

HM GREETES KYRGYZSTAN

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Sadyr Japarov of the Kyrgyz Republic on the occasion of his country's Independence Day anniversary. In the cable, Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Japarov and the people of Kyrgyzstan. — **ONA**



HM SENDS GREETING TO MALAYSIA

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to King Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah of Malaysia on the occasion of his country's National Day. In the cable, Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes of good health and happiness to King Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, wishing the friendly people of Malaysia further progress and welfare. — **ONA**



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QUALIFICATION

Goal is to secure a direct spot for 2026 World Cup: Ivankovic

Times News Service

MUSCAT: With eight direct slots allotted to members of Asian Football Confederation (AFC) for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, jointly hosted by the USA, Canada and Mexico, Oman's chief coach Branko Ivankovic of Croatia has set his sights on a direct qualification for his Red Warriors.

For the first time, Asia will have eight direct spots to a FIFA World Cup with an additional nation participating in the FIFA play-off tournament for a possible total of nine AFC participants at the expanded 48-nation global finals.

The qualification process involves five rounds; the first two of which will also serve as the qualification for the 2027 AFC Asian Cup in Saudi Arabia.

At a press briefing held at City Seasons Hotel on Wednesday, coach Ivankovic unveiled a 24-member national squad as they launch their preparations for the joint qualification for Asian Cup and FIFA World Cup in the second round.

The players have been called for a domestic camp that will be held in Muscat from September 1-7. During the camp, Oman will play an international friendly match against the visiting Palestine side on September 6.



Oman's chief coach Branko Ivankovic.

The national team, ranked world No. 73, will then travel to USA for an international friendly game against the hosts and world No.11 side on September 12 in Minnesota.

Speaking to media persons on Wednesday, Ivankovic said: "We have two major assignments ahead – the joint qualification for the World Cup and Asian Cup and the 2024 Asian Cup in Qatar."

"With the expansion of FIFA World Cup 2026 to 48 teams and eight teams from Asia eligible for direct spots, our goal is to secure one of the direct Asian slots to the World Cup. >**A8**

OMAN TO BOOST WHEAT PRODUCTION UNDER NEW FOOD SECURITY PUSH

The agreements

are part of the

government's efforts

to get investments in

agriculture sector



The pacts are part of the ministry's programmes to support the agriculture sector in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources.

The agreements were signed by Dr. Khalfan Said Al Shuaili, Minister of Housing and Urban Plan-

ning, in the presence of HH Sayyid Marwan Turki Al Said, Governor of Dhofar, and Dr. Saud Hamoud Al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources.

The agreements included 37 contracts for wheat cultivation in Al Najd agricultural district in

Dhofar Governorate, on an area of 28 million sqm to the tune of OMR5.5 million. This is in addition to 3 contracts covering tissue culture and plant nurseries in the wilayats of Salalah and Barka. These had an investment value of OMR3.5 million and they cover a total area of about 93,000 sqm.

So far in 2023, 30 usufruct contracts worth OMR1,050,000 were signed for investment in farming lands affiliated to the Office of Al Najd Agricultural Area Development. They deal with a total area of about 1,260,000 sqm.

Earlier this year, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning signed 6 usufruct contracts to establish farm projects in four Omani governorates. >**A3**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN 60,000 bottles of rose items produced

1 The production of perfumes and essential oils in the Wilayat of Al Jabal Al Akhdar, from its opening until the end of the first half of 2023, amounted to about 60,000 bottles of distilled white rose water, spray and frankincense, locally known as (Luban) water spray.

>**A3**



WORLD Climate change leading to conflict

2 Fragile countries, and those impacted most by conflict, are already being unevenly hit by the effects of climate change, and are less able than other countries to mitigate those impacts, according to a report published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Wednesday. >**A7**

MARKET Oman LNG signs two pacts to supply LNG

3 Oman LNG has announced the signing of two binding term sheet agreements to supply 0.8 million metric tonnes per annum of LNG to Shell International Trading Middle East FZE and 0.75 million metric tonnes per annum of LNG to OQ Trading. >**B1**



Oman medical team treats congenital hypothyroidism case

A2

OXY ULTRA MARATHON

Muscat to be developed as top destination for ultramarathon

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The natural splendour of Muscat Governorate with its breathtaking landscape will be the setting for the second edition of the Oxy Ultra Marathon, organised by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth (MCSY) in partnership with Oxy Oman and Middle East Global Events, from December 7-9.

Revealing the details of the ultramarathon at a press briefing on Wednesday, senior MCSY official, Zeyana Al Yaarubi said: "The idea to organise the ultramarathon in Muscat is to promote the capital city of Oman as a major sports tourism hub for adventure and extreme sports activities."

"We had organised the inaugural edition in the Wilayat of Al Rustaq in December 2021 as 'Oxy Ultra Mountain Running Race' and had received an encouraging response with around 1,000 runners participating from 23 countries."

Zeyana, director of quality activities at the sports ministry, added: "It is time to expand the event and this edition will see a marked difference as we have roped in an



expert extreme sports company in Middle East Global Events (MGE), managed by Mohammed Al Obaidani.

"We hope Mohammed, with his expertise as a race director of extreme sports races will add value to the event and help achieve our goal of making Muscat as a top destination for extreme and adventure sports activities."

"We know the countryside of the Sultanate of Oman is blessed



with natural landscapes that are famous around the world. With Muscat Governorate in focus, it would be easier to attract top runners from across the world with easy travel options to the city."

The Oxy Ultra Marathon will be held over a distance of 50km for both men and women while the 'three-day running festival' will also feature 10km race for all age-groups and 5km race for children and physically-challenged runners



Ultramarathon

An ultramarathon is any race that is longer than the marathon distance of 26.2 miles (42.1km). However, ultramarathons do vary in distance – ranging from a single-day 50km event to a multi-stage race across hundreds of miles. Unlike road marathons, which are usually run on paved surfaces, ultramarathons often involve more challenging terrain (from mountains to deserts) and are designed

to test both your endurance and mental toughness.

The 2023 edition will begin from Wadi Al Khoud in the Wilayat of Al Seeb and the runners will pass through wadis and rough mountainous terrains before finishing in Fanja.

Al Obaidani, CEO of Middle East Global Events, an experienced race organiser, said: "With my years of experience in Oman and abroad, my company hopes to bring in more professionalism to the event and we hope to grow gradually into a top-class event in the next five years. This race will showcase Muscat Governorate and shed light on the country's mountain sports. The marathon also aims to put Muscat on the global map of mountain runners and make it a favourable destination."

Zeyana said: "The hosting of the ultramarathon will also encourage young runners to take up physical activity and reinforces the ministry's direction towards a healthy lifestyle, in line with Oman's sports strategy and Oman's Vision 2040." >**A2**



PRAYER
TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....	12:12pm
Asr.....	3:40pm
Maghrib.....	6:32pm
Isha.....	7:44pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:31am

SURGERY

ULTRAMARATHON

Oman medical team successfully treats congenital hypothyroidism case



MUSCAT: A specialised medical team from the Royal Hospital and Al Nahda Hospital succeeded in conducting a complex operation on a foetus suffering from a tumour that led to congenital hypothyroidism during pregnancy.

The team comprised consultants, specialists and nursing staff from the two hospitals' departments of obstetrics and gynaecology, intensive care for premature babies and ENT (Ear, Nose

and Throat).

Dr. Shamsa Mohammed Al Hinai, Consultant in Embryology, Pregnancy and Childbirth at the Royal Hospital, told Oman News Agency (ONA) that the operation required the insertion of a ventilator tube after surgically pulling out the head.

She added the operation was scheduled and studied carefully, noting that, after birth, the newborn was transferred to the in-



tensive care unit (ICU) where the baby showed stable signs of life.

Dr. Shamsa pointed out that the team followed up on the baby's condition and performed TV and radiological scans to ensure the case's diagnosis as congenital hypothyroidism.

She noted that the baby received appropriate treatment for about a month and was later discharged by the ICU in good condition, while the endocrinology

department maintained regular follow-up of the condition.

For her part, Dr. Alia Yousef Al Mad'hani, Consultant in pregnancy and obstetrics and Director of the obstetrics and gynaecology department at the Royal Hospital, told ONA that three successful operations were conducted after this rare occurrence, thanks to the timely response and cooperation of Al Nahda Hospital's ENT department. -ONA

'Role of private sector is the key to sports development'

< FROM A1 She added: "The event is also an example of public-private partnership (PPP) in line with the Oman Vision 2040 with Oxy Oman joining hands with the ministry and another private event company managing it. The role of the private sector is key to sports development and this model of partnership can be emulated in other sports too. We thank Oxy Oman for their generous support and hope they continue to back ultramarathon in the coming years."

Al Obaidani, the CEO of MGE, said: "We thank the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, and Occidental Company for this strategic partnership, which will yield long-term benefits. As an Omani company, it is also a platform to empower Omani youth in managing sports events in a professional manner that matches global standards. Omani youth deserve



such opportunities."

The ultramarathon will also target schoolchildren and train 300 volunteers for the 2023 edition and as per the plan will target the GCC region for ultramarathoners in 2024 and increase the target of local volunteers to 400.

By December 2027, the plan is to make it a global event and encompass more than 1,000 volunteers.

The event was graced by Mohammed Al Amri, Director-General of Sports Activities at the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and other senior officials.

SÜLEYMANPAŞA OPTIMIST CUP

Oman Sail's Optimist team to take part in Türkiye event

MUSCAT: Oman Sail has selected eleven Optimist sailors from three of its sailing schools to represent the nation in Tekirdağ, on northern coast of Türkiye's Sea of Marmara for the five-day International Süleymanpaşa Optimist Cup.

Being held at the Tekirdağ Sailing Club, the competition features over 400 sailors from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Kuwait, Thailand and Malaysia, as well as hosts Türkiye and Oman.

The team will be led by Ghalib Al Maamari, Centre Manager of Mussanah Sailing School at Oman Sail, with coach Sultan Al Zedjali and assistants Jassim Al Harbi and Hajir Al Amrani supporting the young sailors.

Representing Oman will be Has-



san Al Wahaibi, Abdul Rahman Al Hadi, Habib Al Hassani and Harib Al Busaidi from the Al Mouj Muscat Sailing School, Tameem Al Balushi, Soud Al Shaqsi, Feras Al

Nabhani, Tarteel Al Hassani and Hadeel Al Musharfi from Mussanah, and Khamis Al Mushaikh and Hassan Al Oraimi from Sur.

All of the sailors have earned



Ghalib Al Mamari



Sultan Al Zadjali

their place in the team through a series of strong performances at the recent Oman National Sailing Championship.

Ghalib Al Maamari, Team Leader, said, "This is another excellent opportunity for our young sailors to gain experience, test themselves and understand the demands of performing at an international regatta. We are looking forward to seeing their progress, especially after the Oman National Sailing Championship and training camp in Ras Al Hadd where the entire team showed promising signs of improvement both physically and technically."

Sultan Al Zedjali, Head Coach, said, "Sailing is a global sport and the chance to interact with,

compete against and learn from sailors of a similar age but different backgrounds are a great experience for our team. We need to learn how to manage a variety of conditions and prepare for races, and we are very confident that the team will perform at its best in Türkiye."

Racing gets underway with a practice session on Friday, 1 September, and following the opening ceremony the main series of races begins the next day. The team will have an opportunity to explore the city of Tekirdağ and interact with their peers from around the world as they gain vital experience on and off the water.

