

>> PRAYER TIMINGS

Dhuhr	12:10 pm
Asr	3:37 pm
Maghrib	6:37 pm
Isha	7:51 pm
Fajr (Tomorrow)	4:19 am
>> IFTAR	6:37 pm



6 085010 120010

OVER 42% RISE IN NUMBER OF REGISTERED SMEs

The total number of SMEs registered with the SME Development Authority in the Sultanate increased by 42.7 per cent to reach 73,741 by end of March 2022 compared to 51,663 establishments during the same period in 2021. **>A5**



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TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Tourism drive sees Venice take on Omani vibe

1 Visitors who plan on travelling to Venice soon will be able to see large billboards showcasing the varied landscape and natural beauty of Oman, when they explore the historic city's many canals. To mark Oman's participation at the 59th edition of the Venice International Biennale of Art, which runs from 23 April to 7 November, a tourism promotion campaign has been launched across the city. **>A3**

WORLD UN chief to meet with Putin, Zelenskyy

2 United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is set to meet separately with President Vladimir Putin of Russia and Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine next week, the organisation said on Friday. **>A6**

MARKET Global tag for Duqm Green hydrogen unit

3 Opaz commended the announcement of ACME, for receiving the first-ever international certificate accredited for commercial production of green hydrogen and ammonia in the world. **>B1**

59TH VENICE BIENNALE

Sayyid Theyazin opens Oman pavilion

VENICE: His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, on Thursday inaugurated the National Pavilion of the Sultanate of Oman at the 59th Venice Biennale in Italy; one of the most prestigious art festivals around the world.

The Sultanate participation highlights the Omani cultural production, which emphasises the position of Omani artists among art makers at the global level, as well as promoting cultural communication between the Omanis and different nations worldwide.

HH Sayyid Theyazin said that this participation comes within the framework of implementing the Omani cultural strategy within Oman Vision 2040. **>A2**



OMAN IS READY FOR JOBS OF THE FUTURE



There are several social, economic and technological factors that will contribute to changing the future of jobs

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Youth in Oman are ready to take on the jobs of the future, say economists and tech experts in the country, as global advances will influence the nature of work in the future, and the way they do it.

Jobs in the near future will span at least 10 sectors, said the

Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MOHERI), citing international reports that featured projections of how the digital economy is expected to impact lives.

"The Sultanate of Oman is ready for what is to come," said Khalfan Al Toqi, an economist in the country. "There are programmes that

some parties are currently carrying out and others that need to be worked on. There needs to be co-operation to review current plans to enrich the objectives of what they must do, especially when it comes to technology and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

What needs to be done

"Initiatives need to be developed and agreements signed with other countries in the areas of joint co-operation, while enriching the content of school curricula," he explained. "This development must not stop, but rather multiply and remain in the minds and in the aspirations of our young generations, as they are the future,

whether inside or outside Oman."

Skilled people who can take up jobs in programming, information security, data analysis, alternative energy, international law, 3D printing, distance education, marketing, personal consultancy and financial planning, will be valued in future, said the ministry, in its report published in Scientific Insights, its monthly magazine.

"There are several social, economic and technological factors that will contribute to changing the future of jobs in the short term, and the importance of each of these factors has been determined, as they have varying degrees of impact," said Dr Zahra Al Rawahi, the CEO of Artificial In-

telligence Academy. "Forty-four percent of change is due to evolving work environment, 23 percent is related to the rise of the middle class in emerging economies, 23 percent due to climate change and the lack of natural resources and 21 percent due to geopolitical changes."

In this context, Al Toqi added: "The quality of a typical job will shift or disappear faster than we expect, and these roles will fade away. Reflecting over the past ten years and seeing the qualitative shift in the way we have been working, we notice the transformation was gradual, but the transformation of future jobs will be quicker. **>A5**

MOCIIP

18 investment opportunities to be offered

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Eighteen investment opportunities are to be revealed across the tourism and waste management sectors by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MOCIIP) on Sunday. The event at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC), will be sponsored by Salim bin Mohammed Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage and Tourism. Joint efforts were made by the government and private sectors to identify the opportunities.

Among those who contributed to the identification are ASAAS (Muscat National Development and Investment Company), Omran (Oman Tourism Development Company) and Oman Environmental Services Holding Company (be'ah), following studies on investment opportunities and market feasibility.

The ministry aims to bring qualitative investments as part of the economic diversification plans, create the right environment for successful investment development, empower and stimulate private sector investment, contribute to increasing FDI and promote Oman as a promising investment destination. These investment opportunities will be open through the 'Invest in Oman' platform, which was set up to showcase investment opportunities in the government and private sectors.

INTERVIEW



'School cricket years helped me prepare for film Jersey'

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Years of cricket and a place in the school team helped Bollywood actor Shahid Kapoor mentally and physically prepare for his role as a cricketer in his film 'Jersey', which is now playing in cinemas across Oman and the rest of the world.

In the film, the actor dons the role of Arjun Talwar, a talented batsman who failed to taste success despite having the skills to do so and gets a chance of redemption when he is at his lowest. "Cricket is a game I have always loved: I loved playing cricket when I was a kid, I played hours of cricket day in, day out. I was in my school team," re-

vealed Kapoor. "Cricket is a game I have followed closely: I love the sport, I watch it a lot, I have played a lot many years ago, but then of course, life happened and things moved on and I became an actor."

"So when this film came to me, I felt that I have played enough cricket to not start from zero..kinda start from a three or a four, and then hopefully take it to an eight or a nine," he added. "When you play professional cricket, you need to learn cricket in a very different way. You have to learn it technically and from a different point of view."

Shahid Kapoor was speaking to Evita Louis of TFM on Thursday, to coincide with the launch of 'Jersey'. The film centres on Kapoor's

character Arjun, an ex-cricketer struggling to make ends meet, who wants to fulfil his child's wish of getting a cricket jersey. In the process, he is forced to face his past and finds himself at a crossroads when it comes to his future. "It did take me a lot of time, I think I practiced for almost six months, and we shot for about 35 or 36 days for the cricket shown in the film," he added.

"It was very demanding, but also very rewarding, because anyone who is a cricket lover does want to play on a legit pitch inside a legit stadium, with a season ball and wants to listen to that crack of the leather hitting the wood of the bat: That sound is just special." **A5**

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<FROM A1> Sayyid Theyazin thanks Omani artists for participating in event

The objectives of the Vision represented in focusing on the Omani cultural scene and its cultural diversity to mirror creativity and reflect the civilised face of the Sultanate of Oman as an integrated cultural system resembling a source of creativity and open to other cultures.

HH Sayyid Theyazin also thanked the Omani artists in general and the participants in this event in particular, wishing them success. He also commended the efforts made by the working team at the Sultanate of Oman and the organising team from the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth to make this participation a success.

During the opening ceremony, HH Sayyid Theyazin announced the inauguration of the Sultanate of Oman's national pavilion at the 59th Venice Biennale, starting from Thursday until 27 November 2022.

After the opening ceremony, HH Sayyid Theyazin and the audience toured the sections of the pavilion. HH Sayyid Theyazin was briefed on the works participating in this international art festival, which were created by Omani artists. The participating works express the richness of Oman's cultural history and its unique traditions in visual arts. These works also highlight the Omani social and cultural environment, which, through the stages of its development, constitute a harmonious artistic scene that can be expressed through the means of contemporary art.

The inaugural exhibition of the Sultanate of Oman's National Pavilion, which runs until 27 November 2022 brings together the works of three generations of Omani artists whose practice spans five decades of modern and contemporary visual art in the Sultanate of Oman and by exploring the dynamic and intergenerational dialogue of the Oman's artistic movement over the past fifty years.

After the Venice Biennale sea-



son ends, the pavilion will be brought to the Sultanate of Oman and a parallel programme will be

prepared that enhances the benefit of this historical participation locally. -GNA

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Venice takes on an Omani vibe

Tourism promotion drive launched in the Italian city to mark the Sultanate's participation in the 59th edition of the Venice International Biennale of Art

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Visitors who plan to travel to Venice in the near future will be able to see large billboards showcasing the varied landscape and natural beauty of Oman when they explore the historic city's canals.

To mark Oman's participation in the 59th edition of the Venice International Biennale of Art, from 23 April to 7 November, a tourism promotion campaign has

been launched across the city.

According to Oman News Agency, the country's promotional campaign will run until November with the aim of promoting Oman as a tourist destination in the Italian market. Visitors to the city can see the billboards on public transport buses, Marco Polo Airport in Venice, the Santa Lucia station, on the wall of the Scalzi Bridge, inside water taxis and some of the most iconic locations in the city.

The campaign aims to promote Oman as a unique tourism destination through images that reflect the heritage, tourism and natural wonders of the Sultanate, and highlights its wide variety of attractions, enabling tourists from Italy and European nations to discover Oman and enjoy dif-

ferent tourism experiences.

"The campaign was implemented to attract as many tourists as possible to explore Oman and enhance its image as a safe destination for tourism, in addition to the variety of offers from tour operators that make it possible to enjoy the richness that we offer our visitors, including beachfront accommodation, adventure tours, diving and others," said Asma Al Hajri, assistant director general of tourism promotion at the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism.

The ministry adopts innovative marketing strategies to promote the unique tourism potential that characterises the Sultanate of Oman, and to introduce the different experiences that visitors can have during their visit.



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Trending
ON SOCIAL MEDIA



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25,465 REACH



Story on objects similar to old projectiles found in Oman reached 25,465 people and had 1,470 link clicks on Facebook.



MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

2,600 VIEWS



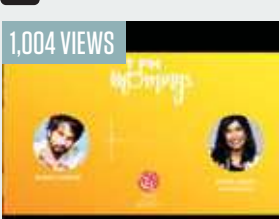
Maghrib Minute news wrap-up

The Maghrib Minute news wrap-up in Hindi had 2,600 views and reached 16,000 people on Facebook.



MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

1,004 VIEWS



TFM interview with Bollywood actor Shahid Kapoor

A TFM interview with Bollywood actor Shahid Kapoor had 1,004 views and 44 likes on Instagram.



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Ramadan

» IFTAR TIMING

6:37 pm

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» RAMADAN WORDS

“He created the heavens and earth in truth and formed you and perfected your forms; and to Him is the [final] destination” [Quran 64:3]

» IFTAR RECIPE

MINI MUSHROOM STRUDELS

By Oneza Tabish

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 medium size onion, finely chopped
- 200 gms mushroom, finely chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2-3 sprigs of parsley, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 10 small sheets of Filo pastry

PREPARATION

- For the filling / stuffing.
- Melt the butter over medium heat in a heavy bottom sauce pan.
- Add the garlic , onions , mushroom and sprinkle salt and pepper and stir fry until the onions and mushroom are tender and cooked.
- Once cooked , add chopped parsley and stir well to combine.
- Cook the stuffing / filling mixture for a few more minutes, reduce the heat to let all the water evaporate from the mushroom mixture.
- Add the cheese once the mixture cools and mix well .
- Stuff the mushroom cheese mix into the ready filo pastry sheets.
- Preheat the oven to 400 degree F and bake till the strudels are brown and well done for about 20 minutes.



