



Founded 1975 · Volume 49 No. 220 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

TIMESOFOMAN.COM

FACEBOOK.COM/TIMESOFOMAN

TWITTER.COM/TIMESOFOMAN

YOUTUBE.COM/USER/TIMESOFOMANONLINE

TIMESOFOMAN.COM/WHATSAPP

TIMESOFOMAN.COM/RSS

LINKEDIN.COM/COMPANY/TIMES-OF-OMAN

INSTAGRAM.COM/TIMESOFOMAN



Bank Muscat. Better Everyday.
Terms and conditions apply.

MINISTERIAL DECISION NO. (5/2025)

New decision issued for governance of closed joint-stock companies

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion issued a ministerial decision regarding the principles of governance for closed joint-stock companies. The ministerial decision No. (5/2025) states that closed joint-stock companies must operate in accordance with governance principles, except for those in which the government holds stakes. The decision requires companies to amend their articles of association in a way that does not conflict with the provisions of these principles, and the ministry will monitor the company's compliance with this requirement.

Dr. Saleh Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion for Trade and Industry, stated that the decision on the principles of governance for closed joint-stock companies contributes to stimulating companies and frames their operations according to the best practices in company management, aligning with global standards. He emphasised that it is a fundamental pillar in developing their operations and enhancing the performance of these companies from administrative, technical, and commercial perspectives, which in turn strengthens the position of these companies and contributes to building a strong and resilient economy.

He explained that corporate governance enhances the continuity of companies by delivering the best practices in company management. It also encourages companies to optimally and prudently invest their capabilities and resources by creating a work environment based on responsibility, oversight, and compliance, with clarity and transparency as its foundation. This includes ensuring the best responsibilities are upheld by boards of directors and executive management, defining authorities, and

establishing decision-making mechanisms that ensure the sustainability of the companies' operations.

Enhancing transparency

Nasra bint Sultan Al Habsi, Director General of Trade at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion, emphasised that the principles of governance for closed joint-stock companies aim to enhance transparency, ensure good management of companies, and protect the rights of shareholders and stakeholders. She also noted that governance comes with a range of benefits and incentives that encourage companies to adopt it.

She added that governance helps to build trust and transparency, ensuring that financial and administrative reports are clear and up-to-date, which strengthens the confidence of shareholders and investors. Governance also aids in the systematic identification and management of risks that the company may face, with fair and equal standards available to all shareholders, including small investors. It ensures appropriate representation of the interests of all stakeholders, such as employees, suppliers, and customers. Furthermore, governance makes the board of directors and executive management more accountable to shareholders and contributes to improving the quality of administrative decisions, which positively impacts the overall performance of the company.

Al Habsi further stated that applying governance principles enhances a company's reputation in the market, making it more attractive to both local and international investors, and enables it to access top sources of funding at better prices and terms. It also ensures that companies comply with the laws and regulations in Oman, including the Commercial Companies Law, reducing risks and penalties resulting from poor management or breach of obligations.

OMAN-BAHRAIN RELATIONS DEEP-ROOTED IN HISTORY

King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain will pay a state visit to the Sultanate of Oman today

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Oman-Bahrain relations are deep-rooted in history which were established by fathers and forefathers of both nations, officials have said ahead of the King of Bahrain's visit to Oman on Tuesday.

King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain will pay a state visit to the Sultanate of Oman today.

Juma Ahmed Al Kaabi, Ambassador of Bahrain to the Sultanate of Oman, said that the visit of King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa to the Sultanate of Oman constitutes an embodiment of bilateral relations that have been established decades ago, the ties that stem from



the common bonds of fraternity between the two countries.

"They are fraternal relations that go deep into history from the sites of civilisations in Dilmun (Bahrain) and Magan (Oman), coupled with the strategic, commercial and cultural relations and based on bonds of amity and kinship. Today, bilateral relations are at their peak, thanks to the Royal directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa and their enlightened visions that will continue to invigorate bilateral relations and upgrade them further," Al Kaabi added. Al Kaabi

told Oman News Agency (ONA) that the two countries have consensus on the fundamentals of foreign policy, including neutrality, good neighbourliness, noninterference in the internal affairs of other countries and the predominance of the dialogue.

He added that Oman and Bahrain also share values of balanced stand in tackling issues of human coexistence and the promotion of international cooperation, the realisation of sustainable peace and sustainable development, the protection of human rights and freedoms, and the protection of environment.

The Bahraini ambassador pointed

out that the state visit bears testimony to the depth of bilateral relations that it will open up vistas of cooperation in various fields leading to integration.

It is hoped that the visit will see the signing of agreements, memoranda of understanding and executive programmes in several fields, including cooperation in museum affairs, education, food security, investment, the development of industries and in-country value (ICV), the media, health, endowments, labour, human resources development, insurance, social protection, agricultural production and stock market fields. **>A2**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Number of passengers at Omani airports rises

1 By the end of November 2024, the number of passengers travelling through Omani airports increased by 3.1%, reaching 13,277,414 on 98,933 flights. **>A2**



OMAN Four advanced surgeries conducted

2 A specialised medical team at Khoula Hospital succeeded in conducting four surgeries to treat wide-neck cerebral aneurysms. **>A3**

WORLD Los Angeles fire death toll rises to 24

3 The Los Angeles coroner's daily update has seen the number of deaths attributed to the ongoing wildfires rise to 24. **>A7**

LANDMARK

Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque introduces entry fee to enhance visitor experience

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, an architectural marvel and one of Oman's most visited landmarks, has introduced entry fees for visitors as part of an initiative aimed at improving services and managing rising footfall.

The Sultan Qaboos Higher Centre for Culture and Science (SQHCCS) clarified the decision, emphasising that the measure ensures a more structured and enriching experience for tourists while preserving the sanctity and historic significance of the mosque.

Inaugurated by the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the Grand Mosque is celebrated for its stunning design, including a magnificent 14-metre chandelier and a prayer carpet once renowned as the world's largest single-piece carpet. These features, alongside its role as a spiritual and cultural beacon, make the mosque a must-visit destination for both international and domestic travelers.

SQHCCS addressed concerns raised on social media, stating that the fees are intended to better manage the rising number of visitors, particularly during peak tour-



ist seasons. The influx has posed challenges to maintaining the mosque's facilities and ensuring a serene environment for worshippers and visitors alike.

In its official statement, SQHCCS said, "The Grand Mosque is Oman's primary tourist destination. In light of increasing visitor numbers, the administration has partnered with the private sector to develop the cultural facade of



the mosque. This collaboration allows small and medium-sized enterprises to compete in providing services, thus fostering economic opportunities within Oman."

On Monday, a visiting expat family of three was charged a total of OMR25,400, with individual tickets priced at OMR 8 plus tax.

"It is a beautiful architectural monument, and we didn't mind paying the entry fee as it is usually the norm whenever you visit tourist attractions around the world," said V. S. Sharma, an Indian bureaucrat on a short visit to Oman. **>A5**



1.5L Turbo Engine, 175 hp, 7-Speed DCT, 2WD
SUPER WARRANTY 6 YEARS / UNLIMITED MILEAGE*

800 50800 9662 8909

Arabian Gulf Automobiles and Equipment LLC

*Terms and Conditions Apply

*Easy Monthly Installment is calculated based on 20% down payment for 6 years loan tenure. Subject to credit approvals from Banks only. Images shown are for illustrative purpose only. Specification may vary as per the model variant. To know more, please visit the CHANGAN AUTO Showroom.

Showrooms : Qurum 94641010, Mawaleh 97888180, Nizwa 96628940, Sohar 95351200, Salalah 96629050, Ibri 96628930

Sales Centers : Barka 96629010, Sur 96628920

Over 13mn travel through Oman airports till Nov

The total number of flights landing and departing from the airports of the Sultanate of Oman by the end of November 2024 reached 98,933



MUSCAT: The total number of passengers travelling through the airports of the Sultanate of Oman by the end of November 2024 reached 13,277,414.

Meanwhile, the total number of flights landing and departing from the airports of the Sultanate of Oman by the end of November 2024 reached 98,933, according to preliminary statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information.

The number of passengers through Muscat International Airport by the end of November 2024

reached about 11,737,391, an increase of 2.7%, of which 10,647,982 were international passengers and 1,089,409 were domestic passengers.

The number of flights through Muscat International Airport by the end of November 2024 reached 88,002, of which 79,675 were international flights and 8,327 were domestic flights.

Regarding the most prominent nationalities travelling at Muscat International Airport, Indian nationality topped the number of passengers on flights departing

and arriving through the airport, with a total of 153,557 passengers by the end of November 2024, (the number of arrivals was 76,852 passengers and departures were 76,705 passengers), followed by Omani nationals with a total of 115,871 passengers, (the number of arrivals was 57,058 passengers and departures were 58,813 passengers), and Pakistani nationality with a total of 49,438 passengers (the number of arrivals was 24,115 passengers and departures were 25,323 passengers).

The number of passengers

through Salalah Airport reached 1,417,947 passengers, an increase of 5.5%, who travelled on board 9,751 flights, comprising a decrease by 2%. The number of international flights through Salalah Airport reached 4,693, carrying 612,994 passengers, while the number of domestic flights reached 5,058, with 804,953 passengers on board.

The number of passengers through Sohar Airport reached 66,531 on 610 flights, while the number of passengers through Duqm Airport reached 55,545 on 570 flights. -ONA

Sayyid Hamoud discusses Arab security issues

MUSCAT: Sayyid Hamoud Faisal Al Busaidi, Minister of Interior received in his office on Monday Dr. Mohammed Ali Koman, Secretary General of the Arab Interior Ministers Council, who is currently visiting the Sultanate of Oman.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on topics scheduled for discussion in the agenda of the upcoming meeting

of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers, in addition to reviewing ways to develop joint Arab security cooperation in various security fields.

The meeting was attended by Eng. Khalid Hilal Al Busaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior and Maj.Gen Abdullah Ali Al Harthy, Assistant Inspector General of Police and Customs for Operations. -ONA



'SPARKLES OF OMAN'

Inspiring art-for-charity event to witness record-breaking painting masterpiece

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's fifth anniversary celebrations of its Renaissance Day will witness a historic event featuring a celebrated, internationally known, artist who is all set to make a concerted bid to enter the Guinness Book of World Records with an attempt to create a sizable painting in a painting marathon.

Iranian artist Mahnoush Abbasgholy (Mia), in her individual 'paint-athon', will be attempting to paint a 40-metres (40mts x 120cms) artwork in seven days, hoping to paint over 15 hours a day, completing the painting in over 100 hours, which when completed will help her enter into the Guinness Book of World Records.

Sparkles of Oman

This ground-breaking live, seven-days' event, titled 'Sparkles of Oman', will be held at Al Bandar lawn area of Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah from January 15 to 21. Residents of Oman are invited to witness this historic event, set to place the Sultanate of Oman on the world map.

Sparkling tribute to Oman

The theme of the 'Sparkles of Oman' painting will capture Oman's mesmerising landscapes, city lights, beaches, mountains and will depict a glowing interpretation of Omani landscape,



culture and heritage. "It will be a vibrant journey through the Sultanate's breath-taking scenery using a medium of contemporary art, weaving gold and silver leaf into the panoramas, adding texture and vibrant colours," Abbasgholy explained. "It will be a sparkling tribute to Oman through art," she added. The finished painting will later be auctioned off to benefit the non-governmental organisation, Children First Association.

Royal patronage

The opening ceremony, on January 15 at 10.30am onwards, of the grand event will be held under the patronage of Sayyid Khalid bin Hamed bin Hamoud Al Busaidi,

chairman of Sabco group of companies and Sheikh Ahmed bin Suwaidan Al Balushi, chairman of Al Balushi Investments.

The closing ceremony, on January 22 at 5.30pm onwards, will be held under the patronage of Her Highness Dr Mona bint Fahad Al Said, assistant vice chancellor – external cooperation – Sultan Qaboos University and the chairperson of Children First Association and Sheikh Ahmed bin Suwaidan Al Balushi.

20 years of hospitality

This inspiring art-for-charity event is hosted at the Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah. The resort along with Shangri-La Al Husn marks

their 20 years of exceptional hospitality in the Sultanate of Oman.

Artist Abbasgholy's painting will be auctioned off to benefit the Children First Association, embodying Shangri-La's ongoing commitment to meaningful community engagement, a top hotel official commented.

Over the past two decades, Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah has become a cherished family resort offering vibrant experiences, while Shangri-La Al Husn serves as a serene retreat for adults seeking luxury and tranquillity. As part of their year-long anniversary celebrations, Sparkles of Oman sets the tone for a series of exciting events and exclusive offers

throughout the year.

"It is such an honour to host an event that contributes to the community, with proceeds from the painting's auction going to Children First Association," Philippe Kronberg, the resort's general manager, said.