The medal presentation and closing ceremony will take place on Tuesday, 5 September 2023. -ONA

TECHNO APPOINTS NEW EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

صناعة تقنية البلاستيك ش.م.م.
Techno Plastic Industry L.L.C.

Omar Sulaiman Al Bahri

Marwan Ali Al Mahrouqi

Mohamed Akmal Hussain

Syed Matheen

Aysha Salim Al Shibli

Eng. Omar Ahmed Qatan

Muscat - August 30 Techno Plastic Industry (Techno) earlier had announced the appointment of Eng. Omar Ahmed Salim Qatan as the company's CEO. Additionally, and in a recent series of developments Omer Sulaiman Mohammed Al Bahri has been appointed as the General Manager of Commercial Affairs, Mohamed Akmal Hussain as the General Manager of Finance & Accounts, and Eng. Syed Matheen as the General Manager of the Plant. Marwan Ali Nasser Al Mahrouqi has been appointed as the Manager of Human and Administrative Resources, and Aysha Salim Rashid Al Shibli as the Manager of Quality Control and Assurance. These new executive appointments mark a significant step towards restructuring the company

and achieving higher levels of Omanization.

CEO Eng. Omar Ahmed Salim Qatan has expressed his vision to lead the company towards broader horizons and strengthen its exports to the American and European markets. With the current Omanization rate standing at 60%, he emphasized on Techno's commitment to achieving high levels in its senior management. Notably, the marketing department has achieved a 100%.

In a press statement, CEO Eng. Omar Ahmed Salim Qatan highlighted the diverse expertise of the team in various professional fields, enabling them to deliver high-quality products and services. Techno

is dedicated to providing renewable and integrated technical solutions that meet the market's demands. He emphasized that Techno's products and services will continue to be the preferred choice for both local and international customers due to their outstanding quality, as the company utilizes state-of-the-art equipment and tools in its production processes.

Techno offers a wide range of products, including PPR polypropylene and PPR-CT. The company specializes in the manufacturing of new variants PPR Multilayer and UV-resistant pipes which complement this range. With its pipe and fitting solutions made from top-quality raw materials, Techno's products are

recognized as per European standards for their efficiency in both hot and cold-water applications and have obtained approval from SKZ, DVGW and German Institute for Standardization (DIN).

It is worth noting that Techno has been awarded the ISO 9001:2015 certificate for being the manufacturer of polypropylene pipes and fittings used in industrial applications within and outside the Sultanate. Techno's vision is to be the preferred leader in quality piping solutions and mission is to provide innovative products with quality excellence while maximising value for all stakeholders including - customers, investors, the government, distributors and our staff.



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Oman has infrastructure to attract tourism events: Salim Al Shanfari

The meeting focuses on tapping the potential of emerging investment destinations and expanding the scope of entrepreneurship

MUSCAT: The Middle East version of the International Congress and Convention Association's (ICCA) meeting, hosted by the Sultanate of Oman, kicked off at Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre in Muscat on Wednesday.

At the two-day event, held under the theme of "Forging a Collective Path to a Prosperous Future", Oman is represented by the Minis-



try of Heritage and Tourism. More than 120 local and regional experts are taking part in the meeting.

By showcasing successful experiences and future thinking about the conference sector, the summit explores various opportunities and paves the way for startups to learn about this sector.

The meeting focuses on the unexploited potential of emerging investment destinations and means of expanding the scope of entrepreneurship. It also outlines the economic impact and revenues gained from the conference tourism sector.

Khalid Waleed Al Zedjali, Direc-

tor of Oman Office of Conferences at the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, said that Oman's hosting of this meeting underscores the country's keenness on establishing a high-level sector for hosting events. Oman is looking forward to developing the conference sector locally and regionally and forging



strong partnership with the ICCA, he added.

For his part, Eng. Said Salim Al Shanfari, CEO of Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, said that Oman has developed proper infrastructure to attract event tourism. An example of this infrastructure is Oman Convention and

Exhibition Centre, which provides spacious grounds and large halls fully equipped to host high-level events, he added.

The meeting was held under the auspices of Azzan Qassim Al Busaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism for Tourism. -ONA

AL JABAL AL AKHDAR

60,000 bottles of rose water, spray, Luban produced



AL JABAL AL AKHDAR: The production of perfumes and essential oils at the Business and Incubators Centre of the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development (ASMED) in Wilayat of Al Jabal Al Akhdar in Governorate of Al Dakhiliyah, from its opening until the end of the first half of 2023, amounted to about 60,000 bottles of distilled white rose water, spray and frankincense, locally known as (Luban) water spray.

Al Azhar Saif Al Zakwani, a technician at the ASMED Business and Incubators Centre in Al Jabal Al Akhdar, said: "The processes of manufacturing aromatics go through several stages, starting with harvesting products and placing them in the distillation device, then the process of condensing the aromatic substance begins, after which the distilled water is left. The distilled product will be cooled for one day, and on the next day, it is bottled and marketed."

He explained that there is a study to open new production lines for other products, including Myrtus communis water, locally known as "Yas", Coleus amboinicus water, locally known as "Zamuta", Tapiscia water, locally known as "Alalan", clove and cinnamon water, among others.

He added, "The centre includes a number of departments, including a training hall for distilling aromatic plants and extracting essential oils, a training department for entrepreneurs and



craftsmen, and the Omani Craftsmen House to display the centre's and craftsmen's products (oils, perfumes, textiles, pottery, silver, etc.), in addition to housing 2,700 rose trees of various varieties."

He pointed out that aromatic plants, such as roses and frankincense are distilled in the center. He further said that the profession of distilling aromatic plants is one of the developed craft industries that benefit environmentally from nature's plants.

He added that ASMED is keen to improve its mechanisms and various production processes that depend on seasonal crops, such as roses, including permanent distillation of frankincense oil and water. He affirmed that the profession of distillation is a source of income for many craftsmen.

Al Zakwani said that products of the ASMED Business and Incubators Centre are sold in many local and foreign markets as popular local products, in addition to presenting them as souvenirs. -ONA

AGREEMENTS

Oman keen to attain food security

<FROM A1 The contracts had a total value of more than OMR32 million and the project's cover an area of more than 3 million sqm.

In the Governorate of South Al Batinah, a contract was signed to establish a honey bee museum in the Wilayat of Barka on an area of more than 12,000 sqm.

The contract, worth OMR1,250,000, provides for the setting up of an exhibition, museum and honey bee institute with different integrated sections, including main trees that provide a suitable habitat for the honey bees.

Another contract was signed for soil enrichment in the Wilayat of Barka, with a total value of OMR180,000. The project, which covers an area of more than 40,000 sqm, seeks to provide a solution to the problem of environmental pollution, mainly by collecting harmful palm waste and utilizing it to make products that compete with similar imports.

In the Buraimi Governorate, a contract was signed to plant 50,000 palm trees of different varieties on an area of more than 2 million sqm. Set up to the tune of OMR3 million, the project was

aimed at enhancing food security.

To enhance the quality of agricultural produce, a contract was signed in the Governorate of Al Dakhiliyah for the establishment of an organic agriculture project, specifically to produce pomegranates in the Wilayat of Al Jabal Al Akhdar. The project covers an area of about 121,000 sqm and the investment was worth more than OMR294,000.

In the North Al Batinah Governorate, a contract was signed to produce and market banana crops in the Wilayat of A'Suwaig. The project covers an area of

about 267,000 sqm and the investment was worth more than OMR446,000. The project is aimed at supplying the local and foreign markets with the finest types of bananas. It constitutes a step forward to enhance the food chain and to grow bananas by using modern agricultural techniques.

The agreements stem from the government's keenness to diversify sources of food security, realize optimal investment of lands and raise the efficiency of their use within the objectives of Oman Vision 2040. -ONA



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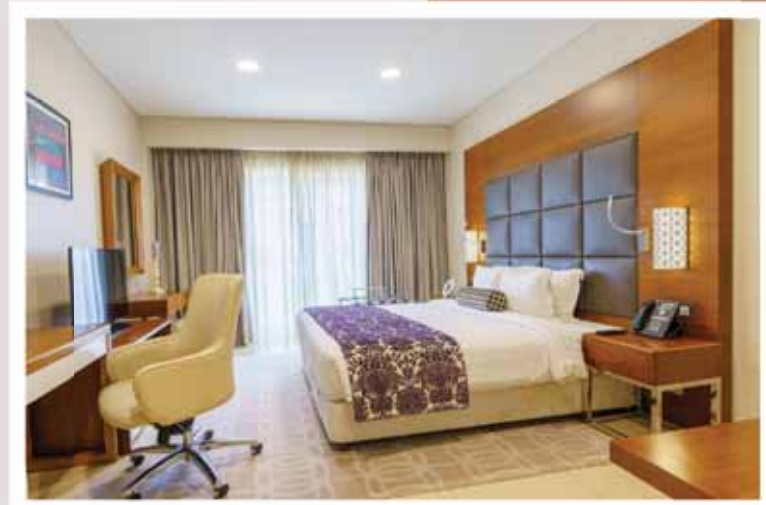
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A BEAUTIFUL VIEW OF THE MUTTRAH CORNICHE

A panoramic view of the Corniche from the historic Muttrah Fort with ships anchored at the Port of Sultan Qaboos. The traditional market of the Wilayat of Muttrah lies in the vicinity of the Corniche. — ONA



'CHANDRAYAAN-3'

India shares with Oman joint vision to harness space potential

AMIT NARANG
Indian Ambassador to Oman

MUSCAT: When the 'Vikram' lander spacecraft of the India's Moon 'Chandrayaan-3' touched down the lunar surface on August 23 at 6:04 PM (IST), it marked a new milestone.

A milestone not only for India's own space odyssey, but also for humankind's quest for better understanding of the mysteries of space.

In doing so, India became only the 4th country in the world to successfully land a spacecraft on the surface of the Moon, and more importantly, the 1st ever to achieve a soft landing on the Moon's south pole.

Landing on the moon, with predicted accuracy, in itself is a momentous achievement.

Landing near the South Pole of the Moon, overcoming the arduous conditions is a testament to the spirit of the Indian scientific community.

The inspirational journey of the Indian space programme which started from its humble beginning in the past to become one of the most advanced in the world, is a testament to the prowess of the Indian scientists and the talent and spirit of scientific temper of the Indian people.

Fittingly, August 23 will henceforth be celebrated as the 'National Space Day' in India. India's moon Mission is a success for the entire world. Through its analysis



and imagery of the moon's surface, Chandrayaan-3 will advance the global understanding of our closest celestial neighbour and further invigorate our collective quest for space exploration.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has stated that the knowledge that will come from the success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission will be used for the benefit and progress of humanity, especially the countries of the global south, in the spirit of our belief in the age-old Indian ideal of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' or 'One Earth, One Family, One Future' which is also the theme of India's G-20 Presidency.

India shares with the Sultanate of Oman a joint vision to harness the potential of the space sector to encourage innovation, enhance infrastructure, boost the digital econ-

omy, and catalyse the development of downstream sectors by making available critical space-based data.

The congratulatory good wishes of the Government and people of the Sultanate of Oman on the success of India's Moon Mission, conveyed graciously by Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Al Busaidi on social media, capture the sense of joy and pride that resonates in the hearts of all Omanis and Indians.

It is indeed fitting that just a few weeks prior to the launch of the 'Chandrayaan-3' Mission, the Chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) was in Muscat where he held productive discussions with the Omani side on collaborations in space sector for mutual benefit. And on August 17, when the 'Vikram' lander separated from the propulsion module of Chandrayaan-3, Eng. Said Hamoud Al Ma'wali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology was present at the ISRO centre in Bangalore to witness the landmark event.

