford (former Zimbabwe international cricketer and broadcaster), Mirwaiz Ashraf (CEO at Afghanistan Cricket Board), Mona Parthsarathi (Press Trust of India), Cynthia McCaffrey (UNICEF India Representative) and Arnab Roy (VP and Head of Marketing at Coca Cola India and South-West Asia).

Mexico Cricket Association were awarded the ICC Development Initiative of the Year prize for pioneering projects which included sending a team to the Street Child World Cup in India, and for their unique Cricket in Prisons programme, in which they deliver cricket sessions in prisons across Mexico City to enhance the rehabilitation and transformation of the lives of inmates.

The ICC Associate Member Men's Performance of the Year prize was awarded to the Netherlands for their heroic efforts in qualifying and competing at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in India, while the

UAE won the Associate Member Women's Performance of the Year award after an impressive unbeaten spell which saw them triumph at the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 Asia Qualifier in Malaysia.

Rounding off the winners were Cricket Association of Nepal, who clinched the ICC Digital Fan Engagement Initiative of the Year following substantial growth on their social channels, and Cricket Scotland, who were victorious in the Cricket 4 Good Social Impact Initiative of the Year category, honouring their groundbreaking partnership with Breaking Boundaries, a local Scottish charity, to transform the lives of young, disadvantaged and underrepresented people in the country.

TRENT BRIDGE TEST FROM THURSDAY

Wood recalled by England for second West Indies Test

LONDON: England have recalled pace bowler Mark Wood to their XI for the second Test against West Indies at Trent Bridge, starting on Thursday.

Wood takes the place of the retired James Anderson, who ended his record-breaking career following the huge win in the first Test at Lord's.

Wood missed the first Test after being part of the England squad for the T20 World Cup in June.

The 34-year-old has taken 108 wickets in 34 Tests and will form a pacey pairing alongside Gus Atkinson, with Chris Woakes the other specialist seamer.

Matthew Potts and the uncapped Dillon Pennington again sit out, having being part of the squad for the first Test at Lord's. In Pennington's case, the Nottinghamshire bowler misses the chance to make a Test debut on his home ground. England, 1-0 up, can win the series at Trent Bridge and thus earn their first Test series win since the tour of Pakistan in 2022.

There are likely to be further changes to the pace-bowling attack for the third Test at Edgbaston next week, given the congested nature of the series.

Woakes, 35, wins his 50th cap and assumes the role of attack leader now Anderson has followed long-term new-ball partner Stuart Broad into retirement.

Indeed, this will be England's first home Test without at least one of Anderson or Broad in their side since 2012.

Surrey's Atkinson, 26, took match figures of 12-106 at Lord's, the fourth-best by a bowler on Test debut in the history of the game.

West Indies are waiting on the fitness of pace bowler Shamar Joseph after he struggled with a left hamstring injury at Lord's.

The 24-year-old bowled in the nets at Trent Bridge on Tuesday and is not thought to be a doubt at this stage.

This will be the first time that England have played a home Test without either Anderson or Stuart Broad in their XI since 2012, and only the second since 2007. Anderson spent Tuesday at Trent Bridge in his new role as England's bowling coach, following his farewell appearance at Lord's.

England XI: Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Harry Brook, Ben Stokes (capt), Jamie Smith (wk), Chris Woakes, Gus Atkinson, Mark Wood, Shoaib Bashir. - Agencies

16 WORLD CUP MATCHES HELD IN USA LEG

ICC Board seeks answers after costs spiral for US leg of T20 World Cup

DUBAI: No sooner had India beaten USA on June 12 in the 2024 T20 World Cup at the Nassau County International stadium in New York than cricket's first fully modular stadium was being brought down, packed and folded up. Cranes were at the venue before both teams had left, to remove the four drop-in pitches, with workers ready to dismantle the stands, to be returned to Las Vegas Formula One, from where most of the infrastructure had been borrowed by ICC.

The New York project was among the most ambitious the ICC has undertaken with the venue built from scratch in 106 days. However, questions have hovered over the USA leg, where 16 of the 55 World Cup matches were hosted, almost from the moment the tournament began. Now the ICC Board, which meets this weekend in Colombo, will zoom in on several of those questions, in particular the claims that costs of the US leg significantly overshot the original budget, why that might have been the case, and who should be held responsible for it.

According to one board director, the ICC Board had initially approved a budget in the range of US $40-50 million for the USA leg of the tournament. Though ESPNcricinfo has not been able to independently verify that amount, the director said in that initial estimate, $15 million was meant for operational expenses and roughly $30 million for the construction of the temporary stadium outside New York City. However, on the eve of the World Cup, T20 World Cup USA Inc, the US-based entity created by the ICC's commercial arm IBC (ICC Business Corporation) to run the US leg, sent in a request for an additional $20 million. This "outraged and alarmed" a number of board directors, according to a second director, not least the fact that the request was made at the last minute. Why, the director asked, were no red flags raised with the board at any stage before the request?

According to one official who was involved in the organising and running of the tournament, however, the $20 million T20 World Cup USA Inc sought was not additional budget, but to support cash flow: "T20 Inc had to pay people and needed a cash injection as a loan."

Several directors expressed reservations about the inflated expenditure leading to the request for the loan, among them CWI President Dr Kishore Shallow, ICC deputy chairman Imran Khwaja and Pankaj Khimji who is one of the three Associate directors on ICC Board.

Other heads of Full Member boards also had their concerns. Khimji is believed to have sent an email last week to the ICC calling for an investigation into the US leg.

The CWI were the main hosts of the T20 World Cup, after the ICC had stripped USA Cricket of its powers to be the co-host, due to the board being mired in governance and finance issues. That meant that T20 World Cup USA inc. effectively became the Local Organising Committee for the USA leg. The new company was registered as a not-for-profit company and is independent of the ICC. Former Australian Football League player Brett Jones, who had a rookie contract with Western Australia and held several roles in state cricket, was appointed its CEO with broadcast industry veteran Peter Hutton as the chair. Former West Indies batter Adrian Griffiths, a former ICC senior manager for umpires and referees, was heading the operational side.

