

FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS ARAB LEAGUE SECRETARY GENERAL

Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister received Ahmed About Gheit, Secretary General of the Arab League. The two sides reviewed the latest developments in the regional and international arenas. **>A2**



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HIS MAJESTY THE SULTAN GREETES PRESIDENT OF GEORGIA

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Salome Zourabichvili of Georgia on her country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments to President Zourabichvili, wishing her continuous good health and welfare. His Majesty also wished the people of Georgia further progress and prosperity. **-ONA**



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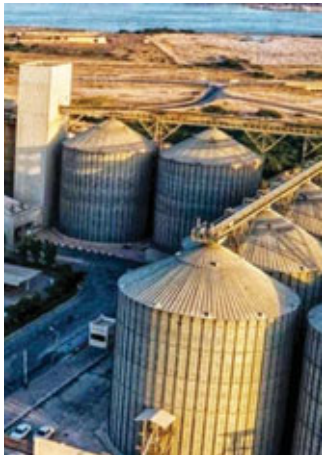
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SALALAH MILLS COMPANY

Sultanate to purchase 180,000 tonnes of wheat from India, Australia

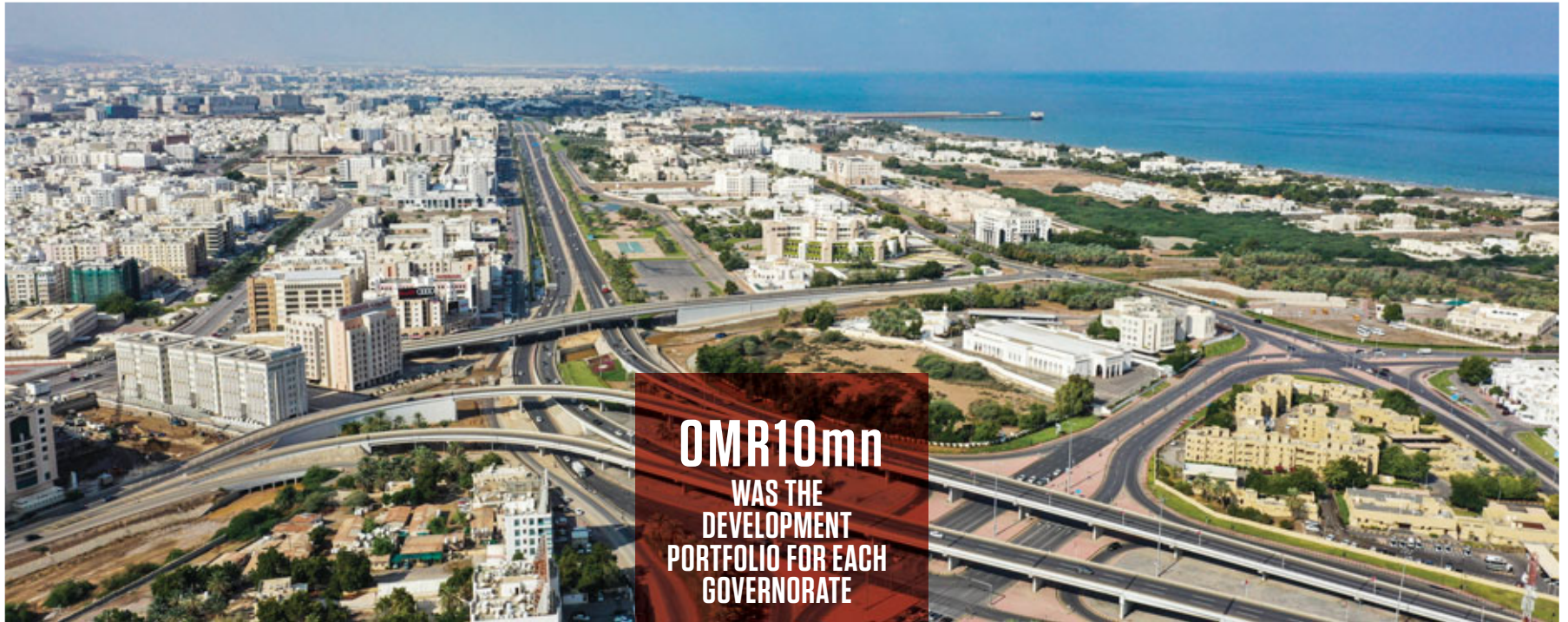


SALALAH: Salalah Mills Company has affirmed that it concluded contracts to purchase 180,000 tonnes of wheat from India and Australia. The consignment is set to arrive in the next three months.

Ahmed Alawi Al Dhahab, CEO of Salalah Mills Company, said that the amount of wheat purchased will meet local demand till the end of 2022. The shipment has left India's Kandla Port, via bulk carrier Valiant Sumer, en route to the Port of Salalah, with 66,000 tonnes of wheat on board.

Al Dhahab told Oman News Agency (ONA) that Salalah Mills is currently considering ways of securing its needs for the first six months of 2023. He pointed out that Salalah Mills is the largest facility of its kind in Oman. He added that the firm operates at a daily capacity of up to 1,500 tonnes and imports more than 400,000 tonnes of wheat per year. **- ONA**

DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR EACH GOVERNORATE DOUBLED IN OMAN



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Under the leadership of HM, the Sultanate's Renewed Development accorded special attention to the development of governorates

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The development fund for each governorate of the Sultanate has been doubled, in accordance with the Royal Directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik.

Under the leadership of His Majesty the Sultan, Oman's Renewed Development accorded special attention to the development of governorates and expansion of society's participation in this process, notably through municipal councils.

The legislations regulating the work of municipal councils are among the accomplishments of Oman Vision 2040.

The Royal directives to augment the governorates development portfolio from OMR10 million to OMR20 million—for each governorate during the Five-Year Plan 2021-2015—serve as incentive for competitiveness and economic growth.

His Majesty the Sultan's keenness on drafting a framework for the implementation of development plans stems from his Royal directives to the departments concerned to present executive plans for the projects needed in

each governorate.

This approach constitutes a motivation for Omani citizens to shoulder the responsibility of contributing to their respective governorates.

A step forward in this direction has been the Interior Ministry's announcing the start of registration of citizens to contest as members of the municipal councils for the Third Term, via the elections website (elections.com). It is a significant move to practice the right to vote and select competent members who represent members of the public in the governorates' municipal councils (two members per wilayat). **>A4**

'Guarding Oman' military drill concludes

A5



TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Oman, Qatar discuss issues of joint interest

1 A session of political consultations was held between the Sultanate of Oman and the State of Qatar. The two sides discussed several matters of joint interest and ways of developing them. They also exchanged views on regional and international matters of common interest. **>A2**

WORLD Texas shooting toll rises to 21

2 The death toll in the mass shooting incident at a school in Texas rose to 21 including 19 children and two adults. The incident took place on Tuesday after an 18-year-old gunman opened fire at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. The gunman was later shot by police officers. **>A6**

MARKET Sezad assigns 13km internal road project

3 The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) has assigned the project to construct and improve the internal roads of the commercial district in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) to the contractor Al Rawas and Al Hashemi Contracting Company. **>B1**

T-TALK

Oman is the 'happy Arabia': French Ambassador to Oman

MADIHA ASIF
madiha@timesofoman.com

MUSCAT: The newly-appointed French Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman is taken away by the hospitality and warm welcome by the people of the country.

Talking exclusively to TTV on its weekly show, T-Talk, H.E. Veronique Aulagnon, Ambassador of France to Oman, opened up about her experience in the country as well as the strong bilateral relations France and Oman share.

Speaking about how she is finding the country so far, the French ambassador said: "I find Oman extremely welcoming and hospitable. I was posted to Lebanon before – a very hospitable country – and was wondering how Oman would be? I have been really impressed by the hospitality of this country.



SCAN THIS TO LAUNCH THE INTERVIEW WITH H.E. VERONIQUE AULAGNON, AMBASSADOR OF FRANCE TO OMAN

"I have been travelling throughout the country, and amazed to see that people who you don't know, invite you to their house and welcome you. I think this is also the reason why so many French tourists are visiting Oman. It is very special."

On how she felt being posted for the first time in the Middle East

region, Aulagnon said that she was hoping to be posted in Oman back in France. "I was hoping to be posted in Oman, and I remember the exact moment when I received the call over an important lunch, I felt very proud to be proposed to serve and represent my country at the highest level after 16 years

of career in my ministry, and the second of course is the excitement. In France we used to call Oman the 'happy Arabia'."

She added that: "As a diplomat, it is very interesting to try to understand the society and try to read what is happening. So, after eight months of being here, I am learning every day." Just in a short span of time, Aulagnon has been to a lot of places in the country already and plans on to keep exploring.

"I have been to a lot of places in Oman – Wadi Shab, Wadi Tiwi, Jabal Shams, Misfit, Nizwa, Bahla, Jabreen, Wahiba Sands, Sur, Ras Al Hadd, and planning to go to Jabal Akhdar, Mussandam and Salalah.

Talking about the strong relationship that the two countries share, the ambassador said that it goes long back in history.

"We had merchants travelling to

the country already in the 17th century, and companies trading here. We had a consul at the end of the 19th century, and today his house has been transformed into a beautiful bilateral museum where we are the only country to have such a museum which is also a sign of the strong relationship we share.

"And I would say that the backbone of our relationship is also the military and security cooperation. I would say that France is in the top five partners of the country. We have, in regular years, around 20 military vessels coming to Oman and many aircraft flying over the country. We do a lot of exchange of information, and also mutual training where people would be trained in Oman and not only we would be providing training. All this can only happen because there is mutual trust," she added.

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SUSTAINABILITY



SPREADING AWARENESS: While in Oman, he addressed an awareness briefing at the Embassy of India in Muscat, and met with thousands of people at a public event at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre(OCEC).

Sadhguru in Muscat on final leg of global soil conservation effort

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Conservationist and naturalist Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev visited Oman as part of the final stage of his journey around the world to promote soil conservation.

While in Oman, he addressed an awareness briefing at the Embassy of India in Muscat, and met with thousands of people at a public event at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre(OCEC).

At OCEC, Sadhguru was greeted by rapturous applause, and welcomed by Amit Narang, the ambassador of India to Oman.

“It is a pleasure and a privilege to be in Muscat, my final city before I enter India,” he said.

Vasudev’s journey began in London and spanned 30,000km across more than 20 countries, including Oman.

He also spoke at COP15 summit of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification held in the Ivory Coast, where he addressed representatives from 194 countries.



