

OMAN, BAHRAIN TO BOOST BILATERAL RELATIONS

Foreign Minister Saayid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi received on Wednesday Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Ahmed Al Khalifa, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Political Affairs in the Kingdom of Bahrain. **>A5**



STATE COUNCIL OFFICE SETS AGENDA FOR NEXT SESSION

The Office of the State Council on Wednesday held its second meeting of the third annual sitting of the 7th Term under the auspices of Sheikh Abdulmalik Abdullah Al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council. The meeting studied proposals submitted by the council's committees and some members. **>A2**



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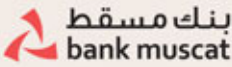
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SAYYID THEYAZIN RECEIVES AMBASSADOR OF GERMANY

His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth received yesterday Thomas Friedrich Schneider, Ambassador of Germany to the Sultanate of Oman. During the meeting, the two sides discussed several matters of mutual interest. They also reviewed the bilateral relations and aspects of cooperation in cultural, sports and youth fields, in addition to exchanging views on means of promoting them to serve the joint interests. — **ONA**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN New fuel outlets on Al Batinah Expressway

1 Steps are underway to open some integrated service stations along Al Batinah Expressway this year. **>A3**

OMAN Subsidy channelled to power sector

2 The review of general policies of the power sector was conducted by the Ministry of Energy. **>A4**

MARKET Focus on sustainable date palm production

3 Oman hosted an annual meeting on a project to develop sustainable date palm production. **>B1**



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PANDEMIC

Oman records more than 22,000 COVID cases in January

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman has logged over 22,000 new COVID infections and 17 deaths since the beginning of the new year.

Speaking exclusively to the *Times of Oman*, Ibrahim Al Maimani, a data analyst and social activist, said: "The total number of new infections in January until Tuesday reached 22,718 at a daily average of 874. On the other hand, 7,288 recoveries were recorded, at an average of 280 each day, which had led to an increase in the existing cases to 16,488. This had dipped the recovery rate to 93.7 percent."

Al Maimani confirmed that a significant increase was observed in the number of inpatients in hospitals. At the beginning of January there were just 14 cases which had reached 223 on Tuesday. As for the intensive care cases, their number was 4 cases at the beginning of January, which reached 26 cases on Tuesday.

Further, he pointed out there were 17 deaths in January until yesterday, whereas in Decem-



ber, it was just 3. In November, it was two."

Al Maimani said: "It was noticed that the number of hospital admissions also increased. It was 75 yesterday, while at the beginning of the current month, it was just two."

Dr. Amal bint Saif Al Maani, Director of Infection Prevention and Control, Ministry of Health, in a statement to the Sultanate of Oman TV, confirmed that all laboratory and epidemiological evidence confirmed that a majority of cases, (over 99 percent), were infections caused by Omicron. **>A4**

Sultanate signs pact for space research, delivery of nanosatellites

Times News Service

MUSCAT: In a first-of-its-kind in the history of the Sultanate of Oman, the Emerging Technologies Company (ETCO), an Oman-based emerging technology innovator, signed an agreement to jointly explore deep space project opportunities and delivery of nanosatellites into the Low Earth Orbit.

The project will initially deliver a nanosatellite that will enable ground-breaking scientific research and capture high-resolution images of deep space.

All collected data and images, both from the Low Earth Orbit and deep space missions, will be analysed digitally using Computer Vision, Machine Learning and AI solutions developed by TU-ATARA in strategic partnership with ETCO.

The project intends to provide long-lasting benefits, including the detection of hidden patterns, identification of trends and prediction of changes caused by, among others, climatic change or natural disasters. It will also provide investment opportunities with a number of universities through Academic Exchange Programmes, to unlock new horizons for the next generation of world space explorers and innovators in the space sector, while investing in national talent that will build a promis-



ing future for Oman.

The agreement was signed by ETCO with Virgin Orbit, a leading US-based satellite launch company, SatRevolution, a Polish nanosatellite manufacturer and operator and TUATARA, specialists in advance AI, data analytics and cognitive technology solutions.

The agreement was ratified by Abdulaziz Jaafar, Chief Executive Officer of International Emerging Technologies Company (ETCO) and Steve Eisele, VP (Business & Strategy) of Virgin Orbits in the presence of Dr Ali Al Shidani, Undersecretary for Communications and Information Technology at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, Sultanate of Oman, Dr Mohammad bin Said Al-Maamari, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, Sultanate of Oman and

Ambassador Leslie M. Tsou, U.S.

Ambassador to Oman and other distinguished members at Muscat.

"Despite many technical advances to date, only a few organisations have been bold enough to successfully launch deep space projects," said Virgin Orbit CEO Dan Hart. "We are proud to have been entrusted by the Sultanate of Oman as their launch partners and fulfilling their ambitious goals to help bring sustainable space solutions to the country."

"Both Low Earth Orbit and deep space projects will contribute to the near-term goals of the Sultanate of Oman, which include the modernisation of the educational ecosystem, scientific research and innovation, enhancement of in-country development of cutting-edge technologies that will shape the world in the twenty-first century," SatRevolution CEO Grzegorz Zwolinski said. **>A4**

SPECIAL EXHIBIT

Exhibits highlighting Oman-India shared heritage on display at National Museum

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Two special exhibits showcasing the shared heritage of Oman and India are currently on display in the National Museum.

The first of these exhibits is a lithograph dating from late Nineteenth century called the "Tarikh-i-Kesari" or "The History of the Caesars" which gives a brief look into the history of Oman and Zanzibar.

The book has been loaned from the National Museum, New Delhi Republic of India.

The other special exhibit is a painting of Al Mirani Fort of Muscat loaned from the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi. The display of the special exhibits



in Oman coincides with the celebration of the Republic of India on its 73rd Republic Day. The display of the collections will continue for three months.

Jamal bin Hassan Al Moosawi, Secretary-General of the National

Museum, said: The National Museum is honoured with the participation of the Republic of India in its celebrations of the Republic Day by displaying loaned artefacts from the National Museum in New Delhi (Republic of India)

and National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi in the Omani and Indian Relations Corner in the Oman and the World gallery available to visitors.

Ancient bilateral relations

The loaned artefacts embody the ancient bilateral relations between the two countries.

This cooperation comes within the framework of strengthening the bonds of international museum cooperation with the leading and prestigious international cultural institutions and museums, especially in the museum and cultural fields, in a way that contributes to achieving museum leadership for both. **>A4**

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#Oman has recorded over 2,000 cases of coronavirus in a day for the first time since June 2021.

A Covid-19 story update for Oman reached 21,691 people and had 1,051 engagements on Facebook.

MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

8,200 VIEWS

Maghrib Minute video

The Maghrib Minute video had 8,200 views and reached 21,800 people on Facebook.

MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

1,140 VIEWS

Morning Minute video

The Morning Minute video had 1,140 views and 51 likes on Instagram.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

60-year job limit cap for expatriates waived off



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Expats living in the Sultanate of Oman, who are aged above 60, will be able to renew their work permits and seek employment in the private sector. The Ministry of Labour issued a circular abolishing the age cap of 60 years currently in force.

The Minister of Labour issued a circular to abolish the age limit of 60 years for expat workers in the private sector.

The circular, sent to Sheikh Nasr Al Hosani, the Undersecretary of Labour at the Ministry, stated: “We would like to inform you that, in view of the current state of the private sector and the large number of requests for exceptions to renew licenses to bring in expat manpower over the age of 60, I ask your Excellency to instruct your specialists to cancel the 60-year age cap for workers in the private sector, and take the necessary measures.”

CYBER DEFENCE

State Council Office sets agenda for next session

MUSCAT: The Office of the State Council on Wednesday held its second meeting of the third annual sitting of the 7th Term under the auspices of Sheikh Abdulmalik Abdullah Al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council. The meeting studied proposals submitted by the council's committees and some members.

Two proposals made by the Technology and Innovation Committee were taken up at the outset of the meeting.

The first proposal dealt with a study on the Cyber Defence Centre's system promulgated by Royal Decree No. 64/2020 and the second one looked into a study on the regulatory and legislative frameworks of artificial intelligence.

The State Council Office hosted Dr. Maryam Abdullah Al Awadi, Chairperson of the Technology and Innovation Committee, and the panel's rapporteurs—Eng.



Mohammed Ahmed Al Lamki and Dr. Mahmood Abdullah Al Kindi. After the discussions, the Office decided to refer the two proposals to the General Assembly, along with the views of the chairperson and rapporteurs, for further elaboration.

Then, the Office studied a proposal from the Economic Committee on enhancing the basics of legal and regulatory systems governing real estate funding, financial leasing and consumer financing.

It also studied the panel's proposal on studying the agricultural sector's economic returns and competitive capacity.

For comment on the two proposals, the State Council Office hosted Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah Al Harthy, Chairman of the Economic Committee, and Hamad Sulaiman Al Ghraibi, Rapporteur of the Committee.

The Office also looked into replies of departments concerned on issues raised by the State Council, including a study to boost water, hiking and desert sports, among other issues. -ONA

MAXIMISE EFFICIENCY

OIA announces restructuring of electricity companies

MUSCAT: In line with the continuous government efforts to maximise efficiency and optimise spending in the electricity sector, Oman Investment Authority (OIA) has started the initial steps of a restructuring project, covering its subsidiary electricity distribution and supply companies.

With a clear vision and defined timeframe in place, the project will engage relevant public institutions and different stakeholders.

Companies included in the restructuring are Muscat Electricity Distribution Company (MEDC), Mazoon Electricity

Company (MZEC), Majan Electricity Company (MJE) and Rural Areas Electricity Company (Tanweer).

The restructuring project will carefully look into matters related to employees in order to minimize the impact that is usually associated with such processes.

Employees of the companies will be kept informed of all relevant matters, as Nama Group is disseminating information to them, and is conducting a series of open discussion sessions on this matter.