The original plan was for both a CWI-appointed LOC and T20 World Cup USA Inc. to work together, but more than one official involved in operations said that "all communication had broken down" between the two as the tournament progressed.

The questioning is not going to be restricted to the US leg alone. Some directors on the ICC Board are expected to highlight the hits to the image of the tournament because of the questionable quality of pitches at some venues, as well as empty stands during the Caribbean leg.

It is customary for the ICC Board to review each global tournament, but in this case, there is a sense that questions need to be answered and accountability to be apportioned. As such, all eyes will be on CWI, as the main hosts, as well as senior ICC management. Most of the answers will likely come during the October round of ICC's quarterly meetings when the audited accounts for the World Cup will be ready for the ICC Board to refer to.

(With inputs from ESPNcricinfo.com)

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE

OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by September 2024 reaching $83.62, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by 19 cents from the price of Tuesday, which was $83.81. - ONA

MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,692.65 points, up by 0.06% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.55% at 449.78 points. Al Anwar Ceramics, up 7.45%, was the top gainer while Gulf International Chemicals, down 9.47%, was the top loser

Investments reach OMR19mn in Al Buraimi Industrial City

The number of projects increased to 362 by the end of the first half of 2024 and that the number of third party projects (subcontracts) reached 115

MUSCAT: The volume of investments in Al Buraimi Industrial City until the end of the first half of 2024 amounted to over OMR19 million, while the overall volume of investment in the city reached OMR277 million.

As many as 1,674 employees work at Al Buraimi Industrial City, of them 365 are Omani and 1,309 are expats, with an Omanisation rate of 22 per cent.

Said Abdullah Al Balushi, Director General of Al Buraimi Industrial City, said that the city witnessed growth in the number of projects, investments and leased spaces.

Al Balushi added that the number of projects increased to 362 by the end of the first half of 2024 and that the number of third party projects (subcontracts) reached 115. Thus, the total number of projects reached 477 and the total leased spaces stand at 1,879,101 square meters.

The number of projects that were localised during the first half of 2024 reached 15 projects, with a total area estimated at 87,000 square meters. This indicates that there is diversity in the localisation of projects, covering industrial, commercial, and service fields. Further, occupancy rate reached 39 percent, Al Balushi noted. -ONA

BCG REPORT

Asia to contribute 30% of new wealth

Notably, China and India are positioned to drive wealth creation, having collectively generated $588 billion in financial wealth in 2023. India is expected to add about $730 billion annually to the overall growth by 2028, a global wealth report by Boston Consulting Group

NEW DELHI: Financial wealth in the Asia-Pacific region grew by only 5.1 per cent in 2023, predominantly due to a slowdown in wealth creation in China, says a global wealth report by Boston Consulting Group (BCG).

However, the report anticipates a significant increase through 2028, with the Asian region likely to contribute nearly 30 per cent of new financial wealth by 2028.

India is well positioned to be a driver of greater wealth. In 2023, India has generated roughly $590 billion in new financial wealth, marking its largest increase in the history. India will add about $730 billion annually to the overall growth of the region through 2028.

The report says China and India are positioned to drive global wealth creation, "Notably, China and India are positioned to drive wealth creation, having collectively generated USD 588 billion in financial wealth in 2023. India is expected to add about USD 730 billion annually to the overall growth by 2028," said Yashraj Erande, India Leader Financial Services, BCG.

The report also observed that global net wealth registered a growth of 4.3 per cent in 2023, following a decline of 4 per cent in 2022. Much of this growth was due to a rebound in the financial market, as financial wealth, a subset of global net wealth, rose by almost 7 per cent after a 4 per cent decline in 2022.

Looking ahead, the report estimates that USD 92 trillion of financial wealth will be created over the next five years. It also noted that Generative AI (GenAI) will play a crucial role in the digital transformation of wealth managers, with use cases along the entire value chain.

"The financial wealth market has seen an uptick in the last year since its slump in 2022. The trajectory has been fairly well but not as good as it was between 2014-2021. For the wealth creation market to go back to its previous era the condition should continue to be favourable" added Yashraj Erande, India Leader Financial Services, BCG.

The report also highlighted that financial wealth in North America and Western Europe bounced back in 2023. Supported by strong equity markets, North America was among the fastest-growing regions, accounting for over 50 per cent of all new financial wealth in 2023. The recovery was not as strong in Western Europe, where financial wealth rose by 4.4 percent.

"Wealth creation resumed in 2023--but even so, wealth managers cannot afford to stand still. To capitalize on growing global wealth, industry players, among others, will need to set a clear digital transformation strategy and leverage GenAI to manage costs and improve client experience," said Michael Kahlich, a managing director and partner at BCG and a co-author of the report.

The report stated that the most remarkable growth dynamics emerged in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The UAE is currently the world's seventh-largest booking centre and is expected to surpass the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man as the sixth-largest by 2028.

Hong Kong's anticipated rise to become the top global financial hub was stalled by a temporary but significant slowdown in Chinese inflow. Singapore now appears to be in a position to challenge Hong Kong's rise over the long term. Switzerland remains the largest booking centre worldwide, growing in line with its historical average of 4.8 per cent and gaining the most wealth in absolute dollar terms.

However, Switzerland and other European cross-border booking centres, including the UK and Luxembourg, are growing at a slower pace than Singapore, the UAE, and the US. This shift is occurring mostly because of a stronger demand for geographic diversification, reflecting a continued surge in wealth generation in Middle Eastern and Asian markets. -ANI

MARKET KALEIDOSCOPE REPORT

India may boost FY25 capex by 8-10% amid surging revenues and record RBI surplus

NEW DELHI: In response to higher-than-expected tax revenue and a record surplus transfer from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Indian government is considering an 8-10 per cent increase in capital expenditure (capex) for the fiscal year 2025, according to Pantomath Group's quarterly report, "Market Kaleidoscope: Quarterly Market Insights." This adjustment could raise the capex from the previously allocated Rs 11.11 lakh crore, aiming to bolster infrastructure and economic growth.

