

**HM SENDS CABLE TO YEMEN**

**MUSCAT:** His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to Dr. Rashad Mohammed Al Alimi, President of the Presidential Leadership Council of Yemen on his country's National Day. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere greetings and wishes of good health, happiness and a long life to the president, praying to the Almighty Allah for the achievement of all aspirations of the Yemeni people. - **ONA**



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**HM THE SULTAN GREETSPRESIDENT OF CAMEROON**

**MUSCAT:** His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Paul Biya of the Republic of Cameroon on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Biya and the people of his country. - **ONA**



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**ECONOMY**



**Oman's economy firmly on the road to recovery**

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** The financial indicators for the first quarter of 2022 confirms that Oman's economy is on a recovery mode. The state's general budget achieved a financial surplus of more than OMR300 million, said the officials and financial experts, adding it reflects the efforts made by the government and the measures taken by it in this direction, supported as it was by the rise in oil prices in global markets.

**Oil prices**

Dr. Nasser bin Rashid Al Maawali, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Economy, said, "The better financial performance of the Sultanate of Oman by the end of the first quarter of this year reflects the efforts and measures taken by the government to ensure the sustainability of financial and economic conditions, supported by the stability of average global oil prices," adding that "the financial surplus will be exploited and directed to stimulate growth."

>A4

# OMAN, IRAN LIKELY TO SIGN MOUS IN INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT FIELDS



The number of Iranian firms investing in Oman is 2,710, of which 1,163 have 100% ownership and 1,547 are partnership firms

**MUSCAT:** The Sultanate of Oman and the Islamic Republic of Iran are bound by historically deep-rooted relations that were enhanced over the past 50 years by joint cooperation, mutual interests and good neighbourliness.

The forthcoming meeting of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik with President Dr. Ebrahim Raisi of the Islamic Republic of

Iran on Monday comes at a time the world is witnessing different regional and international events of concern to the region, both politically and economically. These issues require the exchange of views between the two countries in a manner that contributes to serving their interests, as well as the interests of the region.

Oman and Iran strive to achieve

maximum benefit from economic cooperation and investment opportunities, particularly in economic diversification sectors. Last year, commercial exchange between the two countries stood at \$1.336 billion. The number of Iranian firms investing in Oman is 2,710, of which 1,163 have 100 percent ownership and 1,547 operate as partnership companies.

In the logistics sector, good growth has been realised in the commodities handled at Omani ports, run by Asyad Group, notably in the ports of Al Suwaiq, Shinas, Khasab and Port Sultan Qaboos—which all engaged in active import and export of general goods with their regional counterparts, including Iranian ports. >A2

*Iranian President to visit on Monday*

**MUSCAT:** Dr. Ebrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran will pay a visit to the Sultanate of Oman on Monday. This was stated in a statement issued by the Diwan of Royal Court on Saturday reading as follows: "In reiteration of the good neighbourliness and advanced relations binding the Sultanate of Oman and the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iranian President Dr. Ebrahim Raisi will pay a visit to Oman this Monday, 23 May 2022.

The visit reflects the Royal keenness attached by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and President Dr. Ebrahim Raisi to enhance bilateral relations in various spheres to serve their



Dr. Ebrahim Raisi

interests and aspirations. The visit will explore areas of cooperation between the two neighboring countries.

May the Almighty Allah grant the two wise leaderships success to serve their countries and the Islamic nation!" - **ONA**



**Envoy reveals details of Iran President's visit**

**A3**

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TIES

## High volume of trade between Omani and Iranian ports

**< FROM A1** Statistics show a high volume of direct import and export between Omani and Iranian ports over the past few years, with more than 1.4 million tonnes of goods handled at a rate of 5 to 7 trips per day.

Also, over the past few months, Muscat and Tehran saw an exchange of business delegation visits during which the business community in both countries showcased investment opportunities. These will definitely reflect positively on the volume of commercial exchange in the future.

During the visit beginning on Monday, the two countries are expected to sign memoranda of understanding in economic spheres, in addition to the areas of infrastructure, legislation and investment promotion.

The 19th session of the Omani-Iranian Joint Committee, held in Muscat last February, indicated the two countries' desire to upgrade cooperation in the areas of industry, mining, finance, banking, free trade zones and research in the fields of agriculture, fisheries and livestock.

In the political arena, it is noted that Omani-Iranian relations

are based on solid foundations of good neighbourliness and non-interference in internal affairs. This stance contributed to resolving contemporary regional issues. The two countries hold regular sessions of political talks, the most prominent of which was the session held in Muscat last January where a number of issues were discussed, including Vienna talks on the resumption of the Iranian nuclear programme, which reached its final stages. Through its reputed diplomatic tact, the Sultanate of Oman lend strong support to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

The forthcoming visit constitutes yet another opportunity to enhance diplomatic efforts on the Iranian nuclear file, as well as other issues like the Yemeni crisis, which assumes focal significance to regional security and stability and promotes international security and peace.

Omani diplomacy has always furnished grounds for rapprochement and understanding about issues of dispute between Iran and other countries. Also, the Sultanate of Oman contributed to the release of citizens of different countries held by Iranian authorities on security concerns. -OMA

GCC GAMES

## Oman shooting team bags 7 golds in Kuwait event

**MUSCAT:** The National Shooting Team secured seven gold medals and two bronze medals during its participation in the third GCC games organised in Kuwait from 13 to 20 May.

The headquarters of the Sultan's Armed Forces organised a reception for the members of the National Shooting Team on their arrival in the Sultanate yesterday following their participation in the GCC championship.

On their arrival at Muscat International Airport, the team members were received by Brigadier Mohammed bin Saleh Al Farsi, Chief of Electronic Defence at the Sultan's Armed Forces and a number of senior officers at SAF Headquarters.

The National Shooting Team comprising Major Saif bin Humaid Al Shukaili, Warrant Officer Ismail bin Nasser Al Abri and Sergeant Sulaiman bin Abdullah Al Rahbi secured gold in the 10-metre air-pistol shooting competition.

In the air-pistol 25-metre shooting competition the team comprising Warrant Officer 1 Sultan bin Mohammed Al Hajri, Chief Petty Officer Muaz bin Darwish Al Balushi, and Staff Sergeant Jamal Mansoor Al Hattali bagged gold medal.

In the 50-metre air-gun shooting competition for three different positions, the team secured gold medal having members Chief Petty Officer Esam bin Bader Al Balushi, Staff Sergeant Ali bin Sulaiman Al Saidi and Staff Sergeant Dalham bin Nasser Al Harassi. The 10-metre air-gun team secured the gold medal. The team comprised Warrant Officer Salim bin Ali Al



Naabi, Chief Petty Officer Esam bin Bader Al Balushi and Corporal Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Hajri.

The team at the individual level, bagged three gold and two bronze medals, where Warrant Officer Salim bin Ali Al Naabi secured the gold medal in the air-pistol 10-metre competition, Chief Petty Officer Muaz bin Darwish Al Balushi bagged the gold medal

in the fast pisto 15-metre competition, Chief Petty Officer Esam bin Bader Al Balushi a gold medal in the 50-metre gun competition (3 different positions) and the bronze medal in the air-gun 10-metre shooting competition, while in the air-pistol ten-metre competition, Sergeant Sulaiman bin Abdullah Al Rahbi bagged a bronze medal. -OMA

GROWTH THROUGH TOURISM

**Notice**

## Tender Announcement

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| Brief of the Package            | Supply of vehicles for OMRAN Group and its subsidiaries                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Tender Fees                     | O.R. 25                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Tender Document Sale Start Date | 22.5.2022                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Tender Document Sale End Date   | 26.5.2022                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Tender Closing Date             | 12.6.2022                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Tender Fees Payment             | Twenty Five (25) Omani Riyals (non-refundable)<br><br>A proof of payment of Tender Fees must be brought for collection of Tender, which shall be deposited in account detailed as follows:<br><br>Beneficiary: Oman Tourism Development Co. SAOC<br>Bank: Bank Muscat<br>Branch: Al Khuwair - Sultanate of Oman<br>Account No. 0317008860360019<br>Swift Code: BMUSOMRXXXX<br>Finance Code: 11476301 |
| Vendor Registration             | All Bidders are required to complete a vendor registration at: <a href="https://supplier.omran.om/">https://supplier.omran.om/</a> prior to making any submissions to OMRAN.                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Further Details                 | Please visit OMRAN website: <a href="http://www.omran.om/tenders/">www.omran.om/tenders/</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

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23RD MAY

# Envoy unveils details of Iran President’s upcoming visit

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** The ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran accredited to the Sultanate of Oman, Ali Najafi, has unveiled the details of the visit of Iranian President Dr. Ebrahim Raisi, to the Sultanate, scheduled for Monday 23rd May, at an invitation from His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik.

The ambassador reaffirmed that the visit would contribute to enhancement of the economic and trade relations between the two countries. He added that the relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the Islamic Republic of Iran in the various spheres were established on the principles of good neighbourliness and the bilateral historic and cultural aspects. The ambassador ruled out the presence of any issues or obstacles in the relations between the two countries.

On development and progress of the relations between the two countries, he said “there are wide horizons for development of the relations between the two countries and that the relations are progressing on the right track of development and growth”. He also pointed to the enhancement of the economic relations between the two countries represents one of the priorities.

He said the Government of Iran follows precise strategy in cementing the relations with neighbouring countries. He added that Iran enjoyed a vital strategic location and that it has a number of neighbouring countries. Further, Iran accords due priority to cementing the relations with the neighbouring countries, which would provide the appropriate platform for further enhancement of relations in the economic, commercial and cultural fields, including transport and transit trade.

The ambassador also stressed that the visit of President Dr. Raisi would contribute to further



Ali Najafi, Ambassador of Iran to the Sultanate of Oman

boosting trade and economic relations between the two countries. He pointed out that there is a new opportunity for achievement of such aspirations. He also said the visit of President of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Sultanate of Oman and the negotiations with the Omani leadership would help further cement the joint cooperation between the two countries.

The ambassador also valued the positive role the Sultanate has always played in following up the talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia and the Government of Iraq in Baghdad within the framework of the joint regional cooperation.

On the bilateral cooperation between the Sultanate and Iran in the field of tourism, mainly in medical tourism, he said this sector is within the key fields of cooperation between the two countries. Many Omani citizens have visited the various cities in Iran for treatment and a number of Iranian citizens also visit the Sultanate of Oman for tourism purposes.

He also valued the decision cancelling entry visa for Iranians to the Sultanate for a two-week

visit as well as cancellation of the entry visa for Omani citizens when visiting Iran.

He said that President Dr. Ebrahim Raisi would meet with His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik and a number of Omani officials during the visit, where the two sides would discuss ways of cementing the relations between the two countries. He pointed out that it was the first visit of President Dr. Raisi to Oman since assuming power.

The ambassador reaffirmed that the high-level consultations and visits between the two countries would contribute to setting a new course for boosting bilateral cooperation. He said that the visit is expected to see signing of agreements and memoranda of understanding.

The ambassador stressed the significance of cooperation between the Sultanate and Iran in the field of ports, which would contribute to further boosting the relations between the two countries. He said that trade between the Sultanate of Oman and Iran reached over \$1 billion last year and the economic relations between the two countries witnessed a remarkable growth in terms of volume of trade during the current year as the exchange of trade reached USD 1.350 billion by the end of March this year.