Nama Group is taking the initiative to communicate with all relevant financial institutions and lenders to keep them informed on the project, and to adhere to contractual and legal obligations.

All implications on the companies' commitments in light of the current awarded projects and existing contractual obligations with vendors and contractors are being assessed to ensure that no impact will be resulted from the restructuring project on them.

Nama Group will maintain a constant communications flow with different stakeholders to keep them informed with updates on relevant matters.

-ONA

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OF OMAN

"Tender Announcement"

Supply of Food Parcels for the "Ramadan Iftar Program" for the Year 1443 AH / 2022 AD for Al Mahrah Governorate and Surrounding Areas in the Republic of Yemen

Tender No. 1/2022

Oman Charitable Organization (O.C.O.) announces a tender for the supply of 27,900 (twenty Seve thousand and nine hundred) food parcels for the "Ramadan Iftar Program" for the year 1443 AH / 2022 AD, and distributing them to all the districts of Al Mahrah Governorate and the surrounding areas according to the attached list of locations (16 locations).

Specialized merchants and suppliers wishing to submit their bids for this tender can obtain the terms and conditions from the Financial Department of Oman Charitable Organization against payment of nominal fees, during the period from Sunday 23 January 2022 to Thursday 27 January 2022. The last date for bid submission and acceptance shall be Monday 31 January 2022.

Bids shall be deposited in the tender box at the Financial Department, O.C.O. Headquarters Building at the Wilayat of Baushar, Muscat Governorate, Al Khuwair 33, Southern Street No. 47, near Sultan Said bin Taimur Mosque.

Bids shall be placed in closed envelopes sealed with red wax and addressed to H.E. the Chairman of the Projects and Tenders Committee of O.C.O. before the specified date.

O.C.O. is not obligated to award the tender in whole or in part or to consider the lowest price.



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New fuel stations along Al Batinah Expressway soon

Each one of the integrated service sites will have apart from a fuel filling station, a host of allied services of use to motorists and tourists alike

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development announced yesterday that steps are underway to get some inte-

grated service stations working fully along Al Batinah Expressway within this year. The scheduled operation be-

gins with four sites (15,000 sqm to 30,000 sqm) in North Al Batinah Governorate. Two of the sites will be located in the area of Al Hoor in the Wilayat of Suwaig, one in the Wilayat of Saham's Al Rowdha area and one in the New Liwa area of the Wilayat of Liwa. The integrated service sites comprise, each, a fuel filling station, a public utility building with restaurants, multiservice trade outlets, a hotel suite, a park, prayer areas for men and women, parking lots and other services that will activate tourism and economic activities. -ONA

FIRST MEETING

Tender Board awards projects worth over OMR15 million

MUSCAT: The Tender Board yesterday approved OMR15,913,132 worth tenders during its first meeting this year. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Dr. Said Mohammed Al Saqri, Minister of Economy, Chairman of the

Tender Board. Among the most important works assigned and approved by the board was rehabilitating and furnishing the building of the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, besides adding some facilities to it. Another was the renewal of the

temporary lease contract for the Institute of Public Administration building for one year (from 1/7/2021 to 30/6/2022) and the additional works on the tender for the dualisation of Izz-Adam road project in A'Dakhiliyah Governorate, among others. -ONA



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MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINERALS

Subsidy channelled to power sector, distribution and supply services merged

MUSCAT: The periodic review of general policies of the power sector conducted by the Ministry of Energy and Minerals in cooperation with the authorities concerned yielded fruit.

The Public Services Regulatory Authority played a role in drawing out regulations for expanding the timeframe (from 5 to 10 years) of the residential units' electricity sector subsidy programme.

This involves increasing the annual rate by not more than 2 baisas, while at the same time fixing the tariff endorsed for the residential segment's electricity consumption in 2022 to be stabilised at the same rate as at December 2021.

It was also agreed to unify electricity consumption sector for all accounts of the residential category so that the value of power consumption tariff in 2022 could fall in two classes:

The first class/category pertains



to the original account's tariff (for two or less accounts), and this comprises three segments.

Consumption in the first segment ranges from zero to 4,000 kilowatt/hour at a rate of 14 baisas a kw/h; the second from 4,001 to 6,000 kw at a rate of 17 baisas for each kw/h and the third begins from more than 6,000 kw onwards at a rate of 30 baisas for each kw/h.

The additional account's tariff (for more than two accounts) com-

prises three segments: the first for consumption from zero to 4,000 kw at a rate of 20 baisas for each kw/h; the second for 4,001 to 6,000 kw consumption at a rate of 25 baisas for each kw/h and the third for consumption of more than 6,000 kw at a rate of 30 baisas for each kw/h.

The electricity tariff for the residential category will be calculated as of 1 January 2022. The system of national subsidy granted to entitled categories continues to be applied as prescribed. A subscriber from the exempted categories has a right to select one account for which "additional subsidy" will apply.

The consumption of the first category ranges from zero to 4,000 kw at a rate of 10 baisas for each kw/h; the second 4,001-6,000 kw at a rate of 13 baisas for each kw/h and the third from 6,000 kw onwards at a rate of 20 baisas for each kw/h.

As for the agricultural sector, the Cost Reflective Tariff has been can-

celled (the non-subsidised tariff) for all subscribers. Instead a new tariff will be applied as follows:

The first category ranges from zero to 3,000 kw/h at a rate of 12 baisas for each kw/h; the second from 3,001 to 6,000 kw at a rate of 16 baisas a kw/h and the third from 6,000 kw onwards at a rate of 24 baisas a kw/h.

The Cost Reflective Tariff has been reviewed in 2022 in support for economic recovery efforts and in consolidation of the national economy's performance.

The general policies of the electricity sector seek to implement a programme for rechanneling the power subsidy to the deserving segments, which is part of the Medium Term Fiscal Balance Plan (2020-2024).

Also, to augment the operational and financial efficiency of the power sector and to benefit from the expertise of employees, it has been decided to merge activities of elec-

tricity distribution and electricity supply in two companies: one for electricity distribution (to provide distribution in all governorates of the Sultanate, except the governorate of Dhofar) and a company to supply electricity (to provide electricity supply services to all governorates of the Sultanate, except the governorate of Dhofar). Dhofar Company for Merged Services remains unchanged (to provide distribution and supply services within the governorate of Dhofar).

The overall objective is to augment operational efficiency, minimise costs, expedite the rate of power connectivity in rural areas via the basic grid. This contributes to the reduction of carbon emissions, minimizes dependence on diesel stations and makes ideal use of the expertise of the companies, while at the same time opening scopes for competition in the sector of supply and power connec-

tion services in different parts of the Sultanate.

The arrangements also made it possible to implement the programme of smart, online meter readers, which upgrades the level of the service and the efficiency of electricity distribution. It will also keep pace with global developments, utilise technology in developing subscriber services and realise the setting up of smart, sustainable cities. Smart meters have been installed for major consumers.

The initiatives led to the start of operational tasks for the first instant market for electricity in the Middle East termed "Oman Instant Electricity Market" (oem.om), which tallies with the global power procurement system. This helps create a competitive environment for cost cutting and competition and encourages the use of renewable energy as part of the goals of Oman Vision 2040. -ONA

INDIA REPUBLIC DAY

INDIAN EMBASSY HOLDS RECEPTION TO MARK REPUBLIC DAY

MUSCAT: The Embassy of the Republic of India in the Sultanate of Oman held a reception on the occasion of the 73rd anniversary of the Republic Day on Wednesday evening.

The ceremony, which was held at the headquarters of the

Indian Embassy, was attended by a number of senior officials in the Sultanate of Oman, heads of diplomatic missions accredited to the Sultanate, and a number of officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

-ONA



COVID

<FROM A1 Infection by Omicron generally less severe

She added that an analysis confirmed that there would be an increase in the coming days as the reproduction number had exceeded 2.2, which was on the higher side.

It would begin to double within six days, according to the epidemiological analysis of the numbers during the past few weeks.

She pointed out that there would be a uniformity in the spread of the epidemic in all governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, unlike what happened during the previous waves.

In some governorates, the positivity rate had reached 25 percent, meaning that out of every 100 peo-

ple who had symptoms during the period, 25 were infected with the Corona virus.

She indicated that the decisions of the Supreme Committee, charged with devising a mechanism to deal with the developments, were aimed to formulate a policy regarding conduct of essential business, occupational safety and healthcare to all citizens.

Dr. Amal clarified that the infection caused by Omicron was generally less severe compared to the previous mutant.

It is presumed that 25 percent of the severity is related to the nature of the mutant itself, and the remaining percentage is linked to

other factors such as immunity in the community, natural or from previous infections or acquired immunity from vaccines.

She said the studies confirmed that two or three doses of the vaccine had reduced the spread by 66 percent. It also reduced the chance of hospitalisation with severe symptoms by more than 80 percent, intensive care or oxygen requirement by 90 percent, especially for those who had chronic diseases or were over 60 years.

Dr. Amal bint Saif Al Maani appealed to the people to receive the third dose to ensure their safety and also to contribute to check the spread of the infection.

MILESTONE PROJECT

<FROM A1 Pact to enrich space industry of Oman



SPACE PACT: The strategic agreement was signed by Abdulaziz Sadiq Al Haj Jaafar, CEO of ETCO, and Stephen Eisele, Vice President of Business and Strategy at Virgin Orbit.

"This partnership is a major step in helping us enrich the Sultanate's space industry with the latest technologies and know-how, while adding overall economic value according to Oman's 2040 Vision," Tariq Al Belushi, ETCO Vice President said.

"With this milestone project, we will provide further opportunities in a sector of high potential for both local and international investors."

"Our mission is to deliver enchanting experiences in the digi-

tal space, and we are thrilled to be invited to help translate outer space data into digital insights. We believe that this step will not only be providing vital scientific data and boosting the growth of STEM industries in the Sultanate, but will also inspire the world in the further democratisation of space research," TUATARA Vice President and Chief Innovation Officer Krzysztof Goworek said.