"We are thrilled to support this Guinness World Record attempt and to kick off our 20th anniversary celebrations with an initiative that not only inspires but also gives back to the community. Shangri-La has always been at the heart of Oman's vibrant cultural and social events, and we are proud to begin the year with a cause that brings joy and hope to children," Kronberg added.



JOINT COOPERATION

Oman, Cuba hold talks to boost ties

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Cuba held in Muscat on Monday the first round of the political consultations session.

During the session, the Omani side was chaired by Sheikh Khalifa Ali Al Harthy, while-Gerardo Peñalver, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba chaired his country's side.

The session explored means of promoting the joint cooperation and the existing relations. It underlined the two countries' keenness to boost cooperation in all areas.

The two sides also discussed a set of regional and international issues.

The session was attended by Vladimir Andres Gonzalez, Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to the Sultanate of Oman and minister plenipotentiary Dr. Hanan Ibrahim Al Shihi, Head of America Department at the Foreign Ministry. It was also attended by several officials from both sides. -ONA



STATE VISIT

Oman and Bahrain expected to sign many agreements

< FROM
A1

He pointed out that the Omani-Bahraini Investment Company will be announced (with an estimated capital of OMR10 million).

He added that the company, whose contract was signed in Bahrain during the visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, would constitute a new start to establish investment projects that benefit the two countries and the two peoples.

He added that, since the formation of the Omani-Bahraini Joint Committee, eight agreements, 30 memoranda of understanding and 10 executive programmes have been signed in various diplomatic, economic, cultural, social, sports, environmental and other fields. He pointed out that the recommendations of the Bahraini-Omani Joint Committee aim to maximise the volume of cooperation in all development areas that generated positive outcomes.

Al Kaabi said that the Omani-

Bahraini Business Council, which brings together the chambers of commerce and industry in the two countries, embarked on studying prospects for cooperation in many economic, commercial and investment fields, with the prime objective of achieving integration between Oman 2040 and Bahrain 2030.

Al Kaabi added that the volume of commercial exchange between the two countries in 2023 ranged between \$850 million and \$1.4 billion.

He added that the volume of Bahraini exports to the Sultanate of Oman stood at about \$843 million in 2023, while the volume of Omani exports to Bahrain amounted to about \$558 million in the same year.

As many as 876 Bahraini companies do business in the Sultanate of Oman, while the number of Omani companies operating in the Kingdom of Bahrain is about 270 companies, and there are 1,362 Omani investors who own shares in companies listed on the

Bahrain Stock Exchange, while the number of Bahraini investors who own shares in companies listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange is 696 investors.

Al Kaabi said that the number of tourists from the Sultanate of Oman to the Kingdom of Bahrain reached 57,000 during 2023, while the number of tourists from the Kingdom of Bahrain to the Sultanate of Oman stood at 47,000.

He pointed out that the volume of Bahraini investment in the Sultanate of Oman stood at 470 million dinars or about \$1.25 billion, while the volume of Omani direct investment in Bahrain amounted to about 290 million dinars, or about \$772 million.

The number of licenses for economic activities, issued in favour of Omani citizens in the Kingdom of Bahrain, stood at about 1,236 in 2023, while the number of licenses for economic activities granted to Bahraini citizens in the Sultanate of Oman amounted to about 1140 in the same year.



Introducing
**DOLPHIN CLUB
MEMBERSHIP**

**PACKAGE
INCLUDE**

- Member access to the main swimming pool and 2 gyms
- Member only bulk store with monthly spend of 400 OMR per month
- Members enjoy access to the Dolphin Club Restaurant & Lounge

INTRODUCTORY OFFER

- 12 Month Membership **195 OMR**
- 6 Month Membership **120 OMR**

7274 4460 / 9488 6986

club@dolphinvillagemuscat.com

@dolphinvillageoman, @dolphinvillage_club

www.facebook.com/DolphinVillage/

TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLIED

Terms And Condition Applies



Enjoy priority for transactions

With Al Rifaa Privilege Account

Visit your nearest branch today



الأعمال المصرفية الحصرية
PRIVILEGE BANKING

2479 111

www.barkhofar.com



barkhofar

Scan to learn more





Al Rifaa

A Dutchman in search of an Omani Samaritan who gave him a lifeline

At around 3.15 pm, Erik got hit by an SUV while crossing Saih al-Maleh street, not far from Mina al-Fahal in Al-Qurum. The person driving the car that hit Erik fled the scene

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A Dutchman, who lived in Oman as a young boy in the 90s, is now looking for the Omani who rescued him after the driver who hit him had fled the scene.

It was January 14, 1998. Sultan Qaboos Street was the only major motorway in Muscat and the only shopping malls around were those in Al-Qurum.

The area beyond Seeb International Airport, was not like the sprawling suburb of today.

On that fateful day, Erik Prins, 11-year-old, was cycling back home from PDO School at Ras al Hamra. His parents just bought him a new bicycle, imported from the Netherlands.

In a car-centred society like Oman, cyclists were a rare sight in traffic, especially in those days.

And as he lived outside the PDO camp, contrary to most PDO expats, the trip was not a straightforward one for the young boy.



LUCKY TO SURVIVE: The site of the accident at Saih al-Maleh street, not far from Mina al-Fahal in Al-Qurum (left) and Erik moving around Muscat in 2023.



Erik Prins exploring Nizwa in mid-1990s.

Then at around 3.15 pm, Erik got hit by an SUV while crossing Saih al-Maleh street, not far from Mina al-Fahal in Al-Qurum. The person driving the car that just hit Erik

fled the scene.

And Erik was left on his own. All Erik could remember, was the moment he woke up in Khoula Hospital five days later.

“I woke up and vaguely saw my parents standing next to my bed. I had no idea what had happened,” Erik told the Times of Oman. “Later my parents told me that I had been in a coma for five days and I still could not speak after gaining consciousness.”

Erik suffered several injuries, including a broken leg and a head injury. He had to stay in the hospital for over a month, missing out on school, including his class’s sea-side trip and their visit to remote Fahud.

However, Erik was lucky to have arrived at the hospital in time. While the culprit had left Erik to bleed, an alert Omani witnessing the collision immediately called PDO, after which he was brought to the emergency ward.

“Looking back, I realise that this person saved my life by inter-

vening,” Erik said. “The fact that I was in coma and ended up with a broken leg meant that the impact must have been huge. Had he not been there, things could have been much worse.”

Long recovery process

A long recovery process followed, during which Erik had to undergo numerous operations in Oman and the Netherlands.

“I remember I had to wear a plaster from chest to toe. I couldn’t move or do anything, it was awful,” Erik said.

After his recovery, Erik and his parents met the kind witness, called Saleh. “My parents and I were extremely grateful to him, but I was too young to really talk to him, and thank him personally,” Erik said.

In the summer of 1998, Erik and

his parents returned to the Netherlands after a five-year long stay in Oman. Erik visited Oman numerous times in the years after. In fact, his connection to the Sultanate led him to study Arabic, and in 2016 he even returned to Oman to work as a Special Correspondent here at the Times of Oman.

Now, after so many years, Erik wants to find Saleh. While he no longer has any contact details, he does remember his surname (known at TOO) and that Saleh’s wife worked at Ras al-Hamra Recreational Centre at the time.

“After our stay in Oman, the Sultanate got a special place in my heart, especially since my accident,” Erik said. “This was an eventful part of my life, and now I feel the need to speak to Saleh and share my experiences with him.”

CONSULAR PATENT HANDED TO HONORARY CONSUL OF SOUTH AFRICA IN MUSCAT

Najeeb Yahya Al Balushi, Head of the Protocols Department at the Foreign Ministry handed over the consular patent to Lujaina Mohsen Haider Darwish, appointing her as an honorary consul of the Republic of South Africa in Muscat. — ONA



MODERN MEDICAL DEVICES

Khoula Hospital doctors conduct four advanced surgeries to treat aneurysms

MUSCAT: A specialised medical team at Khoula Hospital succeeded in conducting four surgeries to treat wide-neck cerebral aneurysms, using modern medical devices as an alternative to traditional complex open surgical procedures.

Dr. Ahmed Hamoud Al Habsi, Neuro-Interventional Radiologist at Khoula Hospital, said that the advanced devices have a variety of advantages, including ease of use and high accuracy in guiding the treatment process and reducing the risks associated with traditional surgical procedures.

The devices also eliminate the need to use blood-thinning medications when using stents, said Dr. Ahmed, noting that this reduces potential complications.

He pointed out that the new de-



vices fully treat aneurysm in the neck, thus offering an opportunity to treat a wider range of cases of cerebral aneurysms, both haem-

orrhagic and non-haemorrhagic. He pointed out that the team plans to treat 20 additional cases over the next two years.

For his part, Dr. Rashid Mohammed Al Alawi, Director General of Khoula Hospital, described the achievement as an advanced step in providing specialized medical care in line with the latest international standards.

Dr. Rashid pointed out that this approach enhances Khoula Hospital’s status as a leading centre for treating complex medical cases. The achievement constitutes a milestone for the health sector in the Sultanate of Oman, he added. — ONA

OMAN VISION 2040

National Local Content Laboratory to promote in-country value

MUSCAT: The National Local Content Laboratory kicked off on Monday at Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, with the participation of 43 government and private sector establishments.

The lab is organised by the Secretariat General of the Tender Board in cooperation with the Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit.

The two-week lab discusses issues of relevance to promoting the in-country value (ICV) with a view to enhancing the national economy. Envisaged measures include the implementation of policies to

encourage companies to rely on local resources, cooperation among educational institutions to help develop related skills, and enabling local institutions to expand. It also looks into ways of cooperating with international partners to promote Omani products globally.

The laboratory targets a number of vital sectors, including energy, minerals, construction, electricity, water, health, military and security sectors.

Besides promoting reliance on local products, the lab seeks measures to raise the efficiency of the national workforce, develop

industrial capabilities, localize industries, support innovation, transfer technology and support the competitiveness of local companies. The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Dr. Said Mohammed Al Saqri, Minister of Economy.

The minister stressed the significance of the laboratory and the vital sectors that it targets. He pointed out that many opportunities are at hand to localize basic industries and services in the target sectors which, he said, would in turn boost the expansion of productive structures in the economy.

The lab aims to realise integration among the relevant sectors to ensure the utilisation of shared resources to achieve long-term strategic goals and build effective partnerships with government institutions and private sector establishments. The lab offers an opportunity to encourage cooperation among academic institutions, research centres and industry sectors, with the prime aim of supporting innovation and engaging stakeholders to join discussions on devising a sustainable mechanism of communication among all relevant parties. — ONA



GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS THANKS PEOPLE FOR THE SUCCESS OF FESTIVAL



MUSCAT: The Secretariat General of National Celebrations has expressed appreciation and gratitude to all those who contributed to the success of the recent student festival themed “Oman’s Renewed Renaissance”.

The Secretariat General of National Celebrations valued the efforts, cooperation and keenness of all those who took part in the student festival and made it a success. It observed that such enthusiasm embodied loyalty to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, incarnated the spirit of belonging to the homeland and manifested national unity in a candid, ardent manner. -ONA





HONGQI



ACERE

HS5

OMR 134 PER MONTH

7 YEARS SERVICE | WARRANTY |

ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE





Hongqi Oman

 80080777

 Azaiba

Shura Council’s panel discusses behavioural issues among students

The committee discussed the role of religious education and cultural visits in reinforcing national and religious principles among students

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Education, Research, and Innovation Committee of the Shura Council convened a meeting on Monday with experts from the Ministry of Education, specifically from the Directorate



of Career Guidance and Student Counseling. The meeting focused on addressing behavioural issues among school students and exploring potential solutions, reflecting the committee’s commitment to overseeing all educational and pedagogical aspects in Omani schools. Jamal Ahmed Al-Abri, Chair-

man of the Committee, welcomed the ministry representatives, emphasising the importance of collaboration with relevant stakeholders to enhance the educational sector in Oman and address the challenges faced by educational institutions. The ministry experts presented a comprehensive visual presenta-

tion detailing the general principles of the curriculum, policies, and regulations governing the ministry’s operations. They highlighted the ministry’s efforts in promoting national values and incorporating them into school curricula. Additionally, they discussed the role of religious education and cultural visits in

reinforcing national and religious principles among students. The presentation also covered the projects and activities of the Citizenship Directorate, operating under the Directorate of Curriculum Development. The discussion included the directorate’s administrative structure, foundational pillars, strategic goals, community partnerships, and future vision. Furthermore, the educational activities supervised by the Career Guidance and Student Counseling Center were highlighted. A significant portion of the discussion focused on the role of the Directorate for Islamic Education Curriculum Development in instilling moral values and reinforcing citizenship principles among students. The committee reviewed the directorate’s objectives, its various departments, and its contributions to enhancing Islamic education curricula. The presentation showcased

how ethical values are integrated into the Islamic education curricula across different grade levels. The Career Guidance and Student Counseling Center’s role in addressing behavioural issues in schools was also emphasised. The experts elaborated on modern technologies employed to manage negative behaviours and the contributions of social workers in public schools to these efforts. The committee members listened to the ministry experts’ observations on emerging negative behavioural trends in schools, proposed solutions, and the entities that need to be engaged for effective coordination. The ministry’s future plans to address these issues were also discussed. This meeting underscores the committee’s dedication to collaborating with key stakeholders to foster a positive educational environment and address pressing challenges in the educational sector.