The success of India's Chandrayaan-3 Mission represents a vision of progress, self-reliance, and global leadership.

Chandrayaan-3 is also a symbol of a rising New India. A new India that is at the centre of the global quest for space exploration. A new India that believes in contributing to the global good and humankind's collective progress.

TRANSPORT MINISTRY

Decision for logistics stations

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology has issued a decision on the standards for establishment and operation of integrated logistics stations for clearance and offering handling and storage services, under the best international safety criteria and quality.

The standards are aimed at enhancing the Sultanate's competitiveness as an international logistics centre.

According to the decision, Oman Logistics Centre of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information

Technology shall be responsible for the establishment and work of the integrated logistics clearance and inspection stations and the final approval shall be obtained from the centre before its establishment.

The general requirements of the integrated inspection and clearance logistics stations include establishment of an office for the employees, provision of supplies and laboratories licensed for inspection of goods besides making available areas for inspection of trucks or containers and stores as per the specifications. -ONA

SAMAIL

Six injured in fire incident

MUSCAT: Six people were injured when a fire broke out at a commercial centre in the Wilayat of Samail, Al Dakhiliyah Governorate on Wednesday, August 30, 2023, said the Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority (CDA).

CABLE

HM sends greetings to Trinidad and Tobago



MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Christine Kangaloo of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on her country's Independence Anniversary.

In the cable, His Majesty expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes to President Kangaloo and the friendly people of her country. -ONA



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NOTICE



This is to inform all concerned that **Mr. Praveen Kumar Yellup** holder of **Indian Passport No.R7193857** Resident card No **113994388** is no longer working for **Greenfield International LLC** from **13 August 2023**. Therefore, all the concerned are requested to stop dealing with the above named in favor of the company.

If anyone is dealing with him it is at their own risk and company will not take any responsibility hereafter.

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JOB VACANCY



Oman Electricity Transmission Company SAOG (OETC) has a vital role in the Oman Electricity Sector, as it owns and operates the main transmission network as well as transmission network in Dhofar through which electricity is transmitted from the generating stations to the distribution load centers in all governorates of the Sultanate. The main electricity transmission network operates at high voltage of 132kV and above. Also, OETC has the responsibility of balancing generation and demand at all times of the day as part of its responsibilities for the economic dispatch of power in the Sultanate, and are currently looking for motivated Omani candidates for the following position:

Job Tittle	Job Code
Operations and Maintenance Engineer – Al Wusta	IRC17656

Interested candidates may apply for this post through Jadarah marketplace <https://jadarah.oia.gov.om/> by not later than 10th September 2023.

Please attach the following when applying:

- CV
- University Degree
- Experience Letters

Note: only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.



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Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Health

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Directorate General of Khoula Hospital invites specialized companies to participate in the following Tenders: -

Tender Ref	Description	Last date for Collection of tenders Document:	Bid Submission Closing Date on/ Before 09:00 am Wednesday	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
MOH/DGKH-35 /3197/2023	Upgradation of Fire Alarm System at Directorate General of Khoula Hospital	06/Sep/2023	04/ Oct /2023	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board	R.O 25.000

- Tenders should be submitted on line on <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> .
- Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any tender.
- For any Clarification, you may contact via Telephone: 24402200 , Email id etenderhd@ita.gov.om



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Mathematics (PRT)	M.Sc/ B.Sc in Mathematics & B.Ed/ Diploma in teaching	

Pay and other emoluments will be decided as per the rules of the school.

Candidates fulfilling the above conditions may send a formal email request to career.isn@gmail.com for the "online application link" which should be submitted before the last date.

Note: Candidates who applied for any job position in the school earlier need NOT apply again. Submit your application latest by **6 September 2023 (Wednesday)**.

ON FLORIDA'S COAST

Hurricane Idalia makes landfall

NEW YORK: Hurricane Idalia made landfall on Wednesday as it headed toward Florida's Gulf Coast, forcing evacuations in low-lying coastal areas, while South Carolina went into a state of emergency.

Idalia grew from a tropical storm into a hurricane early on Tuesday, a day after passing west of Cuba, where it damaged homes and flooded villages.

Idalia came ashore at 7:45 a.m. EDT (1145 GMT) at Keaton Beach, an ocean-front community of 13,000 people. The town is at the center of the Big Bend region, where the state's northern panhandle curves into the Florida Peninsula.

"It's just ripping through Taylor County now. Hope all is safe," County Commissioner Jamie English told the Reuters news agency. "Winds gusting. Terrible power outages all over. Debris flying everywhere."

Millions of the state's residents fled to higher ground on Wednesday, as Idalia intensified into a dangerous Category 3 hurricane.

Any storm which reaches Category 3 or higher is considered a major hurricane. The National Weather Service in Tallahassee called Idalia "an unprecedented



event" since no major hurricanes on record have ever passed through the bay adjoining the Big Bend.

Idalia is the fourth major hurricane to hit Florida in the last seven years, after Irma in 2017, Michael in 2018 and Ian, which peaked at Category 5, in September 2022.

Meteorologist Matthew Cappucci told DW that people's response to the evacuation advice was impacted by prior experience, where previous storms were not as strong.

"But the problem is, they've never experienced anything like what they will today. They have no ba-

sis of comparison and they sometimes make very poor decisions," he said before the hurricane made landfall.

Meanwhile, South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster has issued a state of emergency, as a measure to help residents ward off the impact of Idalia.

St. Johns County residents fill sand bags

Most of Florida's residents, numbering more than 20 million, along with many in Georgia and South Carolina, were under hurricane, tropical storm and storm surge warnings and advisories. A state of

emergency has also been declared in Florida.

US President Joe Biden said he and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis — who is in the running to be the Republican candidate for president in 2024 — were "in constant contact."

Biden added that he had assured DeSantis that federal disaster assistance would remain in place for as "long as it takes, and we'll make sure they have everything they need."

Governor DeSantis also asked people to evacuate. "You really gotta go now. Now is the time," he said. —DW



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GABON

Military seizes power

LIBREVILLE: A group of high-ranking military officers in Gabon appeared on TV on Wednesday to announce the nullification of the country's recent election results, citing a lack of credibility.

Gunfire rang out in the centre of the capital, Libreville shortly after the central African country's election committee declared early Wednesday morning that 64-year-old President Ali Bongo had won the election with 64.27% of the vote.

The coup leaders later said Bongo had been placed under house arrest for "treason," while other government figures had

been detained on various charges.

"President Ali Bongo is under house arrest, surrounded by his family and doctors," military officers said in a statement read out on state TV.

Bongo's son, Nouredin Bongo Valentin, who was also a close adviser to the president, was among those arrested.

Bongo appeared in a video from his residence calling on "friends" to "speak out" after the military took power. "In the name of the Gabonese people ... we have decided to defend the peace by putting an end to the current regime," the officers said. —DW

Climate change exacerbating conflict and poverty: Report



Fragile and conflict-affected states, referred to by the report as FCS, are those countries whose location and dependence on agriculture make them most vulnerable to extreme weather



WASHINGTON, DC: Fragile countries, and those impacted most by conflict, are already being unevenly hit by the effects of climate change, and are less able than other countries to mitigate those impacts, according to a report published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Wednesday.

Fragile and conflict-affected states, referred to by the report as FCS, are those countries whose location and dependence on agriculture make them most vulnerable to extreme weather.

They are also some of the most prone to conflict, which in turn hinders their ability to recover from disruptive weather events that, according to the IMF, have happened on average once every

four years in these countries since 1980. This situation is only expected to get worse and temperatures continue to rise. By 2040, the so-called FCS will see around two months of temperatures over 35 degrees Celsius (95 degrees Fahrenheit) compared to just 15 days of high temperatures expected for other countries. "While climate shocks may not trigger the onset of new conflict," the report said, pointing to the complex factors that underly it, they do "exacerbate conflict intensity where it already exists." The IMF predicts that if the world continues on its current high-emissions trajectory, then

conflict deaths in the FCS could increase by between 8.5% and 14% by 2060.

Rainfed agriculture

As FCS also tend to be heavily reliant on rainfed agriculture — a sector that is massively vulnerable to changes in weather patterns — increasing drought is expected to lower food production, increase inflation and push an extra 50 million people into hunger by 2060.

Around one in five countries is classified as fragile and conflict-affected, encompassing a population of almost 1 billion people.

The majority of these states are

in Africa and are some of the countries least responsible for man-made climate change, with their carbon emissions piling in comparison to those of European and North American countries, as well as those of more recent large-scale emitters such as China.

Climate adaptation needed with international support

The IMF calls for these vulnerable states to introduce policies for climate adaptation, including "climate-smart agriculture," "scaling up social spending and climate-resilient infrastructure" and "strengthening social safety nets."

But it also calls on the international community to step up its own efforts to provide support "or else spillover effects associated with fragility and conflict could become even more disruptive, including more forced displacement and migration to other countries."

African countries have been calling on richer countries to help pay for climate adaptation and energy transition. Kenya is hosting the African Climate Summit next week where leaders will attempt to reach a united negotiating position ahead of November's COP28 summit in the UAE. — ANI

NEW RESEARCH

Germans lose faith in schools, pupils struggle: Study findings

BERLIN: Germans are increasingly unhappy about the quality of education in their country, and new research shows they have reason to be, according to two separate studies published on Wednesday. A survey by the Munich Ifo Institute for Economic Research indicates record-low approval ratings for educational systems in Germany's states.

In Germany, teachers grade their students on a 1 to 6 scale, with 1 being the highest grade. The Ifo survey found that only 27% of responders rated their state's educational system with a 1 or a 2. This marks a significant drop compared to the same research done in 2014 when 38% of survey participants were willing to give the two highest grades. Nearly four out of five respondents said they believe that education was negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The overwhelming majority also pointed to the shortage of teachers, lack of funds and systemic inertia as the most serious problems facing Germany's schools.

Meanwhile, a study by INSM, a pro-business think-tank of the German Economic Institute, warned about a rising number of struggling students in the country's educational system.

Worst German state becomes new national average for fourth graders In one instance, the INSM study looked into fourth graders' reading and listening tests from 2011 and 2021, and found that Bavaria is the only state making "minimal" progress. — DW

INDIAN SPACE AND RESEARCH ORGANISATION

ISRO completes launch rehearsal of Aditya-L1 solar mission

BENGALURU: Ahead of the launch of India's solar mission, Aditya-L1, the Indian Space and Research Organisation (ISRO) on Wednesday announced that the launch rehearsal has been completed along with the vehicle internal checks.

Taking to 'X' (formerly known as Twitter), ISRO wrote, "PSLV-C57/Aditya-L1 Mission: The preparations for the launch are progressing. The Launch Rehearsal - Vehicle Internal Checks are completed".

The Aditya-L1 mission is India's first solar mission to be launched with an aim to study the sun.

According to an ISRO statement, the Aditya L1 spacecraft carries seven payloads to observe the photosphere, chromosphere and the outermost layers of the Sun (the corona) using electromagnetic and particle and magnetic field detectors. Using the special

vantage point L1, four payloads directly view the Sun and the remaining three payloads carry out in-situ studies of particles and fields at the Lagrange point L1, thus providing important scientific studies of the propagatory effect of solar dynamics in the interplanetary medium.

The suits of Aditya L1 payloads are expected to provide most crucial informations to understand the problem of coronal heating, coronal mass ejection, pre-flare and flare activities and their characteristics, dynamics of space weather, propagation of particle and fields, the statement said.