This partnership is a follow-up to the Memorandum of Understanding signed during the

International Astronautical Congress in October 2021 in Dubai, which established the cooperation of the parties to design, manufacture and launch the first Omani satellite, manufactured by SatRevolution, onboard Virgin Orbit's LauncherOne in the first-ever launch from the United Kingdom's Spaceport Cornwall in 2022. Driven by a forward-thinking approach, ETCO has developed a portfolio of successful partnerships in line with Oman's digitisation strategy for 2040.

HERITAGE

<FROM A1 'Oman-India share rich bond'

Amit Narang said: "Oman and India share thousands of years of shared heritage and rich bonds of people-to-people contacts. The special exhibits obtained on loan from India showcase this shared past and are also testimony to the excellent cooperation between the Museums and institutions of art and heritage of both the countries. I appreciate the assistance of Jamal bin Hassan Al Moosawi, Secretary-General of the National Museum of Oman in making this special exhibition possible. We look forward to more such

opportunities for cooperation in the future".

The Tarikh-i-Kesari, which was authored by Mohammad Akbar Ali Khan, is a rare visual directory of the princely states of India with the miniatures of their founders or incumbent rulers in addition to the rulers whose countries had close relations with the British Raj. The Book was published on 1 January 1877 CE in two languages; Urdu and Hindi, with the support of the Anjuman-i Islamiya Dilli (the General Islamic Gathering), on

the occasion of proclaiming Queen Victoria the title of "Qaisari-i Hind" (the Empress of India), and announced during the "Delhi Darbar" (the Court Assembly in Delhi)

The publication contains biographies of Sultans, Kings and Princes, including Sultan Thuwaini bin Said Al Busaidi (reign: 1273 - 82 AH/1856 - 66 CE) and Sultan Barghash bin Said Al Busaidi (reign: 1870-88 CE), including two unique miniature paintings of the two Sultans and listing their exploits and formal titles.



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OMAN

MEETING

Oman, Bahrain discuss ways to boost relations



MUSCAT: Foreign Minister, Saayid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi received here on Wednesday Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Ahmed Al Khalifa, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Political Affairs in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The two sides reviewed the bilateral relations and ways of enhancing them to meet the aspirations of the two countries' peoples. They also discussed several matters of mutual interest.

The meeting was attended by Sheikh Khalifa Ali Al Harthy, the Foreign Ministry's Undersecretary for Diplomatic Affairs, Dr. Juma Ahmed Al Ka'abi, Ambassador of Bahrain to Oman and several officials from both sides.

-ONA

ONLINE MEETING

Olive quick decline syndrome discussed

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources took part in the high level regional online meeting on Olive quick decline syndrome (OQDS).

The ministry's delegation was chaired by Dr. Ahmed Nasser Al Bakri, Undersecretary for Agriculture. The meeting saw the participation of several ministers and undersecretaries of agriculture from a number of Arab countries, as well as officials and experts from different parts of the world.

Bacteria
Olive quick decline syndrome (OQDS) is caused by a bacteria named "Xylella fastidiosa" which infects various types of grapes, olives and citrus plants, causing economic losses to farmers in times of its spread.

-ONA





Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Health
ROYAL HOSPITAL

ANNOUCEMENT FOR TENDER

The directorate general of royal hospital invite specialized companies to submit tender

Tender Ref	Description	Last date for Collection of tender Document	Closing Time/ Day/ Date	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
20/2022/MOH/DGRHP-3	Supply of Electrical Spare Parts	03/02/2022	Before 10 AM on Tuesday 22/02/2022	Specialized companies registered with tender board	25 RIALS
22/2022/MOH/DGRHP-5	Supply of Electronics Spare Parts	03/02/2022	Before 10 AM on Tuesday 22/02/2022	Specialized companies registered with tender board	25 RIALS
23/2022/MOH/DGRHP-6	Supply of Electrical Spare Parts	03/02/2022	Before 10 AM on Tuesday 22/02/2022	Specialized companies registered with tender board	25 RIALS
24/2022/MOH/DGRHP-7	Supply of Mechanical Spare Parts	03/02/2022	Before 10 AM on Tuesday 22/02/2022	Specialized companies registered with tender board	25 RIALS
21/2022/MOH/DGRHP-4	Supply & Installation of CCTV camera	03/02/2022	Before 10 AM on Tuesday 22/02/2022	Specialized companies registered with tender board	25 RIALS
59/2022/MOH/DGRHP-10	Modification of Royal Hospital Renal Dialysis Water Line	03/02/2022	Before 10 AM on Tuesday 22/02/2022	Specialized companies registered with tender board	25 RIALS
7/2022/MOH/DGRHP-11	Supply of Reagents for Microbiology Laboratory of The Royal Hospital	24/01/2022	Before 10 AM on Tuesday 31/01/2022	Excellent grade Specialized companies registered with tender board	25 RIALS

- All Specialized and interested Companies registered with Tender Board on the above mentioned Grade may obtain Tender documents from the E. Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document.
- Tenders should be submitted on line on the given website signed and sealed. The Tenderer should enclose scan copy of Bank Guarantee or a certified Cheque issued by a Local bank for not less than One percent (1%) for the Tender value validity for (90) days from the Tender Submission date, addressed to The Chairman of the Tender Committee before one day of date submission.
- The Original Bank Guarantee should be submitted to the office of Director of Finance-Royal Hospital one day before the submission date for all Tenders.
- Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any tender.

(<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)

Any Clarification, you may contact via Telephone: 24166670

Email id etenderhd@ita.gov.om



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VIRUS-FREE ISLAND

COVID-hit Australian warship delivers urgent aid to Tonga

CANBERRA: An Australian warship docked in Tonga on Wednesday in a mission to deliver urgent aid despite several members of the crew testing positive for coronavirus.

All crew members of the Australian HMS Adelaide tested negative before departure, but almost 30 cases have been detected since then.

Tonga's Health Minister Saia Piukala said the delivery of 80 tonnes of supplies would go ahead under strict health rules. The Pacific Island nation was devastated by the eruption of the Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai underwater volcano on January 15, and the subsequent tsunami.

But the country is one of the few in the world that is yet to record an outbreak of COVID-19 and authorities are worried about aid deliveries bringing the virus to the island.



Strict no contact rules

The warship is carrying supplies of drinking water, medical kits and engineering equipment to the

islands where entire villages were destroyed.

All 600 crew members had been fully vaccinated before departure, but on Tuesday officials in Canberra announced that 23 people had tested positive for the virus, all were either asymptomatic or with mild symptoms. This number had increased to 29 by Wednesday, the Tongan health minister said.

The country has imposed a strict policy to avoid contact between locals and those bringing aid. All goods, whether delivered by sea or air, are left in isolation for three days.

"The ship will berth and no contacts will be made. Australians from the ship will unload their cargoes and sail from port," Piukala told reporters. The UN and various relief agencies have warned that an outbreak of COVID-19 at this point could be catastrophic. **bw**



MARKET INTEGRITY RISKS

IMF urges El Salvador to drop Bitcoin as legal tender

WASHINGTON: The International Monetary Fund on Tuesday urged El Salvador to remove Bitcoin as a legal tender citing concerns over financial and market integrity risks.

"They [IMF Executive Directors] stressed that there are large risks associated with the use of Bitcoin on financial stability, financial integrity, and consumer protection, as well as the associated fiscal contingent liabilities," the IMF said in a press release.

"They urged the authorities to narrow the scope of the Bitcoin law by removing Bitcoin's legal tender status," IMF said the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted ten years of growth, but El Salvador is rebounding quickly.

"Robust external demand, resilient remittances, and a sound management of the pandemic—with the help of a disbursement under the Rapid Financing Instrument approved in April 2020—are supporting a strong recovery," the IMF said.

Against this backdrop, IMF said public debt vulnerabilities emerged and persistent fiscal deficits are leading to large and increasing financing needs.

"Since September 2021, the government has adopted Bitcoin as legal tender. The adoption of a cryptocurrency as legal tender, however, entails large risks for financial and market integrity, financial stability, and consumer protection. It also can create contingent liabilities," the Fund warned. **ANI**



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LANDFALL

Death toll from tropical storm Ana rises to 8

MAPUTO: The death toll from tropical storm Ana that hit Mozambique on Tuesday rose to at least eight people, the country's National Institute for Disaster Management (INGD) said on Wednesday. The storm made landfall in southeastern Africa on Monday and carried on through Tuesday with winds reaching up to 100 kilometres (62 miles) per hour, destroying buildings, disrupting infrastructure, forcing hundreds to flee their homes.

The INGD said that over 20,000 people were impacted and more than 3,000 homes were damaged in the storm. Various health centers and schools, along with hundreds of homes were completely destroyed.



The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs had warned ahead of the storm's arrival that it would potentially affect "highly vulnerable populations who have already suffered from previous natural disasters and conflict in northern Mozambique."

Emergency relief needed

Naemi Heita, from the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Mozambique's capital Maputo, told Reuters that the country was in desperate need of clean drinking water, mosquito nets and masks.

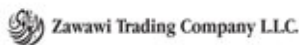
"Beyond the emergency response we need to make sure that we support those families to rebuild their livelihoods — their fields are submerged and their houses are destroyed, ... we need to support them to build back safer," she said.

Widespread destruction

Over three people were reported to have died in neighboring Malawi, while flooding in Uganda killed nine people.

Unusually heavy rainfall has been hitting southern Africa for the past week, triggering floods in South Africa, Lesotho and Madagascar that have killed dozens of people.