» FASTING HEALTH TIP

BENEFITS OF CUCUMBER

While fasting use cucumber in your daily diet in different variations. It is one of the best hydrating fruits and helps in digestion while revitalising you. You can add them to your salad, make a refreshing cold soup, or prepare a glass of smoothie.



» GOOD DEEDS

ENCOURAGE AND EMBRACE ECO FRIENDLY PRACTICES

This Ramadan go for more natural and less-plastic. Take your own cotton or jute bags while shopping your groceries. Use plastic-free alternatives. Try not to use disposable plates, cutlery, cups, containers, etc. Plant a tree in your garden or plant some flowers. Plan your Iftar and Suhoor meals in advance so that there is no food wastage. Use overripe fruit and veg to make smoothies and soups. Do not litter public places. The Holy Month is also a great time to unplug from all the devices that we are so used to. This way you will not only save energy but also benefit mentally. Ramadan encourages and embraces ‘green’ and eco-friendly practices. By making small changes, you can make a big difference and help protect the planet.



UN chief to meet with Putin and Zelenskyy



UKRAINE CRISIS: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a video address late on Friday that Russia plans on capturing countries besides Ukraine.

Guterres is to meet with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and President Vladimir Putin next Tuesday

KYIV: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is set to meet separately with the presidents of Russia and Ukraine next week, the organisation said on Friday.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov had said earlier in the day that Guterres was to meet with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and President Vladimir Putin next Tuesday.

Later, the UN said that Guterres would travel on to Kyiv on Thursday to see Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba.

UN spokesperson Eri Kaneko

said that Guterres wanted to discuss “steps that can be taken right now” to stop fighting with Ukrainian and Russian officials.

“He will also meet with staff of UN agencies to discuss the scaling up of humanitarian assistance to the people of Ukraine,” the UN said in a statement.

On Tuesday, Guterres had appealed for a four-day “humanitarian pause” leading up to Sunday’s Orthodox Easter holiday but his call came to naught.

‘Moscow plans to invade other countries’

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a video address late on Friday that Russia plans on capturing countries other than Ukraine.

“All the nations that, like us, believe in the victory of life over death must fight with us. They must help us, because we are the first in line. And who will come next?” Zelenskyy said.

Zelenskyy’s comments follow statements by Russian military commander Rustam Minnecayev, who said that Moscow plans to take control of the south of Ukraine and open a corridor to the Russian-occupied Trans-Dniester

region of Moldova.

US plans to accuse Russia of ‘using weapons of massive destruction’

Russia’s Defense Ministry has claimed without evidence that the United States is planning to accuse Russian Armed Forces of using chemical, biological or tactical nuclear weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Ukraine.

“This plan has already been developed and is a response to Russia’s success in conducting a special military operation,” said Igor Kirillov, head of the Russian Armed Forces’ radiation, chemical and biological protection troops.

He claimed that western leaders had made several provocative statements in March and April this year, on the possibility of Russia using weapons of mass destruction on a regular basis.

Russia resumes bombardment of Azovstal steel works

Ukrainian presidential adviser Oleskiy Arestovych said Saturday that Russian forces resumed air strikes on the Azovstal steel works in Mariupol where Ukraine’s remaining forces and an unknown

number of civilians are holed up.

Arestovych said, “The enemy is trying to strangle the final resistance of the defenders of Mariupol in the Azovstal area.”

On Thursday, Putin ordered Russian forces not to storm the steel works but rather seal the plant “so not even a fly comes through” to starve what remains of Ukraine’s resistance in the besieged city.

Lviv region announces Orthodox Easter curfew

Maksym Kozysky, the regional governor of Lviv, announced a curfew starting on the night of Orthodox Easter, citing “new intelligence.”

The curfew will begin at 11 p.m. on Saturday and go until 5 a.m. Sunday and continue every day between these hours until further notice.

Kozysky wrote, “Unfortunately, the enemy doesn’t have such a concept as a major religious holiday. They are so beastly that they don’t understand what Easter is.”

He added church leadership supports the decision and said churches in the region would adjust their Easter night services to the morning hours. **DW**



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LARGE HADRON COLLIDER

World’s biggest particle collider restarts after three-year break



GENEVA: Scientists have restarted the world’s largest particle accelerator after a more than three-year break to conduct upgrade and maintenance work.

The Large Hadron Collider (LHC) , located near Geneva, is perhaps best known for helping confirm the subatomic Higgs boson in 2012.

The European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) announced the restart on Friday, saying that “two beams of protons circulated in opposite directions around the Large Hadron Collider’s 27-kilometer (16.8-mile) ring.”

What is the Large Hadron Collider?

The LHC allows researchers to study the “dark universe” — the subatomic particles that make up some 96% of matter in the known universe, along with the forces that hold them together.

The particle accelerator consists of a ring of superconducting magnets which direct beams of

energy around a circular route. The particles travel at high speeds in opposite directions and are made to collide into one another.

In 2012, the LHC allowed scientists to confirm a particle consistent with the Higgs boson particle, nicknamed the “God particle.”

The experiments are taking place more than 100 meters (330 feet) under the border area of Switzerland and France.

Scientists are expecting to conduct an unprecedented number of collisions and hope to make a series of groundbreaking discoveries.

The LHC was shut down in December 2018 to allow for upgrade work to take place.

“The LHC itself has undergone an extensive consolidation program and will now operate at an even higher energy,” said CERN’s Director for Accelerators and Technology, Mike Lamont, adding that “it will deliver significantly more data.” **DW**

TERRORISM

Global community concerned over resurgence of terrorism in Afghanistan

KABUL: A string of bombings across multiple cities in Afghanistan have prompted questions about Taliban claims of providing terror-free administration to the people of the war-torn country, while the global community is concerned about the resurgence of the terrorism in Afghanistan.

Even as the Taliban regime in Afghanistan has repeatedly claimed victory and assured peace and stability in Afghanistan, string of bombings across multiple cities proves otherwise - suggesting a dim future that lies ahead of roughly 40 million citizens.

On Friday evening, a blast occurred at the Mawlawi Sekandar Mosque in the Imam Sahib district of Afghanistan’s northern



province of Kunduz, killing at least 33 people including children and wounding 43. No group has taken responsibility for the latest attack in a series of attacks and bomb blasts that have hit the country since the Taliban takeover of Kabul in August last year.

On Thursday, a bomb explosion ripped through a crowded mosque in northern Balkh province, killing at least 30 worshippers and wounding 80 others according to preliminary assessments, Khaama Press reported.

The IS claimed responsibility for the attack that occurred during a midday prayer in the Mazar-e Sharif city of Balkh province.

The Taliban regime has condemned the recent attacks, includ-

ing the ones in the capital Kabul and other central provinces, and has repeatedly pledged to counter terrorist groups in Afghanistan, the report said.

The recent spike in terrorism-related incidents has prompted questions about Taliban claims, rising concern among residents, as well as regional countries and the global community at large about the resurgence of the terror threat in Afghanistan.

“...Our country is completely taken out of the quagmire of war,” chief spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid had said on September 6 last year, a claim that has repeatedly sought to assure the citizens of a safe living environment, the report said.

On Tuesday, April 19, at least six people, including young students, have been killed and 11 further wounded after three blasts targeted a boy’s school in west Kabul’s Dasht-e-Barchi neighbourhood, according to local security officials.

The blast occurred in a Hazara neighbourhood, triggering fears among residents following a lull in violence over the cold winter months.

The spate of attacks in recent times has drawn worldwide condemnation including from the United Nations, former Afghan politicians as well as human rights groups that have condemned the attacks as ‘crimes against humanity’. **ANI**



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WORLD



Indonesia announces ban on palm oil exports

The announcement followed a rally in Jakarta, where hundreds protested against soaring oil and food prices

JAKARTA: Indonesia announced on Friday a ban on palm oil exports in a bid to stymie the soaring domestic price of cooking oil.

Palm oil is the most produced, consumed and traded edible oil in the world.

The price of cooking oil has risen substantially as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Both Ukraine and Russia are major exporters of sunflower oil.

What did Indonesian authorities say about the ban?

"I will continue to monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy so that the availabil-



ity of cooking oil in the country is abundant and at an affordable price," Indonesian President Joko Widodo said in a statement.

The announcement followed a rally in Jakarta, where hundreds protested soaring oil and food prices.

Indonesian Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati told Reuters that Jakarta understood that the ban would hurt other countries, but stressed that it was necessary to bring down the domestic price of cooking oil as demand exceeds supplies.

Indrawati said that the government made what amounted to one of the "harshest moves" possible after previous measures failed to stabilize prices. Indonesia's government had previously required producers to reserve stocks for domestic use, but this did not succeed in bringing prices down to an affordable level for the country's households. "It's still too expensive for the ordinary household to buy these cooking oils," Indonesia's finance minister said.

"We know that this is not going to be the best result," Indrawati

said. "If we are not going to export, that's definitely going to hit the other countries."

Why are Indonesian palm oil exports important?

China and India are big importers of Indonesian palm oil. Indonesia is the largest producer of the oil and accounts for more than half of the world's supply. Neighboring Malaysia is the world's second-largest producer.

Palm oil is used in cooking oils, processed foods, cleaning products, cosmetics, biofuels and other products.

At this week's International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank meetings in Washington, policymakers expressed concern about possible food shortages due to the war in Ukraine. World Bank president David Malpass urged countries to avoid hoarding food stocks or implementing export controls.

Around 77 million metric tons of palm oil are expected to be produced this year, according to the US Department of Agriculture.

Global palm oil production already slumped during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic due to a drop in migrant labor on plantations in Southeast Asia. **bw**

Europe experienced hottest summer on record in 2021

LONDON: The summer of 2021 was the hottest summer Europe has experienced on record, EU scientists reported on Friday.

According to the annual report published by the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S), the temperature in Europe was 1 degree Celsius above the 1991-2020 average.

Italy even recorded a provisional heat record for the whole of Europe, hitting 48.8 degrees Celsius (119.8 degrees Fahrenheit) in Sicily last August. A particularly bad heat wave in the Mediterranean helped to ignite severe wildfires in Greece, Turkey, and Italy.

Globally, the last seven years have been the warmest on record, C3S reported in January.

The EU scientific information agency's records date back to 1979, but it also uses records from ground stations, balloons, aircraft and satellites going back to 1950.

Record rains led to disaster in Germany

The climate researchers also took a closer look at the flood disaster that hit Germany in mid-July 2021, which claimed the



lives of more than 180 people in the western states of Rhineland-Palatinate and North Rhine-Westphalia.

Record rains were recorded on July 14, 2021 over Belgium and western Germany. According to the C3S report, the previous weeks had seen extremely heavy rainfall in the region, so the soil was no longer able to absorb sufficient water.