WARM WELCOME: At OCEC, Sadhguru was greeted by rapturous applause, and welcomed by Amit Narang, the ambassador of India to Oman.

He also spoke of soil conservation at the Davos Forum in Switzerland.

“After riding through very cold weather in northern Europe, riding through the desert is very hard for me, but it has been a memorable journey,” he said.

“We all come from soil, our food

is soil, and when we die, we go back to the soil,” he added.

As part of efforts to improve soil quality, steps are being taken to set up a 25 member scientific committee to help smaller countries around the world. Larger nations, however, are encouraged to set up their own committees.

DELIBERATIONS

Musandam Municipal meet held

KHASAB: The Municipal Council of the Governorate of Musandam met yesterday under the chairmanship of Sayyid Ibrahim Said Al Busaidi, Governor of Musandam, Municipal Council Chairman. The meeting deliberated on developing municipal action in the Wilayats and the proposal of the Directorate General for Housing and Urban Planning, among other topics. -ONA



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ON SOCIAL MEDIA



MOST READ ON FACEBOOK

74,263 REACH



A story on the Kingdom of Mangoes festival by Lulu reached 74,263 people and had 4,314 link clicks on Facebook.



MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

3,000 VIEWS



A TTV video on the first ever Adventure Resort Park in all of Oman had 3,000 views and reached 11,400 people on Facebook.



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401 VIEWS



Morning Minute video on Oman's women's football team had 401 views and 18 likes on Instagram.



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SEEB SOUQ

MORE THAN JUST A PLACE TO SHOP



Souq Seeb's beach has a unique vibe of its own. Wandering between the lines of cars, gazing at the boats and fishermen working on the sea is extraordinarily refreshing.



The souq in Seeb is a gathering place where residents, young and old, gather to catch up with each other on the events of the day, to share a coffee and some laughs. It is a hive of activity, and no matter how many malls are built, the city wouldn't be the same without it. Located along the coastal road in Seeb, Seeb souq is a sprawling market selling anything from stunning traditional jewellery and luxurious perfume oils, to livestock and locally grown fruits. The beautifully designed souq is huge, so it is best to get yourself familiar with the area by roaming around the ring-like road. On one side you can see the furniture vendors and upholstery shops, known for their affordable prices. You'll also see a few car stereo shops, where, despite their lack of curb appeal, employ some of the best car sound system technicians in the city. Over on the beach side, you will find clothing shops, jewellery shops, perfumeries, restaurants, mosques, and the entrance to the historic central souq for vegetables, foodstuff, spices, ingredients, and meats. It is best explored first thing in the morning for the freshest seafood and produce. Inside the souq there are many stalls that sell traditional Omani halwa, coffee beans, grains, and local dates, at prices much lower than major supermarkets. For dry goods and clothing, the best time to come is after the evening prayers, when the souq is back in action until around 9pm or 10pm. Souq Seeb's beach has a unique vibe of its own. Wandering between the lines of cars, gazing at the boats and fishermen working on the sea is extraordinarily refreshing. Fishing enthusiasts can enjoy mingling with the fishermen who can be found further north of the souq, going towards the new Seeb Corniche.

OMAN VISION 2040

< FROM A1 Need to invest resources to achieve sustainability, job creation

The Municipal Councils Law, promulgated under Royal Decree No. 126/2020, serves as a major element in implementing Oman Vision 2040. Municipal councils may propose mechanisms to invest governorates' resources in a manner that achieves sustainability, job creation, development projects and

assessment of the performance of government service units.

Financial factors

Therefore, each municipal council member has a duty to utilise these legal, regulatory and financial factors to develop his part of the country, gaining insights from his/her first-hand knowledge of

society's needs.

As His Majesty the Sultan said in the Royal speech in January 2022, "our country boasts a wide range of competitive incentives, great potentials and promising opportunities that need to be utilised. The government will unleash all its efforts and capacities to serve cooperation and integration that

ensure channeling development of the governorates. They will enhance their preparedness for investment and develop their local role based on the comparative advantage of each governorate in a manner that creates development models. This will be substantiated by a set of strategic goals to be executed by the government within

the context of the five-year plans. Thus, the march of development can be perfected and empowered to cover all parts of this dear homeland."

His Majesty added that upgrading Oman to the loftiest positions is a national duty and a responsibility to be shouldered by all citizens.

Oman 2040 Vision's priority of developing governorates and sustainable cities will create a distinctive model of balanced growth and consolidate the competitive features of each governorate. It will also contribute to devising social, economic and environmental priorities within the framework of decentralisation. -ONA



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MEETING

Minister of Information lauds Omani-Syrian ties

MUSCAT: Dr. Abdullah bin Nassir Al Harrasi, Minister of Information received in his office here yesterday Dr. Lubana Mushawih, Syrian Minister of Culture.

During the meeting, Dr. Abdullah welcomed the guest and lauded the Omani-Syrian relations. The two sides reviewed cooperation between Oman and Syria in the cultural areas.

The Syrian Minister expressed her admiration for the special attention accorded by the Omani government to the field of culture.

The meeting was attended by a number of officials. -OMA



GUARDING OMAN

Oman’s joint military drill ends

MUSSANAH: The practical demonstration of a joint military drill codenamed “Guarding Oman” was concluded on Wednesday.

The drill was carried out by the Command of the Sultan’s Armed Forces (COSAF) with the participation of the Royal Army of Oman (RAO), Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO) and the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO).

Sultan Naval Base
The concluding event, held at



Said bin Sultan Naval Base, was held under the patronage of Rear Admiral Saif Nasser Al Rahbi, RNO Commander.

The implementation of this exercise comes within the framework of training plans of the Ministry of Defence and the SAF.

Meanwhile, Al Rahbi and several senior officers toured an exhibition which was held on the sidelines of the drill. -OMA



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Invitation to Attend the Ordinary General Meeting of Bank Muscat Money Market Fund



The Investment Manager of Bank Muscat Money Market Fund (the “Fund”) has the pleasure in inviting the unitholders to the Ordinary General Meeting (“OGM”) to be held on **Wednesday, 22 June 2022, at 3 pm**, at Bank Muscat headquarters, airport heights, Seeb, Sultanate of Oman.

Failing quorum, the OGM shall be reconvened on **Thursday, 23 June 2022, at 3 pm**, at Bank Muscat headquarters, airport heights, Seeb, Sultanate of Oman, to discuss and consider the following agenda:

1. To elect the new members of the Fund Management. Any person who wishes to nominate himself/herself for the position should complete the nomination form. The completed forms should be sent to the Fund secretary email raghadn@bankmuscat.com at least five days prior to the OGM date. Nomination forms received in the end of the business day, on Wednesday, 15th of June 2022, The candidate should observe the conditions required for the membership of the Fund’s Management.

In accordance with the Fund’s Articles of Association, every unitholder has the right to appoint any other person in writing as his proxy to attend the meeting and vote on his behalf, by way of a proxy card attached to the notice. Any such natural person should attach to the proxy card a copy of: their ID for adults, their passport for minors or those who do not have a civil card or resident card, and resident card or passport for non-Omanis. For corporates, the proxy form shall be signed by one of the authorized signatories and sealed by the company’s stamp accompanied with copies of the commercial registration certificate and the specimen signature form. Kindly arrive at the meeting venue at least half an hour before the general meeting.

The respected shareholder is requested to attend at the OGM venue half an hour before the meeting.

For queries please contact

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TOP CEO AWARDS 2022

RECOGNIZES OQIC CEO,

MR. HASAN AL LAWATI



Oman Qatar Insurance Company SAOG “OQIC” CEO, Hasan Yaseen Al Lawati, was inaugurated amongst the top 100 CEOs in the GCC during the Top CEO Award 2022 held at Palazzo Versace in Dubai.

Established in 2015, Top CEO is the Middle East’s most prestigious Conference & Awards ceremony for business leaders. Every year, it brings the region’s Top 100 listed companies’ most prominent and successful CEOs from more than 700 companies listed on GCC stock exchanges who have led their companies to outstanding growth, and profitability and have

demonstrated impressive corporate governance during the last year. The award celebrates the leadership qualities of the honorees and their effective role in creating growth in the region.

Commenting on this prestigious recognition, Mr. Hasan said “It is a great honor to be amongst the top 100 successful business leaders in the region and to be privileged with such a prestigious award. The continued success, growth, and trust in OQIC is a grand collection of our teamwork that always moves us forward in providing the best quality products and services that serve our customers and stakeholders. We are always focusing on customer centricity and digitalization to fulfill customers’ expectations and to innovate new products and solutions beyond expectations, especially in medical & motor insurance. The collaboration between management and the Board of Directors in setting up strategies and readiness for uncertainties is one of the qualities embedded in OQIC. The finest way to capture the essence of our success is by looking at the spiral increase in the business level across various lines and customer satisfaction rate. We believe in investing and empowering



our talented human capital which is the main attributable to our success.”

It is noteworthy that the selection of the Chief Executive Officers to win this award comes after a thorough study of the performance of companies and institutions in the region and their abidance to corporate governance. This classification is the most transparent and credible in the region, as it is based on the financial statements of listed companies, Profitability, and growth. Mediaquest and TRENDS teamed up with the world-renowned INSEAD Business School to fine-tune the ranking formula in collaboration with the guidelines set by Dubai-based Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance and audited by accounting giant KPMG to validate the integrity of the ranking process.



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PRE/21/103	2022/ MM/QS-21	MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC SIGNAL IN MUSCAT GOVERNORATE (E- Tender)	Rial 50	15/06/2022	07/07/2022	Specialist
PRE/22/009	2022/ MM/QS-23	Preparation Works at Umq Rubakh –Wisal - at Quriyat (E- Tender)	Rial 25	15/06/2022	07/07/2022	First
PRE/22/045	2022/ MM/QS-22	Slope Protection Works at Qurm alsarooj Beach (E- Tender)	Rial 60	02/06/2022	09/06/2022	Excellent

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UNITED STATES

Shooting at Texas elementary school kills 19 children, two adults

TEXAS: At least 19 children and two adults were killed on Tuesday after a shooting at an elementary school in the US southern state of Texas, authorities said.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott said earlier that the suspect had also died, adding that "it is believed that responding officers killed him."

US President Joe Biden ordered US flags to be flown at half-staff at the White House, military posts, naval vessels and US embassies as a "mark of respect for the victims of the senseless acts of violence."

Biden, who had just returned from a trip to Asia, delivered an emotional address later on Tuesday.