According to data provided by the EU's Emergency Response Coordination Center, as of Tuesday, some 34 people had been killed by the storm in Madagascar while over 35,000 had been asked to leave their homes. **bw**



Recall Campaign for Mercedes-Benz

C-Class (W 204 platform) YR 2010-14, GLK (X 204 platform) YR 2013-15, SLK (171 platform) YR 2006-08, E-Class Coupé/ Convertible (207 platform) YR 2004-16, ML & GL (164 platform) YR 2004-16, R-Class (251 platform) YR 2004-16

Date of Campaign: 27.01.2022
Recall Segment: Mechanical
Recall Type: Safety
Product Description:

Number of vehicles	Chassis number	To	Chassis number	Sales Designation
1119	000550	TO	963281	C-Class (204 platform)
144	232250	TO	951000	GLK (X 204 platforms)
15	137402	TO	185188	SLK (171 platform)
26	001185	TO	098183	E-Class Coupé/ Convertible (207 platform)
176	443357	TO	797193	ML & GL (164 platform)
26	090230	TO	2511651	R-Class (251 platform)

Description of defect:
Mercedes-Benz AG has determined that within Takata driver airbags equipped with non-desiccated ammonium-nitrate airbag inflators, certain climatic circumstances could over time lead to a chemical alteration of the propellant in the inflator of affected vehicles. In case of a crash with front Passenger airbag deployment, this alteration could subsequently cause a rupture of the airbag inflator. Should an airbag inflator rupture, the airbag would lose its restraint function and potentially separating inflator parts could enter the passenger compartment. In consequence the risk of injury would be increased. In addition, local legal requirements might not be met.

Procedure:
As a precautionary measure Zawawi Trading Company LLC will replace the airbag module/ modules on the affected vehicles. The expected workshop visit for the check and replacement of the airbag module/ modules will take around four hours and will be free of charge.

For more information:
Sultanate of Oman customers affected by the recall who have not been contacted already will be telephoned by representatives of Zawawi Trading Company LLC, so that they can arrange a convenient time from 27.01.2022 to get their car inspected.

Contact details:
Toll free number: 80079777 on all working days between 08:30 to 17:30 hrs with effect from 27.01.2022



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CRICKET

Virat is like beast on field, he wants to compete: Ravi Shastri

MUSCAT: Former Team India head coach Ravi Shastri has termed Virat Kohli a “beast” on the field but said the former skipper is totally opposite when he is not playing the game.

Kohli had stepped down as the Test skipper after India suffered a Test series loss against South Africa. Shastri said the challenge for Kohli is now to maintain the same energy when he is playing as a player and not as the captain of Team India.

“Virat is like a beast on the field. He is a terrier. Once he enters the ground, he wants to compete and is not worried about anybody. He is in-your-face and passionate. Off the field, he is totally opposite,” Shastri told Shoaib Akhtar on the former Pakistan pacer’s



YouTube channel.

“Absolutely calm, chilled... there is no issue with him. He is 33. He has been contributing as a captain. The challenge comes when you are not captain after a span of time.”

“Then to still have the energy to play as a player, get runs, and help India win. If he does that, he would have completed a full circle,” he added.

India white-ball skipper Rohit Sharma has cleared his fitness test

and as a result, he will be available to lead the side in the upcoming series against West Indies.

Shastri also pointed out how Rohit has evolved his game in the last few years.

“Now, Rohit is laid back. It was sometimes that you got the feeling that the game came too easy to him, till he realised that ‘God has given me this gift and now let me also work harder and make the most of it’. And when in full flow, there are few batters who play like him,” said Shastri.

India will now lock horns with the West Indies series from February 6. The three ODIs will be played at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad and three T20Is will be held at the Eden Gardens, Kolkata. **ANI**

WORLD GIANTS BEAT ASIA LIONS

World Giants 152/3 (13 overs) beat Asia Lions by seven wickets in the match at Amerat ground on Wednesday. Kevin Pietersen blasted nine fours and seven sixes in his 38-ball 86 runs to guide World Giants on course to victory over Lions. Earlier, World Giants won the toss and decided to bowl first but a tight bowling performance restricted Lions to 149 for 7 in 20 overs.



AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Tsitsipas eases past Jannik Sinner, seals semis berth

MELBOURNE: Stefanos Tsitsipas advanced to his third Australian Open semi-final with a dominant 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 win over Italy’s Jannik Sinner on Wednesday.

With this win, the Greek improves to 4-0 in the Grand Slam quarter-finals. After surviving an up-and-down five-setter against American No. 1 Taylor Fritz, the World No. 4 maintained an elite level throughout the two-hour, five-minute contest on Rod Laver Arena.

Tsitsipas, who won all four of his break points, did his damage early in each set. On serve, he was pushed as far as deuce just once

and never faced a break point.

His combination of pace and spin on the forehand pinned the Italian wunderkind back while slices and angles also unsettled his 20-year-old opponent.

“Jannik is a very good player. So I tried to focus on my best shots and it paid off more than I thought,” Tsitsipas said in his on-court interview.

“I am very, very happy with the way I served today and the way I came in and used my tactics in today’s match structure. Having the crowd support is truly unbelievable,” he added. **ANI**



CRICKET ROUND-UP

ISM, ISG, ISWK win Under-16 games, MCCC Yellow, ISM book U-13 victories

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Outstanding all-round show by Loya Devansh powered Indian School Muscat (ISM) to a thumping 186-run win over MCCC Blue in a Junior Division Under-16 League game at Muscat Municipality ground 2 in Amerat on Wednesday.

ISM had a great day in the park, its batters making merry and bowlers ripping MCCC Blue apart in no time for a wonderful victory.

Hashir Hussain (60), Potrick Hamza (57) and Loya (51) were ISM’s main scorers as they posted 272 for 8 on the board. Patel Dhyan and Basharat Abyan bagged two wickets each.

MCCC Blue failed to make a match of it, folding up for a disappointing 86 in 16.1 overs due to brilliant bowling by Loya who picked up 4 for 19. Dinesh Gaurav topscored with 27.

Brief Scores (Junior Division U16): ISM 272 for 8 in 30 overs (Hashir Hussain 60 – 7x4, Potrick Hamza 57 – 7x4, Loya Devansh 51 – 5x4, Patel Dhyan 2-37, Basharat Abyan 2-29) beat MCCC BLUE 86 all out in 16.1 overs (Dinesh



Gaurav 27 – 2x4, Loya Devansh 4-19) by 186 runs.

Brief Scores (Junior Division U16): ISG 188 for 5 in 28 overs (Rishab Shivadas 83 – 8x4, Hegde Aditya 2-28) beat MCCC Blue 108 all out in 22.4 overs (Jagan Sreekanth 42 – 5x4, Ayush Karthiyl 3-22, Vaibhav Srikanth 2-17, Madhav Manish 2-11) by 80 runs.

Brief Scores (Junior Division U16): ISWK B 166 for 9 in 28 overs (Shetty Ayush 35 – 2x4, Noronha Nikhil 34 – 3x4, Rahildaniyal Habibulla 4-22, Ahmed Al Zadjali 2-21, Tredoux Christo 2-26) beat OCA 158 all out in 25.4 runs (Aaryan Punja 58 – 11x4, Shamsheeri Mohammed 2-16, Maheshwari Pushkar 2-30, Shaikh Izaan 2-45) by 8 runs.

Brief Scores (Junior Division U13): MCCC Purple 94 for 5 in 20 overs (Kale Swastik 21, Rana Arnav 20 – 2x4, Hruday Shivaprakash 2-19) lost to ISM 95 for 1 in 9.3 overs (Hruday Shivaprakash 30 – 5x4, Hafiz Mohamed 27 – 4x4) by 9 wickets.

Brief Scores (Junior Division U13): ISWKA 151 for 6 in 20 overs (ArshJaved 35 – 3x4, Vasudev Ram 33 – 4x4, Akilesh Sai 26 – 5x4) Anirudh Para 3-18, Shravan Sharat 2-19) lost to MCCC Yellow 152 for 4 in 19.3 overs (Mathew Samuel 45 – 5x4, Vihaan Sanjay 26. Arsh Javed 2-23) by 6 wickets.

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MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,167.03 points, down by 0.29 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.03 per cent at 512.81 points. Muscat Desalinate, up 4.65 per cent was the top gainer while, Sembcorp Salalah down 15.00 per cent, was the top loser.

Spotlight on project to develop sustainable date palm production

The project caps GCC countries' collaboration to spur the growth of the date palm sector and augment its contribution to food security in the region



MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, hosted an annual meeting on technical coordination about a project to develop sustainable date palm production systems in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

Held in cooperation with the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), the January 26-30

meeting was opened by Dr Saud bin Hamoud Al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources.

Dr Hamdan Salim Al Wahaibi, Director-General of Agricultural and Livestock Research, said that the project's implementation stems from the significance of the date palm sector which, he said, constitutes a historical and economic heritage. The project, he added, caps GCC states' col-

laboration to spur the growth of the date palm sector and augment its contribution to food security in the region.

Dr Hamdan Salim Al Wahaibi, affirmed that the agenda includes discussing accomplishments made during 2021, devising an executive plan for 2022 and revising the project's priorities in a manner that serves the policies of GCC states in the forthcoming period.

-ONA

GLOBAL ECONOMY

IMF cuts 2022 economic growth outlook

WASHINGTON: The global economy has stepped into 2022 in a weaker position than previously expected, held back by the spread of the omicron variant of the coronavirus, rising energy prices and persistent supply disruptions, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said in its latest edition of the World Economic Outlook on Tuesday.

The fund expects global growth to slow down to 4.4 per cent this year from nearly 6 per cent in 2021. The half a percentage point cut in the 2022 growth outlook — the IMF forecast in October the global output would expand by 4.9 per cent this year — is a result of dimmer economic prospects in the United States and China, the world's largest economies.