Meanwhile, ISRO, in another post on 'X' provided an update on the Chandrayaan's Pragyan rover when it release an image of the Vikram lander as clicked by the rover.

"Pragyan Rover clicked an image of Vikram Lander this morn-

ing. The image was taken by the Navigation Camera onboard the Rover (NavCam)", ISRO wrote.

Pragyan rover

The Pragyan rover is a significant part of the Chandrayaan-3 mission. The rover has embarked on its journey to explore the south pole of the moon.

The ISRO on Tuesday said that the Pragyan Rover has confirmed the presence of Sulphur on the lunar surface.

ISRO said that the Laser-Induced Breakdown Spectroscope (LIBS) instrument onboard the Pragyan Rover unambiguously confirms the presence of Sulphur (S) on the lunar surface near the south pole.

Taking to X (former Twitter), ISRO said, "Chandrayaan-3 Mission: In-situ scientific experiments continue. Laser-Induced Breakdown Spectroscope (LIBS)

instrument onboard the Rover unambiguously confirms the presence of Sulphur (S) in the lunar surface near the south pole through first-ever in-situ measurements."

The Chandrayaan-3 mission has prominently three parts- the propulsion module, which transferred the lander and the rover module to 100 kilometres of lunar orbit, the Lander module, which was responsible for the soft landing of the lunar craft and the Rover module, which is for exploring components on the moon.

India took a giant leap on August 23, as the Chandrayaan-3 lander module successfully landed on the moon's South pole, making it the first country to have achieved the historic feat.

The country became the fourth after the US, China, and Russia — to have successfully landed on the moon's surface. — ANI



SPORTS

Alcaraz, Medvedev march on

Defending champion Alcaraz is aiming to become the first man to retain his US Open title since Roger Federer in 2008

NEW YORK: Spain's Carlos Alcaraz had a short start to the defence of his US Open men's title after German opponent Dominik Koepfer retired injured midway through their first-round match. The 20-year-old led 6-2, 3-2 when Koepfer, who rolled his ankle minutes into the match, had to stop. Third seed Daniil Medvedev needed just 74 minutes to cruise into round two with a dominant win over Attila Balazs. The 2021 champion hit 41 winners as he beat the Hungarian 6-1 6-1 6-0. Despite his brilliant win on Arthur Ashe Stadium, the Russian said he "does not care" all the attention is firmly on top seed Alcaraz and 23-time major champion Novak Djokovic. The emerging rivalry of top two seeds Alcaraz and Djokovic has dominated the build-up to the men's event. Alcaraz won the US Open last year in the absence of Djokovic, who was not allowed to enter the country because he was not vaccinated against Covid-19, and beat the Serb at Wimbledon last month to win his second major title. "That's not the best way to get through into another round, but I have to say on my side I was playing great," said Alcaraz, who will play South Africa's Lloyd Harris next. "Honestly, I didn't expect to play at such a great level in the first round. "I am very, very happy with the level, even if Domi had to retire. Hopefully I can keep that level into the next round." Medvedev, 27, will play Christopher O'Connell for a spot in the last 32 after he won an all-Australian encounter against Max Purcell. But Medvedev's compatriot and 11th seed Karen Khachanov was upset 6-2, 6-4, 6-2 by American



Michael Mmoh. Elsewhere on day two, 19th seed Grigor Dimitrov produced an epic comeback as he saved three match points at two sets down against Alex Molcan of Slovakia. The Bulgarian went on to win the five-set thriller 6-7 (9-11), 6-7 (5-7), 6-1, 7-5, 7-6 (11-9) in a mara-

thon four hours and 40 minutes to set up a meeting with Britain's Andy Murray. Murray kept focus against combustible Frenchman Corentin Moutet to win 6-2 7-5 6-3 in an entertaining encounter. Veteran American John Isner beat Facundo Diaz Acosta of Argentina 6-4 6-3 7-6 (7-1) in his final tournament in professional tennis. Isner served 11 aces in his victory over Acosta Diaz as he increased his record career tally to 14,422. Poland's Hubert Hurkacz, seeded 17th seed, overcame a two-set deficit to win 4-6 5-7 7-6 (7-0) 6-3 6-1 over Swiss Marc-Andrea Huesler and plays Britain's Jack Draper next.

Italian sixth seed Jannik Sinner cruised through in a 6-3 6-1 6-1 victory over Germany's Yannick Hanfmann. Russian Andrey Rublev defeated Frenchman Arthur Cazaux 6-4 7-6 (7-5) 6-1, while 12th seed and 2020 finalist Alexander Zverev beat Australian Aleksandar Vukic 6-4 6-4 6-4. Former Wimbledon finalist Matteo Berrettini beat French 29th seed Ugo Humbert 6-4 6-2 6-2. The Italian will face another Frenchman in Arthur Rinderknech in the second round after he beat Argentina's Diego Schwartzman 6-3 6-4 6-2. - Agencies

Jabeur advances



NEW YORK: Wimbledon runner-up Ons Jabeur said she considered quitting as she overcame breathing difficulties to book her place in the US Open second round. The Tunisian fifth seed clinched a 7-5, 7-6 (7-4) win over Colombia's Camila Osorio on Louis Armstrong Stadium. Jabeur, 29, had treatment from medical staff in the first set and had her blood pressure taken during a timeout. "I have the flu, so it wasn't easy to play," said Jabeur, who also lost in the New York final last year. "I also have a history of asthma. So it was a very, very tough day for me." "I did consider retiring, to be honest, so many times," Jabeur added. Second seed Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus overcame a poor start on serve to win her opening match against Belgium's Maryna Zanevska 6-3, 6-2. Two-time champion Venus Williams, given a wildcard at the age of 43, lost 6-1, 6-1 to Belgium's Greet Minnen on what was a record-extending 24th singles appearance in the Open era. French seventh seed Caroline Garcia lost 6-4 6-1 to world No.114 Wang Yafan of China. Garcia reached the semi-finals at Flushing Meadows last year but has not come

close to replicating that result this year, falling at the first hurdle on court five. Elsewhere on Tuesday, American third seed Jessica Pegula began her US Open bid with a 6-2, 6-2 win over world No.52 Camila Giorgi on Arthur Ashe Stadium. Picking up where she left off in SW19, Czech Marketa Vondrousova beat South Korea's Han Na-lae 6-3, 6-0 to reach the second round. Former US Open finalist Madison Keys secured a straight-set victory over world No.45 Arantxa Rus, winning 6-2 6-4 on Louis Armstrong Stadium. Wimbledon semi-finalist Elina Svitolina beat Germany's Anna-Lena Friedsam 6-3 6-1 on court 17 as the Ukrainian 26th seed returned to Flushing Meadows having missed last year's event while pregnant with her daughter. Meanwhile, Russian 13th seed Daria Kasatkina came from a set down to beat American Alycia Parks 2-6 6-4 6-2 to reach the second round in New York for just the second time in five years. Czech Marie Bouzkova, seeded 31st, saw off a spirited challenge from American wildcard Ashlyn Krueger with a 7-5 6-4 win. On court 11, 14th seed Liudmila Samsonova clinched a 7-6 (7-3) 6-3 win over Krueger's compatriot Claire Liu. - Agencies

ASIA CUP OMAN FOOTBALL

Azam, Ahmed hit tons as Pakistan off to a flying start



MULTAN: Pakistan skipper Babar Azam put up a masterclass in ODI batting, scoring 151 off 131 balls, to help Pakistan thump Nepal by 238 runs in the opening match of the 2023 Asia Cup on Wednesday. On a tricky pitch in Multan, Nepal had made early breakthroughs to leave Pakistan in a precarious position. However, Babar consolidated the innings during that period, taking 72 balls to reach his fifty. Gradually, he increased the tempo and moved from 51 to 100 in 37 balls. Once he reached his hundred, he went into the T20 mode and smashed 51 off the next 22 balls. Babar and Iftikhar Ahmed, who smashed an unbeaten 109 off 71, added 214 off 131 balls in a fifth-wicket stand that guided Pakistan to 342 for 6. Babar didn't come out to field and Shadab Khan captained the side during the chase. It made little difference, as Nepal were bowled out for just 104 in 23.4 overs with Shadab picking 4/27.

Nepal were making their Asia Cup debut, and playing against Pakistan for the first time in any format. Pakistan openers Fakhar Zaman and Imam-ul-Haq departed early to leave the team at 25 for 2. Azam and Mohammad Rizwan started rebuilding the innings and took the side to 100 in the 22nd over. But then Nepal struck back, via their fielding. Dipendra Singh Airee, from cover, hit the stumps at the bowler's end to find Rizwan's bat and both feet in the air. He made 44 off 50 balls. Agha Salman was caught soon after off Sandeep Lamichhane to leave Pakistan 124 for 4. It was then the Azam-Ahmed show as the formidable side clinched an easy victory to kick off their campaign in style. **Brief scores:** Pakistan 342 for 6 (Babar Azam 151, Iftikhar Ahmed 109*; Sompal Kami 2-85) beat Nepal 104 in 23.4 overs (Kami 28; Shadab Khan 4-27, Haris Rauf 2-16, Shaheen Afridi 2-27)

FROM A1 24 players called up for national camp

"It is not going to be an easy task and we face a tough competition to realise the dream of making it to the first World Cup. We commence our journey to achieve the goal in November. I am very optimistic and confident of our players," said Ivankovic. The manager, who led Oman to the Gulf Cup final in January, where they lost to hosts Iraq, said: "The 2024 Asian Cup in Qatar will be another big challenge and I expect my boys to come up with a good show this time. We have planned a comprehensive preparatory plan ahead of the tournament in January. The domestic competitions and presence of Al Nahda Club in the AFC Cup will assist our preparations." The 69-year-old coach added: "I am aware of the clubs' concerns for the release of players for national duty, but I hope there will be a mutual understanding between the Oman Football Association (OFA) and the clubs to ensure the players are in the best shape ahead of the Asian Cup. "As for now, the national team programme begins with the domestic camp and two friendlies. The players will return to clubs after the USA trip and will be with their respective clubs during October. The positive thing is that the Omantel League has begun early, starting on August 17." At the Asian Cup in Qatar, Oman have been placed in a tough Group F which includes Asian favourites Saudi Arabia, Thailand and Kyrgyz Republic. **'Musalami may reconsider retirement decision'** One of the notable absentees from the squad announced on Wednesday was the name of former captain and the most experienced central defender Mohammed al Musalami. It may be mentioned that



Musalami had announced his retirement from international football in March this year. Ivankovic said: "We [OFA chairman Sheikh Salim al Wahaibi and myself] have contacted him and he has asked some more time to rethink on his decision of retirement. He is a valuable player and a leader and it would be good to have him back in the team soon." The coach said that regulars like Al Munther al Alawi, Amjad al Harthy, and Arshad al Alawi, along with Yazeed al Mashani and Hatim al Rashdi are not in the squad for injury reasons and hoped they would recover soon. **Oman's World Cup campaign to start on November 16** Oman have been drawn in Group

D of joint FIFA and Asian Cup Qualifiers second round with Kyrgyz Republic, Malaysia and winner of Chinese Taipei vs Timor Leste match, who feature among 20 nations in the first round. Oman's opening Group D match will be on November 16 at home against Chinese Taipei or Timor Leste. The second round group matches will be held from November 16, 2023 to June 11, 2024. The ten nations that qualify from the first round in October will join the remaining 26 in the second round, which will feature nine groups of four nations, with the winners and runners-up then progressing through to the third round. The 18 nations that reach the third round will be divided into

three groups of six, via a draw conducted at a later date, with the top two nations in each group qualifying for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The fourth round consists of the half-dozen nations that finished third and fourth in the third round being slotted into two groups of three, with the winner of both groups also receiving a direct ticket to the FIFA World Cup. The fifth round features the two runners-up from the fourth round clashing in a two-legged, home-and-away tie to determine Asia's representative in the FIFA play-off tournament. **Squad:** Ahmed Al Rawahi, Ibrahim Al Mukhaini, Fayez Al Rushedi, Mahmood Al Mushaifri, Ahmed Al Kaabi, Motaz Saleh, Khalid Al Breiki, Ahmed Al Khamisi, Ahmed Al Matroushi, Fahmi Said, Juma Al Habsi, Musab Al Maamari, Tamim Al Balushi, Harib Al Saadi, Salah Al Yahyaie, Zaher Al Aghbari, Abdul Rahman Al Mushaifri, Ali Al Hina, Abdullah Fawaz, Jameel Al Yahmadi, Mohsin Al Ghassani, Ahmed Al Adawi, Omar Al Malki and Issam Al Subhi.