He said that he got the news while on his 17-hour flight back to Washington, when "it struck" him that "these kind of mass shootings rarely happen anywhere else in the world. Why?"

"As a nation, we have to ask,



when in god's name are we going to stand up to the gun lobby?" he said, as Congress has repeatedly failed to pass gun control legislation. The blocking of such bills is largely attributed to pressure from the powerful National Rifle Association lobby.

"It is time to turn this pain into action," Biden said.

What we know about the Uvalde shooting

The shooting took place in the

small city of Uvalde, home to around 16,000 people, including a large Latino community. It is around 137 kilometers (85 miles) from San Antonio, near the Mexican border.

The suspect, 18, was a local resident of the town and was believed to have had a handgun and a rifle with which he shot the victims, Abbott said.

DW correspondent in Washington, DC, Sumi Somaskanda said, "We have learned that the shooter

drove up to the scene, abandoned his car and started the shooting."

Among the students killed there were second, third and fourth graders, meaning they were between the ages of 7 and 11, Somaskanda said.

'Another Sandy Hook'

Tuesday's shooting was one of the deadliest attacks at a US grade school since 28 people were killed in Sandy Hook, Connecticut, almost a decade ago.

"It's been 10 years since I stood up in a grade school in Connecticut... since then, there have been more than 900 incidents of gunfire reported on school grounds," Biden said. "We have another Sandy Hook on our hands," said US Senator Chris Murphy of the state of Connecticut. "Our kids are living in fear, every single time they set foot in a classroom, because they think they're going to be next," he added. **DW**



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ECONOMIC CRISIS

Sri Lanka PM Wickremesinghe appointed as new Finance Minister

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has been sworn in as new Minister of Finance, Economic Stability and National Policies on Wednesday morning.

Wickremesinghe has taken an oath before President Gotabaya Rajapaksa at the President's House in Colombo, reported Colombo Page as cited by the Presi-

dent's Media Division. Gamini Senarath, the secretary to the President also attended the oath-taking event. Ranil Wickremesinghe was appointed the Sri Lankan Prime Minister for a record sixth term.

He accepted the post of Prime Minister after securing the support of Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) MPs. **ANI**



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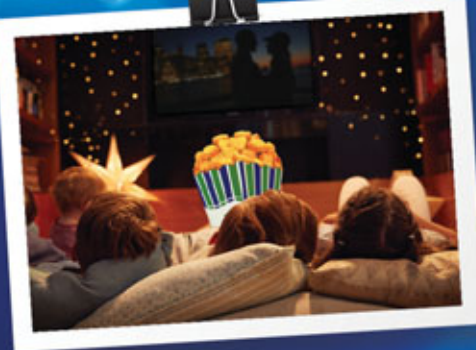
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WORLD



THREE MISSILES

North Korea fires ballistic missiles, South Korea and Japan report

PYONGYANG: South Korea's Joint Chief of Staff said early on Wednesday that North Korea fired three missiles toward waters off North Korea's eastern coast, one after another, between 6 and 7 a.m. local time.

Japan's Coast Guard also reported at least two projectiles believed to be ballistic missiles falling into the sea.

South Korea's military said the projectiles hailed from the Sunan area in Pyongyang.

North Korea has been testing weapons at an unprecedented pace in 2022, including the country's demonstration of an intercontinental ballistic missile in March, the first test of that kind since 2017.

UN resolutions prohibit North Korea from testing missiles capable of carrying a nuclear warhead.



The launch comes soon after US President Joe Biden's five-day tour of the region, starting in South Korea and moving on to Japan, which concluded with Tuesday's Quad meeting with the leaders of Japan, India and Australia.

US condemns 'destabilising' missile tests

US national security adviser Jake Sullivan addressed the issue in a call with his South Korean counterpart Kim Sung-han on Tuesday.

"They both condemned the DPRK's destabilizing ballistic missile tests and committed to continue building on their close coordination. Mr. Sullivan also reaffirmed the United States' steadfast commitment to the defense of the ROK," the White House said in a statement.

The White House had previously said that there was a "genuine possibility" that Pyongyang would carry out a missile test around the time of Biden's Asia trip.

The US has also recently warned that North Korea might be preparing another nuclear test, having last carried one out in 2017 before declaring a self-imposed moratorium on future tests amid attempts at diplomacy with former President Donald Trump. **ow**

EXPLORATION

NASA-supported solar sail could take science to new heights

WASHINGTON: As NASA's exploration continues to push boundaries, a new solar sail concept selected by the agency for development toward a demonstration mission could carry science to new destinations.

The Diffractive Solar Sailing project was selected for Phase III study under the NASA Innovative Advanced Concepts (NIAC) program. Phase III aims to strategically transition NIAC concepts with the highest potential impact for NASA, other government agencies, or commercial partners. "As we venture farther out into the cosmos than ever before, we'll need innovative, cutting-edge technologies to drive our missions," said NASA Administrator Bill Nelson. "The NASA Innovative Advanced Concepts program helps to unlock visionary ideas - like novel solar sails - and bring them closer to reality."

Like a sailboat using wind to cross the ocean, solar sails use the pressure exerted by sunlight to propel a craft through space. Existing reflective solar sail designs are typically very large and very thin, and they are limited by the direction of the sun-

light, forcing tradeoffs between power and navigation. Diffractive light sails would use small gratings embedded in thin films to take advantage of a property of light called diffraction, which causes light to spread out when it passes through a narrow opening. This would allow the spacecraft to make more efficient use of sunlight without sacrificing manoeuvrability.

"Exploring the universe means we need new instruments, new ideas, and new ways of going places," said Jim Reuter, associate administrator for NASA's Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD) at NASA Headquarters in Washington. "Our goal is to invest in those technologies throughout their lifecycle to support a robust ecosystem of innovation."

The new Phase III award will give the research team USD 2 million over two years to continue technology development in preparation for a potential future demonstration mission. The project is led by Amber Dubill of the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Maryland. **am**

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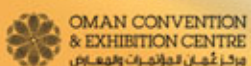
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Liverpool coach Jurgen Klopp crowned Premier League manager of season

Klopp help ensured one of the best title races in history went down to the final minutes of the campaign

LONDON: Jurgen Klopp has been named the Premier League 2021/22 Manager of the Season. Klopp helped to ensure one of the best title races in history went down to the final minutes of the campaign as his Liverpool team pushed Manchester City all the way. They were 14 points behind Man City in January but won 16 and drew two of their remaining matches to finish on 92 points, losing fewer matches, two, than any other team across the campaign. Indeed, in beating Wolverhampton Wanderers 3-1 on Sunday, Liverpool went the entire season unbeaten at home, doing so for a joint-record fifth time in the Premier League. Klopp wins the award for a second time, having also claimed it in 2019/20 after steering Liverpool to their first Premier League title. The 54-year-old won after votes from the public were combined with those of a panel of football experts to decide who would top a five-man shortlist.



TODD BOEHLY GROUP

Premier League approves Chelsea takeover

LONDON: The Premier League Board on Tuesday approved the proposed takeover of Chelsea Football Club by the Todd Boehly/Clearlake Consortium. The purchase remains subject to the Government issuing the required sale licence and the satisfactory completion of the final stages of the transaction. The Board has applied the Premier League's Owners' and Directors' Test (OADT) to all prospective Directors, and undertaken the necessary due diligence. "The members of the Consortium purchasing the club are affiliates of the Clearlake Capital Group, L.P., Todd Boehly, Hansjorg Wyss and Mark Walter," Premier League in a statement said. Chelsea FC will now work with the relevant Governments to secure the necessary licences to complete the takeover. **ANI**

ton Wanderers 3-1 on Sunday, Liverpool went the entire season unbeaten at home, doing so for a joint-record fifth time in the Premier League. Klopp wins the award for a second time, having also claimed it in 2019/20 after steering Liverpool to their first Premier League title. The 54-year-old won after votes from the public were combined with those of a panel of football experts to decide who would top a five-man shortlist.



FRENCH OPEN



Paula Badosa enters round two, Halep survives Schunk scare

PARIS: Paula Badosa of Spain on Tuesday started her French Open 2022 campaign on a grand note defeating French wildcard Fiona Ferro in the first round. Seeded No.3 Badosa needed only 54 minutes to dispatch Ferro in her return to Court Philippe-Chatrier in a 6-2, 6-0 victory to book a second-round seat. Badosa will take on Slovenia's Kaja Juvan in the next round. While Badosa easily advanced to victory, No.11 seed Jessica Pegula defeated Wang Qiang in a hard-fought second set clash. In all, Pegula needed 10 match points to seal a 6-2, 6-4 win and reach Round 2. Earlier, former French Open champion Simona Halep overcame Nastasja Schunk 6-4, 1-6, 6-1 in a hard-fought three-set win in the first round at Roland-Garros. After losing the first set, the 18-year-old won the second set 6-1 to force a decider against the former world No 1, but Halep with her master class secured her place in the second round. In the second round, Halep will take on another teenager, World No.74 Zheng Qinwen of China.

Tsonga on Tuesday announced his retirement from tennis after losing to Casper Ruud of Norway in the first round of the French Open. Tsonga announced last week that he will retire after this year's French Open tournament, bringing an end to a career that saw him reach the 2008 Australian Open final and 18 career titles. The 37-year-old, who announced last month he would retire following the French Open, was beaten 6-7 (6/8), 7-6 (7/4), 6-2, 7-6 (7/0) by the Norwegian eighth seed. It was the 15th time that the Frenchman competed at the clay-court Grand Slam as a professional. Reduced to tears as he served to stay in the match, Tsonga was given a standing ovation by the home crowd on Court Philippe Chatrier, before being greeted on the court by his former France Davis Cup teammates Gilles Simon, Richard Gasquet and Gael Monfils. "I knew something was going to happen. People came to me. They said, 'Would you like to do something after the match?' I said [to] bug off. You don't know if this is going to be my final match," the ATP's official website quoted Jo-Wilfried Tsonga as saying. **ANI**

Jo-Wilfried Tsonga bids tearful farewell to tennis
Former World No. 5 Jo-Wilfried



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MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,121.56 points, up by 0.04 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.29 per cent at 462.17 points. Takaful Oman, up 10 per cent, was the top gainer while, Al Maha Marketing, down 8.24 per cent, was the top loser.

Opaz awards project to construct 13-km of internal roads in Duqm

The project has been assigned to the contractor Al Rawas and Al Hashemi Contracting Company

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) assigned the project to construct and improve the internal roads, which has a total length of 13 km, of the commercial district in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) to the contractor Al Rawas and Al Hashemi Contracting Company.