INVESTMENT RELATIONS

Oman, Iran to enhance economic cooperation

MUSCAT: Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) held a meeting on Monday that brought together members of the Omani-Iranian Business Council and the heads of sectoral committees at the chamber. The two sides discussed efforts to strengthen economic and investment relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the Islamic Republic of Iran. They also explored ways to develop trade exchange between the two countries and enhance cooperation in key economic sectors, including logistics services. The meeting reviewed the investment opportunities available in both countries and the mechanisms for enhancing mutual benefits from these opportunities to achieve common interests. It also stressed the importance of boost-



ing public-private partnerships to implement economic projects that benefit both the economies of Oman and Iran. Faisal Abdullah Al Rowas, Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) underlined the importance of continuing cooperation between the two countries to achieve their economic aspirations. He emphasized

that such meetings are crucial for exchanging ideas, driving progress in joint initiatives, and fostering constructive dialogue to strengthen economic relations between the two sides. The meeting was attended by Dr. Saleh Said Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry. -ONA

TACTICAL ROLES

Pakistani military official visits Maritime Security Centre

MUSCAT: Commodore Rashid Mahmood Sheikh, Commander of the Training Mission of “TABUK” and “RAHNAWARD” Ships in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and his accompanying delegation visited the Maritime Security Centre (MSC) on Monday. They were greeted upon their arrival at the MSC by the Acting Head of the MSC. Members of the visiting delegation were briefed on the tactical roles and tasks carried out by the centre to ensure the safety of the Omani maritime



environment. They also toured the centre’s facilities and viewed its latest equipment and technologies used in carrying out its national duties. -ONA

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Oman hosts InnoXera EdTech Summit 2025

MUSCAT: “InnoXera Global Summit Oman 2025” was organised in Muscat yesterday under the theme “Beyond the Screen: Expanding the Boundaries of Learning”. The summit seeks to build a knowledge-based society that is capable of keeping pace with global technological developments. The organisers gave a presentation on Oman’s e-learning platform project, followed by another display on Intel company’s innovative skills initiative. The summit saw the announcement of the “Innovative Teacher 2024” competition’s results. The

initiative was developed in partnership with Classera, a global leader in smart learning and educational solutions, and Intel Corporation to celebrate teachers who harness technological techniques to design motivating and innovative models. Through this competition, inspiring models were highlighted to indicate how technology can radically transform learning experiences. A project titled “Noor”, an integrated e-learning system, was also launched within the context of partnership between the Ministry of Education and Classera. The project aims to provide an

advanced educational experience to more than 700,000 students and teachers in the Sultanate of Oman, based on artificial intelligence (AI), adaptive learning and other advanced technologies. During the event, a platform named “Tamkeen”, was launched as part of partnership between Omantel, Classera and Almentor, within a joint effort to bridge the digital divide and elevate the status of the Arabic language as a tool for transferring knowledge and building a bright future. The project seeks to enable Arabic speakers to access high-quality educational and training resources in various fields. -ONA

GRAND MOSQUE

Entry fees for visitors at mosque

< FROM A1 “We were absolutely delighted to have visited the masterpiece and appreciate the efforts of the officials to streamline a smooth visit with a guided tour,” he added. The introduction of entry fees is accompanied by several upgrades aimed at enriching the visitor experience. To foster deeper cultural understanding, 35 Omani guides proficient in various languages have been appointed to provide insightful tours. Visitors can also rent modest clothing for OMR2.5 per dress, ensuring adherence to the mosque’s cultural and religious standards. Additionally, a contracted company has been engaged to maintain high service standards, including cleanliness and security, ensuring a seamless and enjoyable visit for all. **Accessibility and inclusivity** SQHCCS clarified that the Grand Mosque remains open to Muslims for the five daily prayers,



with no fees applied for religious, cultural, or scientific visits. This balance ensures the mosque continues to serve as both a spiritual haven and an educational resource while accommodating the needs of tourists. The initiative is also expected to benefit the local economy by engaging SMEs and creating job opportunities, particularly through the appointment of Omani guides. Additionally, the structured visitor experience enhances Oman’s reputation as a cultural

tourism destination. By regulating access and enhancing facilities, the administration aims to preserve the mosque’s rich heritage for future generations. These measures highlight a forward-thinking approach to balancing cultural tourism with heritage preservation. For visitors, the initiative offers a structured and meaningful way to experience the mosque while deepening their appreciation of Omani culture and history.



Ministry of Defence

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

1. The Ministry of Defense invites MOD registered suppliers to participate in The following tender:

Subject	Tender Number	Last date for inquiries	Last date to submit the Tender	Tender Document Price
Supply of Dressings and Surgical Items for The Armed Forces Hospitals and Medical Centers for The Period of Three Years.	02/2025	03/02/2025	10/02/2025	1500 OMR

2. Tenders documents and terms may be obtained on payment from the office of the Secretary of the Tender Committee, gate No. 14 of MAM Camp between 0900 to 1300 hrs. on the working days.

3. Payment of Tender documents to be made by using of any Visa Electron Cards or Visa credit Cards or through Smart Card issued from all the banks are operated in Oman.

INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE AND CUSTOMS

Official of Arab Interior Ministers Council visits Oman

MUSCAT: Lt. Gen Hassan Mohsin Al Shraiqi, Inspector General of Police and Customs yesterday received Dr. Mohammed Ali Koman, Secretary General of the Arab Interior Ministers Council. They reviewed topics of common interest means of enhancing cooperation among member states of the Secretariat General of the Arab Interior Ministers Council.



Times
OF OMAN

Printed and published by:
Muscat Media Group
Post Box 770,
Postal Code: 112

فلسطين

Founder: Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali
Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali
Deputy Editor-in-Chief: Anees bin Essa Al Zedjali
Chief Executive Officer: Ahmed Essa Al Zedjali

EDITORIAL: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24813153, E-mail: editor@timesofoman.com
ADVERTISING: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24812624, E-mail: advertising@timesofoman.com
CIRCULATION: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24818270, E-mail: circulation@timesofoman.com

Highly anticipated event showcasing Oman’s heritage, desert charm opens

“Rahala” is a cornerstone initiative aimed at enhancing Oman’s appeal as a sustainable tourism destination

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The highly anticipated “Rahala” event officially launched on Monday in the Jufaa region of Al Qabil, North Al Sharqiyah Governorate. Designed to highlight the region’s stunning natural beauty and rich cultural heritage, the event offers a unique tourism experience for families, adventurers, and culture enthusiasts from across Oman and beyond. Organised collaboratively by the North Al Sharqiyah Governor’s Office, the Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran Group), and the Ministry of Heritage and

Tourism, “Rahala” is a cornerstone initiative aimed at enhancing Oman’s appeal as a sustainable tourism destination. The event was inaugurated under the patronage of Ibrahim bin Said Al Busaidi, Governor of Musandam, in the presence of Mahmoud bin Yahya Al Dhadhli, Governor of North Al Sharqiyah, and Azzan bin Qassim Al Busaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism for Tourism and Chairman of Omran Group, along with key officials and community representatives.

Speaking at the opening, Mahmoud bin Yahya Al Dhadhli highlighted the event’s importance: “‘Rahala’ is more than just a tourism initiative; it is a platform that celebrates Oman’s cultural and natural assets while fostering economic growth and community development. We believe this event will inspire visitors to explore the authentic experiences North Al Sharqiyah has to offer, while creating tangible opportunities for our local communities.” Dr. Hashil bin Obaid Al Mahrouqi, CEO of Omran Group, emphasised the role of partnerships in the event’s success: “At Omran Group, we are committed to leveraging Oman’s exceptional heritage and natural diversity to deliver unique tourism experiences. Through ‘Rahala,’ we aim to create meaningful economic opportunities for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and foster collaboration with local communities, ensuring long-term benefits for all stakeholders.” “Rahala” offers an exciting array of activities designed to appeal to a wide audience. Visitors can immerse themselves in interactive workshops exploring Oman’s heritage, enjoy live performances of traditional arts, and participate in thrilling outdoor adventures, such as high-rope challenges, sand dune biking, and camel riding. The event also features modern entertainment options, including digital games and stargazing experiences, creating a blend of tradition and contemporary recreation. Highlighting the event’s broader impact, Sumaiya bint Hamad Al Busaidiyah, Director of Heritage and Tourism in North Al Sharqiyah, noted: “‘Rahala’ reflects our vision to elevate desert tourism while celebrating the natural and cultural treasures of North Al Sharqiyah. This event not only enriches the tourism experience but also supports local businesses and home-based entrepreneurs, driving economic growth and increasing hotel occupancy rates in the region.” With its unique combination of cultural celebration and family-friendly entertainment, “Rahala” is set to attract visitors from across Oman and beyond, solidifying North Al Sharqiyah’s position as a must-visit destination.

كاسابيللا
casabella

من
FROM

30%

حتى
UP TO

70%

تصفية نهاية الموسم
END OF SEASON CLEARANCE

يسري العرض من تاريخ: 28 نوفمبر وحتى 15 يناير 2025

Validity from: Nov 28th to Jan 15th 2025

@casabella.oman

@casabella.oman

@casabella_oman

Los Angeles fire toll tops 23, evacuations ordered

Of the fatalities, 16 were recorded to be in the Eaton Fire zone, while eight were from the Palisades Fire zone

LOS ANGELES: The Palisades Fire on the western edge of Los Angeles has turned towards a densely populated area, leading to further evacuations.

The Los Angeles coroner's daily update has seen the number of deaths attributed to the ongoing wildfires rise to 24.

Of the fatalities, 16 were recorded to be in the Eaton Fire zone, while eight were from the Palisades Fire zone.

Teams with cadaver dogs are continuing to carry out grid searches with the expectation that the death toll will still rise.

Better weather conditions and efforts from firefighters have restricted the spread of the Palisades Fire, which was moving towards Brentwood and the densely populated San Fernando Valley.

However, conditions are due to worsen again, with "extreme fire behavior and life threatening conditions" over the coming days.

With the Palisades Fire now compassing 23,713 acres, it remains just 13% contained.



Winds up to 70 miles (110 kilometres) per hour mean a "particularly dangerous situation" is expected to be declared from early Tuesday, said National Weather Service meteorologist Rose Schoenfeld.

Firefighters battled five separate blazes on Sunday that continued to encroach on Los Angeles.

In an interview with NBC's Meet the Press, California Governor Gavin Newsom said the wildfires could amount to the worst natural disaster in US history.

"I think it will be in terms of just the costs associated with it, in terms of the scale and scope," he said.

Newsom added that he was launching a "Marshall Plan" to rebuild the city.

"We already have a team looking at reimagining LA 2.0," he said.

Firefighters attempted to contain the Palisades blaze on Sunday as winds pushed the fire eastward,

threatening previously untouched neighborhoods in the San Fernando Valley.

"LA County had another night of unimaginable terror and heartbreak," Los Angeles County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath said.

Cal Fire official Todd Hopkins said that the fire had spread into Mandeville Canyon and threatened to jump into Brentwood, an upscale neighbourhood that is home to many celebrities. The famous Getty Center and UCLA campus are nearby.

Forecasters have warned that high winds would likely feed the blaze for days to come.

"Critical fire-weather conditions will unfortunately ramp up again today for southern California and last through at least early next week," the National Weather Service said.

"This may lead to the spread of ongoing fires as well as the development of new ones."

Toxic smoke a threat to health

Residents in Los Angeles who have not been evacuated have been warned to stay indoors due to the smoke from the wildfires.

The blazes are pushing toxic clouds into the air and are blanketing the region with fumes, health authorities have said.

"We are all experiencing this wildfire smoke, which is a mix of small particles, gasses and water vapors," Anish Mahajan of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health told a press conference.

"It's those small particles that get into our noses and throats and cause those sore throats and headaches. Everyone in the areas where there's visible smoke or the smell of smoke, and even where you don't see that, we know that the air quality is poor, so you should limit outdoor exposure as much as possible." – DW

Oman signs pact with Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah

RIYADH: Represented by the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, the Sultanate of Oman on Monday signed an agreement on arrangements for the year 1446 AH Hajj (pilgrimage) season.