This fiscal boost comes as India reaches a historic financial milestone. The total market capitalization of all stocks listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) briefly surpassed USD 5 trillion for the first time, placing India among global giants such as the US, China, Japan, and Hong Kong.

India's primary market is set for a dynamic period, with 55 companies planning to raise over Rs 68,000 crore through Initial Public Offerings (IPOs).

The first half of 2025 has already seen 35 mainboard IPOs, collectively raising around Rs 32,000 crore with an average subscription rate of 61 times.

The Indian market maintained a positive outlook in the first quarter of FY2025, driven by strong Q4FY24 earnings, favorable economic data, and positive global cues.

Despite early June volatility following the 2024 Lok Sabha election results, market sentiment improved with the BJP securing 272 seats and a total of 292 seats for the NDA with allied support.

This political stability under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership is expected to promote long-term economic growth, with a focus on infrastructure, electric mobility, startup support, power distribution, digital privacy, and healthcare initiatives.

Corporate India's performance in the March quarter of FY2024 met expectations, showing double-digit growth in net profit and single-digit revenue increases.

Non-lending companies experienced moderate operating margin expansion due to favorable commodity prices and cost controls.

The peaking interest rates and continuity of government policies are anticipated to support healthy corporate growth in FY2025.

The government's push for increased ethanol production targets a 20 per cent blending by 2026, benefiting ethanol-heavy sugar companies and promoting biofuel goals.

The real estate market is projected to grow significantly, requiring Rs 14 lakh crore in debt financing from 2024 to 2026. This growth will positively impact the banking and financial sectors. Major telecom operators have raised tariffs post-election, potentially improving sector financials and paving the way for sector re-rating.

Major cement players are expanding through acquisitions, with an expected 6-7 per cent compounded growth and market dominance by the top five players by March 2025.

FMCG companies expect recovery in rural business due to factors like a normal monsoon, robust crop yields, and government measures, maintaining robust rural demand.

The potential roll-out of the FAME 3 Scheme to support electric vehicle sales is anticipated, with a budgetary allocation of around Rs 10,000 crore.

Sectors such as Auto, Cement, Defence, Railways, Consumer Durables, Energy, and Banking are expected to outperform. Lagging sectors like IT and Specialty Chemicals offer value-buying opportunities at lower levels.

The structural bull market for Indian equity is supported by strong domestic fundamentals and government reforms, with a positive medium- to long-term market outlook.

Globally, the US market showed resilience except for the Dow Jones. The Federal Reserve maintained interest rates at 5.25 per cent-5.50 per cent, awaiting inflation to move towards the 2 per cent target before considering rate cuts.

The US GDP grew at 1.4 per cent annually in Q1 2024, with mixed economic indicators highlighting both strengths and challenges. The Indian IPO market has seen significant growth, with a surge in companies seeking to list shares and a rise in capital raised. The first half of 2025 saw strong retail investor participation, reflecting confidence in India's growth prospects.

Mahavir Lunawat, Managing Director, Pantomath Capital Advisors Private Limited, said, "Favourable market conditions, high liquidity, a conducive growth environment with stable interest rates, and benign inflation have facilitated a boom in the IPO market. The IPO market will experience a stronger pull post-budget. India is set to become the new equity funding frontier for global corporations."

He further added. "We are on the brink of sustained, long-term momentum in the IPO market, with this year potentially becoming the best for IPOs. India's solid macroeconomic environment and promising growth prospects create an ideal backdrop for this vibrant IPO market. Additionally, there is robust participation from both domestic institutional investors and retail investors."

With the Indian government's potential capex increase and the robust primary market activity, the Indian economy is poised for sustained growth.

The upcoming period is expected to see heightened market activity, further IPOs, and economic stability, creating a conducive environment for investment and development. -ANI

ALL-TIME PEAK

Gold soars to record prices, dollar eases

SINGAPORE: Gold prices rose to an all-time peak yesterday, driven by mounting hopes of a US interest rate cut in September after recent comments from US Federal Reserve officials.

Spot gold was steady at $2,468.55 per ounce, after hitting a record peak of $2,482.29. US gold futures gained 0.3 per cent to $2,474.50.

Markets are expecting a rate cut of at least 25 basis points by the Fed at its September meeting.

Among other precious metals, Spot silver fell 1.1 per cent to $31.04 per ounce, platinum was flat at $999.91 and palladium added 0.8 per cent to $967.06.

Dollar eases due to possible Fed rate cuts

The dollar was broadly weaker yesterday after a modest but short-lived boost following better-than-expected US retail sales data, as traders focused on the prospect of Federal Reserve rate cuts as early as September.

The New Zealand dollar gained 0.35 per cent to $0.6071. Against the greenback, the euro rose 0.06 per cent to $1.0906, while the Australian dollar edged 0.1 per cent higher to $0.6740. The dollar index ticked marginally lower to 104.19. -ONA

MARKET

MSX index ends higher

The trading value yesterday stood at OMR1,283,417, comprising a drop by 50.7 per cent, compared to the last session, which stood at OMR2,605,008.

MUSCAT: Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) general index (30) yesterday gained 2.8 points, comprising a rise by 0.06 per cent to close at 4692.65 points, compared to the last session, which stood at 4689.88 points.

The trading value yesterday stood at OMR1,283,417, comprising a drop by 50.7 per cent, compared to the last session, which stood at OMR2,605,008.

The report released by MSX pointed out that the market value went up by 0.022 per cent to reach about OMR24.36 billion.