The ambassador also praised the Sultanate’s balanced foreign policy, pointing out that the Omani leadership accorded due efforts for resolving various regional issues and causes. He also hoped that the exchange of trade would help mitigate the issues in the region.

The ambassador spoke on the significance of handling and resolving regional issues within the region. He reaffirmed the keenness of Iran for cooperation with the countries of the region within the framework of dialogue and co-operation.



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# ‘SYRIA: THE CRADLE OF CIVILISATIONS’ AND ‘LOANED ARTEFACTS FROM INDIA’ INAUGURATED AT NATIONAL MUSEUM



**MUSCAT:** The National Museum on Saturday inaugurated the exhibition ‘Syria: The Cradle of Civilisations’ in cooperation with the General Directorate of Antiquities and Museums in Damascus, and inaugurated the ‘Loaned Artefacts from the Republic of India’ in the Museum’s Oman and the World Gallery in cooperation with the Indian Embassy in Muscat.

The exhibition was inaugurated under the patronage of Her Highness Sayyida Mona bint Fahd Al Said, Assistant President of Sultan Qaboos University for International Cooperation and Deputy of the Board of Trustees of the National Museum, in the presence of Dr. Lubana Mushawah, Minister of Culture of the Syria, Amit Narang, Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman, and a number of people interested in cultural and museum affairs.

The inauguration ceremony included a speech by E. Jamal bin Hassan Al-Mousawi, Secretary-General of the National Museum, and Dr. Labana Mushawah, Minister of Culture of Syria, followed by the speech of Amit Narang, Ambassador of the Republic of India to the Sultanate of Oman.

After the inauguration, an official session of talks was held between the Sultanate of Oman and the Ministry of Culture of Syria, during which bilateral cooperation between the two countries were discussed, emphasising the efforts to develop relation in cultural and museum fields and to strengthen bilateral relations between the two sides. The Sultanate of Oman’s side was represented by Her Highness Sayyida Dr. Mona bint Fahd Al-Said, Jamal bin Hassan Al-Moosawi, and a number of officials of the National Museum. The Syrian side was represented by Dr. Labana Mushawah, and Idris Maya, Ambassador of Syria, and, Muhammad Na-



zir Awad, Director General of the General Directorate of Antiquities and Museums, and a number of the delegation accompanying it. Jamal bin Hassan Al-Moosawi, Secretary-General of the National Museum, said: Preserving the Syrian heritage under the current exceptional circumstances constitutes an urgent necessity that should not be postponed because of the important role that the cultural factor plays in social reconstruction and sensing the identity. This ancient heritage is a civilisational heritage that belongs to all of humanity, transcending the borders of Syria because of its exceptional historical, artistic, aesthetic and significance dimensions.

Jamal Al-Moosawi added: “Within the framework of international cooperation and preservation of tangible heritage, and based on the agreement concluded in (2019 CE) on a temporary loan of museum artefacts from the General Directorate of Antiquities and Museums in Damascus, which were damaged during the period of the Syrian crisis for the purposes of preservation, and from the end of the year (2020) until the middle of the year (2021), (201) museum pieces were received in two

batches, most notably the unique Palmyrene sculptures, in addition to artefacts dating back to the Paleolithic period – pre-pottery A, the Bronze Age, the Umayyad Caliphate period, the Ayyubid period, the Mamluk period, and the Ottoman period. In the first half of the year (2020), (9) Palmyra statues was preserved. Then in the first quarter of (2022), the Conservation and Preservation team at the National Museum completed the restoration of (195) pieces of Syrian artefacts and the (9) Palmyrene statues. As the artefacts gone through a number of stages in the conservation and preservation process, starting with sterilization, documentation and photography, and ending with restoration operations, finally, the team’s efforts were crowned with success.

For her part, Dr. Labana Mushawah, said: The exhibition “Syria: Cradle of Civilisations” is complementary to the many and continuous efforts of the Omani and Syrian parties, which began more than two years ago in lending the National Museum in the Sultanate of Oman a number of Syrian artifacts that are well known. The cultural heritage of Syria exceeds 175 pieces, many of them have been restored, preserved and pre-



served in the National Museum.

The National Museum in the Oman and the World Gallery presents artefacts loaned from the Republic of India. A book entitled “Tarikh-i-Kesari” that presents information on the history of Oman and Zanzibar, loaned from the National Museum in New Delhi, and an artwork of Al-Mirani Fort in Muscat, loaned from the National Museum of Modern Art in New Delhi. The collection will be on display to all visitors until 30th June 2022.

Amit Narang said: “The common historical ties between the peoples of the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of India extend over thousands of years, and the artefacts loaned from India reflect this common past and the continuous cooperation between the two countries. This inauguration is the first step after the pandemic. We look forward to more similar cooperation opportunities in the future, as there is a lot that can be shared between the two countries, not only historically but also culturally. We aspire to cooperate with the National Museum in

establishing more exhibitions of many arts from India.

The book “Tarikh-i-Kesari” by Muhammad Akbar Ali Khan is a rare visual and written document on the era of the Princely states in India, with miniatures of their founders or current rulers, in addition to the rulers whose states had close relations with the British Raj.

The book was issued on 1st January 1877, in Urdu and Hindi languages, with the support of “Anjamen Islamic Delhi” or the General Islamic Gathering, on the occasion of Queen Victoria’s assumption of the title “Empress of India”, which was announced in “Durbar Delhi” or the Court Gathering in Delhi.

The publication deals with the biographies of the rulers, Kings and Princes, including Sultan Thuwainibin Said Al Busaidi (ruled: 56-1866 CE), and Sultan Barghash bin Said Al-Busaidi (ruled: 70-1888 CE), including two unique miniature paintings of the two sultans, enumerating their exploits and their titles. It also reviews a detailed summary

of Muscat and Zanzibar and their geographical location, sources of income for the two countries, and data about their armies. The book reported that the British government allocated 21 gun-salute as a respect and a gesture of welcome to the Sultan of Muscat, Oman and the Sultan of Zanzibar, as they are independent rulers of two fully sovereign states. According to what came in this book, which confirms the long-standing history of the Omani political entity in its two parts Sultan Thuwaini bin Said Al-Busaidi is the only ruler in the Arabian Peninsula who has enjoyed these ceremonies without anyone else, according to what is stated in this book, which confirms the long-standing history of the Omani political entity in its two parts.

As for the oil painting, it embodies a view of Al-Mirani Fort in Muscat by the British artist Thomas Daniel, which dates back to the period of the al-Busaid dynasty (1229 AH/1814 CE). The painting is on loan from the National Museum of Modern Art in New Delhi (Republic of India).

## ECONOMY

# <FROM A1 Opportunities for comprehensive economic recovery

“It will help enhance spending on priority development projects to serve the economic and social dimensions, as well as reducing the level of public indebtedness.”

In a statement to the Oman News Agency, he said the economic and financial indicators of the performance are very reassuring, and with the improvement in the financial performance of the Sultanate of Oman as indicated by different sectors of the economy, it is hoped that the performance will contribute to further accelerating the economic growth and financial activities in the country.

He pointed out that the financial and economic indicators for the first quarter of this year reflect the ability of the financial and economic planning system to deal positively with various global conditions and variables, whether those related to variables in energy markets or global supply and supply chain systems.

He said the continued improvement of financial performance and the surplus in the state’s general budget during the first quarter of this year are positive factors that ensure the achievement of the medium-term financial balance plan for the period 2020-2024, especially in utilizing the surplus to reduce public debt levels and

stimulate economic recovery and increased spending on priority development projects.

Dr. Nasser bin Rashid Al Maawali stressed that the opportunities for comprehensive economic recovery have become better, especially for the sectors most affected by the pandemic and, on the other hand, the state’s general budget surplus of OMR357 million, as compared to a deficit of OMR751 million in the same period of 2021 will help in pumping liquidity to support the private sector and revive economic and commercial activity. During the first quarter of the year, the Ministry of Finance paid about OMR 146.4 million dues to the private sector.

He pointed out that in the short term, economic policy makers will be able to move between more expansive options in order to develop the basic economic infrastructure necessary to stimulate private investment, accelerate the implementation of major development projects, and create the optimal environment to attract more foreign direct investment.

He indicated that the increase in investment expenditures by about 131 percent during the first quarter of this year at OMR150 million, compared to the first quarter

of last year, directly contributes to enhancing productive activities, raising economic growth rates and providing job opportunities for citizens.

The financial surplus also contributed to facilitating the current spending of ministries and civil units as also to easing the burden of public debt service. Spending on the loan interest clause amounted to about OMR 291 million and OMR50 million was dedicated to repaying debts.

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Economy added: “The current level of oil prices and the increase in production in the Sultanate of Oman helped speed up economic recovery, as production averaged 1,025 barrels per day in the first quarter of this year, which will support the growth rates of the oil sector. The latest estimates of the International Monetary Fund indicate the GDP growth will be about 5.6 percent this year, supported by the growth of the oil sector and the non-oil sector by about 8 percent and 2 percent, respectively, and this is the highest expected growth rate among the GCC countries.

He also pointed out that the Ministry of Economy continuously monitors the repercussions of the global situation and

its economic impacts, as well as the change in energy markets and the expectations that accompany this change, and aims primarily to take expansionary and flexible economic policy options capable of dealing with these variables and focused primarily on stimulating growth in economic diversification sectors as a guarantor of stability and continuity of economic growth and mitigate the expected economic risks.

He stated that the remarkable improvement in financial performance and the various measures taken by the Sultanate of Oman to improve the business environment have prompted international credit rating institutions such as Standard & Poor’s (S&P) and Moody’s to improve its future outlook for the Sultanate, which is a positive factor that contributes to attracting more foreign investments. He pointed out that the government will continue its public finance reform approach, as well as its efforts to diversify the economic base, and expand the scope of private sector participation to lead the locomotive of economic growth.

Dr. Nasser bin Rashid Al Maawali stressed that the economy of the Sultanate of Oman is based on a solid foundation to-

wards overcoming the economic repercussions of the COVID pandemic, recording remarkable economic growth and continuing the process of construction and development led by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to move forward towards a better future.

## Positive indicators

On his part, Dr. Khalid bin Said Al Ameri, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Oman Economic Society, said the positive indicators achieved by the general budget of the Sultanate of Oman in the first quarter of this year are mainly due to the growth of net oil revenues to OMR1.56 billion, or 70.2 percent. He explained that the increase in revenues and exchange control led to a financial surplus estimated at OMR357 million.

He added, in a statement to the Oman News Agency, that achieving a financial surplus in the state’s general budget is a positive indicator, and puts the Sultanate of Oman in a good position to legalise or limit the state’s public debt, and contribute to paying the state’s indebtedness through the public debt service item in the budget allocated for the payment of interest on loans. Besides, the Sultanate will not have to take loans to pay off its budget deficit.

He pointed out that the improvement of financial indicators and a decrease in public debt risks with the achievement of financial surpluses is positively reflected on the credit rating of the Sultanate of Oman by credit rating agencies, adding that Fitch, Moody’s and Standard & Poor’s agencies have revised their outlook on the rating of the Sultanate of Oman.

Dr. Al Ameri explained that the payment of more than OMR146 million as dues to the private sector at the end of the first quarter of this year, gives a strong boost to liquidity in the market in particular and the economic cycle in general, stressing that directing the financial surplus to stimulate economic recovery and increase spending on priority projects, debt reduction and management of its risks, push the economic, investment and financial market aspects to recovery.