The agreement, aimed to enhance cooperation between the two sides to serve pilgrims from Oman, was inked during the Hajj Conference and Exhibition organized by the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah in Saudi Arabia as part of preparations for this year's Hajj season.

The agreement was signed by Dr. Mohammed Said Al Maamari, Minister of Endowments and Religious Affairs, and Dr. Tawfiq Fawzan Al-Rabiah, who acted on behalf of the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The provisions of the agreement include the following:

- 14,000 pilgrims will go for Hajj from Oman.
- The data of pilgrims from Oman will be processed via "Nusuk platform" before the 14th of the month of Shaaban 1446 AH.
- The air arrival and departure of the pilgrims from Oman to Saudi Arabia will be via "King Abdulaziz International Airport" in Jeddah and "Prince Mohammed bin Abdulrahman International Airport" in Medina.
- The arrival and departure of pilgrims travelling by land will be via the border checkpoints of Al Rub' al-Khali and Al Bat'ha.

The agreement also stressed the need to abide by all instructions regulating Hajj affairs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as stated in "Nusuk" platform, including pilgrims' meeting all travel requirements and timings. It also requires the authorities concerned in Saudi Arabia to implement the service packages as per the agreed standards and costs. -ONA



TSUNAMI ADVISORIES



Strong quake hits southwestern Japan

TOKYO: A strong earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 6.8 has hit southwestern Japan, the country's Meteorological Agency said yesterday.

Tsunami advisories were issued for Miyazaki Prefecture, where the temblor was centered, in the southwestern island of Kyushu, as well as nearby Kochi Prefecture,

shortly after the quake struck at 9:19 p.m. local time, according to the agency.

The JMA urged the public to stay away from coastal waters.

Japan is frequently hit by earthquakes because of its location along the "Ring of Fire," an arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Basin. -ONA

LANCET STUDY

Death toll in Gaza Strip underreported: Report

GAZA: A Lancet study reveals that the number of Palestinians killed during the first nine months of the Israeli war on Gaza is 40% higher than official records.

Analysis estimates death toll by end of June was 64,260, with 59% being women, children and people over 65.

International organisations warn that life-saving efforts in

Gaza are at a breaking point. Rising famine, freezing conditions, and lack of shelter continue to cut more innocent lives short, including at least 74 children's lives in the first week of 2025.

Israel has confiscated 262 dunams of Palestinian land in northeast Jerusalem for settler road expansions, further threatening Palestinian land ownership and livelihoods. -ANI

INDIA

Foreigners in awe as they attend the Maha Kumbh Mela

PRAYAGRAJ: As the Maha Kumbh 2025 began on Monday, people from across the world have gathered in Uttar Pradesh to participate in the event.

Speaking to ANI, Fermin Ezcurdia expressed great enthusiasm to be in India. Ezcurdia who has come from Spain, said, "I am very excited about India. It is a wonderful country. 12 years ago I was at the previous Kumbh Mela for four days. It was insufficient for me; very little. Now I have come for 30 days".

Javier de Uscaleria who also

came from Spain told ANI that he has visited India six times, with his first visit in 1984 and he has attended the Kumbh Mela two times.

"It was 12 years ago and now. It seems very surprising and draws a lot of attention".

Scale of spirituality

A traveller from Italy expressed wonder over the scale of spirituality at the Maha Kumbh Mela. "This spirituality, this sense that exists here is not elsewhere in the world."

"My experience has been good,

I like it, it's very interesting", he said.

Anna from Italy who is visiting India for the first time said that it has been a good experience.

A lot of colours

Describing the Maha Kumbh Mela, she said, "It's very powerful. There are a lot of things, a lot of emotions, a lot of colours."

Maha Kumbh 2025

The Maha Kumbh 2025 that began on Monday, saw 6 million devotees having already taken a holy dip in

the Sangam by 9:30 AM, according to the Uttar Pradesh government.

Devotees have gathered from around the world to bathe at the sacred confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mystical Saraswati rivers at Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj. The first major Shahi Snan, or Amrit Snan, will take place on Tuesday during Makar Sankranti.

The 45-day religious event is expected to witness the largest-ever human gathering, with over 40 crore people anticipated to attend. -ANI



SPORTS

Oman to host 2025 IODA Optimist Asian & Oceanian Championship

The regatta will be organised by Oman Sail in collaboration with the Oman Marine Sports Committee and the International Optimist Dinghy Association from October 25-November 1 in Mussanah

MUSCAT: Oman will host the prestigious 2025 IODA Optimist Asian & Oceanian Championship. The event, organised by Oman Sail in collaboration with the Oman Marine Sports Committee and the International Optimist Dinghy Association (IODA), is scheduled to take place from October 25 to November 1, 2025, at the Mussanah Sailing School in Mussanah.

The regatta will bring young sailors from across Asia and Oceania and promises a week of intense competition and cultural exchange.

This marks the second occasion that Oman has been selected to host this prestigious championship, following a successful event in 2019 that featured 141 sailors from 21 countries.

The Mussanah Sailing School, recognised earlier this year as a Category A High Performance Centre by the Asian Sailing Federation (ASAF), has a stellar reputation for hosting international regattas and development clinics.

The long list includes the 2021 Youth Sailing World Championship, the 2021 49er, 49erFX, and Nacra 17 World Championships, and the annual Mussanah Race Week.

Dr. Khamis Salim Al Jabri,



Oman Sail's CEO, expressed pride in Oman Sail's ongoing commitment to elevating sailing on the global stage. He said: "It is a great honour for Oman Sail to be chosen to host the 2025 IODA Opti-



mist Asian & Oceanian Championships for the second time. Our Mussanah Sailing School has become an important regional hub for sailing, not just for our own teams but also as a world-class

competition venue. Its status was recently reinforced by the Asian Sailing Federation, recognising it as a Category A High Performance Centre."

He added: "We look forward to

welcoming the best Optimist sailors from across both regions to Oman once more. It's an opportunity to showcase our unique hospitality and culture while providing a venue that enables participants

to forge lifelong connections and take significant steps forward in their sailing careers."

The announcement comes on the heels of Oman Sail's impressive performance at the 2024 IODA Optimist Asian & Oceanian Championship in Hong Kong. All five team members secured top-half finishes, with Tamim Al Balushi placing 10th overall in the Gold Fleet and Hasan Al Wahaibi achieving 13th place. Firas Al Nabhani and Khamis Al Mashaikhi finished 28th and 40th, respectively, in the Gold Fleet, while Hadeel Al Mushaifri earned 41st place in the women's competition Silver Fleet.

The results underscore the strength and potential of Oman's youth sailing teams, providing a strong foundation as the country prepares to host another world-class event.

CROSS OVER TO THE GOOD TIMES

COROLLA CROSS

NOW IN PETROL VERSION

Get set to make the most of your moments with the exciting and power-packed Corolla Cross petrol. Step into a world where style meets utility and elevate every drive with the perfect blend of style, performance and versatility. Redefine what it means to drive fuel-efficient and smart with the Corolla Cross petrol. Discover the Corolla Cross petrol at any Toyota showroom today.

Vehicle features and specifications shown may vary based on the region/country

Saud Bahwan Automotive LLC
ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED C.R NO:1703412

Wattayah Tel.: 24579050/60 • Branches Tel.: Barka 26887504/05, B.B.Ali 25553692, Bidaya 26803900, Buraimi 25660124, Ibra 25571457/25570102, Ibra 25687100, Mabela 24269400, Nizwa 25213015 / 25213008, Rustaq 26876199, Salalah 23217303 / 23217318, Seeb Al Mawaleh 24550013/24550029, Sinaw 25524203 / 25524783, Sohar 26858500, Sur 25541375/0103.

Facebook.com/toyotaoman

@toyotaomanofficial

Youtube.com/toyotaoman

www.toyotaoman.com

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by March 2025 reaching \$82.22, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by \$4.27 from the price of Friday, which was \$77.95. - **ONA**



DUQM ECONOMIST MAGAZINE

Magazine highlights Oman's economic milestones under HM's leadership

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) has released the 38th issue of Duqm Economist Magazine issue 38 for January 2025.

This edition marks the fifth anniversary of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik's accession to power in Oman, highlighting the significant achievements of the country's economic, industrial, and free zones, as well as industrial cities, over the past five years (2020–2024). The editorial focuses on the renewed renaissance under His Majesty's wise leadership, emphasizing the pivotal role

of economic zones in achieving Oman Vision 2040 and fostering economic diversification.

In the issue, Sheikh Dr. Alai Sunaidy, Chairman of Opaz, affirmed that the Authority has reduced service fees by 50% and is ready to further review them to facilitate small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operating within these zones. These reductions include fees for commercial registry processes, contract registration, licenses, permits for various business and industrial activities, investor work permits, environmental approvals, urban planning, construction permits, engineering services, certifications, and service supplier per-



mits, among others.

The magazine features various topics centered on the role of economic, free, and industrial zones in promoting economic growth and achieving Oman Vision 2040.

Highlights include a report on the achievements of these zones in enhancing infrastructure efficiency and attracting investments during the 2020–2024 period. Engr Ahmed bin Hassan Al Dheeb, Vice

Chairman of Opaz, outlined key ambitious projects driving national economic progress.

The issue also addresses significant topics related to food security, featuring an exclusive interview with Dr. Saud Al Habsi, Minister of Agricultural, Fisheries, and Water Resources. He discussed the ministry's strategies for sustainability and self-sufficiency in food production.

Other exclusive topics include articles on the “blue economy” as a sustainable wealth and an endless source of investment opportunities, a survey on project sustainability, and the announcement of a program to attract petrochemical industries in 2025.

The magazine also highlights Omantel's efforts in advancing digital transformation within economic, free, and industrial zones. Additionally, it features interviews with key figures such as Engineer Saeed Al Hinaei, who discussed the role of Duqm's fisheries port in supporting the fishing sector, and Engineer Bahiyya Al Shu'aibi, who shed light on her innovative project, "Space Settlement Center," in Zone 88 of Duqm, designed to simulate life in space.

This issue includes various articles, reports, and a special feature on “50 Global Opportunities: Envisioning the Future and Promoting Innovation.”

Treasury bills worth OMR26.250mn issued

The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR 5 million, for a maturity period of 28 days



MUSCAT: The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) raised OMR26.250 million by a way of allotting treasury bills on Monday.

The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR 5 million, for a maturity period of 28 days. The average accepted price reached OMR 99.700 for every OMR 100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR 99.700 per OMR 100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 3.91071 per cent and

3.92248 per cent, respectively.

The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR 13 million, for a maturity period of 91 days. The average accepted price reached 98.942 OMR for every OMR 100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR 98.940 per OMR 100. The average discount rate and the average

yield reached 4.24548 per cent and 4.29090 per cent, respectively.

Meanwhile, the value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR 8.250 million, for a maturity period of 182 days. The average accepted price reached OMR 97.826 for every OMR 100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR 97.810 per OMR 100. The

average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.36043 per cent and 4.45737 per cent, respectively.

The treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds. The Central Bank of Oman acts as the Issue Manager and provides the added advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities (Repo).

It may be noted that the interest rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 5.00 per cent while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 5.50 per cent.

Furthermore, the Treasury Bills promote the local money market by creating a benchmark yield curve for short-term interest rates. Additionally, the Government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures. -ONA



Oman, Saudi Arabia ink MoU on upgrading financial cooperation

AL MADINAH AL MUNAWWARAH: Represented by the Ministry of Finance, the Sultanate of Oman yesterday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Saudi Ministry of Finance on upgrading cooperation in the financial field.

The MoU was inked by Sultan Salim Al Habsi, Minister of Finance, and Mohammed Abdullah Al Jadaan, Saudi Minister of Fi-

nance. The MoU seeks to enhance ties of cooperation between the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, exchange expertise in financial fields, boost joint coordination on regional and international issues, develop the overall financial policies and analyse public financial data, in addition to streamlining financial and legal regulations and related governance in the public sector. **-OMA**

BYD 30th ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL OFFER

SWITCH ON AN EXCITING FUTURE WITH BYD TODAY!

Experience BYD's futuristic electric vehicles in Oman! Get your first BYD NEV with free insurance, service perks and an exclusive gift. Visit BYD showrooms at Al Mouj, Mall of Oman and Wattayah to experience the future of driving today!