The project serves the commercial district through 10 connections, distributed in three sides of



COMMERCIAL DISTRICT: The commercial district is located 9 kilometres southwest of Duqm Port and 13 kilometres north of Duqm Airport. — Supplied picture

the district and connected to the road of the rock garden district, Sayy Road from the south, and National Road 32 from the west. The commercial district is located 9 kilometres southwest of Duqm

Port and 13 kilometres north of Duqm Airport.

Engineer Yahya bin Khamis Al-Zadjali, in charge of managing the operations of the Sezad, said, "The construction of internal roads pro-

ject for the commercial district in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm is one of the components of the road network within the master plan for the development of the zone, which represents the

dynamic urban development strategy of the zone project until 2030 and a complement to the plans of the Opaz to provide an integrated road network and create a modern urban environment that attracts investment and stimulates commercial movement in the zone."

As to the components of the project, Eng. Yahya added, "The project consists of internal roads in the commercial district that include 4 kilometres dual carriageways, in addition to 9 kilometres single carriageways with one lane and a number of traffic lights, which will be linked with Road 32 and the roads adjacent to the commercial district through a number of exists for easier traffic."

"The project also includes the implementation of a sewage network to collect and dispose of liquid waste from the existing buildings in the commercial district, in addition to the pavement of parking spaces for vehicles in the plan, a sidewalk, and a special path for bicycles to serve the residents in the commercial district and the

neighboring neighborhoods. It also includes a number of facilities that meet the direction of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm of providing infrastructure to make the commercial district a model neighborhood for smart cities," he further added.

The project plan includes the implementation of paving and improvement works, including preparing secondary roads and constructing car parking spaces with suitable spaces for buses, in addition to the construction of a number of internal intersections and the establishment of a number of road barriers and speed bumps. The company executing the project will supply, install and test the smart street lighting system along the roads and places and parking areas.

According to the scope of work, the executing company will install smart street light poles, in addition to preparing a number of outlets designated for charging electric cars and providing telecommunication networks.

THIRD EDITION



MAKING A POINT: The forum included several working papers that deal with many topics, namely recovering stability to boost local production and ICV and supporting national products. — ONA

Major in-country value forum explores supply chains in the Sultanate

MUSCAT: The third edition of the Oman in-country value (ICV) Forum, themed 'Laboratory of Localising Supply Chains' discussed localising supply chains, partnerships and cooperation with mega companies and entrepreneurs, as well as highlighting the costs of localising modern technologies.

Opening ceremony

The opening ceremony of the forum was held under the patronage of His Highness Sayyid Marwan Turki Al Said.

The chief guest said that the

timing of the forum coincides with the transition of Oman and the world at large towards recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the volatility of oil prices.

This, he added, is an important phase in building economic sectors and activities that are targeted by Oman Vision 2040 and the five-year plans for economic diversification.

The forum included several working papers that deal with many topics, namely recovering stability to boost local production and ICV and supporting national products. — ONA

2022 FIRST QUARTER

15 regional IPOs raise \$4 billion in Q1

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Mena region saw a 400 per cent year-on-year increase in the number of companies listing with 15 IPOs raising proceeds of \$4 billion - an increase of 1,242 per cent in value when compared to the same period in 2021, according to the EY MENA IPO Eye Q1 2022 report.

The figure of 15 listings compares to three IPOs in first quarter of 2021, showing that activity in Middle East and North Africa (Mena) looks very promising with a strong start to the year, despite uncertainties that are affecting the global initial public offering (IPO) outlook.

In contrast, global IPO volumes during first quarter (Q1) of 2022 fell 37 per cent, with proceeds down by 51 per cent year-on-year. Strong IPO pipelines in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are expected to result in another record-setting year for Mena IPO markets.

Saudi Arabia dominated listings activity in Q1 2022 with six IPOs on Tadawul's Main Market and seven IPOs on the Nomu-Parallel Market, for a total of 13 IPOs raising \$ 3.9 billion in proceeds. The NOMU market offers lighter listing requirements, serving as an alternative platform for companies to go public, with investments restricted to qualified investors.

Within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the number of



IPO ACTIVITY: Saudi Arabia dominated IPO activity, with six IPOs on Tadawul's Main Market and seven IPOs on NOMU, marking a total of 13 IPOs raising \$3.9 billion in proceeds. — File picture

listings and their total value far exceeded that of previous years. In Q1 2020 the market saw only three listings with a combined value of \$801 million, while Q1 2021 also saw three listings, with a combined value of \$295 million. In 2022, there were 14 total listings across the GCC during Q1, which raised approximately \$3.9 billion in proceeds.

Brad Watson, EY MENA Strategy and Transactions Leader, says: "It is clear that with an unprecedented surge in issuances in Q1 2022, MENA IPO activity is delivering new opportunities for investors and bucking the global trend. The breadth of industry sectors

that have been listed also reflects a more widespread return to strong economic growth across the region, with IPOs in consumer cyclicals, technology, basic materials, healthcare and the energy sector."

"Saudi Arabia is currently the dominant player, but with regionwide activity that is bucking the global trend, we anticipate continued IPO activity across the entire region as 2022 progresses," he added.

Saudi Arabia dominated IPO activity, with six IPOs on Tadawul's Main Market and seven IPOs on NOMU, marking a total of 13 IPOs raising \$3.9 billion in proceeds. Jahez International Company for

Information System Technology completed its listing on the Tadawul and was the first listing in the MENA region for 2022, after raising \$427 million with their IPO on Nomu-Parallel Market in December 2021.

The largest IPO during Q1 2022 for the Mena region was in Saudi Arabia, with Al Nahdi Medical Co. raising US\$1.38 billion in the Kingdom's biggest IPO since Saudi Aramco's listing in 2019. Saudi Arabia's digital security firm Elm Information Security Company had the second-biggest IPO of the quarter, raising \$819 million in proceeds.

The Nomu-Parallel Market also saw four direct listings during this period with no funds raised through a public offering but with shares admitted to trading. They were AME Company for Medical Supplies, Obeikan Glass Co, Saudi Parts Centre Company and Saudi Azm for Communication and Information Technology Co. The Tadawul All Share Index (TASI) increased by 16.1 per cent in Q1 compared to the same quarter in 2021.

Abu Dhabi lists ports company, Mena equity markets continue strong performance. In the United Arab Emirates, Abu Dhabi's main index saw an increase of 17.2 per cent during Q1 2022. Separately, the Abu Dhabi Ports Company raising capital of \$1.1 billion through a private placement before listing on the ADX.

GOVERNMENT DATA

India's crude oil production drops in April

NEW DELHI: India's crude oil production fell by 0.95 per cent year-on-year to 2,469.67 thousand metric tonnes (TMT) in April due to lower output from fields operated by private firms, the government data showed on Tuesday.

However, the crude oil production in April is 3.47 per cent higher than the target for the month. Crude oil production by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) in nomination block during April 2022 was 1,650.65 TMT which is 4.93 per cent higher than the target and 0.86 per cent higher than the production during April 2021, according to data released by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.

Crude oil production by Oil India Ltd (OIL) in the nomination block during April 2022 was 251.46 TMT which is 0.79 per cent lower than the target.

— ANI

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MARKET



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MSX index ends lower marginally

Takaful Oman, up 10 per cent, was the top gainer while, Al Maha Markting, down 8.24 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,121.56 points, up by 0.04 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.29 per cent at 462.17 points. Takaful Oman, up 10 per cent, was the top gainer while, Al Maha Markting, down 8.24 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Shell Oman Marketing were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover. A total number of 449 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR3.55 million, with more than 10.45 million shares changing hands. Out of 36 traded securities, 13 advanced, 11 declined, and 12 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net buyers for OMR465,241 while GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for OMR340,000, followed by foreign investors for OMR126,000 worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 6,554.7 points, up 0.45 per cent. Prices of Takaful Oman, Al

Omaniya Financial Services, Oman & Emirates Investment and National Bank Oman were up by 10 per cent, 9.93 per cent, 1.19 per cent and 0.5 per cent respectively. Prices of Muscat Finance and Taageer Finance were down by 2.78 per cent and 1.09 per cent respectively. Industrial Index closed at 6,045.22 points, down 0.02 per cent. Prices of A'Saffa Foods, Construction Materials, Oman Fisheries, Gulf Mushroom Products and National Aluminium were up by 8.7 per cent, 4.94 per cent, 4.35 per cent, 1.38 per cent and 1.16 per cent respectively. Prices of Galfar Engineering and Raysut Cement were down by 1.84 per cent and 1.2 per cent respectively. Services Index was down by 1.28 per cent before closing at 1,580.65 points. Prices of OIFC, Al Batinah Power, Dhofar Generating and Sembcorp Salalah were up by 2.1 per cent, 2.08 per cent, 1.59 per cent and 1.43 per cent respectively.

- United Securities

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INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,130.76	4,119.27	4,121.56	4,119.76	1.80	0.04
FINANCIAL INDEX	6,561.43	6,525.39	6,554.69	6,525.39	29.30	0.45
Industry Index	6,058.08	6,045.22	6,045.22	6,046.29	-1.07	-0.02
Services Index	1,603.43	1,578.99	1,580.65	1,601.21	-20.56	-1.28
MSX Shariah Index	463.52	459.77	462.17	463.52	-1.36	-0.29
MSX TR INDEX	5,203.44	5,188.98	5,191.86	5,189.59	2.27	0.04
FINANCIAL TR IDX	6,860.00	6,822.32	6,852.96	6,822.32	30.64	0.45
SERVICES TR IDX	1,652.28	1,627.10	1,628.80	1,649.99	-21.19	-1.28
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,287.27	6,273.92	6,273.92	6,275.03	-1.11	-0.02

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
10,459,906	3,547,970	449	22,363,888,551	13	11	12	36