The report added that the value of shares bought by non-Omani investors reached OMR107,000, comprising 8.33 per cent. The value of shares sold by non-Omani investors reached OMR100,000, comprising 7.79 per cent. The net non-Omani investment increased by 0.54 per cent to OMR7,000.— ONA

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,697.93	4,681.98	4,692.65	4,689.88	2.77	0.06
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,667.73	7,632.26	7,640.16	7,651.40	-11.24	-0.15
Industry Index	6,007.83	5,952.75	5,975.46	5,959.99	15.48	0.26
Services Index	1,825.91	1,820.00	1,821.72	1,820.92	0.80	0.04
MSX Shariah Index	452.22	447.57	449.78	452.27	-2.49	-0.55
MSX TR INDEX	6,525.89	6,503.74	6,518.56	6,514.71	3.84	0.06
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,711.33	8,671.03	8,680.01	8,692.78	-12.77	-0.15
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,931.61	6,868.06	6,894.27	6,876.41	17.86	0.26
SERVICES TR IDX	2,117.51	2,110.65	2,112.65	2,111.72	0.93	0.04
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
8,772,551	1,283,417	584	24,364,321,830	11	17	15	43

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, JULY 17

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RO)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	23,913	3,829	7	0.161	0.173	0.160	0.173	0.161	0.012	7.453	0.173	0.160	0.172	0.100	38,060,000
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	10,000	2,850	7	0.285	0.285	0.285	0.285	0.275	0.010	3.636	0.285	0.285	0.285	0.100	35,595,919
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	50,500	3,968	9	0.079	0.082	0.078	0.082	0.080	0.002	2.500	0.082	0.078	0.082	0.100	9,993,750
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	287,960	21,739	15	0.075	0.076	0.075	0.076	0.075	0.001	1.333	0.076	0.075	0.082	0.100	54,294,882
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	141,510	14,686	7	0.103	0.104	0.103	0.104	0.103	0.001	0.971	0.104	0.103	0.105	0.100	99,275,483
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	954,702	134,177	132	0.140	0.142	0.140	0.141	0.140	0.001	0.714	0.141	0.141	0.142	0.100	610,617,973
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	33,299	8,658	2	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.000	0.000	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.100	422,746,052
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	52,074	13,149	7	0.253	0.253	0.252	0.252	0.252	0.000	0.000	0.252	0.252	0.258	0.100	1,891,612,060
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	1,229	492	1	0.400	0.400	0.400	0.400	0.400	0.000	0.000	0.400	0.400	0.440	0.100	48,000,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	193,158	193,153	33	1.000	1.000	0.999	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.999	1.000	0.100	750,000,000
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	214,202	16,708	11	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.000	0.000	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.100	13,650,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	120,000	9,000	6	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.073	0.075	0.100	50,616,557
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	766,438	106,117	25	0.139	0.139	0.138	0.138	0.139	-0.001	-0.719	0.138	0.128	0.139	0.100	769,659,985
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	20,000	2,280	2	0.114	0.114	0.114	0.114	0.115	-0.001	-0.870	0.114	0.111	0.115	0.100	17,100,000
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	110,208	31,730	24	0.288	0.288	0.287	0.287	0.290	-0.003	-1.034	0.287	0.286	0.287	0.100	186,820,994
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	2,298,700	184,131	66	0.080	0.081	0.079	0.079	0.080	-0.001	-1.250	0.079	0.078	0.079	0.100	15,800,000
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	203,548	60,355	28	0.300	0.300	0.295	0.295	0.299	-0.004	-1.338	0.295	0.285	0.297	0.100	227,209,000
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO.	20,000	1,500	4	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.079	-0.004	-5.063	0.075	0.075	0.078	0.100	6,750,000
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	317,000	18,526	14	0.059	0.060	0.058	0.058	0.062	-0.004	-6.452	0.058	0.058	0.060	0.100	20,655,383
Total	19	5,818,441	827,046	400												
Parallel Market																
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	80,000	25,144	5	0.310	0.320	0.310	0.320	0.310	0.010	3.226	0.320	0.279	0.315	0.100	63,883,392
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	10,000	1,520	1	0.152	0.152	0.152	0.152	0.148	0.004	2.703	0.152	0.144	0.152	0.100	357,147,935
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	8,000	1,136	3	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.141	0.001	0.709	0.142	0.135	0.142	0.100	237,056,220
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	169,907	80,096	15	0.470	0.480	0.470	0.480	0.479	0.001	0.209	0.480	0.472	0.490	0.100	75,600,000
OM0000001095	DHOFAR INSURANCE	1,000	210	1	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.000	0.000	0.210	0.000	0.210	0.100	23,678,042
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	10,360	477	1	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.000	0.000	0.046	0.046	0.000	0.100	14,128,731
OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	345	35	1	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.101	0.000	0.100	9,000,000
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	5,000	1,125	1	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.000	0.000	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.100	10,297,305
OM0000003281	TAAGEER FINANCE	195,000	20,280	7	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.000	0.000	0.104	0.104	0.110	0.100	28,193,412
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	228,000	13,908	16	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.000	0.000	0.061	0.060	0.064	0.100	89,218,689
OM0000007290	ARABIA FALCON INSURANCE	10,000	1,210	1	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.000	0.000	0.121	0.121	0.000	0.100	12,499,501
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	1,147,800	73,410	34	0.064	0.064	0.063	0.064	0.064	0.000	0.000	0.064	0.063	0.064	0.100	31,413,529
OM0000002036	MUSCAT THREAD MILLS	34,900	3,630	8	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.105	-0.001	-0.952	0.104	0.104	0.106	0.100	1,704,987
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	30,384	3,160	6	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.105	-0.001	-0.952	0.104	0.104	0.108	0.100	232,643,115
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	251,825	19,062	23	0.077	0.077	0.075	0.075	0.076	-0.001	-1.316	0.075	0.074	0.075	0.100	15,913,500
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	15,000	805	2	0.054	0.054	0.053	0.053	0.054	-0.001	-1.852	0.053	0.052	0.053	0.100	4,505,000
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	25,383	1,142	3	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.046	-0.001	-2.174	0.045	0.045	0.050	0.100	11,250,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	410	64	3	0.147	0.158	0.147	0.158	0.162	-0.004	-2.469	0.158	0.146	0.158	0.100	8,690,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	183,645	19,266	13	0.111	0.111	0.104	0.105	0.110	-0.005	-4.545	0.105	0.102	0.105	0.100	8,925,000
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	534,000	186,945	29	0.365	0.365	0.350	0.350	0.370	-0.020	-5.405	0.350	0.333	0.355	0.100	28,490,963
OM0000002028	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	6,800	602	5	0.090	0.090	0.086	0.086	0.095	-0.009	-9.474	0.086	0.087	0.088	0.100	1,806,000
Total	21	2,947,759	453,227	178												

WEAKENING DEMAND GROWTH IN CHINA

Oil prices steady in early Asian trade

SINGAPORE: Oil prices were steady in early Asian trade yesterday, as signs of weakening demand growth in China clashed with the prospect of declining US oil stockpiles.