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES
Oman Crude (October Delivery 2019) rose 65 cents to reach \$87.13 per barrel, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). Average price of Oman Crude (August Delivery) has stabilised at \$74.78 per barrel, 16 cents per barrel lower than July delivery. - **ONA**

MARKET BUSINESS & FINANCE



WWW.TIMESOFOMAN.COM
THURSDAY, AUGUST 31, 2023



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER
The MSX index closed at 4,760.30 points, down by 0.43 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.10 per cent at 473.20 points. Al Suwadi Power, up 4.00 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Qatar Insurance, down 9.61 per cent, was the top loser.

Oman LNG signs two pacts to supply more than 1.5 mtpa of LNG

Based on these agreements, Shell International Trading Middle East FZE will receive 0.8 million metric tonnes per annum of LNG from the company for 10 years starting from 2025 whereas OQ Trading will receive 0.75 million metric tonnes per annum of LNG under a 4-year deal beginning in 2026

MUSCAT: Oman LNG has announced the signing of two binding term sheet agreements to supply 0.8 million metric tonnes per annum of LNG to Shell International Trading Middle East FZE and 0.75 million metric tonnes per annum of LNG to OQ Trading.

The step comes to leverage the strategic partnership between Oman LNG and other energy firms.

Based on these agreements, Shell International Trading Middle East FZE will receive 0.8 million metric tonnes per annum of LNG from the company for 10 years starting from 2025 whereas OQ Trading will receive 0.75 million metric tonnes per annum of

LNG under a 4-year deal beginning in 2026.

Both agreements form significant steps in the history of Oman LNG and a major milestone, where they mark the completion of delivering 10.4 mtpa per annum and a total of 80 mtpa over a period of 10 years. This achieves Oman LNG's goal to renew its contract beyond the year 2024 successfully in less than 12 months since the kickoff of this campaign.

With the previously agreed term sheet with Shell International Trading Middle East FZE for the offtake of another 0.8 million metric tonnes per year in January 2023, this additional term sheet



makes Shell the biggest off-taker from Oman LNG beyond 2024. Additionally, it comes as a promising step for further collaborations with Oman's primary oil and gas trading arm, OQ Trading.

Under the presence of Eng. Salim Al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, the agreements were signed by Hamed Al Naamany, CEO of Oman LNG, Walid Hadi, Senior Vice President and Country Chair Oman Shell, (on behalf of Shell International Trading

Middle East FZE), and Wail Al Jamali, CEO of OQ Trading at Oman LNG Head Office in Muscat.

Speaking after the signing ceremony, Hamed Al Naamany, CEO of Oman LNG, said, "The term sheet agreements contribute to global energy security and sustain our position as a trusted supplier of reliable energy, where it facilitates business opportunities, and complements our objectives to establish partnerships and add value to the local economy. Additionally, this Global

Marketing Campaign comes as an exceptional milestone in Oman LNG's rather stellar history despite the unprecedented volatile markets due to the geopolitical events and post-COVID challenges."

The agreements are strengthened by the reputation and credibility of Oman LNG as a reliable and trusted LNG supplier around the globe, coupled with the effective management of business processes to produce clean energy delivered to customers around the

world safely and reliably.

From his end, Walid Hadi, Senior Vice President and Country Chair, Oman Shell said: "Shell is proud of the role it has played in Oman LNG to date, as a shareholder and a technical advisor since its inception. We are proud that we will now become Oman LNG's largest LNG purchaser as well as its largest private shareholder. This additional off-take term sheet signifies our deep commitment to continue pulling on all levers of Oman's energy system to address the pressing trilemma of sustainability, affordability, and security. Simultaneously, it serves as a pivotal step in the evolution of our hydrocarbon enterprise, steering it toward a future characterized by both low carbon emissions and financial viability."

Wail Al Jamali, CEO of OQT, added: "As the international energy and commodity trading vehicle of the Government of Oman, we are delighted to add this strategic off-take to our portfolio. The execution of this term sheet represents the first long-term agreement between our two organisations following many years of cooperation. We are committed to developing strong, sustainable relationships for the long-term benefit of our respective shareholders and the Sultanate of Oman." - **ONA**

MUSCAT SECURITIES EXCHANGE

Net profits of MSX-listed firms top \$491 million in 2023 second quarter

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Total net profits for Muscat Securities Exchange (MSX) listed companies in Oman declined by 3.5 percent year-on-year to \$491.5 million in the second quarter (Q2) of 2023 compared to 509.3 million in the corresponding quarter in 2022, according to a new report.

"Total Q2-2023 earnings of the banking sector, the biggest sector in the exchange by market cap, dropped by 7.2 percent to reach \$256.7 million down from \$276.5 million in Q2-2022," Kamco Invest said in its GCC Corporate Earnings Report : Q2-2023 August 2023.



The utilities sector followed with the second largest total net profits of \$99.2 million during Q2-2023 as compared to \$92.5 million in Q2-2022 recording a 7.3 percent year-on-year (y-o-y) growth.

Bank Muscat posted the biggest profits within the banking sector during Q2-2023 at \$107.9 million as compared to \$132.4 million during Q2-2022.

Sohar Bank and HSBC Bank Oman followed with \$27.0 million and \$25.7 million in net profits during Q2-2023. It is noteworthy that these two banks have recently completed their successful merger as a single entity.

The profit growth for the utilities sector came on the back of higher profits reported by five out of the seven companies in the sector. Phoenix Power Company lead the way reporting 5.4 percent y-o-y growth in its Q2-2023 net profits that reached \$37.8 million followed closely by Al Suwadi Power Company and Al Batinah Power

Company which posted Q2-2023 net profits that reached \$22.4 million and \$21.5 million, respectively. Phoenix Power attributed the surge in its quarterly earnings to increased revenue underpinned by the growth of net power exported from 4,131 GW hrs during 1H-2022 to 4,379 Gw hrs during 1H-2023

Total net profits for the Telecom Sector declined by 4.9 percent to \$52.6 million during Q2-2023 as compared to \$55.3 million during Q2-2022 despite witnessing a 7.1 percent profits surge reported by OmanTel during the period. OmanTel's growth in quarterly profits was attributed to higher revenue, including revenue from the acquired business of Zain Group. The telco's revenue growth also included double-digit growth in wholesale transit voice and device revenue. On the other hand, Q2-2023 net profits for Ooredoo Oman reached \$7.8 million as

2023 mainly led by a fall in energy and commodity prices, the Kamco Invest said in its latest report.

Most global commodity prices witnessed a decline during the quarter that was also reflected in the slide in the Bloomberg Commodity index by around 15 percent since last year. A fall in profits for the retail and capital goods sectors also added to the decline while profits for the utilities sector was affected by higher financing costs as declared by the two biggest players in the sector.

On the other hand, banking sector profits remained resilient, registering healthy q-o-q and y-o-y growth as lending grew unabated despite higher interest rates. The telecom sector also showed higher y-o-y profits as did real estate and F&B sectors during Q2-2023. Aggregate net profit for GCC-listed companies reached \$57.9 billion during Q2-2023 as compared to \$61.7 billion during Q1-2023 resulting in a q-o-q decline of 6.2 percent. The y-o-y performance showed a steeper decline of 26.6 percent when compared to Q2-2022 profits of \$78.8 billion, which was one of the biggest profits on record for the GCC markets. Energy, materials and capital goods were the top three sectors by absolute y-o-y profit decline against Q2-2022 as these sectors accounted for 58 percent of total profits during Q2-2023 as compared to 73.8 percent of profits during Q2-2022.

In terms of q-o-q performance, the decline in profit was led by a fall in profits for the energy, capital goods and real estate sectors that was partially offset by higher profits mainly for the utilities, F&B and banking sectors.

US BORROWING COSTS

Europe's weaker economy limits fallout of US bond rout



LONDON: A big selloff that pushed US borrowing costs to 15-year highs left euro zone bonds relatively unscathed in August, reflecting investor bets the bloc's economic growth and funding needs will increasingly lag those in the United States.

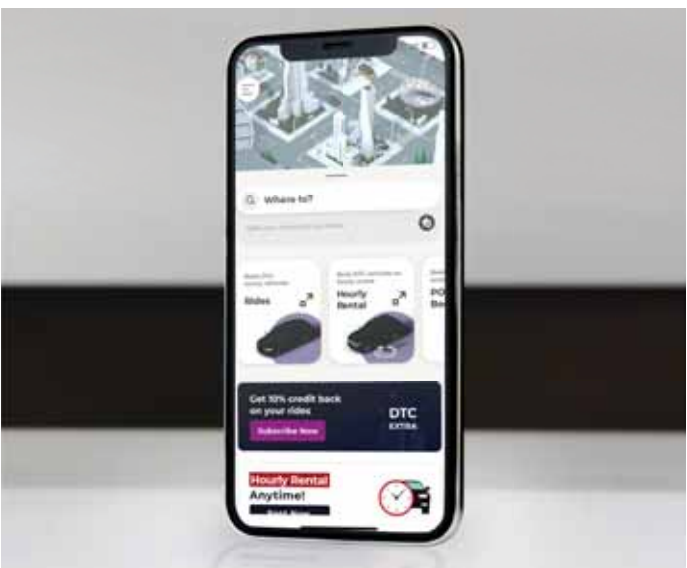
A resilient US economy and rising borrowing needs pushed Treasury yields to their highest in over 15 years in August amid growing expectations that interest rates would stay higher for longer.

Furthermore, US inflation-adjusted borrowing costs rose above 2% for the first time since 2009, hurting stocks and pushing up borrowing costs globally, Reuters reported.

European bonds, however, were less affected.

While the US economy, which grew 2.4% last quarter, has delivered a string of positive surprises, sharp contractions in business activity last week pointed to deepening economic pain in Europe. - **BNA**

ROADS AND TRANSPORT AUTHORITY



Dubai Taxi launches 4 smart app-based services

DUBAI: Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) subsidiary Dubai Taxi Corporation (DTC) has announced the launch of four smart and innovative services to its digital application (DTC App). This step aligns with DTC's digital transformation strategy and its pioneering efforts in providing safe and sustainable digital transportation services, which contribute to Dubai's global leadership in transportation services.