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 25

RIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (R)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	P/B VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FIN.S	10,000	1,660	2	0.166	0.166	0.166	0.166	0.151	0.015	9.934	0.166	0.160	0.166	0.100	50,333,464
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST&FIN	1,032,080	150,569	10	0.145	0.146	0.143	0.146	0.143	0.003	2.098	0.143	0.143	0.143	0.100	34,602,000
OM0000007407	DHOFAR GENERATING	100,000	6,400	10	0.064	0.064	0.064	0.064	0.063	0.001	1.587	0.064	0.063	0.065	0.100	14,223,360
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	56,179	11,223	9	0.199	0.200	0.198	0.200	0.199	0.001	0.503	0.198	0.198	0.202	0.100	325,189,271
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	15,000	4,650	1	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.000	0.000	0.310	0.306	0.310	0.100	207,193,282
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	128,000	32,640	1	0.255	0.255	0.255	0.255	0.255	0.000	0.000	0.255	0.240	0.280	0.100	84,372,541
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INV	20,000	1,760	1	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.087	0.088	0.100	7,920,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	363,938	190,563	30	0.524	0.524	0.522	0.524	0.524	0.000	0.000	0.524	0.522	0.524	0.100	1,966,676,030
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV.H	180,368	12,398	24	0.069	0.069	0.067	0.069	0.069	0.000	0.000	0.067	0.068	0.068	0.100	13,800,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	624,078	536,623	30	0.864	0.864	0.856	0.860	0.864	-0.004	-0.463	0.860	0.856	0.860	0.100	645,000,000
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT.ENG.	35,553	3,698	2	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.105	-0.001	-0.952	0.104	0.104	0.105	0.100	14,560,000
OM0000003281	TAAGEER FINANCE	10,523	953	4	0.091	0.091	0.090	0.091	0.092	-0.001	-1.087	0.091	0.090	0.091	0.100	23,538,224
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	304,557	97,523	20	0.322	0.324	0.318	0.320	0.326	-0.006	-1.840	0.320	0.318	0.320	0.100	208,302,154
OM0000003000	AL MAHA MARKTING	370,360	231,803	8	0.672	0.672	0.624	0.624	0.680	-0.056	-8.235	0.624	0.624	0.000	0.100	43,056,000
Total	14	3,250,636	1,282,463	152												
Parallel Market																
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	19,650	1,081	3	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.050	0.005	10.000	0.055	0.045	0.055	0.100	13,750,000
OM0000002804	ASAFA FOODS	127,614	19,172	15	0.146	0.151	0.146	0.150	0.138	0.012	8.696	0.151	0.151	0.151	0.100	18,000,000
OM0000001368	CONSTRUCTION M.	473,681	40,325	28	0.084	0.086	0.083	0.085	0.081	0.004	4.938	0.083	0.083	0.085	0.100	5,312,500
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	1,211,212	145,184	77	0.116	0.122	0.116	0.120	0.115	0.005	4.348	0.119	0.118	0.119	0.100	21,849,360
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	48,000	2,352	6	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.048	0.001	2.083	0.049	0.048	0.049	0.100	33,069,484
OM0000004735	SEBMCORP SALALAH	5,425	384	3	0.071	0.071	0.070	0.071	0.070	0.001	1.429	0.071	0.070	0.071	0.100	67,774,608
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM P	213,552	47,086	13	0.220	0.230	0.220	0.220	0.217	0.003	1.382	0.230	0.218	0.238	0.100	9,153,160
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES PRO.	310,781	26,547	10	0.084	0.086	0.084	0.085	0.084	0.001	1.190	0.085	0.085	0.086	0.100	10,359,375
OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD.	190,503	16,546	17	0.086	0.089	0.086	0.087	0.086	0.001	1.163	0.087	0.085	0.087	0.100	2,920,716
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	164,389	13,150	17	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.100	16,000,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	78,319	7,545	8	0.095	0.096	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.000	0.000	0.095	0.096	0.095	0.100	212,510,338
OM0000004669	SHARGIAH DESALIN	394	39	1	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.110	0.110	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.102	0.000	0.100	10,758,238
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	695,000	65,330	13	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.000	0.000	0.094	0.093	0.094	0.100	16,450,000
OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	673,641	94,868	26	0.141	0.141	0.138	0.141	0.141	0.000	0.000	0.140	0.140	0.143	0.100	10,648,602
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	22,500	3,135	4	0.138	0.140	0.138	0.139	0.140	0.001	-0.714	0.140	0.139	0.140	0.100	11,815,000
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	151,619	25,092	12	0.167	0.167	0.165	0.165	0.167	-0.002	-1.198	0.165	0.165	0.169	0.100	33,000,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	70,500	7,553	4	0.108	0.108	0.106	0.107	0.109	-0.002	-1.835	0.106	0.106	0.108	0.100	21,719,550
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	645,900	45,213	28	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.072	-0.002	-2.778	0.070	0.069	0.070	0.100	21,500,243
OM0000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	626,155	503,788	4	0.848	0.848	0.804	0.804	0.872	-0.068	-7.798	0.804	0.812	0.000	0.100	49,265,100
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MRK	1,477,925	1,200,096	6	0.824	0.824	0.812	0.812	0.884	-0.072	-8.145	0.816	0.820	0.000	0.100	77,140,000
Total	20	7,207,740	2,264,486	295												

ON 31ST MAY

Banking summit 2022 to focus on fast changing financial ecosystem

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The seventh edition of New Age Banking Summit, organised by UMS Events, will take place on 31st May. Tahir Al Amri, Executive President, Central Bank of Oman (CBO) will be the Chief Guest and Keynote Speaker at the event hosted by His Excellency Shaikh Salim Bin Mustahail Al Mashani and supported by Oman Banks Association.

GBM and Cisco are the lead partners, Bank Nizwa is the strategic partner, Sohar International is the digital transformation partner, ahlibank and Ahli Islamic are the associate partners, Taager Finance is the finance partner, Oman Data Park is the cloud services partner, Global iTS is the technology partner, National Life & General Insurance is the composite insurance partner, United GCC Fund and United Securities are the support partners, U-Capital is the knowledge partner, ESG Integrate is the ESG partner and UMS Digi-



Tahir Al Amri, Executive President, Central Bank of Oman.

tal is the digital support partner for the Summit.

The event will highlight the fast changing financial ecosystem and how the banks are becoming future-ready by adopting new strategies, innovating products and services, and reaching out to customers on digital channels, while proactively combating cyber

risks. It will serve as an engaging platform to focus on new business models to make the banks relevant for next generation customers, and empower them to devise new growth paths and build operation efficiencies.

It will include presentations and discussions involving a cross-section of industry experts from

Oman, rest of the GCC and international markets on subjects including digital transformation, borderless financial ecosystem, fintech, AI, intelligent automation, digital payments, green financing, core banking, crypto eco-system, cybersecurity, digital customer experience, financial inclusion, 5G and cloud services.

The event will be attended by industry thought leaders, senior bankers, fintech specialists, finance & investment experts, insurance professionals and consultants. The Oman Banking & Finance Awards will be co-located with the Summit. The awards will felicitate the key industry leaders, organisations and products/solutions that are at the forefront of new-age financial services in the Sultanate. The event will also host a workshop on the topic 'ESG Adoption in BFSI Sector' for the select attendees. It will be conducted by Imad Alfadel, Founder & Managing Partner, ESG Integrate, UAE.



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BY BRAND FINANCE

L&T wins top global honour

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Larsen & Toubro (L&T), an Indian multinational engaged in EPC projects, hi-tech manufacturing and services, has been named as the 'Second Strongest Brand' among the top 50 Global engineering and construction (E&C) companies - by Brand Finance, the world's leading brand valuation consultancy.

L&T has also been ranked as the 'Third Fastest Growing Brand' by the London-based consultancy in its 'Engineering & Construction 50 - 2022' report. It is the only Indian company among the 'Most Valuable Global E&C Firms'. L&T with its footprint across 50 countries has gained 44 per cent in its brand value over last year.

Commenting on this achievement, an L&T spokesperson, said: "Brand is about so much more than just a name or a logo. It's about trust, reputation, value systems and credibility. We are honoured to be recognised as the Second Strongest Global Brand in the Engineering and Construction space by Brand Finance. This recognition is a testament to our team's commitment to excellence and our clients' trust in our ability to deliver on our promises."

WORLD RANKING

Saudi Arabia jumps 10 places in WEF's Travel and Tourism Development Index

RIYADH: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia moved up 10 places to 33rd in the world overall, in the 2021 World Economic Forum (WEF) Travel and Tourism Development Index, which was released on Tuesday at Davos.

The independent index benchmarks 117 countries on



Justin Bieber announces final global dates

Justin Bieber recently announced the final international dates for his record-setting Justice World Tour, including October 8th at the Coca-Cola Arena, Dubai. Having sold in excess of 1.3 million tickets so far, the tour will travel to over 30 countries -- playing more than 125 shows -- from May 2022 through March 2023.

Thomas Ovesen, owner of T.O.P Entertainment and the outfit responsible for bringing the show to Dubai said, 'having Justin back for what will be his third visit and fourth performance in the city is so exciting, both for his fans and for me personally. The UAE hasn't seen shows of this size and scale since pre pandemic and I can guarantee everyone is in for a real treat -- the production is world class and there is no doubt Justin is at the very top of his game right now, the ticket sales worldwide speak for themselves! We look forward to welcoming all his Middle East fans this October -- this is a hot ticket and we expect to sell out fast, so register for the Visa pre-sale now!'

Fans can register for the exclusive Visa pre-sale at www.coca-cola-arena.com. Pre-sale will start at 10am on May 26th and all fans who registered will receive the pre-sale link to purchase tickets. General on sale will start 24 hours later on May 27th at 10am local time.

The upcoming dates start this month in Mexico, with a stop in Italy before continuing on to Scandinavia for shows

Fans can register for the exclusive Visa pre-sale at www.coca-cola-arena.com. Pre-sale will start at 10am on May 26th and all fans who registered will receive the pre-sale link to purchase tickets.

in August. Next up is South America, South Africa and the Middle East in September and October. The tour will close out the year in Asia, Australia and New Zealand before moving to the UK and Europe in early 2023. Additional dates have also been announced in Dubai, Bahrain, Sydney, New Delhi, Manila, Amsterdam, London and Dublin.

These new shows come on the heels of his 52-date 2022 North American tour, which kicked off in San Diego on February 18. Each evening promises to be a celebration for both Justin and his fans after the pandemic sidelined his 2020 tour.

Recently, Justin teamed up with director Cole Bennett for his new single +video "Honest," featuring Don Toliver. Punchy and uptempo, "Honest" marks Justin's first official single since "Ghost" -- the anthemic finale to the multi-platinum, Grammy-nominated Justice -- went #1 at pop radio in January, making chart history with the most #1 hits by a male solo artist in US radio history and the only fifth artist ever to reach twenty Top 5 hits on Hot 100.