The report also found that sea surface temperatures last year in parts of the Baltic and Mediterranean Seas were the highest since satellite records began in the early 1990s.

"Parts of the Baltic were 5 C above average, which is quite a lot," said the report's lead author, Freja Vamborg. **bw**

CREDIT

Sri Lanka asks for \$1.5 billion credit from India

WASHINGTON: Sri Lanka has asked for another one billion US dollar credit from India for imports as well as a 500 million US dollar loan for oil imports, Finance Minister Ali Sabry said as the country faces dire economic situation.

"The talks with India are very successful," Sri Lankan Finance Minister Ali Sabry told reporters in an online briefing speaking from Washington on Friday. "In talks at the official level with the Honorable Finance Minister of India (Nirmala Sitharaman) it has been agreed to give 500 million US dollar facility for oil. In addition, we have asked for another billion US dollars for imports which they are considering," he said, according to Economy Next, a Sri Lanka news outlet.

India has already announced another USD 1 billion as a credit to Sri Lanka to help shore up the sinking economy of the island nation. The USD 1 billion line of



credit to Colombo will help in keeping their food prices and fuel costs under check.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka is looking for investors that can bring in more than two billion US dollars into the central bank, Xinhua reported citing Finance Minister Ali Sabry.

Addressing the press from Washington on Friday, Sabry said that the next few months will be difficult for Sri Lankans.

"There is a need to attract investments in US dollars into Sri Lanka's central bank," he said, adding that the government is talking with several countries to get funds as soon as possible.

"If that effort is successful and money comes to the central bank, it will help stop the depreciation and stabilize the rupee," he said, according to Xinhua News Agency.

-ANI

TAKEOVER

Elon Musk says he has secured \$46.5 billion for funding Twitter buyout bid

WASHINGTON: Tesla Chief Elon Musk has said that he has lined up commitments worth USD 46.5 billion to finance a Twitter takeover deal, a week after he first made a public offer to buy the social media company, CNN reported.

According to Musk, he has commitment letters to finance the deal, including two debt commitment letters from Morgan Stanley and other unnamed financial institutions and one equity commitment letter from himself, according to a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission on Thursday (local time). However, he has yet to receive any formal response from Twitter's board to his offer to acquire all of its shares that he does not currently own for USD 54.20 a piece, the Tesla Chief said in the filing.

Last week Twitter's board adopted a "poison pill" defense that could make a takeover attempt prohibitively expensive.

The "poison pill" provision, announced in a press release on last Friday, preserves the right for Twitter shareholders other than Musk to acquire more shares of the company at a relatively inex-



pensive price, effectively diluting Musk's stake, as per CNN.

The provision will be triggered if Musk (or any other investor) acquires more than 15 per cent of the company's shares. Musk currently owns around 9 per cent of Twitter's shares.

"The Rights Plan will reduce the likelihood that any entity, person or group gains control of Twitter through open market accumulation without paying all shareholders an appropriate control premium or without providing the Board sufficient time to make informed judgments and take actions that are in the best interests of shareholders," the company said in its statement. **ANI**



INDIAN SCHOOL MUSCAT

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Email: purchase@ismoman.com , Website: www.ismoman.com



TENDER NOTICE

REF: ISM/ADMIN/TENDER/2022-23/001

Sealed tenders are invited from potential service providers / contractors for the following services/works required for the school.

- (1) Providing **Canteen Operations** at Indian School Muscat
- (2) Supply and Installations of **PA systems in the class rooms and Sound & Light Systems** in the MPH.
- (3) **Fire Suppression** system for the IT Server Room
- (4) Supply of **Student Furniture and Computer Lab Chairs**
- (5) Renovation of **Common Restrooms (Toilet Cubicles)** in Jibroo Campus
- (6) Renovation of **Class Room Restrooms (Toilet Cubicles)** in Jibroo Campus
- (7) Renovation of **Restrooms (Toilet Cubicles)** in A Block Ground Floor
- (8) Renovation of **NMPH Restrooms (Toilet Cubicles)**
- (9) Renovation of **Restrooms (Toilet Cubicles)** in C Block Ground Floor

Interested parties shall collect the tender documents from the school cash counter against the payment of **RO.10/-** as a non-refundable tender fee from **24th April 2022 to 1st May 2022** during the working days (Sunday to Thursday) of the school between **7.30 AM and 12.30 PM**.

The completed tender shall be dropped in the Tender Box kept in the school office before the due date. The tender should be in a sealed envelope, addressed to The Chairman, Purchase Sub Committee, Indian School Muscat, P.O. Box: 2470, PC: 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman.

Note: Respective tenders shall clearly mention the "name of service quoted for" by the bidding party. Any tender without the name of service/supply will be considered disqualified.

Last date of tender submission: Refer to the tender document



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Strong Omani squad for GCC Games in Kuwait

OOO has completed all procedures related to participation, as the Sultanate will participate with more than 130 participants

Times News Service

MUSCAT: For the participation of the Sultanate of Oman in the third GCC Sports Games in Kuwait from 13 to 31 May 2022, the Olympic Committee (OOC) will hold a meeting on Monday at the Oman Olympic Academy (OOA) with members of the Oman delegation.

Taha bin Suleiman Al Kishry, OOC Secretary General, and the managers of the participating sports teams will be present during the meeting.



Details related to the Sultanate's participation in the games will be reviewed during the meeting. It will also highlight the procedures that will be followed in Kuwait, the technical details of the competitions, their schedule and places of residence, the requirements for the games before travelling to Kuwait, procedures upon arrival and during the stay. Matters related to health protocol to prevent COVID-19 spread and health measures taken to ensure the safety of sports teams and administrative and technical cadres will be discussed.

OOO has completed all procedures related to participation, as the Sultanate will participate with a delegation of more than 130 participants in ten sports events.

They are shooting, athletics for men, athletics for women, futsal, padel, electronic games, volleyball, swimming, Basketball (3x3) for women, and Karate.

The official delegation of the Sultanate includes Khalid bin Muhammad Al Zubair, OOC Chairman - head of the delegation-, Taha bin Sulaiman Al Kishry, OOC Secretary General, Dr Mansoor Al Toqi, Board member, Ali Al Busafi, Chef de Mission, Bader Awlad Thani, Chef de Mission assistant, Saeed bin Ali Al Hosani, the administrator, Asaad bin Mubarak Al Hsani, representing the Omani Athletes Committee, Majid bin Muhammad Al Wardi, a physiotherapist, Khalil bin Khalifan Al Busaidi, a physiotherapist, and the media personnel Fahd bin Salem Al Zu-

haimi, Khalid bin Muhammad Al Jaldani and Faisal bin Abdul Hamid Al Balooshi.

Oman's national women's athletics team competitions will start on May 13, with the participation of 3 players and 2 coaches. The athletics team competitions for men will start at Ahmed Al Rashdan Track and Field on May 16 till May 18.

The list includes 13 players, and 9 technical and administrative staff.

As for futsal football (men), the list includes 14 players and 6 technical and administrative staff. The competitions will start on May 14 and continue until May 22 at Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah Hall.

The list of national shooting team includes 14 players and 10 technical and administrative staff, in addition to two referees. The competitions will start from 15-19 May 2022 at the Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Ranges Complex.

The national swimming team includes 6 players, 4 technical and administrative staff, and one referee. The competitions will be held at the Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Aquarium Complex during the period from 17-20 May 2022.

Veteran Oman Cricket administrator Iqbal Ariwala passes away

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Veteran cricket administrator Iqbal Ariwala passed away on Saturday afternoon, prompting condolences from many in the cricket fraternity in Oman and beyond.

"Oman Cricket is saddened about the sudden demise of Iqbal Ariwala - International Cricket & Admin Manager this afternoon," said Oman Cricket in a statement on Saturday.

"The Board of Directors and the Staff are deeply hearted and express their condolences to his family. May his Soul Rest in Peace."

Ahmed Raza, the captain of the UAE's national cricket team, also offered his condolences.

"My deepest condolences to Iqbal saab's family," he said on Twitter, using the Hindi term for a person who commands respect. "A very hard working professional and a thorough gentleman. Played a massive role in the development of Oman Cricket in the recent years."

"Our sincere condolences to Mr Iqbal Ariwala's family, friends and Oman Cricket," added cricket coach Kay Baig. "May his soul Rest in Peace."

Steve Richardson, the International Cricket Council's Anti-Cor-



Cricket administrator Iqbal Ariwala.

ruption Unit coordinator of investigations, added: "This is very sad news. My sincere condolences to his family and all at Oman Cricket. Iqbal was a kind and generous host on our visits to Oman. May he rest in peace."

Jack Avuma, the team manager for the Uganda national cricket team, said, "Very sad news this is, my heartfelt condolences to the Cricket fraternity in Oman and to the Family of my brother. From Uganda we extend our sympathies to the entire cricket community."

RAMADAN CRICKET TOURNEY

Pran Oman beat Muscat Rockers

Times News Service

MUSCAT: During the weekend matches of Pran Frooto Ramadan Tennex Ball Cricket Tournament 2022 were held. Pran Oman beat Muscat Rockers by 5 runs. Pran Oman scored 44 in 8 overs with the loss of nine wickets. In reply, Muscat Rockers could manage only 39 runs in 8 overs for the loss of 6 wickets and lost the match by 5 runs. Nazmul from Pran Oman CT was declared man of the match.

In the second match played between Ayan CT & Landmark Group, Ayan CT scored 45 runs for the loss of 4 wickets in 8 overs.



Shafeeq scored 17 runs in 17 balls and Ijaz scored 12 runs.

In reply Landmark Group scored 18 runs with the loss of 9 wickets in 8 overs. Ayan CT won the match by 27 runs. Waqas was declared man of the match.

CRICKET

Rizwan and Khalid shine

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Rizwan of Shaheen XI bowled superbly and got 3 vital wickets for his team to move to quarters against a spirited Ravi XI.

When asked to bat first, Ravi XI scored only 80 runs in 8 overs for the loss of 8 wickets. Only Fayyaza got 33 runs with the help of 4x6 and 1x4 in just 14 balls. Bilal too played well by scoring 19 runs in 6 balls with 3 sixes. Rizwan bowled well to get 3 wickets for 16 runs. In reply, Shaheen XI won the match for the loss of 5 wickets with Nabeel and Sohail scoring 23 and 17 runs respectively.

115-RUN VICTORY

OCT Ruwi crowned champions

Times News Service

MUSCAT: OCT Ruwi cruised to a 115-run victory over OCT Al Hail 'A' in the All-Omani Tournament Final, held at the Oman Cricket Academy on April 21, 2022.

With 5 wins in 5 matches, OCT Ruwi were the competition's most dominant force.

Their opponents on the night came out on the right side of a Net Run Rate tussle to advance from a group of 3 teams and went on to defeat OCT Muscat to book their place in the final.