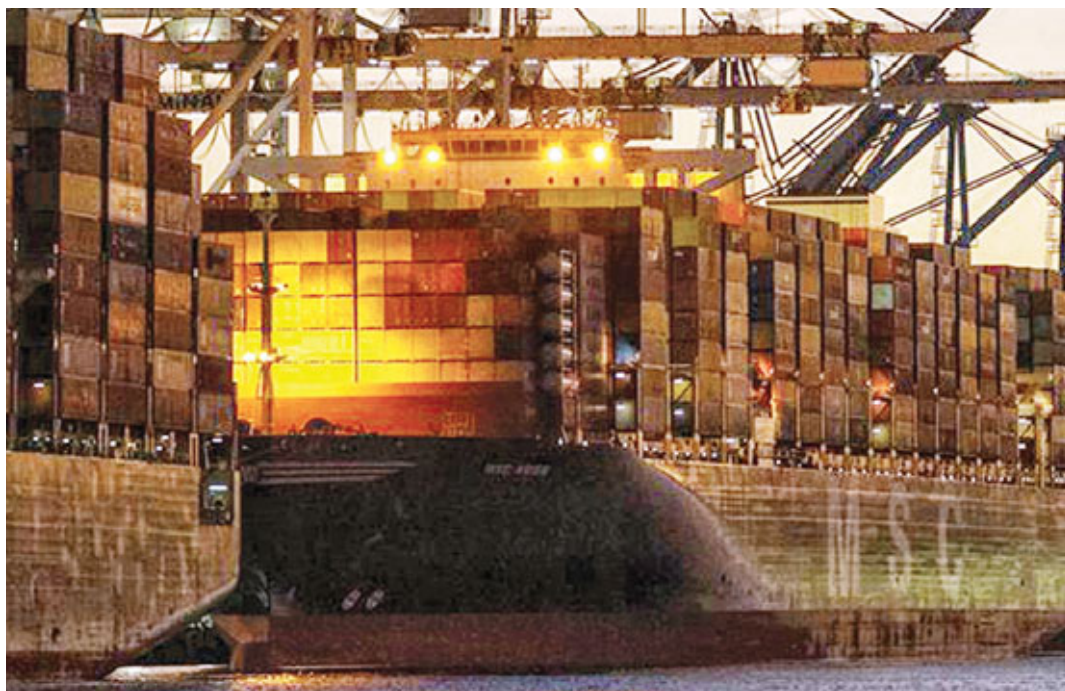
"In the case of the United States, this reflects lower prospects of legislating the Build Back Better fiscal package, an earlier withdrawal of extraordinary monetary accommodation and continued supply disruptions," Gita Gopinath, first deputy managing director of the IMF, said in a blog. "China's downgrade reflects continued retrenchment of the real estate sector and a weaker-than-expected recovery in private consumption."

The IMF also downgraded Germany's 2022 growth outlook by 0.8 percentage points to 3.8 per cent as supply-chain bottlenecks continue to disrupt post-pandemic economic recovery in the export-reliant economy.

Supply disruptions have played a key role in stalling global recovery this year. Shipping snarls as well as a shipping container shortage, and a steep post-pandemic rebound in demand, have left producers, including German carmakers, struggling to source components and raw materials.

High inflation to linger

The chaos gripping global supply chains has been instrumental in propping up inflation globally, particularly in developed economies such as the United States and Germany. Inflation has been



FALTERING GROWTH: The dimmer outlook reflects faltering growth in the world's largest economies, the United States and China. Signalling tough times ahead for households and policymakers, the IMF expects elevated price levels to persist. -DW

further pushed up by rising fossil fuel prices, which have almost doubled in the past year, and soaring food prices, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

The IMF raised its 2022 inflation forecasts for both advanced and emerging markets and developing economies, saying it expects elevated price levels to persist. It now expects inflation to average 3.9 per cent in advanced economies and 5.9 per cent in emerging markets and developing economies in 2022, before subsiding next year.

The soaring inflation has prompted several central banks to tighten the money taps to rein in the price rise. The US Federal Reserve is expected to hike its key interest rates as early as March. A Fed rate hike could spell trouble for some emerging economies, including South Africa, Argentina and Turkey, which could see a flight of capital.

"It is key to communicate well the policy transition towards a

tightening stance to ensure orderly market reaction. Where core inflationary pressures remain subdued, and recoveries incomplete, monetary policy can remain accommodative," Gopinath said. "Emerging market and developing economies with large foreign currency borrowing and external financing needs should prepare for possible turbulence in financial markets by extending debt maturities as feasible and containing currency mismatches."

Divergent recoveries persist

The IMF said the global output in 2023 would grow 3.8 per cent, a little faster than previously forecast as "the shocks dragging 2022 growth will dissipate."

Reiterating its earlier warning, the fund said the recoveries would continue to be unequal. While developed economies are forecast to return to the pre-pandemic trend this year, several emerging markets and develop-

ing economies are expected to take longer to get there.

Gopinath noted that the pandemic had set back the progress in poverty reduction by several years, with the number of people living in extreme poverty in 2021 estimated to be have been about 70 million higher than pre-pandemic trends.

"With policy space diminished in many economies, and strong recoveries underway in others, fiscal deficits in most countries are projected to shrink this year," she said. "The fiscal priority should continue to be the health sector, and transfers, where needed, should be effectively targeted to the worst-affected."

Among factors that pose risks to its outlook, the IMF mentioned the emergence of deadlier coronavirus variants, China's zero-COVID strategy, which could worsen supply disruptions, the highly indebted real estate sector in China, and aggressive monetary tightening by the Federal Reserve. -DW

CEO OF BANK MUSCAT

SICO appoints Shaikh Waleed Khamis Al Hashar as new board member

Times News Service

MUSCAT: SICO BSC (c), a leading regional asset manager, broker, and investment bank (licensed as a wholesale bank by the CBB), announced that it has expanded the size of its Board of Directors to 10 members from nine.

Shaikh Waleed Khamis Al Hashar, CEO of Bank Muscat, has been appointed as non-independent Executive Director of the bank. Bank Muscat, which owns a 10.38 per cent stake in SICO has nominated Shaikh Waleed Khamis Al Hashar as its representative in SICO's Board after obtaining approval from the regulator. The shareholders resolved in the extraordinary general meeting held on January 26, 2022, to expand the Board to 10 members and to appoint Shaikh Waleed Khamis Al Hashar as director.

SICO previously acquired a majority stake in the Saudi-based "Muscat Capital", a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bank Muscat, which has since been rebranded as "SICO Capital". The acquisition took place by way of a share swap.

As a result of the transaction, SICO owned 72.7 per cent of "SICO Capital" and Bank Muscat owned 9 per cent of SICO. Subsequent to the swap transaction, Bank Muscat acquired an additional 1.38 per cent stake in SICO, which, together with the shares previously acquired, represents a shareholding of 10.38 per cent of SICO's share capital.

"We are very pleased to welcome Shaikh Waleed as the newest member of our esteemed Board of Directors," said SICO's Chairman, Shaikh Abdulla bin Khalifa Al Khalifa. "His regional expertise and decades of experience in the banking and finance sector will be



Shaikh Waleed Khamis Al Hashar

invaluable to SICO as we grow and expand our businesses regionally in the coming years."

Shaikh Waleed Al Hashar is the Chief Executive Officer of Bank Muscat, a position that he has held since 2019. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Oman Center for Governance and Sustainability, The College of Banking and Financial Studies, and the Oman Banks Association. Al Hashar has over 28 years of experience in banking, as well as the oil and gas sectors, where he held senior positions in a number of firms before joining Bank Muscat. He holds a postgraduate diploma in General Management from Harvard Business School and a BSc and Masters in Business Administration from California State University in Sacramento, USA.

"I look forward to working with my fellow board members and with the Chairman and executive management at SICO as we embark on the bank's next phase of development," said Al Hashar. "I am confident that the new partnership between SICO and Bank Muscat will be a fruitful one, as we continue creating value for all our stakeholders."

AIR TRAVEL

Accelerate easing of travel restrictions, IATA urges governments

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Governments have been urged to accelerate relaxation of travel restrictions as COVID-19 continues to evolve from the pandemic to endemic stage, IATA said in a statement.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) called for: Removing all travel barriers (including quarantine and testing) for those fully vaccinated with a WHO-approved vaccine, enabling quarantine-free travel for non-vaccinated travellers with a negative pre-departure antigen test result, removing travel bans, and accelerating the easing of travel restrictions in recognition that travellers pose no greater risk for COVID-19 spread than already exists in the general population.

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MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Muscat Desalinate, up 4.65 per cent was the top gainer while, Sembcorp Salalah down 15.00 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,167.03 points, down by 0.29 per cent from the previous close.

The Sharia Index ended up by 0.03 per cent at 512.81 points. Muscat Desalinate, up 4.65 per cent was the top gainer while, Sembcorp Salalah down 15.00 per cent, was the top loser.

Shares of Ominvest were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 462 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR4.76 million, with more than 20.6 million shares changing hands.

Out of 42 traded securities, 8 advanced, 19 declined and 15 remained unchanged.

At the session close, domes-

tic investors were net sellers for OMR403,000 while GCC and Arab investors were net buyers for OMR203,000 followed by foreign investors for OMR200,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 6641.07 points, down by 0.47 per cent. Prices of Taageer Finance and Bank Muscat were up by 1.21 per cent and 0.38 per cent respectively. Prices of United Finance, Al Anwar Investment, Muscat Finance, Global Financial Investments, and Al Sharqia Investment were down by 3.33 per cent, 2.27 per cent, 1.72 per cent, 1.52 per cent, and 1.09 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5825 points, down by 0.04 per cent.