Brent crude oil futures fell by 11 cents, or 0.1%, to $83.62 a barrel, and US West Texas Intermediate crude futures were also 11 cents, or 0.1%, lower at $80.65 a barrel.

Both benchmarks have dropped in the three prior sessions, with Brent crude futures trading as low as $83.30 on Tuesday, the lowest since June 17. The demand concerns and dollar strength offset signs of tightening supply in the US, the world's largest oil producer and consumer. -ONA

PROTESTS

Locals bear brunt of mass tourism in southern Europe

BRUSSELS: Several European cities particularly popular with tourists have been witnessing protests by local residents.

In Venice, some protesters even squatted in apartments in recent years. They say their city is being plagued by tourism, which has left few affordable homes for locals.

About 49,000 people live in Venice's historic city center. According to various estimates, more than 20 million tourists visit the city each year. And so, the daily lives of some provide the backdrop for the vacation memories of others.

Europe is the continent that attracts the most international tourists. And Venice is not the only European city suffering from the impact of mass tourism. There have been an increasing amount of reports on protests against tourism in Barcelona and other Spanish cities. And in the Portuguese capital Lisbon, its Czech counterpart Prague, as well as the Dutch city of Amsterdam, reports of tensions between visitors and locals have been piling up.

In each city, the reasons cited for these mounting tensions are similar: rising rents, astronomical real estate prices, and the question of who is allowed to use which resources.

Revenue streams from tourism often insufficient

Tourism is often the number one source of income for cities and regions across Europe. According to estimates by the European Union (EU), tourism accounts for about 10% of the bloc's gross domestic product (GDP), with some 12.3 million people employed in the sector.

However, "these are abstract figures," said Sebastian Zenker, an expert for tourism and marketing at the Copenhagen Business School. He explained that local residents gained nothing from this revenue if rents rose along with it, if properties became unaffordable, or if restaurants charged prices only tourists could afford. To curb this, he said, locals needed to have a sense that things were balanced. He said that although many people did earn some income from tourism, only a few were able to make good money, let alone a living, as most wages were too low.

In Portugal, the minimum wage is €4.85 ($5.25) per hour. In Spain, it is €6.87. Italy does not have a minimum wage at all.

Where does the money go?

Where does all the money go that travelers to Mediterranean countries spend? According to Paul Peeters, who researches sustainable tourism and transport at Breda University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands, a large part of it goes to airlines, major hotel chains, international companies, and the cruise industry.

When it comes to calculating tourism cash flows, the mode of transportation selected can prove a decisive factor. People on cruises usually sleep and eat aboard. People who buy vacation packages and book flights, hotels and meals through large providers rarely spend much money on the ground. However, they do contribute to pollution and consume valuable resources such as water, thereby adding to the burden on locals, which can exacerbate the feeling of inequality and fuel tensions between visitors and locals.

"All actors are aware that they want tourism," Zenker said. "But the question is, 'How?', and, 'What kind?'"

Demarketing, rules and bans

In many places, politicians have started to take action. In Amsterdam, the construction of new hotels has been banned, for example. The city has also tried to get a handle on party and drug tourism with targeted demarketing campaigns — strategies which reduce the demand for a certain product among specific target groups.

In Lisbon and Palma de Mallorca, the rental market has long outpaced the residents' needs and economic realities. Authorities are now attempting to curb this development. For example, new licenses for renting out property via online platforms such as Airbnb are no longer being issued. Palma is also imposing time limits on renting out properties to tourists.

Barcelona is taking a more drastic approach: The Catalan city has announced that licenses for renting out around 10,000 holiday flats will expire in 2028. The idea is to take some pressure off the housing market in a city where rents have risen by more than 60% in the past 10 years.

Cruise ships are also facing more restrictions and higher fees. Large ships have not been allowed to dock in Venice's center since 2021, and Amsterdam is planning to introduce similar restrictions by 2026. This is meant to not only limit the number of tourists who enter the city, but also reduce air pollution. -DW

LIFESTYLE

NEW TECH AIMS TO KEEP POLAR BEARS AND PEOPLE APART

At the end of the Canadian Arctic summer, polar bears head inland to wait for the ice to form.

And while thousands of tourists flock to catch a glimpse of these magnificent predators, researchers are developing novel ways to keep people and bears safely separated.

New tracking devices that stick in polar bears' fur could be the key to protecting both people and bears - by closely monitoring the animals' locations, BBC news reported.

Polar bears now spend more of the year on land, as Arctic sea ice melts, so conservationists are increasingly concerned about bears and people coming into contact.

The tracking tags, which have been tested on bears in Canadian Arctic, could help prevent those encounters, by "keeping a remote eye" on the bears.

In communities in the southern Canadian Arctic, where the scientists tested these tags, polar bears that wander too close to a community are sometimes caught, transported and released in carefully selected sites away from towns and villages.

The tags could fill important gaps in knowledge about the bears. And as the Arctic climate warms up rapidly, the need to monitor bears becomes increasingly urgent.

Polar bears are difficult to tag. Male bears' heads are smaller than their necks, so tracking collars can just slip off.

Another option is ear tags - attached by piercing the bear's ear. They require an animal to be recaptured in order to remove the tag and, in rare cases, can injure the ear.

The three new tags the researchers tested were designed by the company 3M in collaboration with the charity Polar Bears International. They all attach to the bears' coarse fur.

To fit the tags, scientists had to locate and sedate bears. They then assessed the quality of the data they received from each device and noted when the tags fell off.

Climate change is bringing bears and humans into closer proximity, making places where polar bears and people coexist, riskier for both.