On the other hand, Mustafa bin Ahmed Salman, CEO of United Securities LLC., stated that the budget achieved positive results for the first quarter, driven by the improvement in oil and gas prices, and that this performance would directly reflect on the positive future outlook for the general economy.



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WORLD BEE DAY

# FAO praises efforts made by Oman for beekeeping



**MUSCAT:** The Office of the Food and Agriculture Organisation in the Sultanate of Oman has praised the efforts made by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources in partnership with the private sector for beekeeping and for implementing programmes to improve its quality.

On the occasion of the celebration of World Bee Day, which falls on May 20 annually under the slogan “We are committed to protecting bees: Celebrating the diversity of bees and their breeding systems”, the UN office explained that the cooperation of the Oman’s Ministry, the Oman Indian Fertilizer Company (OMIFCO), and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority has helped in strengthening the honey project and enhanced the capabilities of rural beekeepers by adopting modern technologies.

The ongoing project includes various activities that are implemented mainly in the governo-

rates of Al Dakhiliyah and North Al Sharqiyah with the aim of enhancing the capabilities of small and medium-sized companies in beekeeping in a sustainable and economic manner, strengthening the sector, and enhancing the level of knowledge and awareness of good beekeeping practices in the Sultanate of Oman.

**SDGs**

The UN office pointed out that beekeeping contributes to achieving many of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and everyone has a role to play in improving the quality of bees.

The profession of beekeeping is an important part of rural life around the world rather than just a hobby. On a small scale, they contribute significantly to strengthening rural communities and securing livelihoods.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Agricultural Wealth, Fisheries and Water Resources stated that it pays special attention to the de-

velopment of beekeeping through the implementation of many research, extension and development programmes and projects in all the wilayats of the Sultanate.

The International Day designated by the United Nations came with the aim of raising awareness of the importance of bees and pollinators and highlighting their contribution to sustainable development and the threats they face.

The ultimate goal of establishing this day is to strengthen measures to protect bees and other pollinators, which will greatly contribute to solving problems related to the global food supply and eradicating hunger in developing countries.

Besides their role as wild pollinators, bees play a key role in maintaining biodiversity, promoting sustainability and adapting to climate change, and about 75 percent of the crops that produce fruit and seeds for human consumption in the world partially depend on pollinators for sustainable production. -ONA

COMEX TECHNOLOGY SHOW

# Fireware making efforts for stronger bond with visitors

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Fireware is participating in the 31st Edition of COMEX Technology Show, 2022 at Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre (23rd -25th May). Fireware is taking part with global principal partners viz, Juniper Networks, IBM and Symantec (Broadcom Software).

Fireware has been instrumental in bringing the international badges to Oman’s COMEX technology exhibition and has been systematising the efforts to have a stronger technology bonding with the audiences visiting the technology show.

Industry experts from these three global companies will be around at Fireware’s Booth No. E2C, to share the knowledge and latest on the industry’s technology reach.

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A file photo of COMEX.

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Sultan Qaboos University Hospital

TENDERS ANNOUNCEMENT

Sultan Qaboos University Hospital announces the following tenders:

| Tender No.      | Subject                                                                 | Non-Refundable Fee | Last Collection Date | Site Visit Date | Last Date of Submission |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| HMD/T/378 /2022 | REPLACEMENT OF CHILLER AND PUMPS IN SQUH OLD MEDICAL STORES             | OMR.25             | 06/06/2022           | 07/06/2022      | 04/07/2022              |
| HMD/379 /2022   | REPLACEMENT OF GENERATORS IN DIFFERENT LOCATION IN SQUH                 | OMR.25             | 07/06/2022           | 08/06/2022      | 04/07/2022              |
| HMD/380/2022    | REPLACEMENT OF TRANSFORMER AND RMU IN VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN SQU HOSPITAL | OMR.25             | 08/06/2022           | 09/06/2022      | 04/07/2022              |

Tender Conditions:

1. The companies who are registered in Tender Board shall collect the documents during office hours from 8.00 am to 1.00 pm from the Procurement Department/ Sultan Qaboos University Hospital.

2. The site visit shall be at 09.00 am in the Technical Affaires Department building / Sultan Qaboos University Hospital.

3. The Tenderers shall submit with the form of tender a certified cheque or tender bond from a locally registered bank in the sum of (1%) of the tender value and valid for 90 days from the date of tender submission and addressed to the chairman of tender committee, Sultan Qaboos University.

4. The tender quotations shall be sealed and addressed to Procurement Director; Sultan Qaboos University Hospital. The tender number and the name of the tender shall be mentioned on the tender document. It is not accepted to indicate or mention the name of the company or its logo on the envelop.

5. The quotations are subject to the Tender General Terms& Conditions for the Sultan Qaboos University Hospital.

6. Sultan Qaboos University Hospital is not bound to accept the lowest bid or any other bid.

Procurement Directorate

Sultan Qaboos University Hospital

AL Khoudh / Sultanate of Oman

Tel: 24144688/ 24144633 Fax: 24413156

E-mail: hospitalprocure@squ.edu.om

www.squ.edu.om





TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

SALE OF DIESEL FUEL OIL AL KAMIL POWER PLANT

Al Kamil Power Company SAOG (under liquidation) is offering for sale of approximately 9,800,000 litres of diesel fuel at two of its storage tanks located at its Plant Site, as part of winding down its business operations in the Sultanate of Oman. The entire diesel fuel oil supply will be sold on an "as is where is" basis to the highest bidder and the Company invites local companies in the Sultanate of Oman to purchase the entire supply.

The diesel fuel oil has been recently tested and these test results will be made available to potential bidders. Test results indicate that the diesel fuel oil being stored is acceptable for use. Bidders may wish to either rely on these results in determining the price they are willing to pay or undertake their own tests, at their cost. Interested bidders are encouraged to arrange a Plant Site visit to familiarize themselves with the diesel fuel oil system, diesel fuel oil removal and transporting logistics. Details regarding arrangements for a site visit are described in the tender document.

Bids must be submitted by the close of business (05 pm GST) on May 25th, 2022.

Tender documents which include further detailed information and data about the diesel fuel oil system can be obtained by downloading the Tender Document from the Company's website at:

[http://www.alkamilpower.com/Tenders/Tender\\_Sale\\_of\\_Fuel\\_Oil.pdf](http://www.alkamilpower.com/Tenders/Tender_Sale_of_Fuel_Oil.pdf)



The bid price for the diesel fuel oil shall be submitted in a sealed envelope addressed to:

Al Kamil Power Company SAOG (under liquidation)  
Office No. 53G, Landmark Building, 5th Floor  
(Located Opposite Al Amine Mosque and next to Fraser Suites Hotel)  
Bousher, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

One of Two Diesel Fuel Oil Storage Tanks at Al Kamil Plant Site

AFGHANISTAN

Taliban suspend wheat export citing food scarcity

**KABUL:** The Taliban on Thursday suspended the wheat export or trade to avoid the food scarcity, a local media reported.

“The Ministry of Finance of the country has instructed all customs to separate the wheat from going abroad. The move is aimed at curbing wheat and food insecurity in the country,” Zabihullah Mujahid, the spokesperson for the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan tweeted. In Afghanistan,

farmers are complaining about the low rainfall and also about their agricultural lands, which are running dry this year, Khaama Press reported.

Furthermore, as a result of recent political developments, the Afghan people are experiencing a severe humanitarian crisis. In addition to that, food prices, particularly wheat, have risen substantially since Russia launched its military operation in Ukraine.

While the price for wheat has increased by 50 per cent in different parts of Kandahar province, at the same time it is claimed that some people have begun smuggling wheat to Pakistan.

Previously, World Food Programme (WFP) reported that since the Taliban took over Afghanistan, over 22 million people are facing severe hunger, reported Khaama Press.

According to the UN, hunger

and food shortages have affected up to 97 per cent of the Afghan population.

Afghanistan is estimated to require over six million tonnes of wheat each year to feed its 33 million population.

The decision of banning the exportation of wheat comes at a time when India has pledged to provide 50,000 tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan as humanitarian aid in addition to medications. **ANI**

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Enjoy the richness of Turkish Culture during Cuisine Week

Held for the first time this year from 21 to 27 May, Turkish Cuisine Week aims to showcase Turkish dishes with all their original qualities as the crown of our tables. The event is simultaneously celebrated with promotional events in Türkiye and abroad

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Turkish Culture and Cuisine Week was organised by the Turkish Embassy in cooperation with the Turkish Airlines and the Muscat Grand Millennium Hotel.

“I have the pleasure of announcing the Turkish Culture and Cuisine Week for the first time in Oman starting from today and lasting until 27 May,” said Ayse Sozen Usluer, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the Sultanate.

“We believe Oman is the oasis of peace and wisdom and Türkiye is the cradle of civilizations both with their centuries old history. And it is time to bring and celebrate these two together on a cultural occasion.

“It is a great happiness for all of us to come together on this occasion especially after the dull days of the long lockdowns of global pandemic. During the week, Omani sisters and brothers together with people from all nationalities will enjoy the highest examples of Turkish art, music and food. Because Oman deserves the best, we brought the best and the most distinguished examples of those arts and crafts for you from Türkiye.

“Today the opening Gala will be under the auspices of Her Highness Sayyida Dr. Muna bint Fahd Al Said, Assistant Vice Chancellor for International Cooperation of the Sultan Qaboos University. We will also have other high dignitaries as Guests of Honour: His Excellency Sheikh Khalifa Al Har-



thy, Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry responsible for Diplomatic Affairs; and His Excellency Ahmed Al Humaidi, Chairman of the Muscat Municipality will be together with us.”

“The event is an evident symbol of our excellent relations with historical ties going back to the 16th century, trustful and deep-rooted political relations, 1.5 billion dollar trade volume and economic relations, and last not but not least very strong cultural ties through our people to people relations,” added the ambassador.

“I believe the Turkish Culture and Cuisine Week will become a symbol for our everlasting relations. Held for the first time this year from 21 to 27 May, Turkish Cuisine Week aims to showcase Turkish dishes with all their original qualities as the crown of our tables. The event is simultaneously celebrated with promotional events in Türkiye and abroad.

“With respect to the gastronomy book titled “Turkish Cuisine With Timeless Recipes”, which was published under the leadership of First Lady Emine Erdoğan and under the auspices of the Presidency with the support of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, we aim to promote the richness of Turkish cuisine to a global audience.

“Published in Turkish and English, the book presents 218 recipes for healthy, traditional and zero-waste dishes. I can summarize the slogan of the book: healthy, traditional and zero-waste!!!

“We are living in a world, which becomes more and more insufficient for meeting humanity’s needs. Instead of merely enjoying our food, we should consider a waste-free, ecological and sustainable way of nutrition. Turkish cuisine has all these characteristics.”

“With this understanding, we invited an award-winning Turkish Chef Sinem Özler, who has

also contributed to the Timeless Recipes book, to Muscat for introducing this unique outlook to our Omani sisters and brothers in the first hand.

**Ottoman art**

“And, we have chosen particular examples from Ottoman art because they represent the essence of all the historical developments that occurred in every artistic field, especially in architecture, calligraphy, illumination and ceramics.”