Put to bat first, OCT Ruwi scored a mammoth 206/4 after 20 overs. Mohammed finished on a well-made 64.

In response, OCT Al Hail 'A'



could only manage 91/9 in their 20 overs. Abdul Jalil Al Balushi led the scoring with 22 runs while Abdul Ghani Al Balushi, Faris Said Al Zadjali and Hisham Shafi Hisham chipped in with double-figure totals. Ali Akbar Mohamed Al Balushi and Zubair Ali Akabr

Al Balushi starred for OCT Ruwi with the ball. They combined for 7 wickets, with individual figures of 4/8 and 3/5.

Simultaneously on Turf 2, OCT Seeb challenged OCT Muscat for 3rd spot in what was a much more competitive encounter.

IPL

Gujarat hold nerve to defeat KKR, top the table

NAVI MUMBAI: Gujarat Titans skipper Hardik Pandya smashed another half-century before their bowlers secured a thrilling eight-run win against Kolkata Knight Riders in an IPL 2022 match at the Dr DY Patil Stadium here on Saturday.

Gujarat Titans held their nerve to get their sixth win of the campaign and move back to the top of the IPL 2022 table. The total of 156 is now the lowest to be defended by a team so far in this edition of IPL.

Hardik Pandya played a skipper's knock of 67 off 49 balls while David Miller played a handy innings of 27 for Gujarat Titans. For KKR, Tim Southee scalped three wickets while Shivam Mavi and Umesh Yadav bagged one each. Andre Russell, who bowled the last over for GT, scalped 4 wickets.

Chasing 157, KKR endured a bad start as the team amassed 34 runs with the loss of three wickets in the first six overs.

In the very first over, Mohammad Shami struck to remove Sam Billings. The batter pulled the sharp bouncer and the ball got the top edge which was easily taken by the keeper. In his very next over, veteran Indian pacer struck again to dismiss Sunil Narine.

Lockie Ferguson in the 5th over joined the wicket-taking party with a steaming delivery to Nitish Rana. The batter defended the ball and ended up feathering it to the keeper. Then in the first over after the powerplay, Yash Dayal got the better of KKR's skipper Shreyas Iyer. **ANI**

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POLISH ELECTRIC CARS

More than 40,000 electric vehicles (EVs) have been registered in Poland since the beginning of the year, up 70 per cent compared to the same period of 2021. Of that figure, sales of electric cars were up 140 per cent and hybrids 100 per cent, according to the SAMAR Automobile Market Research Institute.

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SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 2022



RECORD INFLATION

The war in Ukraine and the economic impact of the COVID pandemic in China are continuing to drive a rise in prices, the EU's statistical office says. Inflation has reached the highest rate since the euro was introduced.

Green hydrogen project in Duqm receives international certification

ACME was awarded this certificate from the German Technical Services Company TÜV Rheinland for its project in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) commended the announcement of ACME, a leading company in the renewable energy sector, for receiving the first-ever international certificate accredited for commercial production of green hydrogen and ammonia in the world.

ACME was awarded this certificate for its project in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm - one of the zones supervised by Opaz.

The company received this certificate from the German Technical Services Company TÜV Rheinland, the leading international provider of inspection services, which is one of the global agencies that specialise in independent certification services in the renewable energy sector.

The evaluation process, conducted by the German inspection company for ACME green hydrogen project in Duqm, proved that the project meets all the standards set to be globally certified. The process included reviewing the various specified production methods, transportation methods and the different hydrogen applications in the project.

This international certifica-



RECOGNITION: The evaluation process, conducted by the German inspection company for ACME green hydrogen project in Duqm, proved that the project meets all the standards set to be globally certified. - Supplied picture

tion for commercial production of green hydrogen and ammonia allows the potential customers of this promising industry to ensure that the ammonia and hydrogen of these plants have been produced from renewable energy resources such as wind and sunlight. Likewise, it contains low levels of carbon emissions that contribute to global warming compared to conventional hydrogen or fossil fuels. Accordingly, this will also contribute to encouraging such investments by signing long-term sales contracts and getting renewable energy facilities provided by various countries worldwide.

This, further, attracts various international companies to invest

in the renewable energy sector in the Sultanate of Oman and Sejad in particular.

It also promotes the government's efforts to boost the Sultanate of Oman's position on the global map in the field of green hydrogen production and export as the first country in the world to be awarded this international certificate. This acknowledgement will as well contribute to the shift to alternative energy and diversifying sources of income in accordance with Oman Vision 2040.

Commenting on this international certificate, Eng. Yahya bin Khamis Al Zadjali, In Charge of Managing the Operations of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm

(Sezad), said, "We are pleased for ACME has received this certificate, emphasising the promising future of the renewable energy sector in Sejad, which enjoys a strategic location close to the resources of global energy. In addition, the zone is furnished with a package of infrastructure including ports and roads, which will facilitate the export of this energy to various countries around the world."

Manoj Upadhyay, Chairman of ACME Company, stated, "We are happy to receive the world's first Green Hydrogen Certification from TÜV Rheinland for our commercial-scale Green Hydrogen and Ammonia project in Duqm, Sultanate of Oman. This is a major

milestone for our project in Duqm. The Green Hydrogen Certification will pave the way for defining the criteria and process for the green certification."

On the other hand, Jalal bin Abdulkarim Al Lawati, from the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, remarked "ACME's certificate marks a great achievement for the renewable energy sector in the Sultanate of Oman and will contribute to localising this industry for which Opaz has allocated about 200 sq km in Duqm.

"Opaz also continues to study many other investments applications in this sector in other free zones such as Sohar, Salalah and

Al Mazunah, in addition to Duqm."

It is worth mentioning that ACME Company stands as one of the largest companies in the alternative energy sector in India, and operates electrical plants by solar energy. Besides, it has recently announced a joint venture with the Norwegian company "Scatec" in the green hydrogen project in Duqm. ACME also signed, in August last year with the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, the land reservation agreement for the green hydrogen project in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, which is expected to produce 100,000 tonnes of green ammonia annually in the project's first phase.

SWEDISH OIL COMPANY

Tethys' March oil production in Oman reaches 317,947 barrels



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Tethys Oil's share of the production, before the government, take, from Blocks 3&4 onshore in the Sultanate of Oman, in March 2022 amounted to 317,947 barrels of oil, corresponding to 10,256 barrels of oil per day.

The Official Selling Price (OSP) for Oman Export Blend Crude Oil for March 2022 was \$83.62 per barrel. The OSP, as published by the Sultanate of Oman's Minis-

try of Energy and Minerals, is the benchmark price for Tethys Oil's monthly oil sales excluding trading and quality adjustments.

Tethys Oil, through its wholly-owned subsidiary Tethys Oil Block 3 & 4 Ltd, has a 30 per cent interest in Blocks 3&4.

Partners are Mitsui E&P Middle East with 20 per cent and the operator CC Energy Development (Oman branch) holding the remaining 50 per cent.

Tethys Oil is a Swedish oil com-

pany with a focus on onshore areas with known oil discoveries. The company's core area is the Sultanate of Oman, where it holds interests in Blocks 3&4, Block 49, Block 56 and Block 58.

Tethys Oil has net working interest 2P reserves of 26.2 million barrels of oil (mmbo) and net working interest 2C Contingent Resources of 15.6 mmbo and had an average oil production of 11,136 barrels per day from Blocks 3&4 during 2021.

TEMPORARY MEASURES



Germany unveils measures to tackle high energy prices

BERLIN: The German coalition government has agreed to a set of temporary measures to help people in Germany deal with the high energy costs that have been exacerbated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The measures include a one-off energy tax-relief payment of €300 (\$330), a three-month reduction in the tax on fuel and a three-month reduction in the cost of monthly tickets for public transport. The government is hoping to relieve the financial burden on people who are facing not only high energy prices but also increasing inflation.

Coalition's response to energy crisis

While the €300 bonus will be paid to people through their wages, those on social benefits will also

receive a top-up of €100. Families who receive child support benefits will also see a one-off payment of €100 per child.

A proposal by one member of the coalition, the business-friendly Free Democrats (FDP), to subsidise fuel for consumers when filling up their vehicles at gas stations, was rejected by the other coalition partners, the Social Democrats (SPD) and the Greens.

The agreed proposals announced on Thursday were the result of talks that went on late into the night on Wednesday.

Finance Minister Christian Lindner, from the FDP, said the measures were aimed at achieving energy independence and efficiency as well as supporting citizens facing the effects of Russia's war in Ukraine.

"This should show the people of

this country that we can be trusted to act in this crisis," he said.

Support for private cars and public transport

The tax on fuel for vehicles will be reduced, by 30 cents per litre for gasoline and 14 cents per litre for diesel. "We don't want to abandon those who rely on their cars: commuters, families and tradespeople, to the rising fuel prices," Lindner said.

The government will also provide the funds to regional public transport organisations "so that the states can organise" the subsidies to monthly tickets, Green party co-leader Ricarda Lang said.

She underlined the focus to invest "massively in public transport" to make it "cheaper" than ever before, even if only as a temporary measure. -aw



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Eurozone sees record inflation in March

European Union's statistical office revised its previous estimated year-on-year inflation rate for consumer prices in March to 7.4 per cent in its definitive assessment, down from an earlier assessment of 7.5 per cent

BELGIUM: Prices for goods and services in the eurozone reached an all-time high in March amid spiralling energy prices caused partly by the conflict in Ukraine, the European Union's statistical office said. Eurostat revised its previous



estimated year-on-year inflation rate for consumer prices in March to 7.4 per cent in its definitive assessment, down from an earlier assessment of 7.5 per cent. That is far above the 2 per cent rate targeted as optimal by the European Central Bank's (ECB) policy. The year-on-year inflation rate in February was 5.9 per cent.

What is causing the rising inflation? ECB experts believe that Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the ensuing conflict will continue to drive inflation for some time. The main inflationary factor is the massively rising cost of energy. Energy prices rose 44 per cent in March in a year-on-year comparison.

The harsh anti-COVID measures imposed in China as part of its zero-COVID strategy have, however, also contributed to global inflation, with Chinese economic hubs sometimes severely impacted by lockdowns. The current inflation rate is the highest recorded since the EU's common euro currency was introduced in 1999. -DW

STOCK INDEXES

Wall Street down for third week in a row as interest rate hike fears come to the fore

NEW YORK: Wall Street fell for a third straight week as fears of aggressive interest rate hikes by a Federal Reserve eager to break the back of the worst US inflation in 40 years led to an investor exodus from stocks and even safe-havens such as gold.

The three major US s - the S&P 500, the Dow Jones Industrial Average and the Nasdaq Composite - closed Friday's trade down by an average of 2.7 per cent. For the week, their average decline was 2.8 per cent, adding to the average net loss of 2.6 per cent over two previous weeks.