Services Index was up by 0.37 per cent before closing at 1631.3 points. — **United Securities**

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES							
Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%	
MSX 30 INDEX	4,184.73	4,167.03	4,167.03	4,178.99	-11.96	-0.29	
FINANCIAL INDEX	6,675.06	6,641.06	6,641.06	6,672.34	-31.28	-0.47	
Industry Index	5,825.00	5,822.51	5,825.00	5,822.51	2.49	0.04	
Services Index	1,643.87	1,631.30	1,631.30	1,637.38	-6.08	-0.37	
MSX Shariah Index	512.81	511.31	511.31	512.81	-1.50	-0.29	
MSX TR INDEX	5,037.36	5,016.05	5,016.05	5,030.45	-14.40	-0.29	

Trading Summary							
Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
20,644,519	4,765,878	462	22,312,854,880	8	19	15	42

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PD	LAST BD	LAST OFFER	P/A VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET															
OM0000001525	1,840,000	298,030	4	0.160	0.162	0.160	0.162	0.159	0.003	1.887	0.162	0.157	0.162	0.100	38,394,000
OM0000000306	539,652	421,087	13	0.780	0.784	0.780	0.780	0.772	0.008	1.036	0.784	0.784	0.784	0.100	585,000,000
OM0000000418	25,390	4,941	9	0.195	0.195	0.190	0.191	0.190	0.001	0.526	0.190	0.192	0.192	0.100	38,200,000
OM00000002796	1,705,764	892,425	49	0.524	0.526	0.520	0.524	0.522	0.002	0.383	0.520	0.520	0.524	0.100	1,873,024,791
OM00000002077	782,500	101,725	6	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.000	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.100	37,951,572
OM0000000176	15,000	5,910	1	0.394	0.394	0.394	0.394	0.394	0.000	0.000	0.394	0.394	0.394	0.100	49,209,796
OM0000000586	8,641	3,190	2	0.370	0.370	0.366	0.366	0.370	-0.002	-0.541	0.366	0.366	0.370	0.100	238,547,477
OM00000001533	5,255,400	1,577,119	17	0.300	0.310	0.300	0.300	0.302	-0.002	-0.662	0.310	0.302	0.310	0.100	200,509,628
OM00000002200	1,545,814	181,565	29	0.118	0.118	0.117	0.117	0.118	-0.001	-0.847	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.100	228,109,924
OM00000003298	3,047,750	345,118	28	0.114	0.114	0.112	0.113	0.114	-0.001	-0.877	0.112	0.105	0.112	0.100	337,877,039
OM00000002440	10,553	960	3	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.092	-0.001	-1.087	0.091	0.090	0.092	0.100	8,190,000
OM00000001590	271,000	15,555	17	0.058	0.058	0.057	0.057	0.058	-0.001	-1.724	0.057	0.057	0.060	0.100	17,507,341
OM00000001772	355,240	30,645	33	0.088	0.088	0.083	0.086	0.088	-0.002	-2.273	0.083	0.080	0.086	0.100	17,200,000
OM00000002226	8,000	2,648	5	0.338	0.338	0.330	0.330	0.338	-0.008	-2.367	0.330	0.328	0.330	0.100	20,197,410
Total	15,410,704	3,880,808	214												

Parallel Market															
OM00000007084	61,000	5,484	6	0.089	0.090	0.089	0.090	0.086	0.004	4.651	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.100	13,999,536
OM00000001566	6,500	338	4	0.050	0.056	0.050	0.052	0.051	0.001	1.961	0.056	0.050	0.056	0.100	6,500,000
OM00000001152	1,377,825	151,347	74	0.110	0.111	0.109	0.110	0.108	0.002	1.852	0.109	0.109	0.110	0.100	14,300,000
OM00000003281	555,552	46,666	28	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.083	0.001	1.205	0.084	0.084	0.085	0.100	21,301,560
OM00000001681	500	28	1	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.060	0.060	0.000	0.000	0.056	0.057	0.062	0.100	7,312,500
OM00000002804	700	105	1	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.000	0.000	0.150	0.140	0.150	0.100	18,000,000
OM00000003521	84,533	6,260	6	0.074	0.075	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.073	0.075	0.100	15,020,997
OM00000003661	2,073	199	2	0.092	0.096	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.000	0.000	0.096	0.092	0.098	0.100	7,489,053
OM00000003711	150	6	1	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.000	0.000	0.042	0.040	0.042	0.100	9,282,420
OM00000004420	197,968	10,797	8	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.100	0.101	0.100	223,685,303
OM00000004768	3,490	332	1	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.096	0.096	0.000	0.000	0.095	0.095	0.096	0.100	16,800,000
OM00000004925	220,000	10,560	8	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.100	32,394,597
OM00000004933	132,175	6,345	13	0.048	0.049	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.048	0.051	0.100	34,291,504
OM00000005983	4,500	216	1	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.000	0.000	0.066	0.067	0.067	0.100	70,204,870
OM00000008447	500	37	1	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.081	0.081	0.000	0.000	0.074	0.077	0.088	0.100	38,166,097
OM00000001483	1,808,298	378,408	34	0.210	0.210	0.205	0.209	0.210	-0.001	-0.476	0.210	0.210	0.215	0.100	339,822,788
OM00000002549	30,000	3,670	2	0.123	0.123	0.122	0.122	0.123	-0.001	-0.813	0.122	0.122	0.124	0.100	365,554,875
OM00000001517	162,000	16,374	6	0.102	0.102	0.101	0.101	0.102	-0.001	-0.980	0.101	0.102	0.102	0.100	202,031,592
OM00000003125	110,000	7,175	10	0.066	0.066	0.065	0.065	0.066	-0.001	-1.515	0.065	0.065	0.068	0.100	13,000,000
OM00000007407	56,500	3,353	7	0.060	0.060	0.058	0.059	0.060	-0.001	-1.667	0.059	0.058	0.060	0.100	13,112,160
OM00000004669	14,500	1,450	1	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.102	-0.002	-1.961	0.100	0.095	0.095	0.100	9,780,216
OM00000003139	65,000	7,369	16	0.115	0.115	0.113	0.113	0.116	-0.003	-2.586	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.100	3,793,574
OM00000002374	10,000	560	1	0.068	0.068	0.068	0.068	0.060	-0.002	-3.353	0.068	0.068	0.068	0.100	20,250,376
OM00000004735	57,820	4,166	10	0.077	0.077	0.072	0.072	0.077	-0.005	-6.494	0.072	0.071	0.072	0.100	68,729,180
Total	4,872,384	661,264	243												

GOVERNMENT DATA

India's gems and jewellery exports surge 71% to \$28.9bn

NEW DELHI: India's exports of gems and jewellery surged by 71 per cent to \$28.9 billion in the first nine months of the current financial year as compared with \$16.9 billion recorded in the corresponding period of last fiscal, the government data showed on Tuesday.

According to data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, gems and jewellery exports rose to \$2.99 billion in December 2021 as against \$2.57 billion in December 2020, registering a year-on-year growth of 16.38 per cent.

The exports during the first

nine months of the current financial year are higher when compared with the pre-Covid period.

Gems and jewellery exports during April-December 2019 period stood at \$28.0 billion. During the first three quarters of the current financial year, it is 3 per cent higher at \$28.9 billion. — **ANI**

STOCKS

Asian shares cautiously higher as investors await Fed policy update

BEIJING: Asian share markets got off to a cautious start on Wednesday, after another volatile Wall Street session, as investors braced for the outcome of the Fed's meeting late in the day and any hints about faster tightening of monetary policy.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan was up 0.26 per cent early on Wednesday, but the index has skidded 2.4 per cent this year, and is testing mid-December's one-year low.

Concerns that the Fed's expected interest rate hikes could hammer Asia's equities markets have dragged on the regional benchmark, though moves elsewhere have been even more dramatic. Globally, US stocks posted their worst week since 2020 last week, and MSCI's world index is on course for its biggest monthly drop since the COVID-19 pandemic hit markets in March 2020.

Japan's Nikkei lost 0.8 per cent to hover around its lowest level since December 2020.

The Fed is due to update its policy plan later on Wednesday, likely fleshing out timing for expected rate hikes and shrinking its massive balance sheet. — **BNA**

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Social media addiction leaves very little room and space for physical activity, especially among college students.

The results of a new study by a University of Buffalo researcher showed that social media use has been linked to biological and psychological indicators associated with poor physical health among college students.

The study was published in the journal 'Cyberpsychology, Behaviour, and Social Networking'.

Research participants who used social media excessively were found to have higher levels of C-reactive protein (CRP), a biological marker of chronic inflammation that predicts serious illnesses, such as diabetes, certain cancers and cardiovascular disease.

In addition to elevated CRP levels, results suggested that higher social media use was also related to somatic symptoms, like headaches, chest and back pains, and more frequent visits to doctors and health centers for the treatment of illness.

"Social media use has become an integral part of many young adults' daily lives," said David Lee, PhD, the paper's first author and assistant professor of communication in the UB College of Arts and Sciences. "It's critical that we understand how engagement across these platforms contributes to physical health."

For decades, researchers have devoted attention to how social media engagement related to users' mental health, but its effects on physical health have not been thoroughly investigated. Recent surveys indicated that social media usage is particularly high for people in their late teens and early 20s, a population that spent about six hours a day texting, online or using social media. And though a few studies have found links between social media usage and physical health, that research relied largely on self-reporting or the effects of usage with exclusively one platform.

RESEARCH SHOWS SOCIAL MEDIA USE TIED TO POOR PHYSICAL HEALTH

"Our goal was to extend prior work by examining how social media use across several platforms is associated with physical health outcomes measured with biological, behavioural and self-report measures," said Lee, an expert on health outcomes related to social interactions.

Researchers recruited a diverse sample of 251 undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 24 for the study. Blood samples were collected through finger sticks, and participants also completed questionnaires on physical health and social media usage on Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram, the most popular platforms at the time the data were collected in 2017.

Those responses were cross-checked with another survey that measured validity by determining the degree to which participants took their role in the study seriously.

"We were able to establish a correlation between the amount of social media use and these physical health indicators," said Lee. "The more participants used social media, the more somatic symptoms they experienced and visits to the doctor they reported. They also showed higher levels of chronic inflammation."

Lee said, this study was just the beginning of understanding the relationship between social media and physical health.

"By looking at a biological marker in the blood, we were able to find a relatively more objective association between social media usage and physical health, but this correlational finding can't rule out the possibility that poor health impacts social media usage," said Lee.