"The launch of these services reflects the Dubai Taxi Corporation's commitment to developing smart services in accordance with the leadership's directives to enhance the digital transformation journey for the benefit of the community. DTC is a pioneer in the implementation of innovative and smart services that adhere to the highest global standards. It is constantly striving to improve performance to achieve its strategic goals of providing innovative digital and sustainable transportation services that make people happy," Abdullah Ibrahim Al Meer, Director of Digital Transformation and Commercial Development at Dubai Taxi Corporation, said.

One of the premium services recently provided by DTC is the "Hourly Rental" service, which is meant to suit the demands of residents, tourists, and entrepreneurs, as well as tourist facilities such as hotels, tour operators, airlines, and other public and private entities. Users can use the service to make many non-stop trips without designating a specific destination. Passengers can guide the driver to specific locations. The service caters to

business executives by allowing them to book a single limousine for several meetings, with the option of making multiple stops as part of their business trips. The service is available 24/7, allowing users to complete all journeys with a single vehicle rather of switching between different vehicles, saving them time, effort, and cost.

DTC also launched the "Lost and Found Service", enabling passengers who lost any of their belongings during their trip to retrieve them by communicating with the driver or selecting the Lost Item Request feature in the available trip report on the DTC App to arrange for their return.

Additionally, DTC added the "Meet Me Here" service to its list of services on the smart app, allowing users to share their precise location with friends, making it easy for them to meet at the intended destination. Furthermore, the Share My Trip Status service enables users to share their trip status accurately with their family or friends, giving them details about their trip, route, and estimated time of arrival.

"DTC is committed to achieving sustainable development and providing an innovative model of digital services. It aims to expand the use of artificial intelligence, smart systems, and automation by capitalising on advanced technologies to deliver transportation services in an innovative and exceptional digital manner. The drive cements DTC's leading role in the smart transportation industry and promotes sustainability in Dubai's transportation landscape," Al Meer added. - **WAM**

MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Al Suwadi Power, up 4.00 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Qatar Insurance, down 9.61 per cent, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,760.30 points, down by 0.43 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.10 per cent at 473.20 points. Al Suwadi Power, up 4.00 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Qatar Insurance, down 9.61 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 543 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR2.96 million, with more than 15.65 million shares changing hands.

Out of 48 traded securities, 8 advanced, 20 declined, and 20 remained unchanged.

At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for OMR234,000 while foreign investors were net sellers for OMR182,000, followed by domestic investors for OMR52,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,752.31 points, down 0.43 per cent. Prices of Ominvest, Al Madina Takaful, Oman United Insurance were up by 1.28 per cent, 1.18 per cent, 1.10 per cent respectively. Prices of Oman Qatar Insurance, Ahli Bank, Al Anwar Investment, National Bank Oman were up by 9.61 per cent, 4.62 per cent, 1.22 per cent, 0.67 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,974.19 points, down 0.17 per cent. Prices of Al Maha Ceramics were up by 3.57% respectively. Prices of Voltamp Energy, Galfar Engineering, Al Anwar Ceramics, Raysut Cement, Gulf Mushroom Products were up by 4.00 per cent, 1.25 per cent, 0.91 per cent, 0.64 per cent, 0.44 per cent respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.23 per cent before closing at 1,655.32 points. Prices of Al Suwadi Power, Phoenix Power, Barka Water & Power Company were up by 4.00 per cent, 3.28 per cent, 2.56 per cent respectively. Prices of Muscat Desalination, Sembcorp Salalah, Salalah Port Services, Musandam Power, Oman Telecom were up by 2.17 per cent, 1.02 per cent, 0.95 per cent, 0.72 per cent, 0.49 per cent respectively. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,784.67	4,757.86	4,760.30	4,780.81	-20.51	-0.43
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,787.67	7,726.21	7,752.31	7,785.54	-33.23	-0.43
Industry Index	6,024.26	5,974.19	5,974.19	5,984.62	-10.43	-0.17
Services Index	1,661.61	1,654.71	1,655.32	1,659.22	-3.90	-0.23
MSX Shariah Index	474.66	471.53	473.20	472.73	0.48	0.10
MSX TR INDEX	6,296.52	6,261.24	6,264.46	6,291.45	-26.99	-0.43
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,497.78	8,428.58	8,459.19	8,495.45	-36.26	-0.43
SERVICES TR IDX	1,834.21	1,826.59	1,827.27	1,831.57	-4.30	-0.23
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,435.41	6,381.93	6,381.93	6,393.07	-11.14	-0.17

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
15,654,145	2,963,121	543	23,795,924,233	8	20	20	48

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (BD)	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST BD.	LAST OFF.	PAN VALUE	MARKET CAP	
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	1,400	404	2	0.290	0.290	0.288	0.290	0.280	0.010	3.571	0.288	0.280	-0.288	0.100	15,950,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	368,566	145,421	21	0.393	0.397	0.392	0.397	0.392	0.005	1.276	0.397	0.393	-0.397	0.100	265,341,074
OM0000004788	MADINA TAKAFUL	26,520	2,281	5	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.085	0.001	1.176	0.086	0.085	-0.086	0.100	15,050,000
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	5,700	1,552	4	0.271	0.275	0.271	0.275	0.272	0.003	1.103	0.275	0.272	-0.275	0.100	27,500,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	100	35	1	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.000	0.000	0.350	0.350	0.354	0.100	115,805,449
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	20,000	1,200	1	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.000	0.000	0.060	0.060	0.061	0.100	21,397,638
OM00000002549	BANK DHOFAR	876,750	153,431	11	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.000	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.100	524,361,501
OM00000002796	BANK MUSCAT	2,925,397	833,499	91	0.285	0.285	0.284	0.285	0.285	0.000	0.000	0.285	0.285	0.285	0.100	2,139,323,163
OM00000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO	250,790	14,797	11	0.059	0.059	0.059	0.059	0.059	0.000	0.000	0.059	0.059	0.061	0.100	11,800,000
OM00000003986	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	2,834,973	300,507	25	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.000	0.000	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.100	579,598,181
OM00000003968	OOREDOO	1,492,205	583,809	70	0.388	0.386	0.386	0.386	0.386	0.000	0.000	0.386	0.386	0.348	0.100	251,264,473
OM00000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	892,662	66,557	77	0.075	0.076	0.073	0.074	0.074	0.000	0.000	0.074	0.074	0.075	0.100	14,773,034
OM00000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	1,100	292	2	0.266	0.266	0.265	0.265	0.266	-0.001	-0.376	0.265	0.265	0.270	0.100	33,097,959
OM00000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	88,547	37,035	7	0.418	0.420	0.416	0.416	0.418	-0.002	-0.478	0.416	0.416	0.418	0.100	98,346,560
OM00000003026	OMAN TELECOM	246,463	251,513	10	1.020	1.025	1.020	1.025	-0.005	-0.488	1.020	1.020	1.021	0.100	765,000,000	
OM00000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	78,000	23,088	1	0.296	0.296	0.296	0.296	0.298	-0.002	-0.671	0.296	0.296	0.296	0.100	481,280,121
OM00000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	52,202	11,411	6	0.220	0.220	0.218	0.218	0.220	-0.002	-0.909	0.218	0.216	0.220	0.100	47,960,000
Total	17	10,161,376	2,426,831	345												
Parallel Market																
OM0000004893	AL SUWADI POWER	10,520	274	2	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.025	0.001	4.000	0.026	0.025	0.027	0.100	18,574,565
OM0000005983	PHOENIX POWER	1,586,282	98,349	5	0.061	0.063	0.061	0.063	0.061	0.002	3.279	0.063	0.060	0.066	0.100	92,143,892
OM00000003141	BARKA WATER AND POWER	25,000	1,000	2	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.039	0.001	2.564	0.040	0.038	0.040	0.100	6,400,000
OM00000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	100	200	1	2.000	2.000	2.000	2.000	2.000	0.000	0.000	2.000	0.000	2.050	0.100	179,400,000
OM00000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	46,281	1,851	2	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.000	0.000	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.042	0.100	3,400,000
OM00000004420	BANK NIZWA	1,989,841	196,991	26	0.099	0.099	0.098	0.099	0.099	0.000	0.000	0.099	0.099	0.100	0.100	221,458,350
OM0000004925	ALBATAINAH POWER	451,500	11,305	10	0.025	0.026	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.000	0.000	0.025	0.025	0.026	0.100	16,872,186
OM00000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	50,808	7,266	4	0.143	0.145	0.143	0.145	0.145	0.000	0.000	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.100	242,064,450
OM00000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	44,054	5,727	3	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.000	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.100	9,817,860
OM00000008868	THE PEARL REIF	2,700	329	1	0.122	0.122	0.122	0.122	0.122	0.000	0.000	0.122	0.119	0.000	0.100	581,922,966
OM00000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	3,082	3,045	2	0.988	0.988	0.988	0.988	0.990	-0.002	-0.202	0.988	0.988	0.988	0.100	60,539,700
OM00000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	111,571	33,243	28	0.300	0.300	0.297	0.299	0.300	-0.001	-0.333	0.299	0.298	0.302	0.100	220,289,800
OM00000002287	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	16,270	3,683	5	0.228	0.228	0.226	0.226	0.227	-0.001	-0.441	0.226	0.225	0.226	0.100	10,343,070
OM00000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	311,650	48,909	17	0.157	0.157	0.156	0.156	0.157	-0.001	-0.637	0.156	0.142	0.162	0.100	31,200,000
OM00000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	23,033	6,400	2	0.279	0.279	0.277	0.277	0.279	-0.002	-0.717	0.277	0.265	0.279	0.100	19,498,030
OM00000002333	SALALAH PORT SERVICES	2,410	1,003	3	0.416	0.416	0.416	0.416	0.420	-0.004	-0.952	0.416	0.416	0.000	0.100	74,812,358
OM00000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	110,281	10,772	18	0.098	0.098	0.097	0.097	0.098	-0.001	-1.020	0.097	0.095	0.098	0.100	92,593,479
OM00000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	289,180	23,894	15	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.082	0.081	0.001	1.220	0.081	0.080	0.082	0.100	16,886,000
OM00000003527	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	26,000	4,118	7	0.161	0.169	0.158	0.158	0.160	-0.002	-1.250	0.158	0.158	0.159	0.100	32,071,858
OM00000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	10,343	931	4	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.092	-0.002	-2.174	0.090	0.087	0.092	0.100	13,999,536
OM00000002275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	310	270	1	0.870	0.870	0.870	0.870	0.900	-0.030	-3.333	0.870	0.870	0.000	0.100	82,650,000
OM00000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	171,280	21,057	15	0.125	0.125	0.120	0.120	0.125	-0.005	-4.000	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.100	9,768,330
OM00000002200	AHLI BANK	150,200	24,785	6	0.173	0.173	0.165	0.165	0.173	-0.008	-4.624	0.165	0.160	0.165	0.100	387,693,482
OM00000008979	OMAN QATAR INSURANCE	28,608	4,582	2	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.177	-0.017	-9.605	0.160	0.160	0.169	0.100	25,794,971
Total	24	5,441,334	507,993	181												

TECHNOLOGY

Apple confirms ‘Wonderlust’ event, iPhone 15 series to be out on this date

WASHINGTON: Apple has sent out invitations for its eagerly awaited ‘Wonderlust’ event and formally revealed the date for the release of its iPhone 15 series, according to the Mashable website.

The Cupertino-based tech giant will hold its next important hardware announcement on September 12. The most anticipated iPhone 15 will finally be released, and the entire world will be able to see it.

Along with a number of other goods and services, the iPhone 15 lineup will be unveiled at this event. It will start at 1pm ET, which for fans in India translates to 10:30pm IST.