“We have a comprehensive programme all over the week which I want to inform you shortly: The week will present cultural and gastronomic dimensions of Türkiye.

Throughout the week, we will present the most distinguished delicacies of the traditional Ottoman Turkish cuisine prepared by the award-winning Chef Sinem Özler and her team.”

“Additionally, talented representatives of traditional Turkish



arts will make demonstrations of their art during the week at Muscat Grand Millennium Hotel. For water marbling, artist Önder Can-kurtaran who is also a craftsman of prayer beads; for miniature, Mrs. Halime Karataş; for traditional Turkish tiles Mrs. Gizem Kanbur will present us with their talents.”

“In the Bait Al Zubair Museum, we combined two great collections of art: Firstly Exhibition of Calligraphy and Illumination by Mr. and Mrs. Hüseyin and Naciye Subaşı titled “Al Multazim”; secondly, Istanbul Paintings exhibition by artist Mr. Selahattin Kara from Mr. Mehmet Çebi’s collection. Mr. and Mrs. Subaşı, as well as Mr. Çebi are here in Oman, we will make the opening of the exhibitions during the opening gala together with them. These exhibitions will be on from today until the 3rd of June.”

“Last but not least, Prof. Hüseyin Subaşı will deliver a conference titled “The Art of Calligraphy and

Calligrapher Ottoman Sultans” here in Bait Al Zubair on 23rd of May. And, renowned Turkish musician Mr. Sedat Anar and his band will give a breath-taking concert on the same day, also here in Bait Al Zubair.”

“I assure you that our Governments are doing everything to further develop our relations. As the Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye in Muscat, I will continue to work effortlessly for further strengthening our ties with Oman, and pray to the Almighty Allah to bestow more bounties on our peoples.

“Before ending I would like to extend my particular thanks to the Foreign Ministry of Oman who opened all the possible ways to realise this event, to the Chairman of Muscat Municipality His Excellency Ahmed Al Humaidi for his invaluable support; all our sponsors who supported us both materially and spiritually,” the ambassador added.

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WORLD



# PM Scott Morrison’s coalition admits defeat in Australian election

Anthony Albanese is expected to become the country’s new prime minister

**CANBERRA:** Australia’s Labour Party has emerged victorious in federal elections on Saturday, ousting Prime Minister Scott Morrison’s coalition, according to projections by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Labour’s Anthony Albanese is expected to become the country’s new prime minister, however it is still not clear whether his party will command a majority in its own right or whether it will need to form a minority government. Prime Minister Scott Morrison admitted defeat after what he called a “difficult night” for his conservative government.

“Tonight I have spoken to the leader of the opposition and the incoming prime minister, Antony Albanese, and I have congratulated him on his election victory,” Morrison said.

Australia, a federation of six states, follows the parliamentary system. It has 151 seats in the House of Representatives.

Minor parties and independents were scoring unusually well, increasing the chances of a hung parliament and minority government.

A record number of postal ballots, owing to the COVID pandemic, will also not be counted until Sunday, which could become a factor in close local races.



**GENERAL ELECTIONS:** Prime Minister Scott Morrison admitted defeat after what he called a “difficult night” for his conservative government.

### Who are the main candidates?

The Labour Party leader Anthony Albanese urged people to turn away from a “divisive” Prime Minister Scott Morrison.

“Give Labour a crack. We have plans for this country. We have plans to embrace the opportunities that are there from acting on climate change,” he told voters at the beginning of voting day.

Albanese has pledged to tackle climate change, inflation and promised to hold a referendum on giving indigenous people an institutional voice in national policymaking.

Morrison has also vowed to

tackle inflation and promised better interest rates and cost of living. “It’s a choice about who can best manage our economy and our finances because a strong economy is what guarantees your future,” he told voters.

The third candidate is Adam Bandt of the Greens Party.

The recent bushfires, floods, and droughts were on the minds of many voters as they went in to cast the ballot.

“I grew up in a community that’s been really heavily affected by the fires and the floods over the past five years,” first-time voter Jordan Neville told the AFP news agency in Melbourne.

### What the polls say

Both leaders were campaigning in Melbourne on Saturday before voting in their hometown of Sydney. In-person voting opened at 8 a.m. local time (2200 GMT on Friday). The first polling stations closed on the country’s east coast at 6 p.m. local time (0800 GMT on Saturday). The west coast is two hours behind.

Voting is compulsory for adults in Australia.

Whoever wins the election is expected at a Tokyo summit on Tuesday with US President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. **ANI**

### INFLATION

## G7 countries determined to rein in rising inflation

**ST PETERSBURG:** The Group of Seven (G7) countries are determined to rein in the spiralling inflation, German Finance Minister Christian Lindner said on Friday.

Speaking at a press conference after the G7 finance ministers and central governors meeting held in Germany’s Petersberg, Lindner called on central banks to bring down the surging inflation. “Across most G7 countries, infla-

tion rates have reached levels not seen for decades,” said a communique released after the meeting.

“G7 central banks are closely monitoring the impact of price pressures on inflation expectations and will continue to appropriately calibrate the pace of monetary policy tightening in a data-dependent and clearly communicated manner, ensuring that inflation expectations

remain well anchored, while being mindful to safeguard the recovery and limit negative cross-country spillovers.”

Joachim Nagel, chief of the German central bank, Bundesbank, also voiced his concern about inflation while hosting the press conference with Lindner.

Earlier this month, Nagel, also European Central Bank (ECB) governing council member, ex-

plicitly proposed that the ECB should end bond purchases as the first step at the end of June and start raising interest rates in July.

The G7 ministers and governors reaffirmed their financial support for Ukraine at the Petersberg meeting. They also revealed that the G7 countries have mobilized 19.8 billion US dollars of budget support to help Ukraine in 2022. **ANI**

### CALMING INVESTORS

## Tesla is on my mind 24/7, says Elon Musk to his worried investors

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Tesla CEO Elon Musk on Thursday said that “Tesla is on my mind 24/7,” in an attempt to calm down the investors worried about him being distracted by the Twitter deal that has impacted the stocks of his Tesla car company.

While sharing a meme on his Twitter handle he stressed “So may seem like below, but not true.” “To be clear, I’m spending <5% (but actually) of my time on the Twitter acquisition. It ain’t rocket science! Yesterday was Giga Texas, today is Starbase, Tesla is on my mind 24/7,” tweeted Elon. This comes after Twitter shares fell by 20 per cent in early trading after his announcement to buy the social media platform, media reports said.

Earlier Musk said that the takeover of Twitter Inc is temporarily on hold due to the calculation of fake accounts in it. “Twitter deal temporarily on hold pending details supporting calculation that spam/fake accounts do indeed represent less than 5 per cent of users,” Musk tweeted tagging a media report.

Musk’s announcement came before the opening of trading in the American stock exchanges. In the pre-market trading,



Twitter Inc share price crashed to USD 37.10, which is 17.7 per cent lower than its previous day’s close.

Musk reached an agreement with Twitter on the acquisition of the social network for USD 54.20 per share in a transaction valued at approximately USD 44 billion in late April.

He later said that he would like to revolutionize Twitter’s role in public debate as “free speech is the bedrock of a functioning democracy, and Twitter is the digital town square where matters vital to the future of humanity are debated.”

The billionaire said earlier that he was ready to spend USD 21 billion of his own funds to seal the deal. **ANI**

### MONKEYPOX



## WHO to convene emergency meeting of experts over monkeypox outbreak

**WASHINGTON:** The World Health Organization (WHO) has decided to convene an emergency meeting of experts to discuss the latest outbreak of monkeypox in wake of rapidly rising cases, according to Russian media.

The meeting’s agenda is believed to be the ways of the virus’ transmission, its high prevalence in gays and bisexual men, as well as the situation with vaccines, Sputnik News Agency citing The Telegraph reported on Friday. Since early May, the cases of monkeypox have been witnessed in several countries across the world including the United Kingdom, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Australia and Canada.

On May 7, a case of monkeypox has been confirmed in England, in a patient who recently travelled from Nigeria, as per the UK Health Security Agency.

On May 18, the US’ Massachusetts Department of Public Health confirmed a single case of monkeypox virus infection in an adult male with recent travel to Canada.

According to the release, the case poses no risk to the public, and the individual is hospitalized and in good condition.

“Monkeypox is a rare but potentially serious viral illness that typically begins with flu-like illness and swelling of the lymph nodes and progresses to a rash on the face and body. Most infections last 2-to-4 weeks. In parts of central and west Africa where monkeypox occurs, people can be exposed through bites or scratches from rodents and small mammals, preparing wild game, or having contact with an infected animal or possibly animal products,” the statement reads.

This virus does not spread easily between people but transmission

can occur through contact with the body fluids, monkeypox sores, items that have been contaminated with fluids or sores (clothing, bedding, etc.), or through respiratory droplets following prolonged face-to-face contact.

Earlier, no monkeypox cases have been identified in the US in 2022, while in Texas and Maryland, one case has been reported in 2021 in people with recent travel to Nigeria.

While the United Kingdom has identified 9 cases of monkeypox, in early May 2022; the first case had recently traveled to Nigeria. None of the other cases have reported recent travel. UK health officials report that the most recent cases in the UK are in men who have sex with men.

“Based on findings of the Massachusetts case and the recent cases in the UK, clinicians should consider a diagnosis of monkeypox in people who present with an otherwise unexplained rash and 1) traveled, in the last 30 days, to a country that has recently had confirmed or suspected cases of monkeypox 2) report contact with a person or people with confirmed or suspected monkeypox, or 3) is a man who reports sexual contact with other men. This clinical guidance is consistent with recommendations from UK health officials and US federal health officials, based on identified cases,” the statement reads.

According to the statement, suspected cases may present with early flu-like symptoms and progress to lesions that may begin on one site on the body and spread to other parts and the illness could be clinically confused with a sexually transmitted infection like syphilis or herpes, or with varicella zoster virus. **ANI**

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# Oman's Al-Rawahi fights back to finish 7th in Jordan Rally

Abdullah Al-Rawahi continued to show excellent pace and set the outright fastest time in stage nine

Times News Service

**DEAD SEA:** Oman's Abdullah Al-Rawahi and his Jordanian co-driver Ata Al-Hmoud produced a superb fight back from first day issues to finish seventh overall at the 2022 Jordan Rally, round four of the FIA Middle East Rally Championship (MERC).

With his Oman Rally Team Skoda Fabia R2 evo repaired after an accident on the notorious Jordan River stage on Friday afternoon, the Omani restarted on Saturday under the Rally2 ruling and was classified in ninth place in the general classification heading into two passes through the Bahath, Suwayma and Ma'in special stages in the Dead Sea area.

He continued to show excellent pace and set the outright fastest time in stage nine, second fastest



**JORDAN RALLY:** That vital finish for the Omani ensured that Al-Attiyah was mathematically not able to confirm a record-breaking 18th regional title before the next round in Lebanon.

times behind leader Nasser Saleh Al-Attiyah in the other five special stages on Saturday.

That vital finish for the Omani ensured that Al-Attiyah was mathematically not able to confirm a record-breaking 18th regional title before the next round in Lebanon. Al-Rawahi said: "Friday was disappointing for us. We had made a really good start to the rally. I was having a good pace and trying to be close to Nasser. Unfortunately, we

could not finish the last two stages. We went off the track and we got stuck in a ditch and had to retire. Otherwise everything was okay. We had a bit of over steer throughout the weekend.