SERVICE**

FOR EV **3 YEARS/ 60,000 KM**

FOR PHEV **5 YEARS/ 50,000 KM**

**EV & PHEV#
BATTERY CHARGER**

FIRST YEAR* INSURANCE

**EXCLUSIVE
GIFT COUPON®
FROM 200 - 450 OMR**

Blade Battery - Redefining the Standards of EV Safety | DM - I Super Hybrid - Fuel Efficient with EV Capabilities | e - Platform 3.0 - Fast Charging 5 Minutes | CTB Technology - Fast Charge 15 Minutes | 300 km Range |

World Auto Business LLC

P.O Box 3168, PC 112, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.
Tel.: 72225925
E-mail: sales@wabbyd.com | www.bydoman.com

Campaign period: 10th December 2024 - 8th February 2025 Benefits applicable for all purchases except Government Organizations & Ministries. *Comprehensive 1 Year Insurance - (Oman Only) on ATTO3, SEAL, HAN, QIN PLUS AND SONG PLUS models. Insurance benefit under the campaign would be given up to the extent applicable for Private vehicles only and additional premium as per insurance norms will be collected from the RAC/ Taxi/ D/S etc. **3 Years / 60,000 Kms Service (whichever is earlier) covering 3 services at 20,000 Kms service interval based on normal operating conditions on ATTO3, SEAL, HAN models. ***5 Years / 50,000 Kms Service (whichever is earlier) covering 5 services at 10,000 kms service interval based on normal operating conditions on QIN PLUS AND SONG PLUS models. # Battery Charger 7 KW Charger for PHEV models including installation limited to a cabling length of up to 10 meters. Additional cabling requirements and other works may incur extra charges. Free 11 KW Charger for EV models including installation limited to a cabling length of up to 10 meters. Additional cabling requirements and other works may incur extra charges. This is given only one time. Discount in lieu of Battery Charger may be given to all customers as an additional Special Discount. Customer has to request in writing to avail the benefit. In case customer opts out of battery charger then he/she will not be eligible for battery charger as applicable for a model under the campaign. @ Gift Coupon to be provided for BYD Vehicle purchases. Gift Coupon is applicable for a period of two weeks from 05.01.2025 - 18.01.2025

MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Financial Corporation, up 2.78%, was the top gainer while Al Anwar Ceramics, down 9.35%, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,597.45 points, down by 0.01% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.14% at 424.61 points. Financial Corporation, up 2.78%, was the top gainer while Al Anwar Ceramics, down 9.35%, was the top loser. Shares of OQEP were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 1262 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 5.74 million, with more than 21.41 million shares changing hands. Out of 46 traded securities, 11 advanced, 19 declined, and 16 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net buyers for RO 215K while foreign investors were net sellers for RO 165K, followed by GCC & Arab investors for RO 50K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,849.22 points, down 0.18%. Prices of Financial Corporation, Bank Muscat, Taageer Finance

were up by 2.78%, 1.17%, 0.95% respectively. Prices of National Finance, Al Anwar Investment, Al Madina Investments, Muscat Finance, Oman & Emirates Investment were down by 5.80%, 2.78%, 2.17%, 2.08%, 1.35% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,215.30 points, down 1.27%. Prices of Jazeera Steel Products were up by 1.71% respectively. Prices of Al Anwar Ceramics, Galfar Engineering, Oman Flour Mills, Voltamp Energy were down by 9.35%, 2.78%, 2.22%, 0.49% respectively.

Services Index was up by 0.13% before closing at 1,750.46 points. Prices of Sembcorp Salalah, Shell Oman Marketing, Al Maha Marketing, Abraj Energy, OQ Gas Networks were up by 2.04%, 1.64%, 0.96%, 0.75%, 0.74% respectively. Prices of Musandam Power, Phoenix Power, Al Suwadi Power, National Gas, Oman Telecom were down by 3.62%, 1.54%, 1.37%, 1.28%, 0.65% respectively.

— United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,600.01	4,585.52	4,597.45	4,597.89	-0.44	-0.01
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,873.80	7,846.32	7,849.22	7,863.62	-14.40	-0.18
Industry Index	5,267.26	5,215.30	5,215.30	5,282.18	-66.88	-1.27
Services Index	1,752.21	1,743.53	1,750.46	1,748.12	2.34	0.13
MSX Shariah Index	425.71	424.61	424.61	425.20	-0.59	-0.14
MSX TR INDEX	6,442.31	6,422.02	6,438.73	6,439.34	-0.61	-0.01
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,945.44	8,914.23	8,917.53	8,933.88	-16.36	-0.18
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,077.17	6,017.21	6,017.21	6,094.38	-77.17	-1.27
SERVICES TR IDX	2,096.76	2,086.37	2,094.67	2,091.86	2.81	0.13
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,166.89	1,166.89	1,166.89	1,166.89	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap.	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
21,419,492	5,742,374	1,262	28,052,393,905	11	19	16	46

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, JANUARY 13

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	LAST PR.	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PRE VALUE	MARKET CAP		
REGULAR MARKET																	
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	710,462	71,034	34	0.100	0.100	0.099	0.100	0.098	0.002	2.041	0.100	0.099	0.100	95,457,195		
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	53,000	15,721	12	0.295	0.297	0.295	0.297	0.292	0.005	1.712	0.297	0.297	0.315	0.100	37,094,694	
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	480	294	2	0.610	0.620	0.610	0.620	0.610	0.010	1.639	0.620	0.620	0.620	0.100	58,900,000	
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	1,010,832	260,657	31	0.255	0.261	0.255	0.260	0.257	0.003	1.167	0.260	0.257	0.260	0.100	1,951,663,236	
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	291,761	77,497	45	0.266	0.269	0.265	0.268	0.266	0.002	0.752	0.268	0.265	0.268	0.100	206,413,600	
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	1,571,066	213,713	127	0.135	0.137	0.135	0.136	0.135	0.001	0.741	0.136	0.136	0.140	0.100	588,964,853	
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	1,569	361	1	0.230	0.230	0.230	0.230	0.230	0.000	0.000	0.230	0.230	0.241	0.100	23,000,000	
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	1,782,642	586,486	2	0.328	0.329	0.328	0.329	0.329	0.000	0.000	0.329	0.325	0.329	0.100	219,892,225	
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	2,597	1,026	2	0.385	0.395	0.385	0.395	0.395	0.000	0.000	0.395	0.393	0.395	0.100	130,694,720	
OM0000002274	UNITED FINANCE	4,000	240	1	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.000	0.000	0.060	0.059	0.065	0.100	21,397,638	
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO	31,000	2,726	7	0.088	0.088	0.087	0.088	0.088	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.100	17,600,000	
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	1,507,900	210,025	25	0.140	0.140	0.139	0.140	0.140	0.000	0.000	0.140	0.139	0.141	0.100	926,414,478	
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	41,287	3,523	9	0.086	0.086	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.000	0.000	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.100	14,875,000	
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	47,197	3,365	7	0.071	0.073	0.071	0.073	0.073	0.000	0.000	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.100	49,266,782	
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	65,257	14,874	7	0.228	0.228	0.227	0.228	0.229	-0.001	-0.437	0.228	0.227	0.228	0.100	148,415,284	
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	205,760	188,013	49	0.925	0.925	0.909	0.918	0.924	-0.006	-0.649	0.918	0.910	0.918	0.100	688,500,000	
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO	38,647	2,832	5	0.074	0.074	0.073	0.073	0.074	-0.001	-1.351	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.100	8,896,875	
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO	32,888	2,401	2	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.074	-0.001	-1.351	0.073	0.073	0.074	0.100	6,570,000	
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	296,500	21,345	17	0.072	0.072	0.071	0.072	0.073	-0.001	-1.370	0.072	0.071	0.073	0.100	51,437,256	
OM0000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	22,816	6,223	10	0.278	0.278	0.286	0.286	0.276	-0.010	-3.623	0.286	0.250	0.278	0.100	18,723,740	
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	220,467	21,812	45	0.104	0.104	0.097	0.097	0.107	-0.010	-9.346	0.097	0.097	0.097	0.100	21,340,000	
Total		21	7,938,128	1,704,168	440												
Parallel Market																	
OM0000002911	FINANCIAL CORPORATION	20,250	729	5	0.036	0.037	0.036	0.037	0.036	0.001	2.778	0.037	0.035	0.037	0.100	2,591,109	
OM0000003000	AL MAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING	2,900	3,025	3	1.040	1.050	1.040	1.050	1.040	0.010	0.962	1.050	1.049	1.050	0.100	72,450,000	
OM0000003281	TAAGEER FINANCE	20,000	2,120	2	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.105	0.001	0.952	0.106	0.107	0.000	0.100	28,735,593	
OM0000000747	DHOFAIR GENERATING	11,700	762	3	0.066	0.066	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.000	0.000	0.065	0.065	0.066	0.100	14,445,600	
OM0000009759	OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	10,511,295	3,626,254	602	0.342	0.347	0.339	0.340	0.340	0.000	0.000	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.010	272,000,000	
OM0000003681	VOLTAMP ENERGY	9,662	3,903	5	0.404	0.404	0.404	0.404	0.406	-0.002	-0.493	0.404	0.404	0.430	0.100	32,886,711	
OM0000009096	OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SF2)	1,387,883	153,749	101	0.114	0.115	0.114	0.114	0.115	-0.001	-0.870	0.114	0.114	0.115	0.100	394,381,657	
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	50,820	4,991	5	0.099	0.099	0.098	0.098	0.099	-0.001	-1.010	0.098	0.098	0.099	0.100	219,221,397	
OM0000001169	NATIONAL GAS	27,000	2,079	2	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.078	-0.001	-1.282	0.077	0.075	0.078	0.100	6,545,000	
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	27,000	2,104	2	0.078	0.078	0.077	0.077	0.078	-0.001	-1.282	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.085	0.100	39,164,610
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	87,180	5,582	20	0.064	0.065	0.064	0.064	0.065	-0.001	-1.538	0.064	0.063	0.065	0.100	93,606,493	
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	374,641	18,009	17	0.048	0.049	0.047	0.047	0.048	-0.001	-2.083	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.100	14,435,877	
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	23,104	1,040	3	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.046	-0.001	-2.174	0.045	0.044	0.050	0.100	3,825,000	
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	28,173	12,469	6	0.450	0.450	0.440	0.440	0.450	-0.010	-2.222	0.440	0.405	0.495	0.100	68,300,000	
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	146,400	10,278	13	0.071	0.071	0.070	0.070	0.072	-0.002	-2.778	0.070	0.065	0.070	0.100	14,852,600	
OM0000003821	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	173,300	12,206	15	0.072	0.072	0.070	0.070	0.072	-0.002	-2.778	0.070	0.065	0.070	0.100	14,209,051	
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	94,400	12,416	7	0.135	0.135	0.130	0.130	0.138	-0.008	-5.797	0.130	0.125	0.130	0.100	74,581,557	
Total		17	12,945,808	3,871,714	811												
OIL PRICES																	

Oil hits more than 3-month high; Dollar steady

SINGAPORE: Oil prices hit their highest level in more than three months, extending their rally on expectations that wider US sanctions will affect Russian crude supplies to the world's top and third largest importers China and India.

Brent crude futures climbed \$1.35, or 1.69%, to \$81.11 a barrel after hitting an intraday high of

\$81.44, the highest since 27 August 2024. US West Texas Intermediate crude rose \$1.40, or 1.83% to \$77.97 a barrel after touching a high of \$78.32, the loftiest price since October 8.

The US Treasury on Friday imposed sanctions on Russian oil producers Gazprom Neft and Surgutneftegas, as well as 183 vessels

that have shipped Russian oil.

Dollar steady after solid US jobs data

The US dollar was firm at 109.67 against a basket of currencies, hovering near its strongest since November 2022, after strong US job report.

The euro and the New Zealand

dollar were pinned close to a more than two-year trough at \$1.0242 and \$0.5565, respectively, in the early Asian session.

Against the dollar, the yen fell 0.12% to 157.92, while the sterling last rose 0.07% to \$1.2204. In China, the yuan was little changed in offshore transactions, settling at 7.3605 against the dollar. -**ONA**

Elevate Your Business and Events with Us!

EVENT MANAGEMENT

- Corporate Events
- Weddings & Celebrations
- Product Launches
- and more

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

- Custom Website Design
- E-commerce Solutions
- User-Friendly Interfaces

SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLING

- Strategy & Campaign Management
- Creative Content Creation
- Analytics & Performance Insights
- 24/7 Online Presence

BRANDING

- Logo & Visual Identity Design
- Marketing Collaterals
- Brand Strategy Development
- Consistent Brand Messaging

The New 4th Dimension LLC
Po Box 86, Postal code 115
Sultanate of Oman

+968 92839679 +968 99321290



BEIJING: China saw its exports grew more than expected in December, as factory production kicked into high gear ahead of US President-elect Donald Trump returning to



The study, published in the journal Science, describes how lipocartilages cells create and maintain their own lipid reservoirs while remaining constant in size

An international research team has discovered a new type of skeletal tissue that offers great potential for advancing regenerative medicine and tissue engineering.

An international research team led by the University of California, Irvine has discovered a new type of skeletal tissue that offers great potential for advancing regenerative medicine and tissue engineering.