Lee said, the aphorism could hold true with social media use and physical health: The rich get richer while the poor get poorer. "In our previous research, we found those high in self-esteem benefited from using social media, but people low in self-esteem did not. So, the effect may be more nuanced."

"There's still work to be done," said Lee. "But right now, I wanted to get the word out there that social media use may have a link to important physical health outcomes." - ANI



SPORTS

OMAN RALLY SOHAR INTERNATIONAL STARTS ON THURSDAY AFTERNOON

MUSCAT: The cream of the Middle East’s special stage rally drivers will take the start of Oman Rally Sohar International 2022 on Thursday afternoon.

The Oman Automobile Association has made a couple of late changes to the itinerary for the opening round of the FIA Middle East Rally Championship (MERC). Most notably, the pre-event press conference and ceremonial start venue have moved from Al-Mouj to Nakhal and will start at the earlier time of 14.15hrs and 15.00hrs, respectively.

Event officials have also introduced a timed 3.90km super special stage at Nakhal, with the first car in action from 16.00hrs.

Qatar’s Dakar sensation and multiple regional champion, Nasser Saleh Al-Attiyah, tops the entry in his Autotek Volkswagen Polo GTI and is bidding for a seventh win in Oman. His regular French co-driver Mathieu Baumel should have been trying to earn a third win in Oman, but was unable to make the trip for personal reasons.

His place alongside Al-Attiyah has been taken by 29-year-old Spanish female co-driver Alba Sánchez González, who is a regular navigator on the Spanish national and international rallying scene.

Last year, she partnered Surhayen Pernia in a Hyundai Motor España-supported i20 R5, with the crew finishing seventh overall in the ERC Rally Islas Canarias and claiming outright victory at the Rallye La Nucía-Mediterráneo and Rallye Valles Pasiegos. Oman will be Alba’s first rally in the GCC region, although she did sit alongside England’s Catie Munnings to take 40th overall in the 2018 Cyprus Rally in a Peugeot 208 R2.

“Mathieu was not able to come to Oman, so Alba has stepped in at the 11th hour,” said Autotek Motorsport’s Ken Skidmore. “We met her in Spain, where she co-drives as part of the official Hyundai team.”

Standing in Al-Attiyah’s way are the formidable Omani duo of Abdullah Al-Rawahi and Hamed Al-Wahaibi in a pair of Škoda Fabia Evos, the Qatari’s cousin Nasser Khalifa Al-Atya (Ford Fiesta) and the Czech dark horse and MERC debutant Petr Kačírek in a third Škoda Fabia.

“The stages are quite technical,” said Al-Rawahi, after Tuesday’s recce session. “We made sure that our notes are quite precise and as detailed as possible. We have done these stages before, so we are quite ready for the first day of the rally. Day two is quite different from the first day. I think we are happy. Hopefully this weekend we will come strong and try and give our best.”

Super special stage introduced and ceremonial start moved to Nakhal

Spanish co-driver Alba Sánchez González replaces Mathieu Baumel

Al-Wahaibi carried out three days of pre-event testing before the rally and is relishing the start after an impressive performance that saw him finish fourth overall and take a class win at the Oregon Trail Rally in America in early November.

“The new Evo is brilliant and easier to drive,” said Al-Wahaibi. “We’ve spent three days getting the driving style working. We spent some time with the diffs and the suspension and it all went well. We tested in the Hatat region where my ancestors are from. We tested in three different villages and one of them is where I am from. So we had lots of spectators in the mountains and some family and tribes from our region.

“The first day of recce went very well. The stages are really good. They need a bit more cleaning, a few rocks, but really good. Some roughness, but it is a Middle East rally and has to have that. That’s the character. I’m excited and looking forward to a good rally.”

With the quintet of R5 cars sure to dominate over the fast and flowing gravel special stages that have drawn praise across the world, there will be a separate tussle for honours in the MERC2 category for showroom production-type machines.

Four Omani and two Jordanian drivers will take part. Zakariya Al-Aamri, Faisal Al-Rashdi and Jarah Al-Touqi lead the way for the host nation in a trio of Subaru Imprezas. Joining them on the entry are the Jordanian duo of Ihab Al-Shorafa and Issa Abu Jamous in Mitsubishi Lancers.

Five crews will also tackle a national status event behind the main FIA rally.

The bulk of the competitive action takes place over 12 timed special stages on Friday and Saturday before the ceremonial finish and post-event press conference also move to Nakhal from 15.25hrs onwards on Saturday afternoon.



2022 OMAN RALLY SOHAR INTERNATIONAL – LEADING ENTRIES (UNOFFICIAL)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Nasser Saleh Al-Attiyah (QAT)/Alba Sánchez González (ESP) | Volkswagen Polo GTI R5 |
| 2. Abdullah Al-Rawahi (OMN)/Ara Al-Hmoud (JOR) | Škoda Fabia R5 |
| 3. Hamed Al-Wahaibi (OMN)/Tony Sircombe (NZL) | Škoda Fabia R5 |
| 4. Nasser Khalifa Al-Atya (QAT)/Giovanni Bernacchini (ITA) | Ford Fiesta R5 |
| 5. Petr Kačírek (CZE)/Václav Kopáček (CZE) | Škoda Fabia R5 |
| 6. Zakariya Al-Aamri (OMN)/Mohammed Al-Aamri (OMN) | Subaru Impreza |
| 7. Faisal Al-Rashdi (OMN)/Waleed Al-Rashdi (OMN) | Subaru Impreza |
| 8. Jarah Al-Touqi (OMN)/Issa Al-Wardi (OMN) | Subaru Impreza |
| 10. Ihab Al-Shorafa (JOR)/Youssef Juma (JOR) | Mitsubishi Lancer Evo IX |
| 12. Issa Abu Jamous (JOR)/Emad Juma (JOR) | Mitsubishi Lancer Evo IX |

2022 OMAN NATIONAL SOHAR RALLY – LEADING ENTRIES (UNOFFICIAL)

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 20. Haitham Soomar (OMN)/Wael Al-Shabani (OMN) | Mitsubishi Lancer Evo VII |
| 21. Ghaith Al-Qassimi (OMN)/TBA | Mitsubishi Lancer Evo VIII |
| 22. Haitham Al-Hadidi (OMN)/Saif Al-Hinai (OMN) | Toyota Yaris |
| 23. Musab Soomar (OMN)/Bassam Al-Qassimi (OMN) | Kia Rio |
| 24. Alain Nawfal (LEB)/Bashar Al-Qassimi (OMN) | Yamaha YXZ 1000 R |

ROUND-UP

Toyota Yaris with exclusive benefits

Cutting-edge design defines the exterior of the Yaris, with its dynamic angles as well as sleek headlamps and clearance lamps

MUSCAT: The Toyota Yaris is available with exclusive benefits like Service 2 Years/20,000 km, (Whichever is earlier) and 1 Year Insurance Or Cash Gift instead of Insurance OMR125. The campaign is valid until 9th March 2022. (Prospective buyers may be advised that the benefits vary between model variants, model year and manufacturing year.) Terms & Conditions apply. Visit the showroom for exact details.



Cutting-edge design defines the exterior of the Yaris, with its dynamic angles as well as sleek headlamps and clearance lamps. The front of the Yaris has a horizontal grille for a wider yet more

aerodynamic appearance. Daytime running lamps have also been integrated into the shape of the grille for a sleek appearance, while slimmer LED rear combination taillights adorn the rear of the car

with a unique look. The Yaris hatchback is adorned with a stylish radiator grille, colour keyed front and rear bumpers, 15" alloy wheels, projector headlamps with follow-me-home func-

tion, LED rear combination lamps with line guide, daytime running lights, stylish shark fin antenna, LED high mount stop lamp, front fog lamps, sporty mesh type lower radiator grille in the front, black luggage door garnish with a vibrant red accent. Delivering a dynamic driving experience, the Yaris sedan is equipped with a choice of 1.3L and 1.5L engine and the hatchback is equipped with a 1.5-litre engine. The 1.3-litre Four-cylinder engine in the Yaris sedan generates a Maximum Output of 98 hp and 12.5 kg-m of torque and is mated to either a five-speed manual transmission or a CVT transmission. On the other hand, the 1.5-Litre four-cylinder engine in the Yaris sedan and hatchback, can churn out a maximum output of 106 hp and 14.3 kg-m of torque and is mated to the CVT transmission to offer a smooth shifting experience with excellent fuel efficiency. With an exciting interior featuring a distinctive design and offering convenience and comfort with a layer of luxury, the Yaris sedan's cabin has an exclusive profile.

The centre console of the Yaris has been designed to create a greater sense of integration. The cabin has been adorned with a range of enhanced features, including smart entry & push button start system, cruise control, optitron speedometer and thin film transistor (TFT) multi-Information display, auto air conditioner, as well as a six-speaker audio system with AUX and USB. On the other hand the Yaris hatchback has a keyless entry system, electric power steering with control switches and tilt function with sporty red stitching, sporty front seats, sporty seat fabric with red stitching, steering & gear knob in leather that imparts a premium feel. As with any other Toyota model, safety remains a top priority for the Yaris sedan and hatchback, which includes a comprehensive array of safety features to protect its occupants, such as driver and front passenger airbags, vehicle stability control (VSC), anti-lock braking system (ABS), electronic brake force distribution (EBD), brake assist (BA), traction control (TRC), among many others.

HOSPITALITY SECTOR

Zubair Furnishing hands over its latest project in Riyadh



MUSCAT: Zubair Furnishing, a part of The Zubair Corporation (Z-Corp), recently handed over its latest project in the hospitality sector, the five-star Mövenpick Al Ghadeer Hotel in Riyadh. Commenting on the presentation of the project, Mohammed Hassan Al Tamari, Deputy General Manager of Zubair Furnishing, said, "We are delighted to hand over the Mövenpick Al Ghadeer Hotel project in the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Al Riyadh, scheduled as per the recently approved date. "This project is the second in a row for the same client, 'Earth Foundation Company LLC' and the 50th hotel we have executed in KSA. Zubair Furnishing was responsible for carrying out the supply and installation of FF&E for the hotel, alongside the preparation of guest rooms, apartments, royal suites, chalets and public areas including the reception, business lounge, ballrooms and more."