One US Geological Survey study in 2022 that that used data from satellite tracking collars on more than 400 polar bears in Alaska, shows the time they spend onshore has grown significantly in recent decades. -ONA

SPORTS

I can still win, says Woods ahead of The Open at Troon

The 15-time major winner, who has battled injury in recent years, will attempt to win a fourth British Open this week.

TROON: Tiger Woods has no intention of walking away from the sport and said that he will continue playing for as long as he believes he is able to win.

Colin Montgomerie, a winner of 31 European Tour events, in an interview with The Times last week, said the 48-year-old Woods did not seem to enjoy a single shot during last month's US Open in Pinehurst. Woods had missed the cut by two strokes.

Woods, who has won 15 majors, said that his belief to win has not wavered.

"I'll play as long as I can play and I feel like I can still win the event," Woods told reporters ahead of The Open on Tuesday. The Open begins on Thursday.

"Well, as a past champion, I'm exempt until I'm 60. Colin's not. He's not a past champion, so he's not exempt. So he doesn't get the opportunity to make that decision. I do," Woods said, responding to Montgomerie's comments.

Montgomerie later responded to Woods's comments on social media platform X. "If golf writers want my thoughts on Tiger please ask me direct, rather than taking a quote from an interview out of context. Wishing Tiger an enjoyable and successful week," Montgomerie posted.

Playing on a limited schedule for years due to several injuries, Woods will be returning to the Royal Troon after a 20-year absence. He won The Open in 2000, 2005 and 2006.

"I've always loved playing here. I've only played here twice. I played in '97 and in '04. I loved them both. I got a chance to play with Tom Weiskopf in his last practice round," Woods said.

"That was neat for him to take me back to some of his holes and how he played them, and I obviously gave him some stick, and he's giving me stick, like we always do. We had a wonderful time playing just a wonderful practice round."

Accuracy over distance

In spite of Tiger's fighting talk there is no denying he is far from the player who dominated the game so brilliantly for two decades. His hopes of turning back the clock have not been helped by tournaments favouring the biggest hitters in the game as driving distances get longer but that is also key to his belief that Royal Troon may smile on him.

Accuracy has an edge over distance on the links course, boosting Woods' chances of at least making the cut.

"The older you get the less you can carry the golf ball but over here, you can run the golf ball 100 yards if you get the right wind and the right trajectory," said Woods.

"I think that's one of the reasons why you see older champions up there on the board because they're not forced to have to carry the ball 320 yards any more.

"I've been training a lot better. We've been busting it pretty hard in the gym, which has been good.

"The body's been feeling better to be able to do such things, and it translates on being able to hit the ball better."

During his press conference Woods also backed Keegan Bradley to be a "great leader" as Ryder Cup captain after turning down the role himself.

"I think Keegan is going to be a great leader," said Woods. "He's very passionate about the event."

Bradley was a surprise choice to lead the home side at Bethpage Black in September 2025 after Woods told PGA of America officials he did not have the time to commit fully to the job.

"I'll put my hat in the ring again when I have more time and I feel like I can devote myself to a Ryder Cup," said Woods.

"Right now I've got so many different things I'm juggling and trying to get right at the same time for all the players that are a part of the PGA Tour. "It's one of those things where you just can't get it wrong." - Agencies

SWEDISH OPEN

Nadal marks singles return with victory against Leo Borg

BASTAD: Rafael Nadal's first singles match since losing in the first round of the French Open in May ended with a 6-3, 6-4 win against Leo Borg in the first round of the Swedish Open on Tuesday.

Nadal, 38, missed Wimbledon to focus on the Olympics in Paris this summer and was making his return to action at the tournament in Bastad.

The Spaniard, who won a doubles match with Casper Ruud on Monday, broke his 21-year-old Swedish opponent, the son of tennis legend Bjorn Borg, with a drop shot in the fourth game.

Nadal went on to serve out the ninth game to love to take the first set.

He broke world No.461 Borg in the first game of the second set and, despite losing the first point when serving for the match, Nadal won the game to claim victory in one hour 24 minutes.

"Great feelings," said Nadal. "It was a huge honour to play against the son of one of the biggest legends in the history of our sport.

"He played quite well. He has a future in front so I wish him all the very best."

Nadal is playing the Swedish Open for the first time since his triumph in 2005 in this ATP 250 competition.

The 92 tour-level titlist did not show signs of hindered movement, even tumbling behind the baseline.

"Playing in front of a full crowd means a lot to me. It gives me energy to keep practicing every day. Even in the tougher moments, I have been able to keep going with the help of the team, but of course the fans have a huge impact on that. They give me amazing energy," said Nadal.

Nadal is playing his sixth tournament of the season, having won eight and lost five games. He will now face the fifth seed Cameron Norrie, who defeated Jozef Kovalik 7-6(4), 6-4.

Nadal has an edge of four wins and a loss against Norrie in the head-to-head battle, with Norrie winning the most recent game during the 2023 United Cup. - Agencies

TRIBUTE TO FORMER ENGLAND MANAGER

'Easily one of the best': Jude Bellingham on Southgate

LONDON: Jude Bellingham praised Gareth Southgate as "easily one of the best coaches in the history of the national team" in a heartfelt tribute to the outgoing England manager.

Southgate resigned on Tuesday after nearly eight years in the role, with England's 2-1 loss to Spain in Sunday's Euro 2024 final his last match in charge.

In a post on Instagram, Real Madrid midfielder Bellingham described Southgate as "an unbelievable human being".

"I'd like to thank Gareth and his staff for the great memories during his tenure," Bellingham wrote.

"From the point of view of a fan who has become a member of the squad, it's been a rollercoaster of amazing emotions that has instilled hope and joy back into our country.

"It was a privilege being lead by someone who is so dedicated and passionate, not only is Gareth easily one of the best coaches in the history of the national team but also an unbelievable human being.

"Thank you for everything and all the best in the next chapter, Gaffer."

Gary Lineker expressed his thanks to Southgate on X.

The ex-England striker wrote: "Wishing Gareth Southgate all the very best in the future. He brought pride, respect and a togetherness to England that we hadn't seen for a long time.