Most cartilage relies on an external extracellular matrix for strength, but 'lipocartilages', which is found in the ears, nose and throat of mammals, is uniquely packed with fat-filled cells called 'lipochondrocytes'.

It provides super-stable internal support which enables the strength of tissue. It makes to remain soft and springy -- similar to bubbled packaging material.

The study, published in the journal Science, describes how lipocartilages cells create and maintain their own lipid reservoirs while remaining constant in size. Unlike ordinary adipocyte fat cells, lipo chondrocytes never shrink or expand in response to food availability.

"Lipocartilages's resilience and stability provide a compliant, elastic quality that's perfect for flexible body parts such as earlobes or the tip of the nose, opening exciting possibilities in regenerative medicine and tissue engineering, particularly for facial defects or injuries," said corresponding author Maksim Plikus, UC Irvine professor of developmental and cell biology.

"Currently, cartilage reconstruction often requires harvesting tissue from the patient's rib -- a painful and invasive procedure. In the future, patient-specific lipo chondrocytes could be derived from stem cells, purified and used to manufacture living cartilage tailored to individual needs. With the help of 3D printing, these engineered tissues could be shaped to fit precisely, offering new solutions for treating birth defects, trauma and various cartilage diseases."

Dr. Franz Leydig first recognized lipochondrocytes in 1854, when he noted the presence of fat droplets in the cartilage of rat ears, a finding that was largely forgotten until now.

Now with modern biochemical tools and advanced imaging methods, UC Irvine researchers comprehensively characterised lipo cartilage's molecular biology, metabolism and structural role in skeletal tissues.

In their research, they also uncovered the genetic process that suppresses the activity of enzymes that break down fats and reduce the absorption of new fat molecules.

When stripped of its lipids, the lipocartilages becomes stiff and brittle, highlighting the importance of its fat-filled cells in maintaining the tissue's combination of durability and flexibility.

In addition, the team noted that in some mammals, such as bats, lipo chondrocytes assemble into intricate shapes, like parallel ridges in their oversized ears, which may enhance hearing acuity by modulating sound waves. - ANI



LIFESTYLE

RESEARCH DISCOVERS NEW SKELETAL TISSUE WITH POTENTIAL FOR REGENERATION: STUDY

Al Harthy makes perfect start to 2025 with class victory in Dubai

The Omani teamed up with Paradine Competition team-mates, Toby Sowery, Simon Traves and Darren Leung, in their BMW M4 GT3 EVO at the Michelin Dubai 24H race

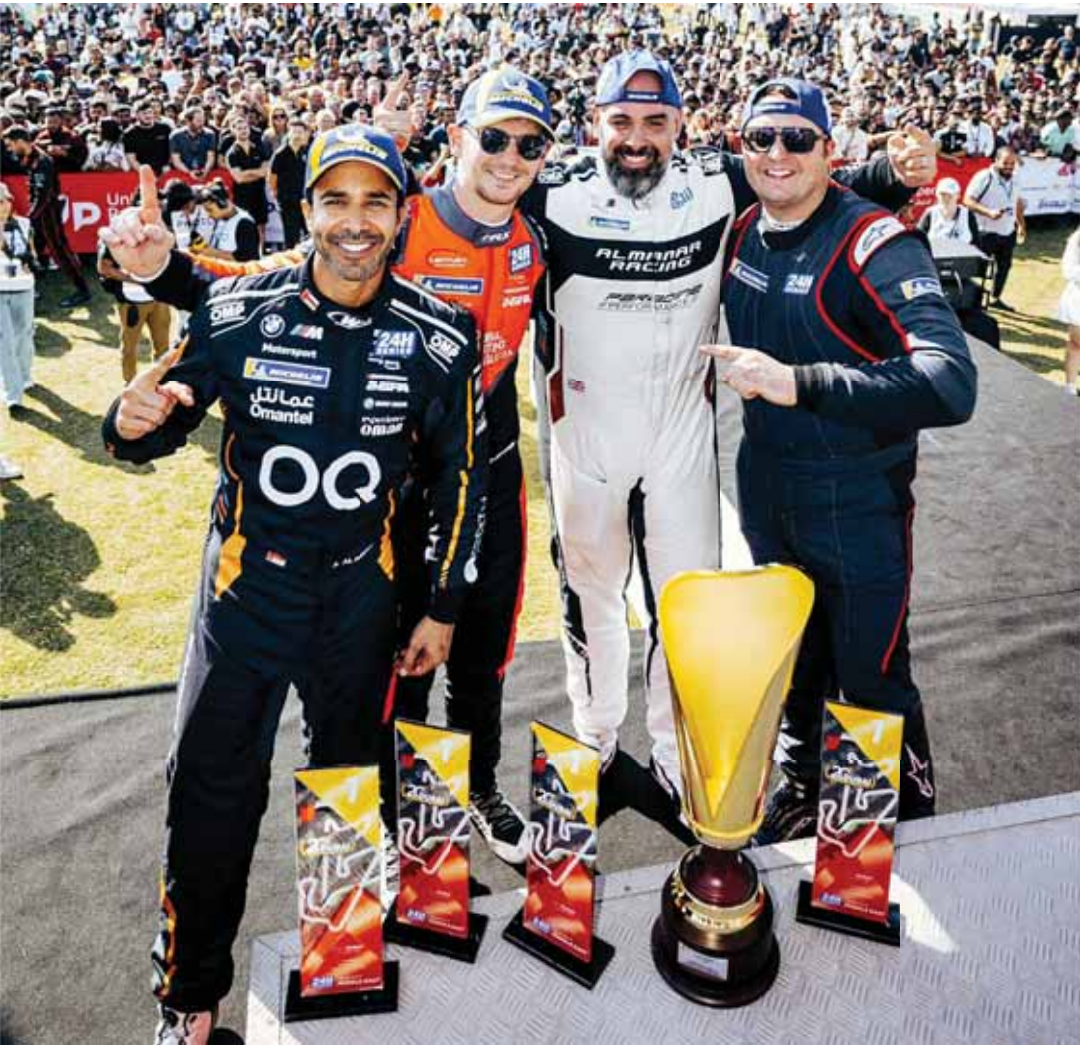
MUSCAT: Ahmad Al Harthy delivered a spectacular start to 2025 with a dominant victory in the GT3-Am class at the 20th edition of the Michelin 24H Dubai on Sunday.

Partnering with Paradine Competition team-mates Toby Sowery, Simon Traves, and Darren Leung in the No.991 BMW M4 GT3 EVO, the Omani racer also celebrated a remarkable fifth-place finish overall, capping a thrilling performance at Dubai Autodrome.

Starting from class pole and eighth overall on the 63-car grid, Paradine Competition's race was a showcase of strategy, consistency, and raw speed. Al Harthy set the tone in qualifying with a stunning 1m58.845s lap, earning the class pole.

"It was a fantastic start to the weekend," Al Harthy said. "Securing pole in such a competitive field was crucial."

The race, which began on Satur-



day, saw Sowery taking the opening stint and surging through the field. By lap 18, he had claimed the overall lead, setting the stage for an intense 24-hour battle.

Al Harthy took over during the first pit stops and navigated two cautionary Code 60 periods with precision, eventually reclaiming the Am class lead.

"Driving at the front in such a high-calibre field was exhilarating," he remarked.

By midnight, Paradine Competition solidified its grip on the GT3-Am lead. As daylight broke, Al Harthy and his teammates maintained their focus, overcoming challenges from rival teams to secure a



commanding victory in their class, finishing a lap ahead of their nearest competitors.

Speaking after the win, Al Harthy expressed his pride and said: "Winning GT3-Am in the 24H Dubai is incredibly special, especially being so close to home. It was a tough race, but the team performed impeccably, and I am

thrilled with the outcome."

Al Harthy also congratulated compatriot Al Faisal Al Zubair and his Al Manar Racing by Team WRT squad for their outright victory at the event.

"It's a fantastic result for Oman. Sharing the pit box with Al Faisal's team made it even more memorable," he said.

FA CUP THIRD ROUND

Arsenal pay the penalty as 10-man Man United win

LONDON: Joshua Zirkzee scored the winning penalty as a 10-man Manchester United beat Arsenal 5-3 on penalties in a thrilling encounter to reach the fourth round of the FA Cup at the Emirates Stadium on Sunday.

United had to play with 10 men for nearly an hour after Diogo Dalot was shown a second yellow card, having mistimed a tackle on Arsenal midfielder Mikel Merino.

Manchester United took the lead through an excellent Bruno Fernandes goal in the 52nd minute, after Alejandro Garnacho took advantage of a Gabriel slip and crossed for Fernandes to curl the ball into the top corner.

Dalot was sent off in the 61st minute after his clumsy tackle and Arsenal were level just two minutes later when centre-back Gabriel volleyed in from inside the area.

The Gunners then had a massive chance to take the lead when Kai Havertz was adjudged to have been brought down by Harry Maguire in the box and referee Andrew Madley awarded a penalty.

There was a delay in the spot-kick being taken after a melee in the box in which Maguire, Havertz and Gabriel were all booked.

Arsenal captain Martin Odegaard then stepped up but Altay Bayindir dived to his left to push



away the ball and keep the scores level. Mikel Arteta's side had big chances through Declan Rice and Havertz again to win the game but could not beat the impressive Bayindir.

United were made to defend throughout extra time as Arsenal

looked for ways to take the lead with their numerical advantage.

But Arteta's side could not find a way through and Havertz had his penalty saved by Bayindir before Zirkzee sent David Raya the wrong way to win the shootout. - Agencies

MATCH PLAYED IN JEDDAH

Barca rout Real Madrid to clinch Spanish Cup

JEDDAH: Barcelona came from behind to beat Real Madrid 5-2 in an incident-packed Spanish Super Cup final in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on Sunday.

Kylian Mbappe gave Real Madrid the lead with a fantastic solo goal, running from the halfway line before slotting past Wojciech Szczesny.

Lamine Yamal levelled for Barcelona in the 22nd minute with an expert finish into the bottom corner from Robert Lewandowski's ball. Hansi Flick's side then took command with three more goals before the break.

Poland striker Lewandowski put Barca ahead with a penalty after Gavi was fouled, before a bullet header from Raphinha three minutes later. The Brazilian winger then picked out Alex Balde to score a fourth in the 10th minute of added time in the first half.

Barca grabbed their fifth goal three minutes after the restart with Raphinha's second of the game. But they had goalkeeper Szczesny sent off for a foul on Mbappe outside the box in the 56th minute.

Brazil forward Rodrygo curled the resulting free-kick past replacement keeper Inaki Pena - but there was no further comeback from Real as Barca lifted the trophy for a 15th time in their history.



It marked the second time in two Clasicos under Flick that Barcelona have hit plenty of goals against their rivals, winning 4-0 at the Bernabeu in La Liga back in October. It was also his first trophy - albeit a minor one - since a 2020-21 Bundesliga title success with Bayern Munich.

The result at King Abdullah Sports City was slightly surprising considering Real Madrid were the team in better form. Barca have only won one of their last seven La Liga games and sit five points behind Real in the table - with Atletico Madrid top by one point.

Carlo Ancelotti's men, meanwhile, had won their last five

games in all competitions and were last beaten on 4 December.

Szczesny was making his third appearance for Barcelona, having waited months for a chance after coming out of retirement to sign earlier this season. He had kept clean sheets in the first two games but the straight red card, which could have potentially let Real back into the game, is now unlikely to do him any favours.

Former Leeds winger Raphinha's double takes him up to 19 goals for the season, with Lewandowski moving on to 26. This was the third Clasico Super Cup in a row, with Barca winning 3-1 in 2023 and Real winning 4-1 last year. - Agencies

ITALIAN SERIE A

In-form Napoli edge Verona to extend lead at the top

NAPLES: Napoli went four points clear of Inter Milan at the top of Serie A after a comfortable 2-0 win at home to Hellas Verona on Sunday.

The 2023 champions took a fifth-minute lead when Giovanni di Lorenzo's effort hit the post, bounced off visiting goalkeeper Lorenzo Montipo's back and into the net.

They wrapped up the win - a fifth in a row - when former Fulham midfielder Andre-Frank Zambo Anguissa scored with an unstoppable drive in the 61st minute.

Former Manchester United duo Romelu Lukaku and Scott McTominay both went close, but Anto-



nio Conte's side were untroubled.

Conte has won Serie A with Juventus on three occasions and with Inter in 2021 - and could make it a hat-trick of clubs if Napoli tri-

umph this season.

Forward Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, though, was not in the squad after he asked to leave the club this week.



The 23-year-old has been linked with Paris-Saint Germain, Liverpool and Chelsea and is expected to move in the January transfer window.

Earlier on Sunday, reigning champions Inter beat Venezia 1-0 to keep up their challenge.