Stocks have been in a downturn most of April, with the Fed planning some of its most aggressive monetary tightening ever to put the brakes on price pressures running riot since the breakout of the Russia-Ukraine conflict that has squeezed global supplies of oil, grains and speciality metals.

The rout on Wall Street deepened this week after an array of Federal Reserve officials - includ-



ing James Bullard and Mary Daly, who head the central bank's St. Louis and San Francisco divisions, respectively - suggested that a 50-basis point, or half percentage point, hike be imposed at the upcoming policy meeting set for May 4-5. The Federal Reserve approved a mere 25-basis point, or quarter point, increase at its previous interest rate hike in March.

Bullard had even suggested a 75-basis point, or three-quarter

percentage point, hike, saying the Federal Reserve was way behind the curve in fighting inflation growing at its fastest pace since 1981.

Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell weighed in on the debate on Thursday, saying it would be "appropriate" for the central bank to move faster and heavier on rates. That accelerated the selloff in stocks over the past two days, and even pulled down gold, seen as a hedge against economic

and political troubles. "The [US] economy is very strong, as is the labour market, but both can only sustain so much tightening in a short period and we may soon see whether the Fed has left itself too much to do," Craig Erlam, analyst at online trading platform OANDA, said.

"Central banks may be targeting a soft landing while belatedly combating very high inflation but that is very hard to achieve and there are plenty of reasons to believe they'll fail to do so again."

In Friday's stock market action, the S&P 500 - which groups the top 500 US stocks - finished down 119 points, or 2.7 per cent, at 4,274. For the week, it fell 2.8 per cent.

The Nasdaq Composite - which houses the biggest technology names of the world, including Amazon, Apple, Netflix and Google - closed down 335 points, or 2.6 per cent, at 12,839.

It tumbled 3.8 per cent on the week for its worst weekly decline since mid-January. -ANI

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Adnoc Drilling shareholders approve robust final full-year dividend at AGM

ABU DHABI: Adnoc Drilling Company announced that its inaugural Annual General Assembly approved all agenda items in its annual general meeting (AGM) held on April 20.

Voting on the agenda included approval of the Board's recommendation to distribute a highly attractive final cash dividend for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2021, amounting to \$325 million, or 7.46 fils per share, in line with previous guidance. This brings the total dividend to an impressive \$685 million for the full year of 2021.

The dividend is backed by very robust full-year 2021 results which saw revenues increase by 8.2 per cent, EBITDA of more than \$1 billion and 6 per cent in net income growth.

The dividend will be paid to shareholders in accordance with Securities and Commodities Authority (SCA) regulations.

Dr Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, Chairman of Adnoc Drilling, said, "Our shareholders' approval of the very attractive 2021 final dividend of \$325 million in Adnoc Drilling's inaugural AGM is cemented by the Company's strong full-year results and its unique role as Adnoc's sole drilling services provider. Adnoc Drilling will continue to deliver the thousands of wells required for Adnoc's significant production capacity growth targets, resulting in the ongoing demand for drilling services and enabling sustainable growth while ensuring robust future returns for our shareholders."

"The company remains committed to a progressive dividend policy and we remain firmly on track to deliver on our objective to achieve 5 per cent annual growth in our dividend over the next five years. I am confident Adnoc Drilling will build on the achievements realized in 2021, as it strives to unlock further value."

Since its inception in 1972,

Adnoc Drilling has gone from strength to strength, culminating in October 2021 when the company's record-breaking IPO received an overwhelming response from local and international investors. Building on that momentum, in December 2021, Adnoc Drilling signed a \$3.8 billion long-term drilling contract with Adnoc Onshore and entered into a Framework Agreement with its strategic alliance partner and global onshore drilling leader Helmerich and Payne to enable further growth and unlock efficiencies.

Abdulrahman Abdalla Al Seiani, Chief Executive Officer of Adnoc Drilling, said: "At the start of 2021, we set out to achieve disciplined growth, deliver on our program for improved operational efficiency, maintain core financial strength, and list Adnoc Drilling on Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX). I am pleased to report that we have accomplished all these strategic priorities."

"Looking across 2022, we expect to accelerate our growth trajectory, driven by our new world-class rigs coming online, continued investments in integrated drilling services and technology, and a laser focus on driving cost efficiencies whilst ensuring we continue to deliver long-term value to our shareholders."

In a further elevation to Adnoc Drilling's growing maturity and stature as a publicly listed company, on March 30, 2022, it was included among 15 constituents of the newly launched FTSE Russell ADX 15 Index (FADX15). FADX15 is the first co-developed index under ADX's strategic partnership with FTSE Russell, positioned to be the main benchmark for the ADX market and specifically designed as a tradable index.

Shareholders attending the AGM, which was hosted as a hybrid event both online and at Adnoc's Business Centre in Abu Dhabi, passed all other agenda items for the meeting.

SUBSIDY SCHEME

Polish subsidies make electric cars a cheaper alternative

WARSAW: More than 40,000 electric vehicles (EVs) have been registered in Poland since the beginning of the year, up 70 per cent compared to the same period of 2021. Of that figure, sales of electric cars were up 140 per cent and hybrids 100 per cent, according to the SAMAR Automobile Market Research Institute.

This is largely thanks to the rollout in late 2021 of a government subsidy scheme, called My e-car, for drivers who choose to lease EVs, with monthly instalments often lower than for combustion engine vehicles.

Last November, Poland's state-owned National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management (NFOSiGW) allocated 500 million zlotys (\$125 million, €115 million) for subsidies for customers buying EVs. The program is aimed at reducing air pollutant emissions by lowering the consumption of fossil fuels in transport, mainly via co-financing purchase or leasing of zero-emission vehicles.

It is part of a wider electromobility campaign which aims to have more than 600,000 electric cars on the roads of the EU member state by 2030. Currently, only one in every 500 cars registered in the country is electric. By comparison, in Germany, it's every 50th new car.



ElectroMobility Poland - an initiative of four Polish power companies - wants to lead the country into the era of electromobility, and is planning to build the first domestic EV in 2023. Poland already has a thriving e-car battery production industry. Niche e-car producers also exist as does an internationally renowned e-bus maker.

'My e-car' scheme

The "My e-car" subsidy scheme introduced in 2021 significantly cuts long-term rental instalments under the operational leasing method - a fixed monthly instalment whereby drivers get a car that is ready to drive and only pay for the fuel.

The support is granted in the form of subsidies for the purchase of zero-emission vehicles

and subsidies for fees specified in lease agreements. The subsidies are only available to individual customers, but companies, institutions and local governments will be able to apply in the future.

"The My e-car programme is one of the decisive points," said Wojciech Drzewiecki, the president of the SAMAR automotive market research institute. "E-cars also have quite high residual values, which enable companies to prepare good offers with more attractive monthly instalments," he told DW.

"The offer is becoming more comprehensive and attractive, which changes peoples' minds," Drzewiecki added.

Hikes in fuel prices at gas stations resulting from the war in

Ukraine have also meant drivers are looking more favourably at EVs.

Since the launch of the programme, leasing firm Arvala has received over 2,500 inquiries about subsidised vehicles and submitted 450 applications for subsidies to Bank Ochrony Srodowiska (BOS), which supports the program and has so far granted 40 million zlotys under the leasing method.

According to a recent survey conducted by car leasing firm Webfleet Solutions, over 60% of Polish corporate car-fleet operators are interested in buying EVs over the next two to three years.

The programme applies to EVs with a price of up to 225,000 zlotys or 211,000 zlotys net for people using the car in the so-called mixed method for both business and private purposes. The subsidy is 18,750 zlotys - or 27,000 zlotys when using the car for more than 15,000 km (9,300 miles) per year.

"Experience so far shows that if there were no subsidies, the sale of battery vehicles would remain at a much lower level," Jakub Farys from the Polish Automotive Industry Association told DW. As Poland is still at the "initial stage of popularizing EVs," subsidies are needed, but could lead to a situation when their popularity will be so great that they are no longer needed, he added. -DW



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SPORTS STUDY REVEALS OBSESSION WITH FAILURE, HUNT FOR PERFECTION LINKED TO BURNOUT

A University of Essex-led study has revealed that athletes who strive for perfection and fixate on their mistakes risk burning out.

More than 250 sportspeople - across individual and team sports - were examined and it was discovered hyper self-critical competitors who react negatively to even minor failings are at risk of psychological difficulty.

It was discovered perfectionistic concerns - an obsession and excessive reaction to perceived failure - were strongly related to athlete burnout.

This fixation on failure may see them view any achievement as inadequate and upcoming competitions, as disproportionately stressful, and create a self-fulfilling performance prophecy.

It is hoped the study led by Luke Olsson, from the University's School of Sport, Rehabilitation and Exercise Sciences will help shine a light on burnout.

He said: "Most people have come across the term burnout, with a lot of research focussing on the reason why it develops.

"There are many studies that have shown if an individual pursues perfection, whether that be in work, sport, or school, it can lead to burnout.

"However, our study was able to determine one potential explanation as to why this is the case in sport, which suggests that the stresses of pursuing perfection can lead those to mentally disengage with their sporting activities."

Mr Olsson worked with academics from York St John University on the Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology-published study which examined those

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All men and women in the study had been competing for more than eight years and were on average 21 years old, spanning levels from university to international.

competing or training in the UK.

All men and women in the study had been competing for more than eight years and were on average 21 years old, spanning levels from university to international.

They were measured for levels of stress, burnout and perfectionism.

The athletes competed in a variety of sports - including athletics, golf, weightlifting, football, netball, and hockey. Burnout is defined as athletes having a reduced sense of accomplishment, prolonged exhaustion, and falling out of love with their sport.

Cognitive behavioural therapy, mindfulness and developing a kinder mindset are all thought to reduce perfectionistic concerns and potentially prevent burnout.

Mr Olsson added: "There is a need to prevent athletes from experiencing burnout.

"In the case of our research, the athletes themselves should be wary that pursuing perfection and being overly self-critical is likely to be doing more harm than good.

"I believe athletes may be better served by being less self-critical which should allow them to celebrate successes in performance and embrace failures as an opportunity to reflect and improve rather than beat themselves up." - ANI





FEATURE



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CHINA ISSUES WHITE PAPER ON ITS YOUTH IN NEW ERA

The State Council Information Office of China on Thursday published a white paper titled “Youth of China in the New Era.” The white paper is the first of its kind focusing on China’s youth. The document records achievements in the country’s youth development in the new era, and reflects the spirit of its youth

The following is the full text of the report of Youth of China in the New Era:

PREAMBLE

Youth is the most active and vital force in society. The hopes of a country and the future of a nation lie in the hands of its young generation. Young Chinese have always played a vanguard role in the quest for national rejuvenation.

After 1840, China was gradually reduced to a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society and suffered enormous hardships. The country endured intense humiliation, the people were subjected to great pain, and China’s civilization was plunged into darkness. China’s youth gradually came to recognise the mounting national crisis.