Over the past year, Justin has set new marks in his highly-decorated career: "Stay" with The Kid LAROI, Justin's eighth career Hot 100 #1 single, made him the youngest solo artist ever to reach 100 hits on the chart. "Peaches," his certified-triple-platinum smash, made Justin the first male solo artist to debut at #1 on both the Billboard 200 album chart and

Billboard Hot 100 singles chart simultaneously.

Justin Bieber's eighth #1 album Justice has sold over eight million copies globally, amassed over 12 billion global streams, and was nominated for eight Grammys, including Album Of The Year. With an astounding 100 billion career streams and over 75 million albums sold globally, Justin reigns as one of the biggest artists in the world. Bieber is the #1 artist on YouTube with over 68 million subscribers worldwide and is the #1 artist on Spotify global with 79 million monthly listeners.

Justin -- who was named Artist Of The Year at the 2021 MTV VMAs and was nominated for thirteen Billboard Music Awards -- has been wowing fans nightly on the opening leg of his Justice World Tour 2022, the biggest and most ambitious tour of his career. Throughout, Justin has remained committed to using his platform for social good, bringing his 'Justice In Action' initiative to fans across the country, raising awareness on important issues like criminal justice reform, climate action, voter registration and much more.

The Justice World Tour, promoted by AEG Presents, is Justin's first global outing since 2016/2017's 'Purpose World Tour'. Described by The Times of London as "mesmerising", Bieber played to 2.7 million fans over the course of his 2016-2017 run, with the finale seen by 65,000 fans at London's British Summer Time Hyde Park festival.





ROUND-UP



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OMR2.5 worth green certificate can win you grand prize of up to OMR5mn

To take part in the draw, participants have to visit <https://omillionaire.com/> website and purchase a green certificate worth OMR2.5.

MUSCAT: Environmental initiative O! Millionaire's first draw got off to a great start with it picking 61 winners and one winner who won a guaranteed sum of OMR10,000. The show was aired LIVE on O! Millionaire's social media pages (Instagram, YouTube channel, Facebook and Twitter) and website. The draw will be held every Thurs-

day on these media platforms every week.

To take part in the draw, participants have to visit <https://omillionaire.com/> website and purchase a green certificate worth OMR2.5. The green certificate will entitle them to an entry for a draw which can win them prizes up to OMR5mn. The certificate gives participants two chances to win, one is the raffle that pays out one winner OMR10,000 every week and the draw that can win them prizes up to OMR5 million.

A spokesperson for Millionaire Investment said, "For just OMR2.5 participants can win different amount of cash prizes every week. If a grand prize winner is not picked in a draw, every week a sum of OMR50,000 will be added to the prize sum. We won't have a mega winner till it reaches OMR10 000 000 or someone wins it. We are pleased with the response we received at the first O! Millionaire draw. Those purchasing green certificates worth OMR2.5 can participate in the draw which will be held every Thursday."



Winner of prize money OMR10,000 Courtney Chadwick, a South African national who has been a resident of Oman for the last four years said, "I was very excited and a little shell shocked. I am still in disbelief as I did not expect to win."

She plans to invest mostly in education for her children and donate part of it for animal rights.

Millionaire Investment recently launched O! Millionaire with an objective to transform lives, plant

trees and make Oman a happier place. O! Millionaire green certificate will create opportunities for winning and will contribute towards the country's efforts to reduce carbon footprint, Vision 2040 in alignment with the United Nation's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. A tree-planting programme which is part of the initiative will support Oman's efforts towards climate action and food security. To promote Oman as a natural sanctuary, the initia-

tive will also create an Oasis Park - Middle East's largest green park.

The purpose of O! Millionaire is to raise funds for the preservation of Oman's natural environment through an efficient, socially responsible, and ethical tree-planting programme.

O! Millionaire has weekly prizes to motivate the green certificates buyers and owners. There will be a draw held every Thursday at 8 pm where one person can win every week the prize of OMR10,000. The

winner is picked by an RNG system that will randomly select one green certificate number. In addition, in O! Millionaire's big draw the draw machine will select seven numbers from 1 to 44. This will have five winning categories: If the participant matches 7 out of the 7 numbers they will win the grand prize of OMR5,000,000, if they match 6 out of the 7 numbers they will win OMR50,000, 5 out of the 7 numbers wins them OMR500, 4 out of the 7 numbers, you will win OMR50 and if they match 3 out of the 7 numbers they will win OMR1. For the first two categories, the prize will be split between the winners.

O! Millionaire, aspires to generate thousands of jobs for nationals contribute to the country's GPA (VAT and profits taxation), raise the Happiness Index of Oman, promote tree-planting programme, reduce CO2 emissions, support ESG Initiatives, work with local distributors and sales affiliates, and support tourism promoting Oman as a country taking action against global warming.

IN BARKA

AT COMEX 2022

WOW Cinema opens

MUSCAT: The Sultanate's own cinema brand is all set to enrich the entertainment landscape in the Batinah region Oman's home-grown theatre brand WOW Cinema is now open at Barka Grand Centre in Barka. The six-screen multiplex is part of Grand Entertainment, a subsidiary of Al Tamman Investments.



Bringing all the latest blockbusters, WOW Cinema is set to enhance the entertainment landscape in the Batinah region. WOW Cinema features a variety of theatre experiences for movie lovers. Featuring a state-of-the-art expansive cinema lobby, the multiplex features Kids, a one-of-its-kind cinema concept created for the little ones.

WOW XL provides cinema-goers with the chance to watch all the latest motion pictures on a larger screen that measures 16.20m x 6.77m with the latest Dolby-Atmos sound system. For those looking to watch movies in the lap of luxury, WOW Gold Class provides all the facilities that include exclusive Gold Class Lounge access, in-seat service, and reclining seats to elevate the cinema experience. WOW Gold Class also doubles up as a fine space to host private parties and get-togethers.

Adding to the charm of movie

watching is WOW SKY where movie aficionados will be able to watch the latest flicks from the comfort of their cars soon. WOW Cinema will soon host exclusive screenings and previews. The cinema halls are also equipped to host corporate trainings and events.

"WOW Cinema has been conceptualised to redefine the movie-watching experience. We are thrilled to open the first home-grown multiplex in the Batinah region and thereby bring world-class cinema experience to the people there. We intend to open more movie theatres in the country soon, at various strategic locations," says Tushar Bajpai, Business Head, Grand Entertainment.

Al Tamman Group (www.al-tamman.com) is a key player in the Sultanate's retailtainment sector with defining projects concepts like Holoverse and Funtopia under their portfolio.

ODP wins award for excellence in cybersecurity

MUSCAT: Oman Data Park (ODP), the Sultanate's first IT-managed and cloud services provider, has won Comex Award For Excellence in Cyber Security, within its participation in COMEX 2022, which kicked off on Monday at the Oman International Convention and Exhibition Center and will last until Wednesday, that includes a conference on the Artificial Intelligence and other events related to the information technology.

The wining of Oman Data Park by this award is a testimony to its commitment to provide the best and most significant choice of data centre services in the Sultanate, as well as it is a recognition of ODP's efforts in predicting and detecting the cyber security threat and in providing preventive services, that to keep Omani business entities safe from cybercriminals hacking as well as reducing cyber-attacks.

Commenting on this event, Engineer Maqbool Al Wahaibi, CEO of Oman Data Park Company, said: "Winning this award is considered as a qualitative addition to the Sultanate's capabilities in preserving and protecting data locally, and it is also an affirmation of Oman Data Park's ability to continue to win recognitions and professional awards year after year."

He added: "This winning affirms



Oman Data Park's leadership in supporting the digital transformation efforts made by the government and the private sector, while all our services in various fields constitute smart, pioneering and effective solutions, that the concerned authorities and companies can rely on."

He also added: "Further to our delight by receiving this award, we are pleased to witness that COMEX 2022 is being held face to face with the public after an absence of the expo for the past 3 years. Thus event has an important role in enhancing knowledge of the technical aspects in the Sultanate, and considered

very practical in keeping the pace with the global technological developments, through providing various opportunities for the Sultanate of Oman to benefit from these developments."

Al-Wahaibi pointed out that Oman Data Park always looks forward to offering its quality services to Public and private companies in order to provide them opportunities to take advantage of the modern technology and employing it in developing their digital operations. ODP continues to provide infrastructure for artificial intelligence services and cloud services, as well as hosting data within the Sultanate of

Oman, to ensure the data security.

He emphasised that the number of Oman Data Park customers reached over 500 entities in the private corporate sector, while it provides its advanced services to small and medium enterprises within the framework of its national and social responsibility, by hosting their data via special packages for SMEs, benefiting from its work team that consisting of a group of qualified national cadres in the fields of accurate technology and in supporting data preservation process.

Through COMEX 2022, Oman Data Park showcased its various cloud services, hosting services, managed services and other specialized services that are provided by ODP to government agencies and private sector companies to meet their needs of managed and cloud hosting services.

At the same expo, ODP also highlighted its pioneering experience in the Managed Security Services which it provides through its Cyber Security Park, which contributes to providing high-quality services to many government agencies and private sector companies to meet their needs for managed and cloud hosting services. As well as it also presented visual presentations about its services.

COMEX OMAN 2022 Q&A

Trend Micro showcases its leading cybersecurity solutions

MUSCAT: An interview with As-sad Arabi, Managing Director, Gulf Cluster, Trend Micro. Exceprts:

What is Trend Micro and what does it have to offer?

Trend Micro is a global cybersecurity leader helping make the world safer for exchanging digital information. Fuelled by decades of security expertise, global threat research, and continuous innovation, we protect hundreds of thousands of organisations and millions of individuals across clouds, networks, devices, and endpoints.

As a leader in cloud and enterprise cybersecurity, we also deliver a powerful range of advanced threat defense techniques optimized for environments like AWS, Microsoft, and Google, and central visibility for better, faster detection and response.

Trend Micro's global threat research team delivers exceptional intelligence and insights that power our cybersecurity platform and help protect organizations around the world from 100s of millions of threats daily.

How important are tomorrow's innovations and how does it relate to actualising the Oman Vision 2040?

We always strive to deliver solutions and services for organizations to help them keep up with today's accelerated pace in the digital world. More importantly, provide tools and strategies that

can not only adapt to future challenges but boost their operational capabilities while securing all their digital environments.

Organisations in the country will have to rely heavily on the future of technology in order to improve various digital procedures, government services, and the country's digital infrastructure, and re-engineer the entire digital experience.

These enhancements will require robust cybersecurity innovations, strategies, and best practices to maintain stability and growth in every aspect of the country's agenda.