Former Manchester United full-back Matteo Darmian scored the

only goal as Simone Inzaghi's side bounced back from losing in the Italian Super Cup final to rivals AC Milan in Saudi Arabia.

They were without injured trio Hakan Calhanoglu, Henrikh Mkhitaryan and Yann Bissecck, but got the points when Darmian converted a rebound.

Later Inter Milan manager Inzaghi said: "It was not simple, but we won and that is what we wanted."

"It wasn't easy for us, after losing the final in that way. The boys were great, we came here tired and we played a great game."

Atalanta are third after they could only draw 0-0 with Udinese on Saturday. - Agencies

ahlibank celebrates 17 years of excellence

This significant occasion served as a moment of reflection for the bank’s employees, celebrating the core principles that have cemented ahlbank as a trusted Partner in Excellence.

MUSCAT: ahlbank, one of the Sultanate’s most esteemed financial institutions, recently celebrated its 17th anniversary, marking a milestone that reflects both its enduring success and its unwavering dedication to sustainable growth.

This significant occasion served as a moment of reflection for the bank’s employees, celebrating the core principles that have cemented ahlbank as a trusted Partner in Excellence.

Founded in 2007, ahlbank has evolved into a leading force in Oman’s financial sector. With a diversified portfolio of financial solutions, supported by a modernized branch network, advanced digital platforms, and a highly skilled workforce, ahlbank continues to meet the dynamic needs of its clientele across retail, commercial, and investment banking sectors.

During the anniversary celebration, ahlbank’s employees engaged in activities designed to deepen their connection to the bank’s core values—excellence,



innovation, integrity, responsibility, and sustainability. These initiatives served not only to inspire pride in their contributions but also to reinforce the shared vision that drives the bank’s continued success.

Central to this vision are ahlbank’s five pillars of excellence—Digitalization, Corporate Banking, Retail Banking, Wealth Management, and Socio-Economic Progress—which are intrinsically linked to these values.

Together, they guide ahlbank’s strategic direction, ensuring the delivery of superior customer experiences and fostering meaningful contributions to community development.

ahlibank’s commitment to digital transformation is clearly demonstrated through its enhanced mobile banking app, instant credit card issuance, and cutting-edge digital services and branches, positioning the bank at the forefront of innovation. Groundbreaking

initiatives like 1:1 IPO financing and instant minor account openings further reinforce its digital leadership. In Corporate Banking, ahlbank continues to deliver tailored solutions through dedicated relationship managers and business-to-business platforms, while its Retail Banking division focuses on providing a seamless experience through an extensive branch network and customized services, all powered by advanced digital tools. Complementing these efforts, ahlbank’s Wealth Management services, including the Digital Wealth Management system and Systematic Investment Plan, foster long-term financial growth, integrating seamlessly with corporate and retail banking offerings. In alignment with its commitment to socio-economic development, the bank undertakes several initiatives geared at empowering SMEs, supporting non-profit organizations, and nurturing young talents. These interconnected pillars re-

flect the bank’s vision, reaffirming its leadership in innovation and sustainable growth in Oman.

In 2024, ahlbank achieved significant milestones, strengthening its role in advancing Oman Vision 2040. The bank successfully issued Additional Tier 1 (AT1) Bonds, raising OMR 40 million to bolster its capital adequacy. It also played a pivotal advisory role in securing OMR 40.6 million for The Sustainable City, Yiti, and supported the second phase of Khazaen Economic City, driving forward sustainable economic development. Additionally, the bank’s financial closure for the Industrial Waste Treatment Facility at Sohar Port marked a critical step in reducing Oman’s reliance on hazardous waste exports.

As the bank drives progress, its unwavering commitment to excellence remains central to every initiative, consistently setting new standards and reshaping Oman’s dynamic financial landscape.

ISLAMIC BANKING

Dhofar Islamic launches debit cards for youth, ladies and minors

MUSCAT: Dhofar Islamic, the Islamic banking arm of BankDhofar, has announced the launch of debit cards tailored for youth, ladies, and minors. These cards are designed to address the diverse needs of customers while adhering to Islamic Sharia principles.



The debit cards provide customers with instant and secure access to their accounts 24/7 through the extensive ATM network. Cards are issued immediately at branches, are internationally recognized, and come with robust security features.

Bilal Faiz Al Raiisi, AGM Cards and Bancassurance at BankDhofar, emphasized that Dhofar Islamic prioritizes its customers by offering services and facilities that align with Islamic Sharia principles. He explained that the cards were developed to cater to the daily financial needs and aspirations of youth, women, and minors, providing them with greater financial flexibility and convenience.

Dhofar Islamic’s product portfolio, approved by the Sharia Supervisory Board, is designed to meet the demands of modern, fast-paced lifestyles.

Recently, the bank introduced specialized accounts for youth, ladies, and minors, featuring benefits such as zero minimum balance fees, free money transfers via mobile apps, and other conveniences. Customers can also open current accounts through the Dhofar Islamic mobile application, providing seamless access to banking services.

Dhofar Islamic Al Riadah customers enjoy access to a range of competitive financing options, including personal and vehicle financing for up to 10 years, housing financing for up to 25 years, and flexible repayment plans for travel-related expenses, including Hajj and Umrah, for up to three years. Additionally, the

bank offers education financing with repayment periods of up to 10 years.

The recently launched MasterCard World Credit Card further enhances Dhofar Islamic’s offerings. This card provides exclusive benefits such as rewards points on local and international purchases, complimentary and unlimited access to over 1,300 airport lounges in more than 450 cities, and substantial discounts on hotels, resorts, and car rentals worldwide.

Rebranded in February to mark its 10th anniversary, Dhofar Islamic unveiled a new logo symbolizing its evolution from a single star to a constellation of enhanced capabilities. Each star in the constellation represents the bank’s core values and its commitment to innovation, customer satisfaction, and excellence in banking services.

Since its inception, Dhofar Islamic has been a cornerstone of Sharia-compliant financial services in Oman. Its network has grown to 25 branches, serving regions and governorates across the Sultanate. The bank has also captured a significant market share in Oman’s Islamic banking sector, driven by asset growth, an expanding financing portfolio, and increased customer deposits. Through its diverse and modern offerings, Dhofar Islamic continues to meet the evolving needs of its customers, offering comprehensive financing solutions for housing, goods, and other Islamic products.

EXTENSIVE OPERATIONS



Jalmood National chooses FUSO Oman to enhance oil & gas operations

MUSCAT: Jalmood, a 100% Omani-owned enterprise, has chosen FUSO, distributed by General Automotive Company in Oman, to strengthen its extensive operations across the Sultanate. Since its establishment in 2006, Jalmood has grown into a prominent contractor in the oil & gas sector, achieving remarkable success through a steadfast commitment to quality and customer satisfaction.

Trusted name

Over the years, Jalmood has earned its position as a trusted name in the industry, being registered with key organisations such as Petroleum Development Oman, the General Secretariat of the Tender Board, and the Oman Society for Petroleum Services (OPAL). The company has delivered a wide range of projects, including well pad and access road construction, road maintenance and re-sheeting, road grading, civil works, and conductor and earth hole drilling, reinforcing its reputation for excellence and reliability.

To support its demanding and diverse operations, Jalmood has added 6 FUSO commercial vehicles to its fleet. FUSO trucks are renowned for their exceptional durability, reliability, and

advanced performance. FUSO’s ability to consistently deliver high-quality, robust vehicles has made it the preferred choice for businesses operating in challenging environments.

FUSO vehicles are engineered to tackle Oman’s rugged terrains while offering comfort, safety, and efficiency.

Designed for versatility

Built with precision and designed for versatility, FUSO trucks are equipped to meet the needs of various industries, from logistics to construction. With advanced safety features, innovative technology, and a reputation for dependability, FUSO empowers companies like Jalmood to overcome operational challenges while maintaining high productivity and reducing costs.

This partnership emphasizes Jalmood’s confidence in FUSO’s dependable, robust, and efficient commercial vehicles, fostering smooth operations and excellence within Oman’s Oil & Gas sector. It also highlights Jalmood’s dedication to investing in top-tier resources to boost its operational capabilities and secure long-term success. By choosing FUSO, Jalmood aligns with a brand that mirrors its vision of quality, efficiency, and sustainability.

LEADING PATH TO PROSPERITY

Bank Nizwa fuels Oman’s growth with innovative Islamic banking solutions

MUSCAT: Under the astute leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, the Sultanate of Oman has emerged as a beacon of resilience within the GCC. The nation’s dedication to fiscal discipline, economic diversification, and sound financial management has laid a solid foundation for sustained economic growth, exemplified by S&P Global’s upgrade of Oman’s credit rating to investment grade in September 2024. This achievement has strengthened investor confidence, lowered borrowing costs, and opened doors to international capital markets. Additionally, Fitch Ratings revised Oman’s outlook to ‘Positive’ in December 2024, citing successful fiscal reforms and prudent debt management.



Amid this steady economic progress, Oman’s Islamic banking sector has played a pivotal role in shaping the financial landscape. Integrating Sharia principles with the evolving needs of a modern economy, Islamic banking assets in the Sultanate surpassed OMR 8.2 billion by the end of September 2024, accounting for 18.7% of total banking assets, recording an increase of 16.4% compared to the same period last year. Additionally, the total financing granted has grown by 13.8%, reaching approximately OMR 6.7 billion. Furthermore, deposits have increased by 24%, totalling around OMR 6.5 billion by the end of October 2024. This growth reflects a rising trend towards Sharia-compliant solutions. The sector’s financing portfolios and deposits also recorded substantial growth, reflecting the rising preference for Sharia-compliant solutions. As Oman’s first full-fledged Islamic bank, Bank Nizwa has been instrumental in this sector’s evolution.

Commenting on the same, Khaled Al Kayed, Chief Executive Officer of Bank Nizwa, said, “In the five years since His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, may God protect him, ascended to the throne, the Sultanate of Oman has entered a distinguished era of renaissance. This transformative phase has yielded significant advancements across various economic sectors, thereby fostering comprehen-

sive and sustainable development throughout the nation. Under the enlightened leadership of His Majesty, Oman is not only enhancing its economic framework but also establishing a solid foundation for a prosperous and resilient future for all its citizens.”

“Amid this renaissance, the Islamic finance sector in the Sultanate of Oman has witnessed significant growth, establishing itself as a vital contributor to the country’s economic development. At Bank Nizwa, we take pride in our leadership in this sector by aligning our initiatives with Oman’s ambitious goals. Through our Sharia-compliant solutions, we continue our unwavering efforts to enhance economic empowerment and make a positive and meaningful contribution to the social and economic fabric of the nation,” he added.

Bank Nizwa’s financial performance in 2024 reflects its unwavering commitment to excellence, innovation, and customer-centricity. For the third quarter ending September 30, the bank reported a net profit of OMR 12,431 million, representing a 6% increase from the previous year. Total assets rose to OMR 1.770 billion, a 13% growth, while the financing portfolio expanded by 14% to OMR 1.507 billion. Customer deposits surged by 20%, reaching OMR 1.440 billion—a testament to the bank’s strong market positioning and its ability to meet dynamic customer demands. Complementing its financial

achievements, Bank Nizwa has played a transformative role in fostering Islamic financial literacy across the Sultanate. Through workshops, seminars, and digital initiatives, the bank has raised awareness about the benefits of Islamic finance, empowering individuals and businesses to actively participate in Oman’s economic progress. This commitment to education is part of the bank’s larger goal to make ethical financial solutions available to everyone.

A key driver of Bank Nizwa’s impact lies in its tailored financing solutions, which have facilitated milestones in critical sectors. By supporting both SMEs and large-scale ventures, the bank has directly contributed to projects that contribute to Oman’s economic diversification agenda and Oman Vision 2040 goals.

Innovation continues to be central to Bank Nizwa’s strategy, as the bank integrates advanced technologies to enhance service delivery while maintaining the highest standards of Sharia compliance. This forward-looking approach underscores Bank Nizwa’s dedication to blending tradition with modernity, driving greater efficiency and accessibility in financial services.

A pioneer in promoting sustainable finance in Oman, Bank Nizwa has also led the introduction of green financing solutions and championed several sustainability-linked initiatives. These efforts align with Oman’s environmental

objectives and demonstrate the bank’s commitment to cultivating a balanced, future-ready economy that prioritizes both prosperity and environmental stewardship.

Bank Nizwa’s continuous innovation has earned it widespread recognition both regionally and internationally, with the bank recently receiving several prestigious awards. Notably, it was honoured with the ‘Strongest Islamic Retail Bank in Oman 2024’ at the Islamic Retail Banking Awards (IRBA). This accolade underscores Bank Nizwa’s commitment to delivering innovative banking solutions that adhere to Islamic Sharia principles, while also meeting the evolving needs of its customers and maintaining the highest standards of service excellence.