The enlightenment of its youth lit a beacon of hope for the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Around the May Fourth Movement in 1919, a large number of aspiring and progressive young intellectuals assumed the lead in accepting new ideas, new culture, and new knowledge. After careful consideration they chose to follow Marxism-Leninism, which led to a widespread awakening of the people and the nation for the first time since the Opium War. In July 1921, 13 delegates, of an average age of only 28, participated in the first National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and announced the founding of the Party, an epoch-making event that sounded the clarion call for the awakening and rise of the nation. This marked the beginning of a new era of national rejuvenation for China. Under the CPC’s leadership, the Communist Youth League of China (CYLC) was established in 1922, opening a new chapter of the Chinese youth movement.

Looking back on a century of relentless change, China’s youth have never wavered in their determination to love the Party, the country and the people, nor in their commitment to the original aspiration of following the instructions and guidance of the Party. During the New Democratic Revolution (1919-1949), they rose to the occasion without fear of death and fought bravely for national independence and the people’s liberation. During the socialist revolution and reconstruction (1949-1978), they endured hardships and dedicated themselves to building the newly-founded country. In the new period of reform, opening up and socialist modernisation, those with a talent for innovation who were open to challenges stood out and forged ahead, led reform, and ensured that China progressed with the times.

The 18th CPC National Congress held in 2012 marks the beginning of a new era in the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core attaches great importance to young people, and cares deeply about them, and fully trusts them. It is committed to the principle that the Party exercises leadership over youth, gives top priority to youth development, and ensures the CYLC plays its role to the full as an aide to the Party and a reserve force. This will enable the



younger generations to develop fully and achieve historic progress. In this great new era, China’s youth have shown amazing vibrancy and great passion.

Young Chinese people in the new era are confident, aspirant and responsible. They wholeheartedly support the leadership of the Party. With a global vision, they stand at the forefront of the times bursting with commitment: pursuing lofty ideals with a firm belief in Marxism, communism and socialism with Chinese characteristics; full of patriotism, sharing weal and woe with the country and the people; displaying the sterling quality of living up to responsibilities; being the first in the country to worry about the affairs of the state and the last to enjoy themselves; striving to be pioneers in, pacesetters for and contributors to the country’s development.

History shows clearly that without the CPC, the Chinese youth movement would have achieved little. For China’s youth, commitment to the CPC is the most valuable experience, and the revolutionary traditions passed down are the most precious wealth accumulated over the past century.

In his speech addressing a ceremony celebrating the CPC centenary on July 1, 2021, Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, emphasised that “In the new era, our young people should make it their mission to contribute to national rejuvenation and aspire to become more proud, confident, and assured in their identity as Chinese people, so that they can live up to the promise of their youth and the expectations of our times, our Party and our people.”

We have stood at a new historical starting point and embarked on a new journey in achieving the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Looking ahead to the new era, China’s youth are embracing precious opportunities to realise their ambitions and display their talents, as they shoulder the important responsibility of building a great modern socialist country and realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation.

The Chinese Dream is a dream about history, the present and the future. It is cherished by all of the people, but even more so by the young. China’s youth in the new era will keep on striving with boundless energy, to turn the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation into reality.

In order to fully showcase the vigorous image and the invaluable contribution of China’s youth in the new era, China is releasing this white paper on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the CYLC.

I. The New Era: Great Times with Ample Opportunities

Great times make fine young people and flourishing ages nurture true talent. The Chinese nation has achieved a tremendous transformation from obtaining independence and becoming prosperous to growing in strength, and the current new era bestows prosperity and hope. China’s rejuvenation has become an unstoppable process.

Living in the best times in Chinese history, the current young generation enjoys an enabling environment for development, a broad space to grow, and wonderful opportunities to make a good career.

(1) Better Conditions for Development

China’s economic and technological influence and composite national strength keep growing, which offers a sound foundation for China’s youth to develop with

increasing confidence.

Better material conditions. Affluence provides a good foundation for the young generation to develop and grow. China has achieved two miracles - rapid economic growth and lasting social stability. In 2021, its economy ranked second in the world in size, with GDP exceeding 110 trillion yuan. As more than 25 million young people have escaped poverty, this generation can look forward to a better future of greater prosperity.

In pursuing a life of high quality, young people are changing their consumption habits from consuming mass products and services to customized ones. They are changing from buying to meet their basic needs to buying to enjoy life, from having clothing to wear to dressing fashionably, from having food to eat to eating well for good health, and from taking affordable transportation to choosing fast and comfortable vehicles. Their standard of living has seen qualitative changes and their prospects for development are supported by a solid material foundation.

Greater space for rich intellectual and cultural life. A rich and colorful intellectual and cultural life is a precondition for young people to prosper and grow.

With a growing number of libraries, museums, cultural centres, art galleries and other public cultural facilities being built,[By the end of 2020, the number of registered museums had reached 5,788 across the country, with one new museum being opened every two days on average during the period 2016-2020.] young people now enjoy notably improved public cultural services. Instead of feeling amazed at any new place they visit, they are getting used to visiting all kinds of places, thus refining their cultural tastes. Through the buoyant growth of traditional cultural industries such as publishing, television, movies, and artistic performance, and emerging cultural sectors such as the digital creative industry, online audio and visual, digital publishing, digital entertainment and online performance and broadcasting, young people now find diverse public cultural products available to them. Instead of reading and watching whatever they could get hold of, they can read and watch whatever they would like, thus broadening their vision. As a huge variety of tourist products are created for them to choose, such as cultural tours, countryside tours, CPC heritage tours and international travel packages, their desire to travel around the world is now satisfied. Instead of affordable sightseeing trips near their homes, they can travel anywhere they wish, thus enriching their knowledge and experience. These expanding intellectual and cultural spaces offer greater possibilities for young Chinese to achieve more, set lofty goals, and refine their tastes.

Growing with the internet. The internet has profoundly shaped the current generation, and the current generation has also influenced the internet.

At the end of 2020, the number of netizens aged 6 to 18 reached 180 million in China, with the internet available to 94.9 percent of minors, and the gap in internet accessibility between cities and rural areas narrowed to 0.3 percentage point from 5.4 percentage points in 2018. The internet has become the “sixth sense” of contemporary young people and part of their lives, and offers them a space to grow.

Along with rapid popularization of the internet, more and more young people are using the internet to access information, exchange ideas, make friends, and shop, and

their ways of learning, living and working are changing profoundly. Young people make up the majority of the users of short online videos, live-streaming viewers, and ride-hailing customers. As they become the main producers of information, consumers of services, and promoters of technologies related to cyberspace, they are exerting a tremendous influence on internet trends. In a complex online environment, young people are spreading positive energy and shaping new social trends in an effort to ensure a clean cyberspace.

(2) More Opportunities to Fulfill Potential

Only when the country prospers can its young people prosper. With rapid economic and social development, young people in China in the new era have access to better opportunities for development and a growing stage on which to fulfill their potential.

Equal access to education. Young people in China enjoy more equal and higher-quality educational opportunities as the country continues giving high priority to education. In 2021, the completion rate of compulsory education in China reached 95.4 percent, the gross enrollment rate in senior secondary education reached 91.4 percent, and the gross enrollment rate in higher education reached 57.8 percent, with 44.3 million students on campus, ranking first in the world. More and more young people have stepped onto this important path to success and excellence.

The country has established and been improving the system of financial aid to students, which offers full coverage from preschool to postgraduate education. By 2020, subsidies had totaled over 240 billion yuan and assisted nearly 150 million students, achieving full coverage from preschool education, compulsory education, and senior secondary education to undergraduate and postgraduate education, across public and privately-run schools, and for all students from families with financial difficulties. The right of particular groups to receive compulsory education and their interests have been well protected, including children living in cities with their parents who are migrant workers, and students from rural and poor areas. In 2020, 85.8 percent of children living in cities with migrant worker parents studied in public schools or filled the slots purchased by the government in privately-run schools. From 2012 to 2021, more than 820,000 students from rural and poor areas were enrolled in key universities through special enrollment plans. More young people have thus been granted equal opportunities to receive better education, which prevents poverty from passing down from one generation to the next.

Diverse career options. The career choices of young people in China are increasingly diverse and market-oriented, and made, more often than not, on their own. Young people now look beyond a stable lifelong job in the traditional sense, and non-public economic entities and new social organizations are gradually becoming their main channels for employment. The options of “either workers or farmers” are a thing of the past, and the tertiary industry has become an important gathering place for the young workforce. In 2020, the tertiary industry employed 47.7 percent of those in employment across the country, up 13.1 percentage points from a decade ago. In particular, new and rapidly-rising industries and new business forms have given birth to a large number of new

career options, such as esports players, live-streaming hosts, and web writers, and engaged a large number of young people in flexible employment, such as parcel and food couriers. There have emerged what they call “Slash” people with multiple titles, jobs, and ways of working and living. All these have testified to the greater range of opportunities and choices available to young people as times change.

Unimpeded mobility and more development opportunities. As the socialist market economy develops, the vitality of market players increases, and various factors of production flow more easily, young people enjoy more development opportunities and greater mobility. With the extension of the strategy for coordinated regional development, young people in China, who used to flock to economically developed southern and eastern regions of the country, have gradually diversified the target cities where they seek development opportunities and where they can fit in and thrive. Many young people from rural areas settle down and realize dreams in cities through hard work. In 2020, the number of migrant workers reached nearly 170 million and most of them were young people. Young permanent urban residents accounted for 71.1 percent of the total young population in the country, 15.3 percentage points higher than ten years ago and 7.2 percentage points higher than that of the permanent urban residents in the country’s total population. More young people are making their homes in the city and leaping forward in development through urbanization.

(3) More All-round Protection and Support

The development of young people calls for strong protection and support of the state. As fairness and justice in society have steadily improved and people’s rights and interests have been effectively safeguarded, young people in China in the new era can grow and prosper in a better legal environment and enjoy stronger policy support, more reliable social security, and greater care from a range of organisations.

Better legal protection. With progress in the rule of law in all respects, the system of the socialist rule of law with Chinese characteristics is steadily improving, providing strong protection for young people to develop. As the fundamental law of the country, China’s Constitution clearly stipulates that “the state shall foster the all-round moral, intellectual and physical development of young adults, youths and children”, which has laid a basic foundation for a legal framework to protect youth development. The youth development involves a wide range of areas and requires highly systematic, concerted efforts from all sectors. The Civil Code stipulates various civil rights and interests of young people. Laws including the Education Law, Compulsory Education Law, Vocational Education Law, Higher Education Law, Law on the Promotion of Privately-run Schools, and Family Education Promotion Law, among others, have prescribed a sound legal environment to ensure young people their right to education. Laws including the Employment Promotion Law, Labor Law, Labor Contract Law, Social Insurance Law, Law on Scientific and Technological Progress, Law on Population and Family Planning, Law on Physical Culture and Sports, and Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women have effectively safeguarded the rights and interests of young people in various fields. Laws including the Criminal Law, Law on the Protection of Minors, Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, and Anti-Domestic Violence Law have helped build a legal shield protecting the legitimate rights and interests of young people.