In support of the Oman Vision 2040, we are committed to collaborating with both the public and private sectors and fortifying their growth strategies with industry-leading solutions.

Why is it essential to support Comex2022?

Platforms like COMEX 2022 enable tech industry leaders in the region to not only showcase solutions to secure the digital transformation but exchange ideas and insights that can transform the way people work and live.

COMEX 2022 gives Trend Micro the opportunity to build on its commitment to safeguarding the digital journeys of every organization and individual in the modern-day digital world.

It is crucial that we are enabled to engage and interact with decision-makers and industry lead-



ers to raise awareness of today's threat landscape, and the tools and strategies that are required to face the cybersecurity challenges of the future.

Trend Micro is consistently spreading awareness on the necessities of today's cybersecurity across the region, aiming to reach more organizations and individuals to support their digital journeys. Better access to advanced solutions gives enterprises the potential to accelerate their development in the most secure manner.

This also gives us the chance to grow our presence in areas with organizations that lack the necessary resources to protect their digital assets.

What will Trend Micro be presenting at this year's COMEX 2022?

We aim to showcase our globally leading cybersecurity solutions

that protect every angle of operations for enterprises across the country. As organisations continue to advance or embark on their digital transformation journey, Trend Micro's Vision One, with XDR extended detection and response, provides a broader perspective and better context when it comes down to detecting, investigating, and responding to threats faster. This powerful tool enables superior cross-layered detection and investigation on a single, integrated platform.

We will also discuss and help organisations to further strengthen their cybersecurity strategies by incorporating the Zero Trust (ZT) approach. The ZT security model takes a step beyond the traditional modes of protection, treating every device, user, and connection to a network, inside and out of the organization, as a potential threat. The ZT approach focuses on authenticating resources, users, and assets individually before they can gain access to an enterprise's network.

Q: Why do organisations need to adopt better cybersecurity strategies?

We have to consider today's accelerated digital world and how it has provided easier ways to connect and increase productivity. The need for cybersecurity is more apparent now than ever, as more organizations and individuals are relying on digital innovations to make their lives easier. And now,

protecting their digital activities has become a top priority.

Today, hybrid work and learning are a very prominent fixture in almost every organization and household across the world. These remotely located access points can create complexities within a network, which must be protected with the most highly sophisticated solutions and industry-leading strategies in cybersecurity.

Additionally, migrations to the cloud continue to pick up the pace for enterprises of all sizes. Their workloads in the cloud require safer procedures and a fortified digital infrastructure. The cloud has become a more powerful tool yet bad actors continue to find more vulnerabilities to exploit.

These are also accompanied by advancements in AI and machine learning, IoT, 5G, automation, and integration, which provide a plethora of benefits and advantages. However, adopting new technology for organizations means new ways for cyberattacks to take place. And this is where Trend Micro's robust and multilayered solution on a single platform, such as the recently launched Trend Micro One, comes into play.

These challenges are reflected in the latest figures highlighted in Trend Micro's Annual Cybersecurity Report for 2021, over 4 million email threats and more than 4.6 million URL victim attacks were detected and blocked across Oman.

Additionally, 700 thousand mal-

ware attacks were identified and stopped. And as the country transitioned into remote work, Smart Home Network (SHN) solutions shielded home devices and prevented 581,000 SHN events.

The recent figures indicate, that within the evolving threat landscape, organizations need to adopt multi-layered solutions to be able to protect their operations against more sophisticated attacks from cybercriminals.

Q: Can you please tell us about Trend Micro One?

Trend Micro One, is a unified cybersecurity platform with a growing list of ecosystem technology partners that enables organizations to better understand, communicate, and lower cyber risks. This unified approach delivers a continuous lifecycle of risk and threat assessment with attack surface discovery, cyber risk analysis, and threat mitigation and response. Trend Micro One is the perfect security console to counter modern threat actors and their stealthy attacks in today's digital era. It identifies, monitors, and profiles cyber assets in customers' environments. Furthermore, it analyzes risk exposure, the status of vulnerabilities, configuration of security controls, and types of threat activity. In addition, it also ensures preventative controls and takes swift action to mitigate risks and remediate attacks across enterprises by leveraging Trend Micro's threat and risk intelligence.



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ROUND-UP



CTFP PROGRAMME

NBO staff boost trade finance skills with ICC Academy

MUSCAT: Continuing to foster a market-leading workforce, National Bank of Oman (NBO) has partnered with the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Academy to develop its teams’ trade finance skill-set.

Members of the bank’s Global Transaction Banking, Trade Finance and Corporate Banking Operations teams will complete the Certified Trade Finance Professional (CTFP) programme in the coming months, developing their expertise in key trade finance products and techniques as well as structured trade solutions as part

of the bank’s efforts to meet the dynamic requirements of its corporate customers.

As the educational arm of the International Chamber of Commerce, the world’s largest business organisation, ICC Academy offers a specialised and internationally-accredited certification for trade professionals designed by leading industry experts.

The structured preparation for the certification includes e-learning, lecture-led presentations, case-study discussions, one-on-one coaching and mock assessments, allowing participants to to

develop a wide range of expertise.

Mohammed Yahya Al Jabri, Head of Global Transaction Banking at NBO, said, “At NBO, we invest heavily in upgrading our staff members’ skillsets to make sure that they remain ahead of the curve and are can continue to serve our customers better. We are delighted to team up with ICC Academy to offer this industry-recognised specialty training programme as we reinforce our commitment to ensuring that corporate clients are supported by our team of dynamic and highly-skilled professionals.”

“This credible certification will

sure add value to our customers and develop the expertise of our employees to become well-rounded bankers capable of advising and assisting with both traditional and complex solutions,” Al Jabri further added.

The programme is one of many strategic interventions launched by NBO’s Academy of Excellence, which has been helping its employees meet their professional goals while serving a diverse clientele, ranging from small- to mid-sized local businesses to large conglomerates, multi-nationals and government entities.



RECENTLY FELICITATED



Khimji Ramdas honours 25 long-serving employees

MUSCAT: As an organisation that places immense importance on its employees, considering them one of the most valuable assets of the company, Khimji Ramdas Group recently felicitated 25 of its employees for completing 25 years of service. A total of 397 awardees completed a 25-year tenure between 2010 and 2021. In the 12th edition in 2022, 26 more employees were added to the list, out of which 18 were Omani nationals. As a mark of respect, 25 grams of gold were given to the employees for their ongoing contribution to the company.

Commenting on the ceremony, Pankaj Khimji, Director of Khimji Ramdas Group said, “One of the core pillars of Khimji Ramdas is ‘care’, and that begins with our employees. We have achieved great milestones and the credit, undoubtedly, goes to the unfaltering dedication, professionalism, and responsibility that our employees have demonstrated. The inherent values of trust, commitment, and learning have been the cornerstone of our success and these beliefs have formed the base of a strong and long-running organisation. While we congratulate all the awardees at the event, we also thank them for their years of loyalty, hard work, and faith in the company.”

Meanwhile, Nailesh Khimji, Director, Khimji Ramdas Group further added saying, “Our employees are the ambassadors of our organisation and play a quintessential role in its success story. On behalf of the entire board of directors, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to everyone who has helped create the strong brand identity of Khimji Ramdas. These contributions are of paramount importance to the continued growth of the organisation and are a mark of passion, perseverance, and dedication.”

Said Abdullah Said Shereiqi who works in the Khimji Ramdas Nizwa Branch said, “The most profound thing at Khimji Ramdas is the amount of importance the company places on appreciating the efforts of its employees while respecting their needs. As a long-term employee of the company, I have always felt supported, encouraged, and motivated to keep learning and progressing in my career.”

Jamila Issa Ali Albalushi who

works at the Pizza Hut Mabela branch, which is a part of Khimji Ramdas Lifestyle Cluster, expressed her pride in being a part of such a reputable company saying, “Khimji Ramdas has been a progressive company that has focused on empowering women. I am the first Omani woman from my family to work in the field of hospitality and the first Omani woman to get promoted in the branch that I am working in. I followed in my father’s footsteps, who had been a loyal employee of Khimji Ramdas for 52 years. He was one of the first employees to join the company. Though I started out doing a job that I loved, I quickly progressed from kitchen staff to the regional manager. This is a testament to the opportunities the company provides for its employees.”

Sharing a similar opinion, Samir Jan Mohammed Ghulam, a site supervisor in the Building Materials Business at KR Infrastructure Cluster said, “I built my career at Khimji Ramdas. The work culture at Khimji Ramdas encouraged me to learn new skills at the company’s garage and I was soon promoted to the post of assistant mechanic. The company also gave me a chance to explore other avenues of interest as I then tried my skills in the shipping sector before moving to the Sports and Fitness segment where I grew to a senior employee position.”

Promoting a conducive work environment that promotes productivity, Khimji Ramdas Group has been encouraging its employees to explore new challenges, diversify their knowledge, and lead by example.

Commenting on her years of service at Khimji Ramdas, Zakiya Hamood Mohammed Al Rahbi, Assistant Divisional Manager at Khimji Ramdas Shipping Business, Projects & Logistics Cluster said, “Despite the size of the company, the attention and respect given to every employee is commendable. Although I started out as a delivery worker, the company recognised my keen interest in accounting and helped me acquire a suitable role in the relevant department where I was the only woman at that time. The culture of sharing experiences, mentoring, and encouraging one another is prominent at Khimji Ramdas and has been instrumental to my personal and professional growth.”

Investments in CX technology are all set to soar as 74 per cent organisations in the Middle East plan to invest more than 200,000 US\$ in 2022, revealed the Intelligence Report

MUSCAT: Organisations that have effectively invested in the digitisation of their CX journey and made a mark to that effect were recognised at the Customer Experience Live and Intelligent Automation Show Middle East. Omani organisations fetching top honours for their exemplary CX, AI and digital performances included Omantel, Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) and Al Mouj Muscat.

Winning two prestigious awards namely Best Service Delivery Telecom and Best Intelligent Automation Project in Telecom, Talal Said Al Mamari, CEO,

Omantel said, “As far as automation is concerned, delivering high value to our customers through operational excellence is vital to us. Some of the opportunities lie in accelerated digitisation of products and services as we transition towards the future.”

Similarly, bagging the Best Intelligent Automation Project in Oil and Gas and Intelligent Automation Leader of the Year Oil and Gas awards, Saud Zakwani, Head of Data Science, Petroleum Development Oman said, “With hyper-automation and continuous improvement a key priority, intelligent automation is the common winning strategy being leveraged by organisations to transform processes and deliver bottom line impacts. At PDO, we are combining traditional automation methods with intellectual assets and data science to achieve agility and be a dynamic organisation.”