"It was important to gather some points, especially as we did not finish in Kuwait. This time we had a few dramatic moments, but we managed to come back and the second day was good and the set-up for the car was much bet-

ter when we went softer. The pace was there as well. Having Nasser in the championship is a great benchmark.

He is a world class driver. Every time I try and get closer and closer to him and that is happening and he is always there to support as well. Hopefully in the future we can do what Nasser has been doing!" The series continues with the Rally of Lebanon on September 2nd -4th.

## FOOTBALL



## Paris Saint-Germain confirm Di Maria's exit

**PARIS:** Paris Saint-Germain on Saturday confirmed Angel Di Maria's exit after seven seasons in the Rouge et Bleu shirt.

The Argentine has taken home 18 titles and now boasts the club record for the most assists. Arriving at Paris Saint-Germain during the summer of 2015, Angel Di Maria immediately made his mark on the right wing of the Paris attack, scoring 15 goals and picking up 25 assists across all competitions, in his first season. During that campaign, the Rosario native set the record for the most league assists in one season (18).

In 7 seasons with Paris Saint-Germain, the Argentina international played 294 matches, finding the back of the net on 91 occasions and recording 111 assists to his name.

On May 19, 2021, during the final of the Coupe de France against AS Monaco (2-0 victory), he en-

tered into the Club's history books as he picked up his 104th assist in Rouge et Bleu, becoming the all-time top provider in the club's history, ahead of Safet Susic.

Angel Di Maria has left a permanent mark on the history of the club, commented Nasser Al-Khelaifi, President of Paris Saint-Germain. "He will remain in the memories of the supporters as someone with an irreproachable attitude, who has defended our colours with faultless commitment. I would ask all of the Paris Saint-Germain family to head down to the Parc des Princes tomorrow to give him the tribute he deserves," Naseer said in a statement.

Di Maria has won five Ligue 1 titles (2016, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022), 5 Coupe de France (2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021), four Coupe de la Ligue (2016, 2017, 2018, 2020), and four Trophee des Champions (2016, 2018, 2019, 2020). **ANI**

## TENNIS

# ATP to remove ranking points from Wimbledon 2022

**NEW DELHI:** The ATP has announced that there will be no ranking points involved in Wimbledon 2022 after it decided to ban Russian and Belarusian players from playing this year due to the invasion in Ukraine.

"The ability for players of any nationality to enter tournaments based on merit and without dis-

crimination is fundamental to our Tour.

The decision by Wimbledon to ban Russian and Belarusian players from competing in the UK this summer undermines this principle and the integrity of the ATP Ranking system. It is also inconsistent with our Rankings agreement. Absent a change in circum-

stances, it is with great regret and reluctance that we see no option but to remove ATP Ranking points from Wimbledon for 2022," said an ATP statement.

Despite ATP's decision Wimbledon continues to stand by the ban. The Wimbledon ban has been widely criticized as Russian and Belarusian players are allowed to

compete at other tournaments.

The International Tennis Federation (ITF) will also not grant ranking points in the junior and wheelchair events at Wimbledon starting on June 27. The WTA is yet to take a call on the same.

The decision of ATP means that world number one Novak Djokovic will lose 2,000 ranking points. **ANI**





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## UNCREWED STARLINER SPACE TAXI LAUNCHED

American aerospace giant Boeing launched its Starliner capsule from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida on Thursday evening.

# MARKET

## BUSINESS & FINANCE



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SUNDAY, MAY 22, 2022



## PACT FOR TOURISM PROJECTS

Oman Tourism Development Company (Oman Group) and South Al Sharqiyah Governor's Office signed a pact to develop several tourism projects in the governorate.

# Assets of Islamic banking top OMR6bn at the end of March

The banking sector growth coincided with the return of the economic activities back to normal after the end of lockdowns on account of the COVID-19 pandemic

**MUSCAT:** Islamic banking sector in Oman registered robust growth in the first quarter 2022 in a number of its indicators. The total assets of the sector reached over OMR6 billion at end of March 2022, an increase of 10.7 per cent against OMR5.4 billion compared to March last year.

This growth coincided with the return of the economic activities back to normal following the end of lockdowns on account of COVID-19 pandemic. The assets of the Islamic banking sector represent 15.3 per cent of the total assets of

OMR39.3 billion in the banking sector registered at end of March, last year.

### CBO statistics

The statistics issued by the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) indicates that the total finance offered by the Islamic banking sector increased at end of March 2022 to OMR4.945 billion compared to OMR4.510 billion at end of March, last year, an increase of 9.6 per cent.

The sector has also seen a growth of 11.6 per cent in the total deposits which reached OMR4.

457 billion against OMR3.991 billion in March 2021.

The deposits of the sector form approximately 17.2 per cent of the total banking deposits, which reached OMR25.9 billion at end of March 2022. The finance offered by the banks and Islamic outlets represented approximately 17.9 per cent out of the total credit offered by the banking sector up to the end of last March, which amounted to OMR27.9 billion.

The reopening of the economic activities has contributed to enhancement of the growth of the national economy, according to Bank Nizwa. Bank Nizwa expected the year 2022 to see a good economic growth coinciding with the success achieved in the Fiscal Balance Plan (2020-2024).

The national economy is strongly heading towards recovery amidst mitigation of restrictions associated with COVID-19 pandemic, according to the quarterly 2022 report of the bank.

— OMA



**ROBUST GROWTH:** The sector has also seen a growth of 11.6 per cent in the total deposits which reached OMR4.457 billion against OMR3.991 billion in March 2021. — OMA

## MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND INVESTMENT PROMOTION



# Annual survey of industrial establishments to begin today

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion will begin on Sunday an annual survey of industrial establishments for a period of two months.

The implementation of the survey this year targets more than a thousand industrial establishments in the various governorates of the Sultanate from within and outside the industrial zones, ports, free zones, and the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad).

The survey will be provided by entering the Invest Easy online portal. The digital system for industrial statistics aims to make

all stages of the industrial survey fully digital and contribute to the speed and accuracy of access to industrial information.

Engineer Sami bin Salem Al Sahib, Director General of the General Directorate of Industry at the Ministry, said: "Industrial information depends on complete statistical surveys, which have an influential role in following up and evaluating the industrial strategy 2040."

"It will also contribute to improving performance monitoring mechanisms in industrial facilities, in addition to knowing the movements. In addition, the digital system will contribute to linking industrial statistics with the

main performance indicators of the ministry." Al Sahib stressed that these surveys contribute to the Sultanate of Oman achieving strong growth rates in the manufacturing sector during the coming period, as annual surveys of industrial establishments are an essential part of an integrated system of national industrial statistics.

He said that the survey will provide information about establishments and their activities, with the aim of collecting data of all operating industrial establishments licenced in the Sultanate of Oman, with an investment of more than OMR5,000, and a workforce of more than nine workers.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

# 4 EU countries pledge ten-fold rise in North Sea wind power

**BRUSSELS:** Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark on Wednesday pledged to build at least 150 gigawatts of offshore wind capacity in the North Sea by 2050.

The declaration, signed at an offshore wind summit in Denmark, came as Europe is also seeking to cut its short-term reliance on Russian energy imports amid the war in Ukraine.

"This is not just a declaration, but the toolbox for what we have to do and will do in the coming period," said German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who traveled to Denmark to sign the declaration.

Robert Habeck, Germany's vice chancellor and the economy minister, said the move would strengthen Europe's expansion of renewable energy "and thus further reduce dependence on gas imports."

Habeck said the declaration was the "basis for the first truly European power plants."

"The projects are to be devel-



oped jointly, financed jointly and the electricity distributed jointly," Habeck told German broadcaster ZDF.

According to Habeck, the goal was "no longer for each country to do its own thing, but to approach this in a truly cooperative manner."

The wind turbines would be raised off the coasts of the four countries. The project would represent a tenfold increase in the EU's current offshore wind capacity.

This capacity would be enough to power 230 million European

homes. The ambition is also to use the green power to make hydrogen and green fuels for heavy industries and transportation that cannot easily be directly electrified, Danish Business Minister Simon Kollerup said. According to Denmark's Climate and Energy Minister Dan Jorgensen, the cost of installing 150 gigawatts of offshore wind power would amount to hundreds of billions of dollars and would be financed mainly by private investors with small state subsidies.— DW

Full story @ [timesofoman.com/business](https://timesofoman.com/business)

## DRAMATIC HIKE

# US natural gas price spikes

**NEW YORK:** Americans have until recently been spared the dramatic hike in natural gas prices seen in other regions of the world. While energy bills have risen sharply on both sides of the Atlantic, skyrocketing natural gas prices have hit European consumers particularly hard, threatening millions of people with fuel poverty.

Earlier this month, however, natural gas prices in the United States hit a 13-year high of \$8.78 (€8.32) per million British thermal units (MMBTU).

Since the beginning of March, prices have risen nearly 90 per cent and the US EIA — the agency responsible for analysing domestic energy use — said last week it

expected prices to remain elevated for the rest of the year. Although the US spike is still nothing compared with Europe, where natural gas prices recently hit \$37 per MMBTU, the rise is an additional burden for the Biden administration which is struggling to tackle stubbornly high inflation.

— DW

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# Agreement signed to develop new projects to boost tourism sector

The pact was signed by Yahya bin Badr Al Mawali, Governor of South Al Sharqiyah and Eng. Mohammed bin Salim Al Busaidi, Chairman of Omran Group, in presence of several officials from both parties

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran Group) and South Al Sharqiyah Governor's Office signed a pact to develop several tourism projects in the governorate.

The signing aligns with Omran Group's endeavours to work in harmony with various stakeholders in order to stimulate the growth of the Sultanate's tourism sector.

The pact was signed by Yahya bin Badr Al Mawali, Governor of South Al Sharqiyah and Eng. Mohammed bin Salim Al Busaidi, Chairman of Omran Group, in presence of several officials from both parties.

Under the pact, Omran Group will undertake technical support as well as supervise the execution operations of the multi-phased



The two parks will provide a variety of tourism and entertainment facilities, including dining areas, retail outlets, kids' playgrounds, and campgrounds. — Supplied picture

projects being developed in several Governorate's destinations, where phase one will see a park development in Al Suwaih with a total area exceeds 65,000 square metres, as well as the development of another park in Al-Ashkharah extending over a total area of roughly 14,000 square metres. The two parks will provide a variety of tourism and entertainment facilities, including dining areas, retail outlets, kids' playgrounds, and Campgrounds.

On this occasion, Dr. Yahya bin Badr Al Mawali, Governor of South Sharqiyah said, "The governorate draws plenty of local and inbound

tourists owing to its rich and diverse destinations, which we seek to exploit, jointly with various stakeholders, to further stimulate the governorate's tourism."

"Our collaboration with Omran Group aims at upgrading tourism services and products within those destinations, which in turn will open prospects and promising opportunities for local businesses and SMEs in the governorate," Al Mawali added.

Meanwhile, Eng. Mohammed bin Salim Al Busaidi, Chairman of Omran Group said, "This signing comes within the framework

of the existing collaboration between Omran Group and South Sharqiyah Governor's Office which resonates with our vision and optimistic approach towards growing the Sultanate's tourism sector and diversifying tourism products and services within different governorates."