"He was close, very close to footballing immortality and he always did the job with humility, decency and dignity. Thank you, Gareth."

A number of current England stars also paid tribute to Southgate on social media.

Among them was captain Harry Kane, who was appointed as skipper by Southgate ahead of the 2018 World Cup.

"Boss. Thank you for everything you have done for me and our country!" the Bayern Munich striker wrote on X.

"You have been one of England's greatest ever managers and it has been a pleasure to have served as your captain throughout.

"You helped our nation connect and believe in our team again. There have been so many highlights and we've made memories together that will last forever!"

Arsenal midfielder Declan Rice wrote on Instagram: "Thank you gaffer. It's been a privilege to play for England under your guidance.

"Memories that will stay with me forever. All the best in your next adventure."

Everton goalkeeper Jordan Pickford, also on Instagram, added: "I also want to say a special thank you to the boss for always believing in me during his time with us and I would like to wish him all the best in his next steps. Thank you Gareth."

Harry Maguire missed out on selection for Euro 2024 because of a calf injury, but the centre-back played a key role in previous tournaments under Southgate.

"You made us all believe again - memories that will last forever. Thank you boss," the Manchester United defender wrote on Instagram.

Sarina Wiegman, who has been Southgate's counterpart with the England women's team for the past three years, said she was sad to see him go.

"He is such a nice person and a great coach," she told ITV. "We wouldn't see each other all the time but when we would see each other it was very nice. "What he has done for England football is really incredible. He can be very proud of himself. England is very proud of him and I'm Dutch, I am very proud of him too." - Agencies

SHOOTERS STILL AT LARGE

Ex-Sri Lanka U19 captain shot dead

NEW DELHI: Former Sri Lanka Under-19 skipper Dhammika Niroshana died on Wednesday at the age of 41 after being shot by an unidentified person outside his home in Ambalangoda, Sri Lanka, according to *ESPNcricinfo*.

The shooters are still at large and the Sri Lankan Police are currently investigating to identify the person and arrest them.

Between 2001 and 2004, Niroshana appeared in 12 first-class games and 8 List A matches for the Galle Cricket Club and scored more than 300 runs, bagging 19 wickets.

Niroshana took an early retirement from all forms of the game in 2004.

He made his U-19 debut in 2000 before taking over the captaincy in 2002. In December 2004, Niroshana bid adieu to competitive cricket after playing his last match.

Even though Niroshana never made his debut in the senior team of Sri Lanka, he played alongside star Sri Lankan players like Angelo Mathews, Upul Tharanga, and Farveez Maharoof at the Under-19 level. -ANI

FIFA ALSO INVESTIGATING

Chelsea's Fernandez faces disciplinary action over alleged racist chant

LONDON: Chelsea have begun disciplinary proceedings against midfielder Enzo Fernandez after he posted a video on social media that the French Football Federation (FFF) said included an alleged "racist and discriminatory" chant.

On Tuesday the FFF said it would file a complaint to world governing body FIFA over the video featuring a song sung by some of the Argentina squad about France's black players.

Fernandez's Chelsea team-mate Wesley Fofana, who has one cap for France, posted an image of the video on Instagram, describing it as "uninhibited racism".

Fernandez - a £107m British record signing in February 2023 - said he is "truly sorry" for the video he posted as Argentina celebrated winning the Copa America.

FIFA is also investigating the video, in which several members of the Argentina squad take part in a song originally sung by Argentina fans questioning the heritage of France's black and mixed race players.

Chelsea have seven France players who are black or mixed race in their first-team squad - Fofana, Axel Disasi, Benoit Badiashile, Lesley Ugochukwu, Christopher Nkunku, Malo Gusto and Malang Sarr.

"The song includes highly offensive language and there is absolutely no excuse for these words," said Fernandez.

"I stand against discrimination in all forms and apologise for getting caught up in the euphoria of our Copa America celebrations.

"That video, that moments, those words, do not reflect my beliefs or my character."

A Chelsea statement read: "We acknowledge and appreciate our player's public apology and will use this as an opportunity to educate. "The club has instigated an internal disciplinary procedure."

The FFF will contact the Argentine Football Association (AFA) about live video posted on social media by Fernandez after Argentina beat Colombia 1-0 in the Copa America final on Sunday.

A statement from the FFF, external said president Philippe Diallo "condemns in the strongest terms the unacceptable and discriminatory remarks that were made against the players of the French team".

It added: "Faced with the seriousness of these shocking remarks, contrary to the values of sport and human rights, the president of the FFF decided to directly appeal to his Argentine counterpart and Fifa and to file a legal complaint for racially offensive and discriminatory remarks."

The Argentine FA has been approached for comment.

France beat Argentina in the last 16 of the 2018 World Cup, and Argentina beat France in the final of the 2022 World Cup.

A FIFA spokesperson they were "aware of a video circulating on social media" and "the incident is being looked into".

They added: "FIFA strongly condemns any form of discrimination by anyone including players, fans and officials."

Chelsea said they find "all forms of discriminatory behaviour completely unacceptable".

They added: "We are proud to be a diverse, inclusive club where people from all cultures, communities and identities feel welcome." - Agencies

FEATURES

HEAT IN THE CITY: CAN COLD AIR CORRIDORS HELP?

Many cities get unbearably hot in summer due to dense development, concrete, a lack of greenery and rising temperatures. Could cold air corridors help cool them down?

Cities are prone to heating up in summer. Concrete and asphalt store the sun's heat for a long time, keeping metropolises hot long into the night.

Because temperatures above 20 degrees Celsius (68 degrees Fahrenheit) are more likely to interfere with sleep, cooling cities in the face of our changing climate is an issue of increasing importance.

That's where cold air corridors come into their own.

What are cold air corridors?

Beyond the heat of the metropolis, the surrounding countryside remains significantly cooler, especially at night. On a cloudless summer evening, it can be up to 15 degrees fresher outside the city limits.

Green strips, rivers, lakes, railway lines and wide tree-lined streets can act as corridors through which the colder outskirts air flows into sultry city centers.