The predicted iPhone 15 series has been the subject of numerous leaks and reports, which have shown some significant design modifications, reported Mashable. -ANI

TEMPORARY SUSPENSION

Toyota halts operations at all of its Japan factories

TOKYO: Toyota announced the temporary suspension of operations in all 14 of its manufacturing plants in Japan due to a system malfunction on Tuesday. The issue did not seem to stem from a cyberattack and the problem was being investigated, said company spokesperson Sawako Takeda.

Toyota stated that the system glitch had impacted 28 assembly lines and said it was not clear when they would be back up and running. Reuters reported that the glitch meant that around one-third of the company's global production was out of operation.

What we know about the Toyota factory shut-down

The company is renowned for its efficient manufacturing practices, including the “just-in-time” production system, which involves delivering necessary parts and components at various stages



of the assembly process.

The glitch impacted the company's ability to handle incoming auto parts. This one issue brought the whole usually efficient and cost-effective system to a halt.

The news of the production halt led to a decrease in Toyota's stock value, which was down 0.64 percent to 2,421.0 yen. The stock decline appeared to slow down as

the midday break in Tokyo markets approached.

The glitch first shut down 12 Toyota factories on Tuesday morning, with the company subsequently deciding to halt the afternoon shift at the remaining two.

“We will continue to investigate the cause and to restore the system as soon as possible,” the company said in a statement. -IHW

MERGERS AND ACQUISITION

Mena M&A activity reaches 318 deals valued at \$43.8bn in first half of 2023

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Middle East and North Africa (Mena) region witnessed a total of 318 mergers



LIFESTYLE

Researchers Reveal Six Essential Foods to Combat Cardiovascular Disease Risk



OTTAWA: A study spearheaded by McMaster University and Hamilton Health Sciences researchers at the Population Research Health Institute (PHRI) has found that not eating enough of six key foods in combination is associated with a higher risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) in adults.

Consuming fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, fish and whole-fat dairy products is key to lowering the risk of CVD, including heart attacks and strokes. The study also found that a healthy diet can be achieved in various ways, such as including moderate amounts of whole grains or unprocessed meats.

Previous and similar research has focused on Western countries and diets that combined harmful, ultra-processed foods with nutrient-dense foods. This research was global in scope and focused on foods commonly considered to be healthy.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates nearly 18 million people died from CVD in 2019, representing 32 percent of all global deaths. Of these

deaths, 85 percent were due to heart attacks and strokes. PHRI researchers and their global collaborators analysed data from 245,000 people in 80 countries from multiple studies. The results were recently published in the *European Heart Journal*.

Researchers derived a diet score from PHRI's ongoing, large-scale global Prospective Urban and Rural Epidemiological (PURE) study, then replicated that in five independent studies to measure health outcomes in different world regions and in people with and without prior CVD.

There is a recent increased focus on higher consumption of protective foods for disease prevention. Outside of larger amounts of fruits, vegetables, nuts, and legumes, the researchers showed that moderation is key in the consumption of natural foods.

Moderate amounts of fish and whole-fat dairy are associated with a lower risk of CVD and mortality. The same health outcomes can be achieved with moderate consumption of grains and meats – as long as they are unrefined whole grains and unprocessed meats. -ONA

Fulham knock Spurs out of EFL

Tottenham's Richarlison scores but fails to rescue his team from exit

LONDON: Richarlison scored but could not prevent Tottenham going out of the English Football League (EFL) Cup as Fulham won a penalty shootout 5-3 to progress to round three on Tuesday night.

After a Micky van de Ven first-half own goal gave Fulham a deserved lead, Spurs levelled in unusual circumstances, *BBC Sport* reported. The home side were temporarily reduced to 10 men when Kenny Tete had to change his boot and Spurs took full advantage when Richarlison headed in.

But Davinson Sanchez's penalty was saved as Fulham won the shootout.

It was Tete - with a new boot on - who scored the decisive spot-kick to send the home side through.

It was ultimately a deserved win for Fulham, who should perhaps have been out of sight before Richarlison levelled with his first goal of the season after the hosts dominated the first half against a sluggish Spurs side.

Fraser Forster made an excellent save just before the break to deny Rodrigo Muniz, who also had a couple of decent chances before then.

Tottenham improved after the break and Manor Solomon almost got a dream winner against his former side late on, but his curled effort from the edge of the box was saved.

Substitute James Maddison also hit a free-kick into the wall but penalties were needed to settle the



tie, with Fulham successfully converting all of theirs to send Spurs out.

It was overall a very encouraging performance by Fulham, whose manager Marco Silva had to watch the game from the stands after picking up three yellow cards in the first three Premier League games of the season.

Richarlison relief

Tottenham have had a good start to the season in the Premier League with an opening-day draw followed by back-to-back wins against Manchester United and Bournemouth. Consequently, this EFL Cup match offered Spurs boss Ange Postecoglou the chance to rotate his squad and give others

Wolves rout Blackpool

Also, Matt Doherty marked his second debut at Wolverhampton Wanderers with two goals as they comfortably beat League One side Blackpool 5-0 to reach the third round. Sasa Kalajdzic opened the scoring when he struck from a rebound in the first half.

Fabio Silva turned in the second after Blackpool's Kenny Dougall hit the post.

Wolves then added three more after the break with Doherty's double and a Nathan Fraser strike.

Irishman Doherty, who spent 10 years at Wolves from 2010 before leaving for spells with Tottenham Hotspur and Atletico Madrid until returning this summer, got his first with a header,

before guiding in his second soon after.

Things have picked up for Wolves after a poor start to the season in which they lost their first two Premier League games, conceding five goals and scoring just one.

But it is now back-to-back wins for Gary O'Neil's side, scoring three times without reply and that will give them encouragement after perhaps fearing a difficult campaign ahead.

O'Neil made nine changes for this game but still had far too much for a Blackpool side that was relegated to League One last season.

Five goals will be the hugely satisfying aspect of the victory for the home fans, with Wolves having

ASIA CUP SQUAD

Sri Lanka bring in Fernando, Perera



COLOMBO: Seamers Binura Fernando and Pramod Madushan have been named in Sri Lanka's Asia Cup squad, replacing the more experienced quicks who are out with injuries. Legspin-bowling allrounder Dushan Hemantha has also made the squad, essentially as a like-for-like replacement for Wanindu Hasaranga.

Kusal Perera is in the squad as well. It has been more than two years since he last played an ODI, but this has mostly been because of injury. He had been ill with Covid-19 in the past week, but is understood to be improving, and will join the squad when he makes a full recovery.

Fernando and Madushan came in in the absence of the injured Dushmantha Chameera (pectoral tear), Dilshan Madushanka (oblique tear), and Lahiru Kumara

(side strain), who have all been ruled out of the tournament. Chameera and Madushanka, in particular, are also battling to be fit in time for the World Cup, which starts on October 5.

Hasaranga, who has a thigh strain, could conceivably have played towards the end of the tournament, but with the World Cup so close, Sri Lanka have chosen not to risk aggravating the injury.

Sri Lanka play their first match on Thursday, against Bangladesh.

Sri Lanka squad: Dasun Shanaka (capt), Pathum Nissanka, Dimuth Karunaratne, Kusal Mendis (wk), Kusal Perera, Dhananjaya de Silva, Charith Asalanka, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Dunith Wellalage, Maheesh Theekshana, Matheesha Pathirana, Kasun Rajitha, Dushan Hemantha, Binura Fernando, Pramod Madushan. - Agencies

HONOUR

Haaland wins PFA men's player of the year award

LONDON: Manchester City's Erling Haaland has won the PFA men's players' player of the year award, with Arsenal's Bukayo Saka named young player of the year on Tuesday, *BBC Sport* reported on Wednesday.

Norway forward Haaland, 23, scored 52 goals in all competitions in his debut season with Pep Guardiola's side.

Haaland beat teammates Kevin de Bruyne and John Stones, Arsenal's Saka and Martin Odegaard and Tottenham's Harry Kane, now at Bayern Munich.

City won the Premier League, FA Cup and Champions League Treble last season.

"It's an honour to win this prestigious award," said Haaland. "To be recognised by your competitors is a great feeling and I would like to thank everyone who voted for me."

"It was an unforgettable season for the team and for me personally. Winning the Treble was something I never imagined, so to achieve that with such a special group of players was an amazing feeling."

"We created some incredible memories last season, but now we want to do the same again this year. We have started the season well and we need to keep going."

Haaland joined City from Borussia Dortmund in June 2022.



He was also nominated for the young player prize, which was awarded to England winger Saka after he scored 14 goals and contributed 11 assists in his finest season for the Gunners.

The 21-year-old beat fellow nominees Moises Caicedo, who recently joined Chelsea from

Brighton, Aston Villa midfielder Jacob Ramsey, Arsenal forward Gabriel Martinelli and Brighton striker Evan Ferguson.

Aston Villa striker Rachel Daly won the PFA women's player of the year award, while Chelsea's Lauren James was named young player of the year. - Agencies

BANGLADESH SQUAD



Litton ruled out of Asia Cup, replaced by Anamul

DHAKA: Litton Das has been ruled out of Asia Cup 2023 with a viral fever. The illness prevented him from travelling to Sri Lanka with the rest of the squad, and he has not yet recovered. He has been replaced by Anamul Haque in a like-for-like swap of top-order batters who can keep wickets.

Anamul, 30, last played an ODI for Bangladesh in December 2022 against India. In all, he has represented Bangladesh in 44 ODIs, in which he has scored 1254 runs at an average of 30.58, which includes five fifties and three centuries. In all those matches, he has either opened or come in at No.3. Anamul will serve as a back-up keeper for Mushfiqur Rahim, *ESPNcricinfo* reported.

"He [Anamul] has been in the runs in domestic cricket and we have continued to monitor him in the Bangladesh Tigers programme. He was always in our consideration," Minhajul Abedin, chairman of the national selection panel, said.

"Due to Litton's unavailability, we needed a top-order batter who could keep wicket and Anamul got the nod."

Litton's absence could prove to be a big blow for Bangladesh, who are chasing their first Asia Cup title.

The 28-year-old has been Bangladesh's highest run-getter in ODIs since the start of 2022 with 878 runs in 25 innings at an average of 41.80. He has scored seven fifties and a century during this period, with a highest score of 136 against Afghanistan in February last year. - Agencies

PREMIER LEAGUE

Van Dijk charged by FA after red card against Newcastle

LONDON: Virgil van Dijk has been charged by the Football Association (FA) for acting in an "improper manner" after being sent off in Liverpool's win at Newcastle, *BBC Sport* reported on Wednesday.

The Liverpool captain was shown a straight red card in the 29th minute at St James' Park on Sunday for fouling Newcastle forward Alexander Isak.

The defender appeared to argue with referee John Brooks while the incident was reviewed by VAR.

The FA says it is alleged Van Dijk used "abusive and/or insulting words".



"Virgil van Dijk has been charged with a breach of FA rule E3.1 following Liverpool's Premier League game against Newcastle United on Sunday, 27 August," said the FA in a statement. "It's alleged that the defender acted in an improper manner and/or used abusive and/or insulting words towards a match official after being sent off in the 29th minute."

The 32-year-old Netherlands centre-back, who also appeared to argue with the fourth official before making his way down the tunnel, has until Friday to respond to the charge. Currently, Van Dijk will serve a one-match ban for the initial

red card and miss Liverpool's next game against Aston Villa on Sunday.

The charge comes after referees' chief Howard Webb said he was "determined" officials would not "turn a blind eye" to bad behaviour from players and coaches this season.