More considerate policy support. China has made policies and improved its policy system to cater to the diverse needs of young people in the country. Considerations for young people have been clearly embodied in the 13th and 14th Five-year Plans for National Economic and Social Development, and the needs of young people have been given particular attention when putting in place major national strategies, such as the strategy for invigorating China through science and education, the strategy on developing a quality workforce, the innovation-driven develop-

ment strategy, the rural revitalization strategy, and the Healthy China initiative. Increasing attention and support have been given to young people in top-level design. In April 2017, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued the Middle- and Long-term Youth Development Plan (2016-2025), the first national-level plan directed towards young people in the history of the People’s Republic of China, providing fundamental policy guidance for young people in China to grow and develop in the new era. The Party and the government have paid close attention to issues of immediate concern to young people in areas including job-hunting after graduation, innovation and entrepreneurship, social integration, dating and marriage, support for the elderly, and children’s education.

A series of policies and measures have been introduced, and the building of youth-development-friendly cities is in full swing, with the concept of prioritizing young people growing in popularity. Now, a basic mechanism for youth work from the central level to the local level has been generally put in place, and a preliminary policy system for youth development with Chinese characteristics has taken shape. Young people have been benefiting from the policies fully and they feel that they have been taken care of and their important needs are being addressed.

Improved social security services. As China has built the largest social security system in the world and further developed inclusive social security services, young people in China are shielded by social security when they enter the workforce, and free from various worries when pursuing their dreams. They can therefore live a more comfortable life, feel more at ease at work, and have greater confidence about the future. The government has introduced a series of policies to support flexible employment through multiple channels, gradually improved the social security services for those engaged in such employment, and supported young people in taking up flexible jobs. Housing supply for young people has been increased, and more big cities have increased the supply of government-subsidized rental housing for new urban residents and young people, mitigating housing problems for young people. The country is working towards an integrated national scheme for basic old-age insurance, and will continue to expand the coverage of such insurance policies as unemployment insurance and work-related injury insurance to young working population. Young people are better protected by the social security system.

Strong institutional safeguards and support. Organisations help young people grow and develop. As a CPC-led people’s organization composed of progressive young people, the CYLC has always prioritized safeguarding the rights and interests of young people, and their development opportunities. It has earnestly advocated the idea of prioritising youth development, made full use of its organisational strengths and vigorously mobilised social resources to carry out policy advocacy on the pressing difficulties and problems that are of the greatest concern to young people. It has been doing its best to address specific problems by every means possible to create a good environment for young people to grow and develop. As one of the basic people’s organisations under the leadership of the CPC, the All-China Youth Federation has always represented and safeguarded the legitimate rights and interests of young people of all ethnic groups and all sectors of society, guided them in their active and healthy participation in public activities, and worked hard to help them healthily grow and prosper. As a federative body of student unions and graduate student unions at universities and colleges and student unions at secondary schools under the leadership of the CPC, the All-China Students’ Federation has voiced and safeguarded the specific interests of young students in accordance with the law and the Constitution of the Federation, and organised healthy, positive, and colorful extracurricular and community service activities to help them grow and develop.

 to be continued



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ROUND-UP



IKEA to open flagship store in Oman

Spanning 25,000 square metres, the two-level flagship store is set to launch in Lulu Group's Oman Avenues Mall

MUSCAT: Swedish home furnishings giant IKEA, has announced the opening of its first store in Oman in June. Spanning 25,000 square metres, the two-level flagship is set to launch in Lulu Group's Oman Avenues Mall. Bringing customers affordability and a comfortable shopping experience, the new IKEA will be located in the centre of the city making it more accessible for many people. It will feature inspirational room setups and creative solutions for visitors with over 9000 articles across Living Room, Bedroom, Kitchen, Bathroom, and other home furnishing accessories. Leveraging digital innovation, Oman's



first IKEA store will also be available virtually, making it easier for shoppers to browse and buy the latest products. The new IKEA store will be home to some of the most innovative customer experience solutions, including wall projectors to facilitate planning and product selection. Throughout the main showroom, digital signage and in-store technology will help customers find the right furnishings, visualise room setups and schedule deliveries in simple, easy steps. Oman's first IKEA will also comprise a 394-seat restaurant, directly connected to the shopping centre for easy access and convenience. As one of the world's largest food providers, IKEA is taking the next step toward making healthy and sustainable food more affordable and accessible to many people. The retailer hopes to inspire better food choices at its Oman store, with a food and beverage range that includes IKEA's popular

plant-based meatballs, ASC-certified salmon, and UTZ-certified coffee. Featuring self-service kiosks, the IKEA restaurant extends into the mall for more seating options for customers. Customers can shop from the Swedish Food Market for their favourite Scandinavian ingredients and enjoy fresh pastries, cookies and more at the IKEA Bistro. Vinod Jayan, Managing Director – IKEA UAE, Egypt, Qatar and Oman, said, "Al-Futtaim IKEA's

first store in the Sultanate of Oman reflects our commitment to making sustainable living affordable and accessible while creating a better everyday life for the many people. As part of the Al-Futtaim Group, we live by the same ethos of enriching the lives and aspirations of our customers at every turn and we aim to do this for our customers across Oman. We are now closer to our Omani customers and are confident that the experience and home furnishing ideas we provide at IKEA will inspire our customers to refresh their homes." Designed to have a positive impact on the environment and promote sustainable living, IKEA's first Oman store will contribute to the sultanate's Green Agenda with innovative solutions that help reduce waste, save energy, and conserve natural resources. It will also comprise electronically commutated motors that run an alternating current power supply to provide 30% more efficient than conventional air conditioning, with condensation to be used for the mall's landscaping. Moreover, the store will be powered by LED bulbs created to reduce consumption by 70%-80%. Furthermore, all IKEA products are crafted with sustainability in mind, inspiring and enabling more

than 70 million people in the region to live a better everyday life by 2025. The Swedish home furnishings retailer pledges to design every product from the very beginning to be reused, refurbished, remanufactured, and eventually recycled by applying its circular product design principles during the product development process. IKEA also recycles 90% of its dry operational waste annually on a global level. The new IKEA store in Oman will also provide its customers with the Click and Collect service to enjoy a convenient and contactless shopping experience. The "Click & Collect" works in three simple steps. First, customers need to choose their preferred time and place for delivery. Secondly, they receive an email and an SMS once the order is ready and finally, they can have the order picked up from the store on the same or the next day, without getting out of the car. Customers can access the "Click & Collect" service through the IKEA website and mobile app. This service is available for all online paid orders. Additionally, the new IKEA store will also offer a wide range of services such as assembly and delivery, measurement facilities, and kitchen services at affordable prices in addition to gift cards and easy finance options.

LEGENDARY VIDEO GAME

Cinépolis Cinemas in Oman Avenues Mall premieres 'Sonic the Hedgehog 2'

MUSCAT: Cinépolis Cinemas, hosted the much-anticipated country-wide premiere of *Sonic the Hedgehog 2* on April 19. The latest instalment, built on the ultra-successful Sega game, comes two years after the release of *Sonic the Hedgehog*, which grossed over \$145 million at the box office creating a new whole new generation of Sonic fans. "It's very exciting that *Sonic the Hedgehog 2* is bringing the best of the legendary video game to the big screen," says Alejandro Aguilera, CEO of Cinépolis Cinemas. He continues: "Back in the 90's I spent an entire summer playing the video game so the characters have been a big part of my life. I am excited to watch this latest version!"

Coupled with some of Cinépolis famous popcorn, guests got a chance to watch Sonic and his trusty side-kick tails face off with the evil Dr Robotnik and his new partner Knuckles in their quest in search of a mystical emerald that has the power to destroy civilisations. The event took place in the award-winning Junior auditorium in their flagship location of Oman Avenues Mall, Muscat, which features a colourful jungle gym, complete with slide and ball pit, as well as fun bean-bag seating, -creating a truly one of a kind experience!

4D E-motion experience
The multiplex hosts a multitude of formats such as its state-of-the-art 4D E-motion experience. The im-

mersive theatre format allows cinema lovers to "live" the movie thanks to motion seats and outstanding special effects such as wind, water, seat vibration, smell and air shots all perfectly synchronised with the action on the screen. Cinépolis Luxury Cinemas, a few steps away from Cinépolis Cinemas offers guests a more luxurious and exclusive movie-viewing format. The auditoriums host a mix of Recliner leather seats with adjustable tables or the brands' Lounger seats, which are even more spacious and offer privacy and exclusivity to their valued customers. Cinépolis' aim is to make the movie-going experience as unique as possible in a multitude of different ways.

FESTIVITIES

Joyalukkas announces 'Cashback Celebrations'

MUSCAT: World's favourite jeweller, Joyalukkas is offering its patrons a 'Cashback Celebrations' offer to add to their Akshaya Tritiya and Eid festivities. Customers can now enjoy OMR 5 gift vouchers on the purchase of gold jewellery worth OMR 250 & OMR 20 gift vouchers on the purchase of diamonds, polki and pearl jewellery worth OMR 250 and multiples thereafter. Moreover, in addition to the exciting cashback offers, customers can now pay just a 10% advance and get assured gold rate protection from Joyalukkas. This exclusive offer uplifts the festive spirit and enables patrons to get assured rate protection in case gold rates increase or enjoy lower rates if gold prices drop. Announcing these offers, John Paul Alukkas, Managing Director at Joyalukkas Group, quoted, "Joyalukkas is always delighted to present their customers with the finest of experiences. "To make shopping exciting and

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To make shopping exciting and rewarding during the auspicious occasion of Eid and Akshaya Tritiya, we are pleased to offer these exclusive offers to our patrons

John Paul Alukkas
Managing Director at Joyalukkas Group

rewarding during the auspicious occasion of Eid and Akshaya Tritiya, we are pleased to offer these exclusive offers to our patrons. Customers can enjoy cashback gift vouchers and assured gold rate protection during the offer period.

"I would like to personally invite everyone to visit our best-in-class showrooms and enjoy this limited period offer. You can enjoy the Cashback Celebrations offer across all Joyalukkas showrooms till May 7.

INDIAN SCHOOL DARSAIT

ISD pilots stress management among students

MUSCAT: Stress management among students is a hit-or-miss matter. To tackle this matter most of the educational institutes schedule optional stress management classes, but students often lack the time to attend. Indian School Darsait (ISD) teachers walked the extra mile to make the students' minds at ease and feel at home. Motivational sessions were also conducted on career prospects in the field of Science and Commerce.