He further stated, "Omran Group is as active national arm in the tourism sector development, with a proven track record of developing iconic tourism projects. Through this collaboration, Omran will help boosting the tourism sector through bringing the expe-



riences of taskforces specialised in executing such projects."

It is worth mentioning that Omran Group is working to further explore tourism development opportunities in collaboration with the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism besides various stakeholders, this has been translated through meetings held with governors' offices and attended by officials from different entities, which discussed tourism development require-

ments within each governorate according to its potentials.

Omran Group, which owns three hospitality assets in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate, Atana Stay Al Ashkharah, Ras Al Jinz Turtle Reserve, and Masirah Island Resort, plays a crucial role in enriching tourism experiences by developing iconic destinations that reflect its interest in sustainability, including the Sultanate's cultural heritage.

## AEROSPACE GIANT BOEING

# Uncrewed Starliner space taxi launched

**SEATTLE:** American aerospace giant Boeing launched its Starliner capsule from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida on Thursday evening.

The Orbital Test Flight 2 (OTF-2) mission for the International Space Station (ISS) blasted off with no astronauts on board at 6:54 p.m. local time (2254 UTC/GMT) and has entered orbit, Boeing Space said.

Boeing tweeted that the spacecraft, fixed atop the United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket, was currently "on a path to dock with the

International Space Station."

After nearly two and a half years since first attempting to enter orbit, Boeing's Starliner appears on track to reach the International Space Station. The uncrewed test came after several costly setbacks.

The Boeing CST-100 Starliner launches from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, at 6:54 p.m. on Thursday, May 19, 2022, as seen from Kennedy Space Center.

NASA is hoping to use Starliner as one of its vehicles to carry astronauts to space

— DW



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## 1955 MERCEDES-BENZ BECOMES MOST EXPENSIVE CAR TO SELL AT AUCTION

Mercedes-Benz announced it sold to a private collector one of only two examples of a 1955 300 SLR Uhlenhaut coupe for €135 million (\$143 million) at auction, making it the most expensive car in the world. The car with its wing-like doors and sleek body is named after engineer Rudolf Uhlenhaut. The auction took place on May 5 at the Mercedes-Benz car museum in Stuttgart. — dw



## PIONEERING PROJECTS

# Renaissance appoints Raed Dawood as new Chief Corporate Affairs Officer

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Renaissance Services has appointed Raed Dawood as its Chief Corporate Affairs Officer. Raed, previously with the telecom sector, joined Renaissance on May 1, 2022.

Raed's appointment is part of the broader objectives of Renaissance 2.0, which sets the template for the company's next generation and turbo-charges strategy implementation, modernisation, and exponential growth.

**25 years of experience**

The company looks forward to an exciting future with Raed as he brings with him over 25 years of experience along with a long list of accomplishments.

As a multi-disciplinary, change-focused leader passionate about Oman's innovation-driven future, he has led and contributed to pioneering projects in sectors ranging from banking and finance,



Raed Dawood. — Supplied picture

ICT to government relations and policy affairs.

Stephen R Thomas, CEO, Renaissance said, "Raed has an impressive track record across mul-

tiple disciplines, which will be an asset for us. His passion to shape the future of Oman through technology is inspiring and completely in sync with our Renaissance 2.0

goals. I am confident that his contributions will add significant value to the company's new direction."

Renaissance is the leading accommodation, services solutions and IFM company in Oman, listed on Muscat Stock Exchange.

The company has invested over US\$520 million in Oman employing over 2,570 Omani nationals contributing to local growth, building potential and creating opportunities. Renaissance is committed to safety, efficiency, green awareness, and sustaining in-country value.

The company has built a strong local supply chain with 79 per cent of procurement within Oman and is passionate about building a sustainable future by investing in substantial CSR programmes every year. Renaissance owns and operates Renaissance Village Duqm, Oman's largest workforce accommodation facility, in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD).



# RELOCATE PLANTS LIKE A PRO

“Tried-and-true methods will help you safely move your plants; all it takes is some know-how, elbow grease and a shovel,” says Jamie Briggs, director of marketing, Exmark, a leading manufacturer of commercial mowers and equipment for landscape professionals and homeowners based in the US.

This is the driving idea behind “Backyard Smart,” free online explainer videos full of facts to answer your most common lawn and garden questions. The following strategies, which come directly from a recent “Backyard Smart” episode, will have you transplanting plants like a pro:

## WHEN TO DO IT

Time of year matters. Perennials should be moved in spring when other flowers are in bloom and the days are cooler. Conversely, shrubs should be relocated in the fall – the cooler air and warmer soil make for perfect transplanting conditions. Never move plants in summer or winter. Hot weather, when plants need the most water, can kill sensitive roots. Likewise, the cold, hard ground in winter makes it virtually impossible for plants to take root. Always transplant on cloudy, cool days to protect roots from the harsh sun and retain moisture in their soil.

## RULES OF THUMB

To begin, picture a circle around your plant. You’re imagining its root ball – the mass of roots and packed-in dirt that help provide plants the necessary nutrients and stability to grow.

For perennials, dig a circle at least three inches out from the plant’s edge. Shrubs are a different story. Instead of digging out from the farthest part of the shrub, first measure the circumference of its stem. For every inch in stem thickness, draw the length from the circle to the stem a foot longer. If your shrub has a 2-inch-thick stem, measure a circle that’s at least 4 feet in diameter (or, a radius of 2 feet from stem to circle).

Now it’s time to dig. Always dig straight down, as digging too shallowly and at an angle can lead to damaged roots, which can stunt growth and ultimately kill your plants.

**Shrubs are a different story. Instead of digging out from the farthest part of the shrub, first measure the circumference of its stem.**

Once you’ve dug up your plants, knock a little dirt loose from the compacted root ball. This enables roots to hang free, and encourages plants to take root in their new home.

## RELOCATION

Always dig the new holes at the same depth as the existing ones. Planting too deeply can encourage water pooling around the root system, effectively drowning your plants. Planting too shallowly has an opposite, but equally deadly, impact: it exposes the root system to warmer

weather and can dry it up. For an even easier reference when transplanting shrubs, the root flare – the area where the stem expands at the base -- should be partially visible at the soil’s surface. Now fill the remainder of the hole with soil, water generously, rinse and repeat.

For more easy-to-understand approaches to making the most of your outdoor spaces, check out the Exmark Backyard Life site at [exmark.com/backyard](http://exmark.com/backyard).

Now get outside and get moving -- your plants will thank you for it! -Statepoint

ROUND-UP



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# Huawei Watch GT3 Pro on your wrist is an everlasting masterpiece

The Huawei's latest flagship smartwatch makes it easy to support a healthy lifestyle, with Electrocardiogram (ECG) analysis, and Huawei TruSeen™ 5.0+ data monitoring technology, allowing for accurate heart health measurement and blood oxygen monitoring

**MUSCAT:** The Huawei Watch GT3 Pro comes with a “moon phase collection” interface design, premium materials, an ultra-clear large screen and a range of watch faces to choose from. The latest Huawei's latest flagship smartwatch makes it easy to support a healthy lifestyle, with Electrocardiogram (ECG) analysis, and Huawei TruSeen™ 5.0+ data monitoring technology, allowing for accurate heart health measurement and blood oxygen monitoring.

Huawei Watch GT3 Pro GT 3 Pro Titanium Edition comes with a 14 days battery life and 7 days of battery life in intense usage scenarios, while the Huawei Watch GT3 Pro Ceramic Edition comes with 7 days of battery life in typical scenarios and 4 days of battery life in heavy usage scenarios. Thanks to wireless fast charging, you can charge up the watch for a full-day day of use in just 10 minutes.

Users of the Huawei Watch GT3 Pro have access to over 100 workout modes paired with an AI Running Coach and personal running planning feature based on an individual's physical, running history and personal goals. They are also able to monitor their health



with the Electrocardiogram (ECG) function. The Huawei Watch GT3 Pro allows users to obtain accurately record ECG data in support of vascular health management, allowing users to actively prevent the risk of vascular diseases.

The Huawei Watch GT3 Pro, is available in Titanium and Ceramic editions in Oman at a price OMR149.9 starting from 19 May at Huawei Experience Stores, e-commerce and across select retailers in Oman.

**Huawei P50 - The Ultimate Camera Phone with aesthetic design**

It compromises the powerful Main Camera Matrix and SuperZoom Matrix. The hardware is integrated with the Huawei XD Optics and Huawei XD Fusion Pro image engine, resulting in high-resolution images that are brighter and cleaner with more details. Huawei went the extra mile to glean a better understanding of colours. It created a comprehensive solution and tweaked over 2,000 colours in the full colour gamut. There is a new super colour filter system with True-Chroma Image Engine and Super HDR technology that provides comprehensive enhancements to details, colours and dynamic range. The Huawei P50 is

outstanding in videography as it is in photography. The True-Form Dual-Matrix Camera supports 4K video recording on both the front and rear, providing vivid clear footage from every angle.

Moreover, the periscope zoom lens supports a maximum zoom range of up to 80 times. The Huawei P50 also supports a new generation of AIS Pro True-Steady Shot technology and is complemented by all-new OIS hardware to offer vastly improved stabilisation experiences

It incorporates a stunning display with a single punch hole camera. With the HDR display supporting the full P3 colour gamut, it can deliver an impressive visual experience for both video entertainment and gameplay alike. The Huawei P50 features a 6.5-inch display with a high refresh rate and 300 Hz touch sampling rate to provide fast response times. With an IP68 rating, you can be sure you will be protected from the elements when out and about.

Whether for gaming, recording, working or simply browsing the Internet, the Huawei P50 delivers excellent battery life with a large and long-lasting 4100mAh battery, which is supported by 66W Huawei SuperCharge.

Furthermore, the trusted in-

novative and secure AppGallery is available on the Huawei P50 where users can download a wide range of high-quality apps.

The newly launched Huawei P50 in Cocoa Gold and Golden Black is available in Oman at a price OMR299.9, starting from 19 May.

**Huawei Watch Fit 2 - Fashion on your wrist**

With fashionable characteristics, the Huawei Watch Fit 2 connect style and functionality together. The Huawei Watch Fit 2 is equipped with a 1,74-inch AMOLED HD Huawei FullView that displays 336PPI and 336 x 480 resolution to deliver an excellent visual experience and is accompanied by a screen-to-body ratio as high as 72.2%. The watch also features a new chessboard launcher design provides users with an interactive experience and the Tap to Transfer feature.

Huawei Watch Fit 2 now comes with a speaker, in addition to the microphone. Calls can be pushed from users' smartphone to their smartwatch via Bluetooth[6], so they can chat on the go, wherever they are. Users can answer and hang up calls with ease by tapping on the smartwatch's button and add frequently used contacts in the Huawei Health App. They can also

play music directly on the smartwatch with offline music playback and manage music playback through mobile apps. Gain access to Huawei Assistant•Today on the smartwatch to quickly check the weather, flights, and other information. Despite the compact body, Huawei Watch Fit 2 manages to fit in a large battery. Under typical usage scenarios, the smartwatch can be used for 10 days, and 7 days under heavy usage scenarios.

The new Huawei Watch Fit 2 in black will be available in Oman starting May 26th at a price starting from OMR59.9.