The incident occurred three minutes after Liverpool went behind to Anthony Gordon's opening goal and with the visitors under pressure in the game.

Darwin Nunez came off the bench to score twice late on and hand Liverpool a 2-1 victory to maintain their unbeaten start to the season. - Agencies

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ROUND-UP

NBO signs strategic finance agreement with Oman REIT Fund



Under the agreement, NBO will provide a new long-term Sharia-compliant financing of OMR 30 million to Oman REIT through its Islamic banking window, Muzn Islamic Banking

MUSCAT: Fulfilling the diverse financial needs of customers across all segments, the National Bank of Oman (NBO) has entered into a facility agreement with the Oman REIT Fund (Oman REIT), an Omani Real Estate Investment Fund, listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX). The signing ceremony took place at NBO's head office in Al Azaiba.

Abdullah Al Hinai, Chief Executive Officer of NBO and Mustafa Salman, Chairman of the Board of Oman REIT, signed the agreement in the presence of senior officials from both entities and FIM Partners Muscat SPC, which serves as Oman REIT's asset manager. Under the agreement, NBO will provide a new long-term Sharia-compliant financing of OMR 30

million to Oman REIT through its Islamic Banking window, Muzn Islamic Banking. This customised financing facility aims to support the REIT's real estate investment activities and contribute to the overall growth of the company. Speaking on the partnership, Abdullah Al Hinai said, "We are delighted to collaborate with Oman REIT. The agreement underscores NBO's steadfast dedication to establishing reliable and value-centric partnerships with local organisations. "Through this collaboration, both parties aim to achieve mutually beneficial goals that actively contribute to Oman's progress. The bank will persist in its efforts to design tailor-made products that unlock opportunities and stimulate progress for all." Speaking on the collaboration, Mustafa Salman said, "We are thrilled to join hands with NBO

and Muzn Islamic Banking. This deal will provide Oman REIT with the financial and operational flexibility to further expand its portfolio and enhance its overall performance by deploying the facility into resilient and yield accretive properties. It will be a strong contributor to the growth and depth of the Omani institutional real estate sector. Undoubtedly, such strategic partnerships are pivotal in strengthening private sector contribution and generating in-country value." Fares Bou Atme, Director-Real Estate at FIM Partners added, "We are very pleased with the transaction and look forward to working with the team at NBO. It is further testimony to our continued commitment to the REIT's business plan and will allow Oman REIT to further diversify its portfolio and further enhance returns to its investors, whilst increasing cash

flow predictability. We have already deployed 25% of the facility into the acquisition of the Nesto Wadi Kabir transaction, which we are very pleased with and have built a strong pipeline of performing and high-yielding assets, in which we intend to deploy the remainder of the facility." This deal reinforces NBO's and Muzn's Islamic Banking Window capabilities and expertise in structuring innovative, tailor-made Sharia-compliant financing solutions, underpinned by the bank's thorough due diligence and credit assessment methods. Moreover, the agreement reaffirms NBO's commitment to supporting businesses across various sectors, with a special focus on making banking more convenient, accessible and enjoyable for all customers. Since its establishment in 1973 as Oman's first local bank, NBO

has remained committed to creating genuine value and advancing through new possibilities for Oman and its people. Through its Islamic window, Muzn, NBO has consistently offered a comprehensive suite of Sharia-compliant products and personalized services designed to provide a seamless experience for local organisations and enhance their business returns. Oman REIT's portfolio consists of a portfolio of diversified real estate properties across office, retail, logistics and residential segments and has currently reached OMR 56 million in asset value. Oman REIT is managed by FIM Partners Muscat SPC, a subsidiary of FIM Partners, which brings north of 15 years of investment management and \$3 billion of assets under management with offices in Dubai, Muscat, Riyadh and London.

APPOINTMENT

Alizz Islamic Bank appoints Ali Al Mani as Chief Executive Officer



MUSCAT: The Board of Directors of Alizz Islamic Bank announced the appointment of Ali Al Mani as the bank's Chief Executive Officer. Ali Al Mani has over 22 years of experience in the Finance and Banking industry in both Islamic and Conventional banks, with expertise across areas of corporate banking, retail banking, operations, finance, project management and technology. He has held various leadership positions at major local banks and prior to joining Alizz Islamic

Bank, Al Mani was the Deputy CEO of National Finance Company overseeing the performance of one of the largest finance companies in Oman. Ali Al Mani holds a Master's degree in Innovation, Leadership and Management from York University, United Kingdom. He also has a Bachelors of Arts in Computer Applications & Internet from the University of Bedfordshire, United Kingdom, in addition to a number of specialised qualifications in Banking and Finance.

ADVANCED THERAPEUTIC TREATMENT

Badr Al Samaa Hospital, Sohar inaugurates advanced Cardiac Catheterisation Lab

MUSCAT: Badr Al Samaa Group of Hospitals and Polyclinics launched advanced GE Optima Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory (CathLab) at its hospital in Sohar which is all set to deliver advanced therapeutic treatment to heart patients of Al Batinah Governorate. Mohammed Abdullah Ali Al Busaidi, Governor of Sohar and Acting Governor of North Batinah was the chief guest of the launch ceremony. The ceremony was attended by managing director of Badr Al Samaa Group of Hospitals, Dr P A Mohammad, Executive Director, Firasath Hassan, CEO, Sameer PT, COO, Jacob Oommen, Consultant - Interventional Cardiology, Dr Kamal Pasha, Regional Head, Manoj Kumar and various government officials, doctors, administrative staff and other dignitaries. The event marks a significant milestone in our commitment to improving patient outcomes and revolutionizing cardiac interventions. Mohammed Abdullah Ali Al Busaidi expressed happiness on this occasion and said that such technological advancements in private healthcare sector of North Al Batinah Governorate will benefit



effit the people in many ways and will prove life saving. He appreciated management of Badr Al Samaa for continuously upgrading the services and introducing cutting edge technology. In a joint statement, by managing directors of Badr Al Samaa Group of Hospitals, Abdul Latheef and Dr. P A Mohammed said that this launch is the part of their vision of making the standards of private healthcare in Oman reach global standards. They said that addition of new modalities and clinical services is a continuous process and very soon more services will be added in Badr Al Samaa Hospital, Sohar.

Moideen Bilal and Firasath Hassan, executive directors of Badr Al Samaa Group of Hospitals said that the need for advanced cathlab was felt to ensure heart patients gets the right and timely treatment which they deserve. They said with this technology Badr Al Samaa has on-boarded well experienced cardiology consultant, Dr Kamal Pasha and cardiology technicians and nurses, which makes it the best department in the region. Dr Kamal Pasha said that this CathLab at Badr Al Samaa Hospital, Sohar, boasts of the latest cutting-edge infrastructure and state-of-the-art technology, which

will offer a comprehensive array of diagnostics and therapeutic procedures in cardiology. Equipped with advanced imaging capabilities, interventional cardiology procedures will now be more precise and efficient, providing accurate diagnosis and targeted treatments for patients suffering from various cardiac conditions. This GE Optima CathLab has cutting-edge imaging system which enables cardiologists to visualize intricate details of the cardiovascular system. With the aid of the latest equipment and techniques, the cathlab at Badr Al Samaa Hospital, Sohar offers a wide range of minimally invasive procedures like Angiography, Angioplasty with Stenting, Primary (Emergency) Angioplasty, etc. The inauguration of the CathLab at Badr Al Samaa Hospital, Sohar reaffirms Badr Al Samaa's commitment of delivering patient-centric, cutting-edge technology designed to meet the evolving needs of the heart patients. The advanced equipment and enhanced capabilities provided by this cathlab will empower their team of highly skilled specialists to provide the highest quality of care for cardiac patients.



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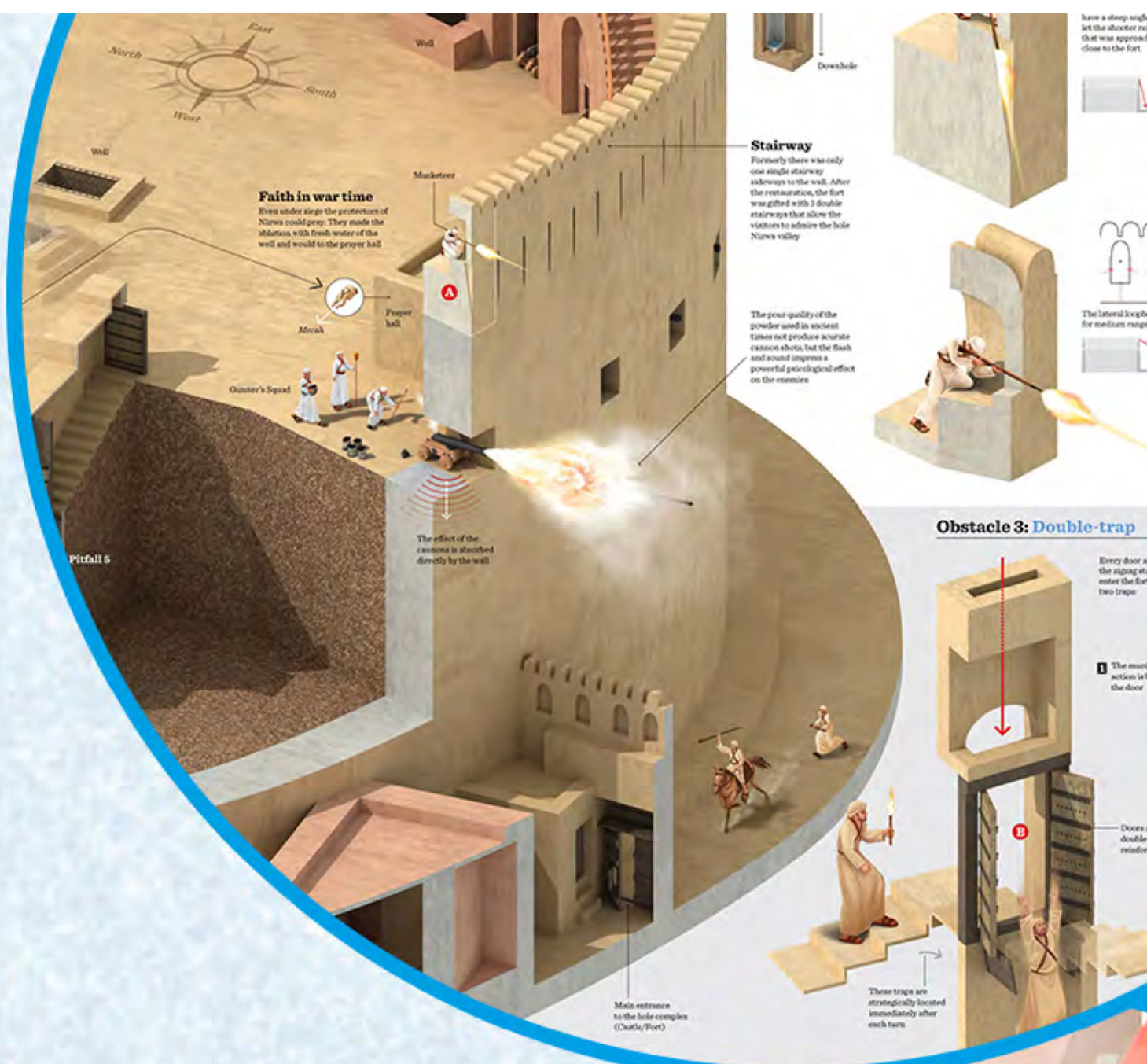


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