From his side, Ayman Abdelkader Shiba Al Hamad, member of the Board of Directors of the Earth Foundation Company, said, "We are pleased to once again collaborate with Zubair Furnishing, one of the oldest and most prestigious furnishing companies in the Gulf region. "It hosts vast experience in the field of hotel furnishing and equipment. The new hotel is a value addition to the hospitality sector in KSA since it includes 216 luxury apartments, 96 twin rooms, 100 apartments and royal suites, as well as 4 luxury chalets. We look forward to receiving guests starting this year onwards." Zubair Furnishing is one of the oldest companies of The Zubair Corporation, which was established in 1971 and specialises in the implementation of furnishing projects for hotels and high-end residential and commercial complexes. For over the past five decades, the company has received

several international certificates such as ISO 9001 in 2015, in recognition of its ability to implement projects with first-class results. The company has also expanded to reach the European, American, African and Indian subcontinent, as well as the Middle East, where the company has completed more than 300 hotels in 33 countries around the world. Today, Zubair Furnishing is currently implementing many projects in the Sultanate, France and other Gulf countries. Its team is working to execute a group of hotels including Hilton Al Khobar Beach, Hyatt Regency Al Khobar, Radisson Blu Hotel Riyadh, Shangri-La Hotel Jeddah, Mandarin Oriental Hotel Muscat, Swissotel Jeddah, Sunset Hotel Jeddah, Avani Muscat and Mövenpick Hotel Muscat. Zubair Furnishing striving to constantly strengthen its presence as one of the most prominent furnishing companies in the region.

EXCLUSIVE CENTRE



Oman International Hospital launches 'Med Academy'

MUSCAT: Oman International Hospital, the multi-super speciality hospital in Oman, announced the launch of 'Med Academy' on its premises. The Med Academy, established with support from Siemens Healthineers, will be the first of its kind in the private healthcare sector in Oman dedicating an exclusive centre for medical training, research and development of new clinical practices and approaches. Oman International Hospital soft-opened in May 2021 and officially inaugurated by Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Saidi, Minister of Health on January 6 has already achieved several milestones. The establishment of 'Med Academy' comes close on the heels of the hospital accredited with the prestigious EFQM Certification two weeks ago. Dr José Alexandre Cunha, Board Member of Oman International Hospital and Chairman of IGHS Group that manages the hospital said, "It is indeed a proud moment as we embark on yet another ambitious goal of establishing Med Academy. IGHS believes strongly in investing in research and development and training of doctors and health professionals, especially as we

face greater health challenges in the form of pandemics, epidemics and outbreaks. Research and development can lead to discoveries while training will improve our existing practices resulting in contributing to the overall health of a population. We will be working in tandem with the Ministry of Health, who has been very supportive ever since we stepped into this beautiful country." João Seabra, Head of Global Enterprise Services of Siemens Healthineers said, "We are very happy to be associated with the great work done at the multi-super speciality Oman international Hospital. With the dedicated Centers of Excellence and state-of-the-art equipment and modern facilities as well as a great team of doctors from Oman and across the globe, all guests are guaranteed high-quality treatment. Going one step ahead, we are very thrilled to collaborate with Oman International Hospital in establishing the 'MedAcademy' through which we will enrich young medical students and also support various research and development projects." The Med Academy, established in the OIH premises, will have dedicated teams of R&D experts

working on various disciplines while welcoming senior students and sophomores from various universities in Oman as well as abroad to stay and get firsthand training by working along with OIH doctors. OIH has already welcomed final year students from the University of Porto and has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Coimbra. The sprawling 42,000 sq m hospital is equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and cutting-edge technological solutions from across the world and is the home to five Excellence Centers - Women and Children Centre, Heart and Vascular Centre, Ortho and Spine Centre, Oman Vision Centre and Derma and Cosmetic Centre, a hybrid operation theatre and several other cutting-edge features and facilities. The expert doctors, nurses and para-medical staff of the hospital are drawn from Oman and across the globe and are highly experienced. Strategically located in the centre of capital Muscat's Al Ghubra area, just across the road from the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, Oman International Hospital is easily accessible from any part of the city.

oman OASIS

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ROUND-UP



SPLASH DEBUTS NEW SPRING '22 COLLECTION

Like an advent calendar for Spring, the collection blooms with the warmth of electric blues and flaming orange in January – transitioning into a fluorescent palette bursting with coral, green and lime as we progress into Spring

MUSCAT: A motley mix of expressive colours, silhouettes that redefine fashion and rustic simplicity that reflects the beauty of nature – Splash Spring '22 collection comes with the message of 'living life in full bloom'.

At Splash, Spring is more than just transition fashion that includes unimaginative floral prints. It is a runway where every audacious style, print and texture undergoes a Spring update – to emerge into a vibrant display of impeccable and inviting style.

Like an advent calendar for Spring, the collection blooms with the warmth of electric blues and flaming orange in January – transitioning into a fluorescent palette bursting with coral, green and lime as we progress into Spring.

The key pieces for women include pleated dresses, ruffled shirts, pinafore dresses, shorts suits and distressed types of denim. The collection elevates preppy dressing with desk-to-dinner looks that include statement XL collars and volume dresses. Balancing warm tones like blue, orange and jellybean green with cooler tones

like salmon, lilac, citrus and whites – the collection has a reassuring warmth that symbolizes hope and newness, much like the season.

Whilst the monotony of structured, preppy pieces is broken by details like volume sleeves and ruffle hems, the romance in the collection comes alive in pleated skirts, Broderie Anglaise cutout shirts and floral dresses.

Another striking highlight of the season is the Splash Plus Size Spring collection. Instead of adding extended sizes to the existing collection, the Plus Size collection is a meticulously conceived showcase of beautiful, luxe clothing, where monochrome and soft shades of sand and ecru come together to present a cutting-edge appeal.

With opulent pleats, oversized florals, delicate textures and gold trims, the inclusive collection is a revival of regal dressing. The collection also features ditzy prints in bright lime and Victorian blue along with loungewear featuring character prints.

Smart tailoring anchors the men's collection with anime-inspired prints, graffiti designs, varsity logos, camo prints and stripes. The palette is enriched with pastels, orange and green.

Discover the all-new Splash Spring '22 collection at Splash stores, Splash at Centerpoint and online at Splash fashions.

RECOGNITION

MALABAR GOLD & DIAMONDS emerges as Oman’s Most Trusted Brand

MUSCAT: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one among the largest jewellery retailers globally with a strong retail network of over 280 outlets spread across 10 countries, has won ‘Oman’s Most Trusted Brand’ award in the jewellery category for the fifth time in a row.

The award was handed over by Dr Mohammed bin Hamad Al Rumhy, Minister of Energy and Minerals to Najeeb. K, Regional Head – Oman, Malabar Gold & Diamonds in the presence of Nicholas Nithin Abraham, Senior Executive - Marketing, Malabar Gold & Diamonds and Saleh Zakwani-Executive Chairman, Apex Media.

Oman’s Most Trusted Brand Awards acknowledges brands that have won the confidence of their customers through a voting process, which is also an opportunity for customers to prove their loyalty towards their favourite brands.

“This award brings us a lot of happiness since it is an affirmation of our customers’ trust in the brand and winning it 5 years in a row makes it even more special. We dedicate this inspiring triumph to our millions of satisfied customers, team members and investors, without whose wholehearted support, this exceptional accomplishment would not have been possible,” said Najeeb. K, Regional Head – Oman, Malabar Gold & Diamonds on the occasion.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds has always kept customer-first as the principal attitude in all its steps taken and take efforts at satisfying the discerning needs of its multinational and multicultural customers by incorporating the diverse tastes in the splendid jewellery designs that they showcase.

The brand had recently announced its global expansion plans for 2022 in which it will open 22 new showrooms in India and abroad in January, as part of which, 2 new showrooms will be opened in Oman, in Al Khoud Street and Mall of Oman. The group will invest another \$107.5 million for this new phase of expansion this year.

As part of its commitment, Malabar Gold & Diamonds safeguards the purchases of customers through a set of policies named ‘Malabar Promise’:

- Complete Transparency - Totality transparent and detailed invoice and price tag.
- Tested and Certified Diamonds – Every diamond passes through 28 internal quality tests and is also certified by international labs.
- Guaranteed Buyback – Best buyback value for gold and diamond jewellery.
- Zero deduction gold exchange – Full value, without any deductions on the exchange of 22KT gold.
- 916 Hallmarked pure gold – All jewellery hold 916 hallmark certification, a guarantee of purity.
- Assured Lifetime Maintenance at over 250 stores across 10 countries.
- Responsibly sourced – Sourced responsibly to protect the environment and stakeholders, for the jewellery to be truly auspicious.
- Fair labour practices – Fair wages, benefits and working conditions for karigars.
- Fair price policy – Reasonable making charges for all jewellery which assures the best value for the purchase.

The Malabar Group commits a fixed percentage of its profit to support socially responsible purposes both in India and abroad, since its inception in 1993. Education, health, women empowerment, affordable housing and environmental protection are the focus areas for the group.

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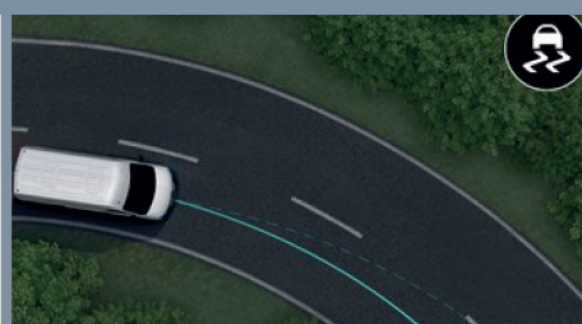
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