**Huawei Mate Xs 2: Perfection Expanded**

Introducing the Huawei Mate Xs 2, Huawei's brand-new flagship foldable smartphone. With a weight of only 255g[9] and a thickness of only 5.4mm[10], the phone features the first 3D Fibreglass Design to achieve a fusion of aesthetic colours and textures. To achieve an ultra-flat surface which is minimalistic and natural, the phone uses the Falcon Wing Design. Through that, the movement of the hinge and screen is precisely synchronised via the fixed-length linkage control. For the phone's screen, the use of Huawei's self-developed innovative industry-

first composite screen to absorb all shock and buffer makes the Huawei Mate Xs 2 ultra-reliable.

To further enhance user-quality, the Huawei Mate Xs 2 is equipped with Huawei flagship products such as a 7.8-inch True-Chroma foldable display to deliver high resolution content, Silicon-Based Anode battery for higher density and larger capacity, 66W Huawei SuperCharge that allows a 90% charge within 30minutes, and an Anti-Reflective Nano Optical layer to help reduce glare.

And to top that all off, the Huawei Mate Xs 2 incorporates innovative interactions with multi-tasking capabilities and Floating Window Swipe Gestures to provide a seamless control while operating the multi-window.

Price and availability in Oman to be announced.

**Huawei Health App**

Huawei Health App covers all aspects of a healthy lifestyle, including Fitness, Nutrition and Wellness. Users can enjoy a wide range of features of the Huawei Health App to stay fit for both physical and mental health. With Huawei Health+, Huawei is introducing a new premium paid subscription service for users who are looking for more advanced health & fitness features.

Creating a regiment to stay health is not easy but with the help of the Huawei Health App+ Stay Fit Plan, users can create workouts and eating plans with automatic reminders for individuals base on their personal training days, exercise goals and favourite foods. Use the Nutritional Analysis to input nutrition data for each meal and calculation highly accurate calorie counts that can help users meet their goals.

Lastly, to help with breathing, Huawei's Breathing Training allows users to create and develop their own breathing exercise routine which encourages consistency and ensures that the practice fits into the user's daily life. The Huawei Health+ will be firstly released in Germany and Italy.

Huawei continues to strive enable users to lead healthy lifestyles with new innovations. With new and unique hardware and functions allowing users to track and motivate themselves as they embark on the journey to finding their best self.

## OMAN TOURISM COLLEGE

# OTC organises academic major fair and parents forum

**MUSCAT:** Oman Tourism College (OTC) organised an exhibition for academic programmes and a forum for students' parents on May 18, at its facilities. The event was in line with OTC's keenness to familiarise students and their parents with the academic programmes offered by the college and the job opportunities associated with them in the labour market and the promising opportunities in the tourism sector.

Commenting on the importance of holding such events, Mohamed Shamis Al Rawahi, Head of Internships and Placement said, “The aim of the Academic Major Fair and Parents Forum was to introduce the foundation students to the programmes offered by OTC and the career opportunities associated with them in the future. This is because the tourism sector is one of the key focused economic sectors within Oman Vision 2040. In this context, the forum sought to help students make the right decision that will determine their career path. In addition, it also stems from the college's educational role in providing assistance and support to its students in choosing the academic major, in line with their aspirations and capabilities, which will then represent the beginning of their career path to form a successful future. Alongside the fair, the event included a forum for parents to introduce them to the specialisations so they can help their children choose and build a successful future for them.”

“OTC offers programmes that keep pace with the needs of the market and support the objectives and pillars of Oman's Vision 2040 as well as the Sultanate's tourism strategy in graduating Omani workforce to lead the tourism sector. Offered programmes include a Bachelor's degree with honors



and a Diploma in four major disciplines: Tourism and Hospitality Management, Event Management, Tourism Marketing and Business Management. Each major is associated with a wide range of promising opportunities in the tourism sector,” he added.

The event saw a speech on the academic programmes of the col-



lege, presentation of success stories from the college's graduates, competitions for attendees and a tour to introduce the college's specialisations and student projects. The Admission and Registration Department and the Student Affairs Department also took part in the exhibition to respond to students' inquiries and provide support and guidance in choosing their preferred major. The Student Advisory Council was present as the link between the students and the college administration to listen to the students' suggestions and opinions.

The college saw the presence of several parents in the evening from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Bader Al Dhahli briefed the parents on the role of the college and the academic disciplines it provides, followed by a tour of the college facilities and the ac-

companying exhibition.

Oman Tourism College is the leading academic institution that offers various study programmes related to tourism and hospitality in the Sultanate. The college strives to provide highly competent and trained graduates who are well-prepared to take on a competitive labour market, further enhancing its pivotal role in developing this sector on a local level.

Established in 2001, Oman Tourism College (OTC) is the leading institution in Oman specialising in tourism and hospitality. Located in the heart of the capital, Muscat, near Madinat Al Irfan, OTC offers a wide range of programmes and courses aimed at developing human resources for the tourism, hospitality, events and related sectors.

As part of OMRAN's portfolio of companies, OTC's mission and vision are in line with the Oman Tourism Strategy 2040 and the objectives and pillars of Oman Vision 2040, with the clear objective of OTC playing its part in providing a well-trained and qualified workforce for the Sultanate in the tourism, hospitality and events sectors.

Students of OTC can enjoy an international learning environment while strengthening the Sultanate's tourism industry with an enthusiastic and forward-looking workforce. Staff from 16 different nationalities, moderate study fees, part-time and full-time study options or language modules in French or German are just some of the assets of OTC. A range of professional development and vocational courses which can be tailored to meet the particular needs of clients are also included in OTC's portfolio. All undergraduate programmes are quality approved by Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin).



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ROUND-UP



# Attractive offer on charismatic Renault Megane comes to an end

Admired for its driving performance, Renault Megane is known for its driving comfort, technology and safety features

**MUSCAT:** As part of its exclusive promotion, Renault Oman, from the house of Suhail Bahwan Automobiles, has announced an attractive offer on Renault Megane, the vibrant and elegant saloon.

Blending striking good looks and stunning performance, Renault Megane, the chic saloon, has been impressing auto aficionados. Admired for its driving performance, Renault Megane is known for its driving comfort, technology and safety features.

As part of the Renault Oman special scheme, customers who buy Renault Megane can enjoy free registration, free insurance (on selected model), three years/100,000 manufacture warranty, free periodic vehicle service package, AAA/road assistance card and reference programme among others. Social media users who participate in the Ramadan promotional campaign will also be eligible for attractive prizes.

The unique Ramadan offer boasts of a host of advantages for customers purchasing Renault Megane.

All customers purchasing Renault Megane from Suhail Bahwan Automobiles LLC will be eligible to participate in the Ramadan campaign scheme. Vehicles purchased with commercial registration will not be eligible for the scheme. Vehicles bought for taxi, driving school, ministries, fleet, and rent-a-car usage will not be eligible for this scheme.

A spokesperson for Renault Oman said, "The charismatic Renault Megane is a real head-turner. With its sedan body, dynamic lines and generous proportions, it has a style of its own, which is both lively and elegant. Renault Megane, which is available in 2.0 litres engine configuration along with 1.6 litres variant, is a popular car and much-loved car in Oman. This is a perfect time to own this car."

**Free Registration**  
All customers purchasing Renault Megane PH2 during this scheme period will be eligible for free first year vehicle registration.

**Free Insurance**  
All customers purchasing Renault Megane PH2, during this scheme period will be eligible for free first year vehicle insurance (Oman & UAE only).

**Free Periodic Vehicle Service Package**  
All customers purchasing Renault Megane PH2 during this scheme period will be eligible for Free Periodic Maintenance Service Package for 5 Years / 100,000 kms (whichever is earlier). This offer includes only the Service intervals of 10,000 Kms.

**Digital Promotion**  
Social Media users who will participate in the Ramadan promotional campaign and other Online Challenges on @renaultoman Instagram will get fuel voucher worth of OMR 50 (3nos.) and Renault branded Sterilizer cum wireless charger (2 nos).

**3 Years/ 100,000 Kms Manufacturer Warranty**  
All customers purchasing Renault Megane PH2 during this scheme period will be eligible for three Years/100,000 kms mileage warranty (whichever is earlier).

**Free AAA Assistance Card**  
All customers purchasing Renault vehicles during scheme period will receive Free AAA assistance card for first year only.

**Reference Programme**  
Renault will generate references of people looking to buy a car. This reference will be generated from existing Renault customers. The same person cannot refer himself but can refer multiple names. If any of the referred persons buy a Renault car, then the person who referred him will get 50RO Gift Voucher. This Gift voucher can be redeemed during vehicle service at SBA workshop. Purchase of consumables from SBA counters, Purchase of parts and accessories from SBA counters. All such Gift Voucher winners will be declared on an ongoing basis. This Gift voucher is non-transferable and cannot be redeemed for cash or exchanged for credit. The Gift Voucher will be valid for 6 months from the date of issue. The voucher



er needs to be redeemed fully all at once. Part redemption will not be allowed.

**Renault Loyalty Programme**  
All Renault existing owners and their immediate family members [father, mother, son(s) and unmarried daughter(s)] will be eligible for the following additional benefits on purchase of another Renault vehicle. An additional PMS Service (applicable only on the new vehicle and not to other family members vehicles) of 10,000 kms will be given to gold member (2-3 vehicles in family), 20,000 kms to Diamond Member (4-5 vehicles in family) and 30,000 kms to Platinum Member (6 & above vehicles in family). Gold member will get trade-in additional benefit (applicable to all family members) of OMR 50, while diamond members will get OMR 75 and platinum members will get OMR 100. IHF Interest Rate for gold and diamond members is 5 per cent and platinum is 4.75 per cent.

**Renault Megane**  
With its sleek silhouette, high-tech cockpit and sophisticated styling, Renault Megane combines elegance and versatility. Attractive and dynamic, Renault Megane makes a bold statement, unveiling its performance excellence and high-tech interior.

Its energetic lines and substantial proportions add to its increasing popularity with car aficionados in Oman. Megane presents a high-class driving experience, thanks to its technologies, design, and roominess

**Acclaimed expertise**  
Renault's designers have drawn upon their acclaimed expertise to seamlessly incorporate 503 dm3 VDA of boot storage capacity without compromising the vehicle's

aesthetic appeal. Its generous dimensions (4.63m long and 1.81m wide, with a record wheelbase in its class of 2.71m) underscore its status-enhancing credentials and provide additional room for occupants. Its sleek profile is the result of painstaking work on the proportion of glass to metal (one-third / two-thirds), as well as its low height (1.44m) and ground clearance (13cm).

Fitted as standard either across the range or in the higher-end versions, chrome detailing (grille, side mouldings, door window strips, door handles and exhaust tailpipes) point to the model's quality and reinforce its status-enhancing appeal. Its 1.57m front and rear track – the widest in its class – and its range of wheel sizes up to 18 inches imbue it with a striking stance. Its broad, sculpted shoulders express its sportier style.

**Carefully appointed 'cockpit'-feel**

The carefully appointed 'cockpit'-feel cabin exudes an unmistakable 'cockpit'-feel thanks to sculpted, enveloping seats and features such as a configurable colour 7-inch TFT data display, R-LINK 2 which supports Apple carplay and Android Auto. Furthermore, the positioning of all the vehicle's technological features has been thought through to facilitate their everyday use.