But because cold air is heavier than warm, and flows only a few centimeters above the ground, it can easily be impeded by obstructions such as buildings.

So when designing cities, these corridors should be kept as free as possible.

Why does colder air develop in the surrounding countryside at night?

Beyond the city there is less concrete and asphalt and more earth, trees and grasses that store much less of the sun's heat into the night.

Cool air is further created by the evaporation of water through the leaves of abundant plants in rural areas.

A cloudless night sky also helps to cool grasslands, woodlands, orchards, and the sand, clay and peat soils that retain little heat after dark.

Getting more cold air into the city

Topography is also important. Heavier cold air that collects directly above the ground can flow with great force down a mountain or hillside and create a cooling wind.

Cities flanked by a mountainside or located in a valley can benefit greatly from this cold air when it flows into urban centers and displaces into warm air rising upwards while reducing temperatures in streets and buildings.

The southern German city of Stuttgart, for example, is located in a valley and works to preserve its cold air corridors that act as a local ventilation system.

These corridors are therefore taken into account when planning urban development and new building projects in the city.

What can cities do?

The importance of cold air from surrounding areas for cooling cities is being increasingly recognized across German urban centers, in addition to major international cities such as New Delhi, Lima, Lagos, Seoul, Melbourne and Portland.

These metropolises are commissioning environmental meteorologists to measure temperatures and wind currents at various locations in and around the city to create a detailed climate atlas.

On the basis of this data, cities can stop building on fresh air corridors, decide to improve them, or to protect and strengthen natural cooling in the surrounding area.

Cities can take further measures to significantly reduce extreme heat in cities and improve the quality of life. -DW

ROUND-UP

Changan CS95 4WD 7-seater transforms your long journeys in comfort and elegance

This seven-seater 4WD marvel seamlessly blends elegance and functionality, making it a top pick for families and individuals who crave sophistication and performance

MUSCAT: The Changan CS95, a personification of luxury and family-oriented design, continues to redefine the SUV experience with its array of exceptional features.

This seven-seater 4WD marvel seamlessly blends elegance and functionality, making it a top pick for families and individuals who crave sophistication and performance.

The 2024 MY CS95's technological improvements are insignificant which has powerful 2.0-liter turbo engine produces 224 horsepower and guarantees smooth gear shifts with AISIN 8-speed automatic transmission. The CS95 offers strong performance and competent handling in a variety of driving conditions thanks to its impressive torque of 390 Nm.

The CS95 Technological advancements in the CS95 are nothing short of groundbreaking. It boasts a 540-degree HD view, CarPlay, Android Auto, an induction electric back door, and a panoramic skylight, all designed to enhance comfort and convenience. The intelligent systems are further augmented by the ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance Systems), which include Lane Departure Warning (LDW), Lane Change Support (LCS), Traffic Jam Assist (TJA), and Pedestrian Warning with auxiliary braking. These features ensure a safer driving experience by offering real-time assistance and mitigating potential collisions.

The exterior of the CS95 is a testament to sophistication. With dimensions of 4949mm in length, 1930mm in width, and 1790mm in height, the SUV commands an impressive presence. Its smart grille and contemporary design, coupled with 20-inch wheels featuring 255/50 R20 tires, enhance both aesthetics and stability. The updated family dot matrix grille and through-taillight design add a touch of modern elegance.

Step inside the CS95, and you are greeted by a spacious and luxurious cabin. The panoramic skylight, covering 1.14 square meters, bathes the interior in natural light, creating an inviting atmosphere. The executive seats, crafted from Nappa leather, offer supreme comfort with their ergonomic design, pre-tight seat belts, and adjustability, ensuring a fatigue-free drive.

Practicality is a hallmark of the CS95, evident in its expansive trunk space. By folding the third row, you get a generous 465L of storage capacity, which can be extended to over 2000L by flattening both the second and third rows, catering to all your storage needs for long journeys.

The CS95 also prioritises a healthy cabin environment. It features independent rear air conditioning, a three-temperature zone system, an air conditioning ion generator, and efficient sterilization and air purification systems, ensuring a fresh, forest-like atmosphere for every trip.

CS95 stands out as a paragon of stylish design, advanced technology, and spacious comfort. With its robust performance, intelligent systems, and luxurious features, the CS95 elevates the standard for family-friendly luxury vehicles, making it the ideal choice for those seeking a premium SUV experience.

REINFORCES 5G NETWORK COVERAGE

Vodafone announces network readiness for Khareef

MUSCAT: Ensuring its customers enjoy a seamless, uninterrupted and fast mobile experience this Khareef, Vodafone Oman has reinforced its 5G network coverage, adding and expanding tower capacities across the Dhofar governorate.

Addressing network challenges in high-footfall areas, the company's network readiness efforts extended to also include the installation of new sites within the season's hotspots such as Dhareez Beach, Wadi Darbat, and Ittin Square.

Recognising the importance of connectivity for the residents and visitors of Dhofar during the season, the digital operator fast-tracked its network expansion plans for Oman's southernmost governorate, investing its resources and technological advancements to provide robust and reliable service throughout the season. As a result of Vodafone's steadfast commitment to providing an even greater experience, all customers in the Governorate can now enjoy cutting-edge technologies with unprecedented speed and agility.

"Our goal is to ensure that every resident and visitor in Dhofar has a great experience this Khareef season with Vodafone. We've listened to our customers and worked hard to reinforce our network where it matters most. With our expanded coverage and advanced technology, we're ready to provide reliable, high-speed connectivity that meets everyone's needs," said Stelios Savvides, Director of Technology at Vodafone Oman.

At the heart of Vodafone Oman's market-leading experience is its pioneering 5G Next Level network. This cutting-edge technology redefines the user experience by delivering exceptional speeds, reduced latency, and efficient data usage. Unlike legacy operators, Vodafone Oman's network operates without speed caps, ensuring seamless and uninterrupted connectivity for both business and leisure activities. In addition to its remarkable 5G capabilities, Vodafone Oman offers crystal-clear VoLTE calling over its fast and reliable 4G network. This service exemplifies the company's dedication to providing superior quality telecommunication at every turn.

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