The Term II CBSE examination is around the corner and fear of not performing well causes great anxiety among the students. It is important for students to be in a calm state of mind and to deal with any emotion that may be causing distress, during the examination. To overcome the stress and anxiety caused during exams, a series of online interactive sessions on stress management and exam anxiety was conducted by Dr Nita Joseph, Counsellor and HoD - Inclusive Education for the students of classes X and XII from 12th to 18th April 2022. "The objective of the session is to equip the young aspirants with the skills and strategies to manage exam stress in various ways, so that they could deal with the stress and most importantly, be at ease and confident for the upcoming board examination" said Dr Nita. Students are facing many types of stress such as exam anxiety, timely submission of assignments, performance in exams, lack of free time, and fear of making mistakes. Stress is a frustrating condition where it contains an excess of work and an overload which reduces the concentration, mentality and the normal working condition of any student. Zehra Fatima, HoD - Biology and Divya Babu, faculty in Commerce Department, gave an orientation to the students of class X on the selection of elective subjects in class XI and emerging career opportunities. ISD wishes every student to soothe the Board exam stress most confidently.

SERVICE OFFER



Audi Oman offers special aftersales benefits across model line-up

MUSCAT: Audi Oman, represented by Premium Motors, has announced an exclusive aftersales service offer across its model line-up during Ramadan. Packed with a host of benefits, it aims at providing an enhanced aftersales experience to Audi customers. The offer that is valid till May 6 extends customers a 20 per cent discount on service items, 25 per cent discount on AC filter with free AC check, 25 per cent discount on brake parts (brake pads, brake disk and brake oil) with free disc assembly, body shop polish for OMR 25, 25 per cent discount on suspension parts with free alignment and 60 per cent discount on selected parts. Christian Nehme, General Manager of Premium Motors Oman, said: "We pride ourselves on offering the very best in aftersales service. Audi stands out for

performance, safety and reliability that is second to none and we seek to keep it that way throughout the ownership of the vehicle. Visit our service centre and we guarantee you the highest level of aftersales care. This offer will enable our valued customers to ensure the best possible care of their favourite Audi while enjoying great benefits." Audi models boast high horsepower engines with incredible handling, luxurious interiors and class-leading technologies. They also score highly on consumer safety surveys. A range of Audi models is available for viewing and test drives at the Premium Motors showroom located at Alfardan Heights at Ghala. Premium Motors is spread across three floors and designed in accordance with global standards and corporate identity.



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Attractive offer available on crossover Changan CS75 Plus

Customers buying CS75 Plus crossover (2.0 L Turbo Engine, 224 hp, 8 speed AT) are eligible for many benefits as part of the exclusive Ramadan promotion ‘Driving Forward This Ramadan’

MUSCAT: Arabian Gulf Automobiles and Equipment (AGAE), part of Bahwan International Group, has announced an attractive Ramadan offer on crossover Changan CS75 Plus which impresses with premium design, comfortable automotive interior, and highly intelligent configuration.

Customers buying CS75 Plus crossover (2.0 L Turbo Engine, 224 hp, 8 speed AT) are eligible for many benefits as part of the exclusive Ramadan promotion ‘Driving Forward This Ramadan’.

Ramadan offer 2022 includes:
Free service (3 years/55,000 km whichever is earlier) PMS every 10K intervals.

First-year free insurance (Oman & UAE)

First year free registration

Free fuel card worth OMR 50

Exclusive Ramadan gift as Apple Watch 7 Series 41mm

Manufacturer’s warranty 6 years/250,000 km whichever is earlier

The above Ramadan offer is valid for all retail customers purchasing Changan CS75 Plus till May 20.

A spokesperson for AGAE said, “Changan CS75 Plus has been impressing car enthusiasts for its promising quality of innovation, aesthetics, functionality and stability. The model makes driving feel like winning with its stunning design, premium interior and intelligent features. The CS75 Plus is loaded with smart and innovative features that aim to elevate the confidence and sophistication



in every drive. In CS75 Plus Radar based safety features and Automatic parking is one of the unique features in luxury variant. This Ramadan offer is guaranteed to make the buying experience special and affordable for customers.”

Customers purchasing Changan CS75 Plus can avail Periodic Maintenance Service of three years/55,000km and includes only 10,000km service intervals.

Customers of Changan CS75 will get a free fuel card worth OMR 50 upon purchase.

Customers buying Changan CS75 are eligible for Apple Watch Series 7.

Free first year insurance (Oman and UAE) on purchase of Changan CS75; for private registration only.

Free first year registration on purchase of Changan CS75.

Customers of Changan CS75 can enjoy manufacturer’s warranty for 6 years/250,000 km whichever is earlier.

Compact crossover Changan CS75 Plus

With its premium design, comfortable automotive interior, and

highly intelligent configuration, the compact crossover Changan CS75 Plus which comes in luxury and sport variants offers a host of special features

The Changan CS75 Plus 2WD features a more sloped roofline and more power. Under the hood, it has a 2.0-litre turbocharged 4-cylinder engine, mated to an 8-speed automatic transmission with a power of 224 hp and torque of 360 Nm. With a wheelbase of 2710 mm, and it measures 4700 mm in length, 1865 mm in width and 1710 mm in height.

Standard features in the CS75 Plus include power windows, central locking, cruise control, dual-zone auto A/C, 8 speakers, multifunctional steering wheel, USB+AUX ports, 12-inch screen, Bluetooth, 360 camera, leather ventilated seats, sunroof, fog lamps, parking sensors LED headlamps, panoramic roof, keyless entry and start, and 19-inch wheels. Safety features includes dual front, side and curtain airbags, ABS, and hill assist.

Its Blue Core Powertrain Technology, based on the principles of

power, clean and quiet, provides owners a highly efficient and energy saving performance.

CS75 Plus features a more streamlined body with flowing lines and geometric patterns, creating the overall appearance of a vehicle from the future.

To instil the confidence and sophistication in every drive, CS75 Plus offers a range of intelligent driving technologies and advanced safety features.

To create a premium drive experience, CS75 Plus seamlessly integrates luxurious interior with high-tech convenience features, coupled with ample space.

Changan CS75 Plus 2.0 T B AT Luxury

Changan CS75 Plus 2.0 T B AT Luxury includes the features of CS75 Plus 2.0 T 8 AT Sport features. Its exterior boasts of piercing front position headlamp, adaptive high and low beam, ORVM with memory and puddle lamps. Its interior features multi colour ambient lighting, front seats ventilation, driver seat with memory and luggage cover.

Its safety attributes intelligent adaptive cruise control, 360 Camera (HD) with 3D View, blind spot detection, rear approaching alarm, reverse auxiliary alarm, lane departure warning, rain sensor wiper and seat belt pretensioners.

Intelligent Adaptive Cruise Control provides a safer and more pleasant driving experience. IACC facilitates smart driving features including heavy traffic assisted driving, lane keep assist, automatic deceleration during turns, intelligent speed limit assist, and voice-activated cruise speed setting.

The 12 inch LCD touch screen in the middle displays a 360 degree camera view around the car. When the option is clicked a 3D model of the car is shown and within the screen itself you may rotate the car and view the surroundings.

The model can avoid or ease the collision by alarm and auxiliary braking. The car detects blocks and sends a visual and an audible alarm to notify you.

In a scenario where you brake suddenly and the car behind you is unaware of this and is approaching you with speed. Your car detects

the challenge and alerts you in the screen in front of you and the rear lights of your car start blinking/flashing in order to capture the driver’s (Behind) attention.

There are two options for this, the driver either sits in the car or he leaves the car. Under both the options the car parks itself by using sensors and by scanning the nearby areas.

Infotainment showcases full LCD IC, eight Speakers, trip recorder with SD Card Slot and Qibla. Comfort factors include seat belt height adjustable remote key - window close, all windows - one button up down, auto IRVM and dual zone AC.

Changan CS75 Plus 2.0 T 8 AT Sport

The exterior features of Changan CS75 Plus 2.0 T 8 AT SPORT includes 19” dual tone alloy wheels, LED headlamps, front fog lights with cornering, panoramic sunroof, ORVM - electrically adjustable, folding and heating, rear led tail-lamps, quad exhaust pipes. The interior has sport seats with two tone interior (black & red), electrically adjustable front seats, drive mode (normal, eco, sport), leather steering wheel, soft leather dashboard, multifunction steering wheel.

Safety features include front and curtain airbags, ABS, E80 +TCS+ESC+HHC, hill descent control, auto hold, TPMS, 360 camera, adaptive cruise control, automatic emergency brake, front collision warning and electronic parking brake.

Infotainment element has 7-LCD instrument cluster, 12” infotainment screen, high performance audio system with 6 speakers, navigation, mirror link - Android & Apple. The model offers electric tailgate, remote control engine start/stop, push button start/stop, rear ac vents, keyless entry and auto AC.

Arabian Gulf Automobiles and Equipment which is part of Bahwan International Group has set up a spacious and state-of-the-art Showroom in Al Qurum and Service centre in Ghala, Muscat. AGAE has already tied up for Periodic Maintenance Services in many cities including Salalah, Sohar, Sur, Nizwa, Ibra and Barka etc. Changan Oman offers 5 years or 150,000 km manufacturer warranty on all passenger vehicles in Oman.

BANK MUSCAT

Sayyarati auto finance offer comes with multiple benefits

MUSCAT: As part of its vision to serve customers better, everyday, Bank Muscat launched a highly competitive Sayyarati Auto Finance offer on the occasion of the Holy Month of Ramadan and in line with the bank’s commitment to constantly develop and launch new products and provide added value and benefits to its customers.

The launch of the Sayyarati offer has seen an excellent response from customers all over Oman, and the bank has reminded all those who wish to buy their dream car to take advantage of the special rates which are available only till 31 May. The offer is of great help for both customers and auto dealerships across Oman as the holy month usually witnesses the maximum automotive sales in the Sultanate.

The exclusive Sayyarati offer includes a special discounted rate that starts at just 3.5 per cent for both new and used cars. The highly competitive rates are available for a period of up to 10 years along with free third-party insurance



for used car financing. The new Sayyarati offer will be available for Omani nationals working in government and semi-government in-

stitutions as well as Tier 1 and Tier 2 companies. Expatriate residents working in government and semi-government organisations, as well

as Tier 1 companies, can also make use of the offer to purchase a car of their choice.

The feature-rich auto finance

can be obtained within the shortest possible time from Sayyarati Centres and Bank Muscat branches located across Oman. The monthly

loan instalments for Sayyarati finance are automatically deducted from the customer’s account once the mandate to do so is provided to the bank by the customer. For the added convenience of customers during the holy month of Ramadan, the bank’s Sayyarati centres at Wattayah and Salalah will be open in the evenings too from 8 pm – 11 pm on all weekdays (and 8 pm – 11 pm only on Saturday). Loans up to OMR60,000 are available for Omanis – for both new and used cars.

The holy month witnesses a lot of interest from customers to buy cars and benefit from the different offers available during Ramadan. Bank Muscat is also very keen to enhance cooperation and partnership with different car agencies to offer the best services possible. With some of the world’s best and safest vehicles available for purchase in the Sultanate, the bank continues to do its part in making attractive auto finance easily available for people in Oman.



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