Travelling comfort is further enhanced by the careful attention that has been paid to the interior finish, to the quality of the soft-to-the-touch materials, which are within easy reach of the driver and passengers: Materials found in Renault's higher-end models, Plush foam-backed covering selected for the dashboard, upper door panels, door inserts and armrests, Satin-effect chrome instrument, air vent and centre console surrounds,

Full-grain Nappa leather-trimmed steering wheel, available on the top trim level.

**Class-leading comfort**  
The precision-designed seats promise and provide class-leading comfort and support thanks notably to the use of dual-density foam. The frames are the same as those employed for Koleos and Talisman. Leather seats available as option on the top version offer massage function for the driver plus electrically-adjustable lumbar support.

The cabin offers a generous level of space for the driver and passengers alike: Shoulder and elbow room are amongst the best in the class (1,441mm shoulder room in the front and 1,377mm in the rear, with 1,492mm elbow room in the front and 1,413mm in the rear). 216mm knee room in the rear. The angle of the rear-seat back (27 degrees) optimises head room for taller passengers and improves postural comfort.

**Innovative technology**  
The Megane is based upon the Renault-Nissan Alliance's CMF-C/D modular architecture which it shares with other high-end Renault models, including the Talisman and the Koleos. The Megane comes with a wide range of features more commonly associated with the next segment up and unique in the segment: a configurable 7-inch TFT colour screen instrument display and the R-LINK 2 multimedia tablet available in two formats (7-inch landscape format.

**Digital surround**  
Higher-end versions of the Megane come with R-LINK 2 with a 7-inch landscape format. Unique in the segment, it benefits from a capacitive 'pinch & zoom' screen

for simplified use, much like that of a smartphone or tablet computer. R-LINK 2 is a control centre that manages the vehicle's various functions: multimedia, navigation, telephone, radio, driving aids (ADAS).

R-LINK 2 offers: an intuitive, easy-to-use interface, similar to that of a tablet or smartphone: click-and-drag to move icons, page scrolling, two-finger zoom, etc., easy customisation, courtesy of three configurable 'home' pages with widgets (icons) and up to six different profiles that allow swift access to pre-selected driving settings and in-car ambience preferences, a control centre which enables the activation and deactivation of the majority of the car's functions, including the audio system, the hands-free telephone, the navigation and driving aids, connectivity, with smartphone replication Apple car play and android auto (available depending on market). The Megane equipped with R-LINK 2 also benefit from auditorium sound and eight speakers. Thanks to its special digital signal processing software, this system adds depth and texture to listening pleasure.

Connectivity and charging options include: Bluetooth® for hands-free use of a telephone and audio streaming (standard on all versions), one or two USB ports (depending on version), a 3.5mm jack socket (standard on all versions), one cigar lighter cum 12V power source and one 12V power supply at rear (standard on all versions) and a SD card slot (standard with R-LINK 2),

Driving data (speed, RPM, fuel consumption, etc.) is displayed on a personalisable 7-inch colour screen situated behind the steering wheel, in the driver's line of sight.

**SBA commitment**  
SBA is largely committed to supporting Renault Oman's growth in the Sultanate through major emphasis on customer satisfaction and by providing world-class after-sales services in Oman. With a national network of 9 showrooms, 16 service centers & 23 spare parts outlets, SBA has further built upon its legacy of trust, excellent customer service and providing value for money to each of its customers.

For more local information, you can visit the following website: <https://www.renault.com.om/> or call our Toll Free number on 80050011.

ACHIEVEMENT

## NBO wins MEA Finance award 2022 for corporate banking innovation

**MUSCAT:** Continuing to raise the bar for banking, National Bank of Oman (NBO) has won the award for 'Best Innovation in Corporate Banking and Finance' at the MEA Finance Banking Technology Awards 2022.

The award recognises the bank's achievements in delivering smart banking solutions, namely its Corporate Internet Banking (CIB) platform, online trade channel, the first-of-its-kind Merchant App, and the recently launched direct debit service, as well as its overall efforts to drive growth in an increasingly competitive regional market.

**Security features**  
Using technology and security features, NBO's Corporate Internet Banking (CIB) platform allows companies to make instant transactions, payments and transfers, access account balances and complete transaction his-

tory on all company's accounts, delegate authority and restrict user's functions. All of these are accessible 24/7. Meanwhile, the first-of-its-kind in Oman Merchant App allows merchants to receive payments through a dynamic QR code raised through the app.

Through Direct Debit Service, companies can now automate their monthly payments, eliminating the need for cheques. These services are regularly updated to provide customers with a distinctive banking experience.

Mohammed Yahya Al Jabri, AGM, Head of Global Transaction Banking at NBO said, "Putting our clients first and offering tailored services that meet their evolving banking requirements are key objectives for us at NBO. We continue to employ the latest innovations and technologies to ensure they have access to the best service possible. This prestigious award

recognises our efforts and spurs us on to achieve even more when it comes to digitising our banking services and ultimately, creating value for the industry."

More details about NBO's range of products and services are available in-branch, online at [www.nbo.om](http://www.nbo.om) or by contacting the Call Centre on 24770000.

NBO, the first local commercial bank in the Sultanate of Oman, was founded in 1973 and is today one of the leading banks in Oman. The Bank serves its customers in Oman through 60 Branches, more than 180 ATM/FFM/CCDMs as well as two Branches in U.A.E.

The Bank is committed to community improvement through its corporate citizenship programs and is an active supporter of a range of worthy causes in Oman, with emphasis on health and human services, civic, education, environment, youth, women, arts and culture.





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ROUND-UP



# Omantel’s Generation Z Training Programme: An asset for graduates

This programme gives graduates the opportunity to gain practical insight into the operations of the company through various rotations, projects, and mentorships

**MUSCAT:** The Generation Z training programme offered by Omantel provides fresh graduates in Oman the opportunity to have the perfect start to their career. This programme gives graduates the opportunity to gain practical insight into the operations of the company through various rotations, projects, and mentorships.

For the first and second batches of Generation Z programme, the one-year programme has been a life-changing experience for many

graduates, including those who were able to find jobs after completing the program. In addition to chances of employment, members of the program gained the opportunity to manage real-life projects and were able to handle increased responsibilities entrusted to them.

Graduates enrolled in this programme can perform a number of tasks that would place them in the shoes of actual employees. These trainees were given tasks, such as designing cables and revising the coordinates of 4G and 5G towers, which are all relevant to the tasks performed by regular employees. Additionally, this program trains trainees to develop critical and practical skills.

Mohammed Al Yaqoubi, a former first batch Generation Z trainee and current employee in the Consumer Customer Care Department at Omantel, stated, “This programme helped me improve my communication skills, personal skills, and critical thinking skills. Through the Generation Z programme, I was able to learn how top officials handle meetings and a lot of other things related to the business.”

Moreover, this programme signifies the importance of delegating work to trainees, which not only shows the trust placed on



become more disciplined as they are required to give a lot of attention to their tasks to be able to follow up with it with their supervisors in their weekly meetings. Consequently, this shows these trainees the next step they can take with their projects which in most cases in college, stops after you click submit.

Noor Al Shukairi, a second batch Generation Z trainee in the Technology Unit at Omantel, described the personal growth she has experienced since starting the programme.

“One of the biggest changes that I have noticed in myself is that currently I am a much better programmer than when I first graduated,” said Noor.

“My sense of confidence and leadership have been enhanced then when I used to lead projects in college. I think maybe because within the program they gave us the permission to go ahead and ask whoever we want about whatever,” she added.

Omantel’s Generation Z training programme works to challenge trainees and equip them for real-life experiences in their respective fields. This prepares a generation that has skilled and talented individuals who will take Oman to greater heights.

## ENHANCING SKILLS

# ahlibank celebrates second batch of graduates from Etimad Programme

**MUSCAT:** Enhancing its pioneering role in developing the leadership skills of its employees, throughout empowering Omani youth, and supporting their career development. Eight employees of ahlibank, have recently graduated from the Etimad Leadership Development programme. The employees were felicitated by the Bank’s senior management and the in-house Talent Management Committee (TMC). The ceremony was overseen by Said Abdullah Al-Hatmi, CEO of ahlibank, along with several members of the executive management and senior staff of the bank.

**New graduates**

The new graduates from the second batch of Etimad Programme symbolise the Bank’s growing focus on human capital development. Having fielded a team of eight employees in the program last year, ahlibank followed it with a new batch of talented employees to demonstrate its alignment with the national objectives for youth empowerment and Omanisation.

As a National Leadership programme, Etimad aims to create qualified Omani leaders - middle and senior management - in the private sector. The Programme represents a strategic collaboration between the public and private sectors in Oman, and ahlibank’s participation reaffirms its commitment to upskill Omani team members for competitive roles in the future.

On the sidelines of the felicitation ceremony, the Bank also conducted a discussion panel to exchange knowledge and expertise among the employees who enrolled into the Etimad programme. The employees, occupied in leadership and supervisory positions, assured the team members that they would leverage their training



to move up the career ladder and take on roles that define their professional development.

Presiding over the discussion, Said Al Hatmi, outlined ahlibank’s alliance with the government in realizing the larger objectives of Oman Vision 2040. He noted that the Bank’s undeterred focus has and will always be on achieving sustainable human resource development by raising the levels of education and enhancing the potentials of the local youth, in the regional and global employment market. Complementing the government’s efforts to build the national workforce with training and development initiatives like

Etimad, he said it helped motivate private sector organisations to collectively forge the path ahead. He also thanked the Bank’s management team and TMC for their intuitive knowledge in assessing the needs of the market and responding to it with initiatives that refine employee skills and hone their talents.

Congratulating the new graduates, Hana Al Kharusi – GM Corporate Banking and –Chairperson of TMC, said, “This is a proud moment for us at ahlibank. Eight of our qualified employees have gained exposure and skills to take on more responsible jobs and excel in their respective fields. We cele-

brate their success in the program and encourage them on to reach for newer milestones. They are a testament of ahlibank’s quest to ensure sustainable human development; not only in the organisation but further on a national level. As empowered employees, they will now share their knowledge and contribute to the progress of our Bank. We believe in all-round development of our employees and have invested in several training and development programs. We wish our team of new graduates more success in the coming days as they take on fundamental roles to enhance their personal and professional achievements.”

The discussion panel saw new graduates sharing their knowledge from the recently concluded programme and the ways they would implement it in the workplace. The team assured the management cadre of their determination to support the Bank’s vision to be a vibrant and innovative centre of banking.

The Etimad programme from which ahlibank employees graduated, works on preparing qualified national human resources who are capable of assuming leadership positions in key divisions in the private sector. Its primary objective is to train and empower Omanis in the private sector in dif-

ferent batches through specialised curriculums, designed in partnership with international and local institutions. The programme consists of three main themes: leadership from within, leadership by position and leadership through change and cooperation.

ahlibank has launched several initiatives and programs over the past years, empowering the national workforce through training and skill enrichment, such as (Himam) Programme.

In meeting the objectives of Oman Vision 2040, which lies in building national competencies that are essential to meet market challenges.





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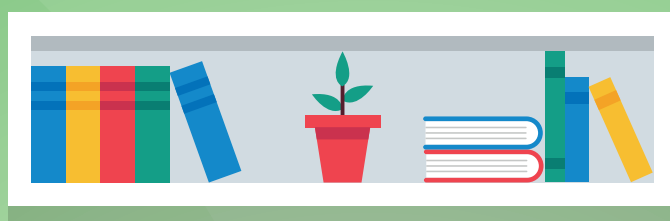


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