Investments in CX technology are all set to soar as 74 per cent organisations in the Middle East plan to invest more than 200,000 US\$ in 2022, revealed the Intelligence Report launched on the sidelines of the Customer Experience Live and Intelligent Automation Shows Middle East held in Dubai over two days that concluded on 25th May. Organised by Customer Experience Live, a unique digital platform, the event dedicated to the regional CX industry saw over 600 senior lead-



ers gather and share insights on how they transformed CX and automation into a growth lever for their organisations.

Providing key insights on regional CX industry the report states that 62 per cent companies plan to revisit their long term CX strategies while 40 per cent plan to make significant investments within a year.

Speaking at the launch, Ayusha

Tyagi, Managing Director, Customer Experience Live, said, “As organisations seek to increase customer understanding, improve loyalty and reduce churn rate, 48 per cent believe that digital transformation implementation or expanding AI, chatbots, analytics, and cloud capabilities are of utmost importance to meet consumer demand and enhance the experience.”

2022 FIA WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

GAZOO Racing wins 6 hours of Spa-Francorchamps

MUSCAT: The GAZOO Racing (GR) team earned its first win of the 2022 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) season after an eventful 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps. World Champions Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi, and José María López, driving the No.7 Toyota GR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercar, overcame a strong challenge from Hypercar competitors, as well as adverse weather, to win round two of the 2022 season, the final event before the Le Mans 24 Hours.

With the stunning performance at the 7.004 km circuit in Stavelot, Belgium, the team celebrated its sixth consecutive victory at Spa-Francorchamps with seven wins out of eight races for Toyota GR010 Hybrid Electric since the Hypercar was introduced at Spa in 2021. The race had started full of promise for the GR team that showcased its unmatched capabilities throughout the stages. As the race progressed, extreme weather conditions led to several off-track incidents, interrup-



tions, and red flag periods. However, Mike and Kamui maintained steady performance throughout the race amid the challenges.

Inside the last hour-and-a-half, José María took the wheel of the No.7 Toyota GR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercar for the final stint, which saw a close battle among the three Hypercar contenders amid weather-driven disruptions. But eventually, José María managed to lead the race's final stages, especially as track conditions improved continuously and crossed the line after six hours to win by 27.473secs from the competitor car.

Akio Toyoda, President and

CEO of Toyota Motor Corporation, commented: “Thank you to Mike, Kamui, and José María for their first victory of this season. I am pleased with the first victory of the new Team Principal, Kamui, and thank you for your hard work in your dual role. Heavy rain posed a significant challenge, but we at Toyota truly believe that the car must be safe to drive in any circumstance. The race gave us yet another opportunity to gain invaluable insights into making ever-better cars that drivers can drive with confidence. I’m looking forward to seeing everyone in the team work closely together to support our two GR010 Hybrid

Electric vehicles to deliver an exciting race at Le Mans. Thank you to all the fans for your support for us this time as well.”

Over the years, Toyota has been participating in many different forms of motorsports, including Formula One, the World Endurance Championship (WEC), and the Nürburgring 24 Hours endurance race. Toyota’s participation in these events was overseen by separate entities within the company until April 2015, when Toyota established GR, to consolidate all of its motorsport’s activities under one in-house brand. Representing Toyota’s belief that ‘the roads build the people, and the people build the cars,’ GR highlights the role of motorsports as a fundamental pillar of Toyota’s commitment to making ‘ever-better’ cars. Harnessing years of experience gained under the extreme conditions of various motorsports events, GR aims to forge new technologies and solutions that bring the freedom, adventure, and joy of driving to everyone.



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Bank Muscat continues attractive Baituna home finance promotion

As part of its efforts to improve financial inclusion, the bank is currently offering an attractive interest rate on home finance till 30 June 2022 to select customer segments

MUSCAT: As the largest financial services provider in Oman and aligned to its customer-centric vision, Bank Muscat has been pro-

viding various financing products to the largest number of customers in Oman, which are in line with their unique needs.

Bank Muscat's Baituna home finance in particular has been helping large numbers of customers over the years in financing their dream home.

As part of its efforts to improve financial inclusion, the bank is currently offering an attractive interest rate on home finance till 30th June 2022 to select customer segments, who are currently not availing any financing from the bank. New customers can also avail the attractive offer by applying for financing or transferring their existing financing to Bank Muscat.

Omani nationals in Government institutions, Tier 1 companies, select government and private sector entities and pensioners are eligible for this special offer, which features low interest rates



starting at 4.5 percent. Customers can use Baituna financing up to OMR500,000 and for a tenor up to 25 years to construct or purchase

new homes or buy land for residential construction. Bank Muscat customers can take advantage of the fast processing of applica-

tions and the excellent insurance coverage for their financing. Flexible payment options and quick documentation makes Baituna the leading home finance in the Sultanate. Documents required include ID card, Salary assignment letter, Krooki and Mulkiya copy, valuation of property from an approved evaluator, Sales and Purchase agreement, and seller ID. Construction legalisation (Eba-haa) and maps as well as Advisory letter and contractor agreement are required in case of construction loans.

Speaking about Baituna, Abdullah Tamman Al Maashani, General Manager - Products, said: "Bank Muscat is very keen to provide products and benefits in line with the needs of its customers, and is continuously fine-tuning and developing them. We would also like to thank our customers for the strong confidence in our products and services and their

valuable feedback, which is helping the bank develop and offer new products that best serve the needs of its customers. We would like to encourage all eligible customers to take maximum advantage of this special offer at the earliest in making their dream homes a reality.

Housing finance development is particularly important in boosting equitable economic growth, enabling households build assets, improving living conditions, empowering a country's population, and strengthening communities and overall social cohesion.

Bank Muscat is committed to supporting this crucial sector and strengthening its role in the development and growth of the Sultanate's economy.

As Oman prepares for the next phase of its progress and development under the landmark Oman Vision 20240, the role of home financing is only set to grow more and more important.

FOR ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

ABQ announces competition winners

MUSCAT: Being the largest private school operator in Oman, ABQ Education Group is passionate about the health and well-being of the youth in this country and therefore committed as an official partner of this year's Al Mouj Muscat Marathon. Their aim is to reiterate the importance of a healthy and active lifestyle amongst school going children.

With a few months to go before the race in November, ABQ, in association with the Al Mouj Muscat Marathon, hosted an online competition applicable to the kids' category participants. The competition entrants had to name their favourite sports star and provide a reason for their answers. Three children were selected to each win a Chromebook based on their answers.

ABQ Education Group Chief Executive Officer, Humayun Kabir, says, "It was not an easy task to choose the winners as the entrants really provided strong arguments to support their choices. Besides the talent and impressive achievements of the sports stars, many children mentioned the characteristics that these athletes display which inspire others and enable them to achieve great heights. The three winners are very deserving recipients of the Chromebook prizes."

The winner in each age category is:

- Age 7-8: Jumana Al Sibani
- Age 9-10: Faris Al Lawati
- Age 11-12: Deborah Ankita



The Marathon organizer, Sabco Sports' Managing Director, Nic Cartwright, says, "This competition gave Al Mouj Muscat Marathon children the opportunity to express their passion towards fitness and identify the sportsmen and women all over the world who inspire our young athletes to never quit. It was a great initiative by ABQ Education Group to reinforce the importance of health, sport and fitness among the youth of Oman at grassroots level."

The Al Mouj Muscat Marathon is the most popular event on the national sporting calendar and Oman's biggest race.

The extended entry period allows for even more participants to enter and promises to be the biggest marathon to date. For more information, please visit www.muscatmarathon.om.

MAZOOON ELECTRICITY



Workshop on first aid for employees organised

MUSCAT: To mitigate the effects of an accident or medical emergency, Mazoon Electricity Company, the leading electricity provider in Oman, organised a workshop on first aid for employees.

The workshop, held to train employees with first aid procedures, was conducted by legal nurse Ammar Al Lawati.

First aid skills

The objective of equipping employees with first aid skills is to

preserve life, aid recovery and manage the incident.

A spokesperson for Mazoon Electricity said, "First aid training helps employees become more conscious of safety in the workplace, leading to a reduced number of accidents and injuries. We also feel employees trained in first aid will understand the steps to take during an emergency. A quick response can reduce recovery time, leading to less time lost from injuries."

To provide employees with the

knowledge, practical skills and understanding required to provide and coordinate first aid in the workplace is in compliance with Mazoon Electricity's HSE policy.

Mazoon Electricity Company SAOC (MZEC) is a closed Omani joint stock company registered under the Commercial Companies Law of Oman.

The company is primarily undertaking regulated distribution and supply of electricity in Al Dakhiliya, South Al Sharqiya,

North Al Sharqiya, South Batinah governorates and Suwaiq in North Batinah governorate under a license issued by the Authority of Public Services Regulation, Oman (Previously known as Authority Electricity Regulation - AER). The establishment and operations of the company are governed by the provisions of the Law for Regulation and Privatisation of the Electricity and Related Water Sector (the Sector Law) promulgated by the Royal Decree 78/2004.

UNIQUE FLAVOURS



Nesto's Al Khoud store kicks off 'food fiesta'

MUSCAT: Nesto Hypermarket has launched the first season of "Food fiesta", at their Al Khoud store. The event celebrates the unique flavours from across the globe. The food fiesta 2022, which runs from May 19 till May 28, 2022, provides customers an opportunity to discover unique eats and treats from all over the world. The fiesta was inaugurated by Member of the Shura Council rep-

resenting the Wilayat of Seeb, His Excellency Qassim bin Marhoon Al Ameri, in the presence of Nesto officials.

Nine days festival

The nine days festival, which will give customers a chance to be part of cookery contests, fun activities. Activities such as free sampling sessions and exhibitions will be held as part of the event. Special

in-store sampling counters will be put up throughout the promotion, offering customers an opportunity to sample a variety of food products on display.

Speaking on the promotion, Rafi Valiyakath, General Manager - Nesto, Al khoud, remarked, "We launch the food fiesta to take our customers on an appetising journey to savor an array of culinary delights from around the world,

be part of some fun activities. We also have big discounts and stunning offers on food products, crockery, and appliances during this period." Nesto has constantly been providing its customers the ultimate shopping experience with maximum value for money. All of Nesto's seasonal promotions and offers are intended to continuously provide the best of the world to their customers.



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