Bank Nizwa is at the forefront of advancing tools for the Islamic financial industry, extending its leadership beyond the banking sector to also transform endowment institutions. Its efforts are focused on strengthening the endowment sector’s capabilities, aligning with the ambitious goals of Oman Vision 2040. The bank’s record is filled with numerous strategic initiatives in the field of endowment, with one of the most prominent being the launch of the Ishraq Endowment Investment Fund in 2024. This fund was established in partnership between The Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, the Sultan Qaboos Higher Centre for Culture and Science and Bank Nizwa, in cooperation with Oman National Investments Development Company (TANMIA). This ambitious initiative is a significant addition to the endowment sector and marks a major advancement in the development of Islamic financial tools.

As Oman progresses toward becoming a knowledge-driven and innovation-led economy, Bank Nizwa stands as a symbol of purpose and progress. By spearheading advancements in Islamic finance, the bank reinforces its leadership in the sector while driving Oman’s holistic economic development through the promotion of ethical finance that fosters inclusivity, responsibility, and long-term prosperity.

ROUND-UP

Bank Muscat initiatives contribute to economic and social development

As one of the largest financial institutions in Oman, Bank Muscat plays an active role in implementing various initiatives and programmes aimed at contributing to social and economic development

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq's Accession Day is a celebrated occasion that profoundly signifies the continued development in Oman's renewed Renaissance. Since January 11, 2020, the government has provided clear insights into achieving sustainable development and fostering social well-being while safeguarding and enhancing national achievements. This vision not only paves the way for a prosperous future but also ensures a thriving society for generations to come.

With the increasing role of the banking sector in supporting national economy and achieving financial stability, His Majesty the Sultan called for strengthening financial inclusion, supporting small and medium enterprises, and diversifying income sources to work towards achieving an equitable economic balance. He emphasized the importance of innovation and creativity to enhance efficiency and facilitate services offered to all customers. In response, the



financial sector played a pivotal role in achieving these goals. Local banks, including Bank Muscat – the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman – exerted every effort to support His Majesty the Sultan's directives and implement the national vision.

As one of the largest financial institutions in Oman, Bank Muscat plays an active role in implementing various initiatives and programmes aimed at contributing to social and economic development. The Bank's efforts encompass various sectors, including:

National human development

Bank Muscat is committed to invest in various innovative initiatives to offer further learning and development opportunities to Omani youth. The Bank works according to a strategic plan that aims to widen the horizons of Omani youth and enable them to sharpen their skills. Annually, the Bank identifies all needs across its various departments and branches, considering all developments and requirements for human resources in diverse banking specialities.

During 2024, Bank Muscat provided 401 job opportunities, achieving around 92% Omanisation with over 4350 employees working in the different branches

across Oman. In recent years, the Bank has focused on cultivating an ideal work environment by enhancing employee experience and engagement, as well as supporting career development. This commitment positively impacts the level of services offered to customers. Commending these efforts, Bank Muscat was honoured with the global prestigious award “Best Places to Work for 2024” presented from “Best Places to Work”, a prestigious global institution in the United Kingdom.

With regard to the training aspect, the Bank provided more than 637 training opportunities for male and female students in corporation with various educational institutions. This annual initiative aims to provide better opportunities for students to develop their skills in their respective specialties, especially those related to financial and banking sector.

Supporting institutions and corporates

Bank Muscat places great importance on developing services and facilities tailored to the needs for government institutions and corporates. It demonstrates an unwavering commitment to delivering customized solutions, innovative technology and seamless services that empower businesses to thrive in a dynamic

economic environment.

The Bank is keen to enhance the efficiency of its electronic services to reduce costs and expedite transaction completion. Digital transformation has become essential for institutions, especially with the latest developments in the digital services. The Bank has contributed to the success and development of many government institutions and corporates across various sectors by providing customized banking solutions.

In addition, the Bank offers financing programmes specially designed to support entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprises. These programmes provide consulting and technical services that promote project sustainability, enhance competitiveness, and facilitate growth, recognizing their role as the backbone of the national economy.

Community sustainable programmes

Bank Muscat's social responsibility programmes are in line with Oman Vision 2040 which focuses on achieving a sustainable development and enhancing Omani society's well-being by encouraging partnership between private and public sectors. These programmes support various sectors such as education, health and environment. Among the main programmes, the Bank implements “Tadhamun” which benefitted more than 2200 social welfare families; ‘Green Sports’ which supported 203 local sports teams and 70,000 beneficiaries since its inception in 2012; ‘Maliyat Academy’ which aims to promote financial awareness and literacy in youngsters, benefitting so far more than 23,000 school students; as well as ‘Al Wathba Academy’ which offers programmes and initiatives that support entrepreneurs in various fields and provide management and financial consulting. All these initiatives have witnessed a positive feedback from the community.

In addition, the Bank partnered

previously with the Ministry of Higher Education through Jesr Al Mustaqbal programme to provide scholarships to young people from social welfare families. Regarding environmental initiatives, the Bank inaugurated the 300-olive-tree planting initiative in Jabal Al Akhdhar, which aim to serve the community and foster the Sultanate's economic growth by launching projects with long-term ecological, social, and economic impact. In order to raise awareness against cyber fraud, the Bank partnered with Royal Oman Police. The awareness initiative highlighted various fraud methods in order to reduce the financial and psychological consequences that they cause.

Digital transformation and financial inclusion

As the government moves towards a full digital transformation, Bank Muscat is working hard to invest in the infrastructure and information technology to create the plans required to advance this transformation through the creation of electronic channels.

With over 185 branches and service centers, including Meethaq Islamic Banking branches, spread throughout all governorates, the Bank is simultaneously growing its branch network in multiple governorates. There are now approximately 890 self-service electronic devices, including ATMs, CDMs, multifunction devices, and statement printers.

The Bank is currently upgrading a number of branches, which include services and facilities dedicated to people with disabilities so that they can complete their banking transactions easily and with high quality. A number of employees in branches have been trained on the use of sign language, in cooperation with the Omani Association for People with Hearing Disabilities, aiming to provide the best services to this important category of society.

Over the years, the Bank has launched a number of critical prod-

ucts and services that enable it to reach out to different customer segments. In 2019, Bank Muscat launched the first ATM in Oman for visually-impaired persons at the premises of the Al Noor Association for the Blind. The Bank continues to enhance financial inclusion amongst persons with disabilities by providing easy access at branches and training its employees to better serve its customers.

Islamic banking services

Since its inception in 2012, Meethaq Islamic Banking from Bank Muscat has been exerting efforts to provide Sharia-compliant financial services, as the Sultanate's largest Islamic institution in the field. Meethaq expanded its branch network throughout the year to boost its presence in all governorates. This was demonstrated by the increase in the number of branches, currently amounting to 31 and 20 Premium Banking Centers (Hafawa) across the Sultanate.

In order to maintain leadership in offering high-quality products and services, Meethaq is also dedicated to investing in the newest technologies to improve efficiency and customer service, with an emphasis on competitiveness, and implementing best practices and products to meet the needs of various segments.

Continuing leadership and excellence

Bank Muscat is committed to offer cutting-edge banking services and maintain its leadership and excellence in the years to come by concentrating on improving strategies that meet the needs of customers and the demands of this dynamic market. The Bank also plans to keep investing in modern technology, cultivate its workforce, and enhance the customer experience. By focusing on financial inclusion, the Bank aims to reach a larger customer base and reflect its ambitious vision to achieve sustainable growth and strengthen its position.

MHD ACERE

New Hongqi HS5: A fusion of distinctive elegance and unmatched performance

MUSCAT: MHD ACERE unveiled the new Hongqi HS5, a luxury SUV that redefines the standards of elegance, performance, and comfort. This remarkable vehicle seamlessly blends exceptional performance capabilities with a luxurious driving experience, embodying Hongqi's distinctive oriental vision.

Commenting on the launch, Mohsin Hani Al Bahrani, CEO of MHD ACERE, said, “The New Hongqi HS5 exemplifies the essence of luxury and performance that our customers in Oman desire. With its distinctive oriental vision, state-of-the-art features, and unmatched driving dynamics, the HS5 sets a new benchmark for the luxury SUV segment. We are thrilled to bring this exceptional vehicle to the Omani market.”

Dynamic and attractive design

The New Hongqi HS5 is a testament to Hongqi's identity, featuring a luxurious and dynamic design. At the forefront, a striking large grille with eight vertical chrome lines is centered by the iconic Hongqi logo, creating a modern yet authentic character. The front is further enhanced by the unique and elegant LED head-



lights, exuding sophistication and cutting-edge style.

Flowing lines extend gracefully from the front to the rear, offering a cohesive and integrated appearance. At the rear, horizontally-stretched LED taillights emphasize the vehicle's wide stance and are accented by a chrome line, adding a touch of distinction to its dynamic profile.

Under the hood, the New Hongqi HS5 is powered by a robust 2.0-liter turbocharged engine, delivering an impressive 252 horsepower and a maximum torque of 380Nm. Paired with an advanced 8-speed automatic transmission, the SUV

offers a driving experience that is both powerful and seamless.

Step inside the New Hongqi HS5 to discover a world of modern luxury. Designed to meet the aspirations of the discerning driver, the vehicle features a spacious cabin with refined aesthetics and advanced technology.

Highlights include: A 12.3-inch driver information display for intuitive control. A premium 12-speaker Bose surround sound system for an immersive entertainment experience. Exquisite materials and thoughtful design elements that elevate comfort and sophistication.

'ALIZZ CARES' PROGRAMME

Alizz Islamic Bank launches ‘Sports for All’ initiative to promote a healthy lifestyle

MUSCAT: As part of the bank's ‘Alizz Cares’ programme and underscoring its commitment to fostering inclusivity, empowering communities, and enhancing the quality of life, Alizz Islamic Bank recently announced the ‘Sports for All’ initiative that strives to encourage sports and development into the community.

This ‘Sports for All’ initiative reflects the bank's commitment to promoting inclusivity, health, equality and public welfare through sports, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The first arm of this initiative will be the bank partnering with Special Olympics Oman to sponsor a specialised full year training programme for 10 athletes.

The launch ceremony was held under the auspices of Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed Al Shamsi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Development in the presence of Ali Al Mani, CEO of Alizz Islamic Bank, former Oman National Team players Ali Al Habsi and Hassan Mudhafar, the executive management team of the bank and other dignitaries from Special Olympics Oman.

Ali Al Mani, CEO of Alizz Is-



lamic Bank said “At Alizz Islamic Bank we believe that sports can be used as a catalyst for positive change and we are committed to empowering all ages, abilities and backgrounds. We believe in the importance of educating the public about the benefits of sports and engaging in physical activities which resonates with our collective dedication to making an impact to the society.”

Al Mani added “As a society, it is important that we break down social barriers and ensure equal access to sporting opportunities to everyone and by championing accessibility and with special needs initiatives we promote inclusivity and harness diverse talents and perspectives of every member of our community.

Through our ‘Sports for All’ initiative and our partnership with the Special Olympics Oman, we are striving to create a community that provides meaningful opportunities for individuals of all abilities to benefit from advantages of participation in sports.”

Special Olympics Oman works with the objective to build behavioral, physical, and professional skillsets of its members by integrating them into society. The association's longstanding commitment to raise awareness on the needs of people with special needs extends to supporting and encouraging their participation in social, cultural, sports, health, professional and recreational activities, in collaboration with government and non-government entities.

WINTER OFFER



White Tap Dispenser
OR Tap dispenser
OR Manual water pump
OR Cradle with tap

+ 2 Full Bottles
+ 15 Refill Coupons

OMR 20 ONLY



Hot & Cold Dispenser
+ 2 Full Bottles
+ 30 Refill Coupons

OMR 50 ONLY

Experience the purest winter with special offers from Oman Oasis

Promotion duration: 1 December 2024 to 28 February 2025

TOLL FREE

800 71 222

9275 5522

OmanOasisWater

OmanOasisOfficial

OmanOasis

M M - 06 /1002 /2024



Enroll Now

oman OASIS

BALANCED DRINKING WATER

JAC

JS6

3 DAYS EXCLUSIVE OFFER 13TH TO 15TH JANUARY

**LIMITED
STOCK
AVAILABLE**



STARTING FROM

RO 6,466*

FREE
50,000 KMS OR
3-YEAR SERVICE
PACKAGE

OR

**LULU GIFT
VOUCHER
WORTH**
RO 100

OR

3M
CERAMIC IR PROTECTION
GLASS TINTING VOUCHER
(ALL SIDES + REAR) WITH
**5-YEAR
WARRANTY**

JAC
MOTORS | **JAC**
Experience the new



Towell Auto Centre LLC
YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER

 **71453300**
www.jacoman.com

Visit the showroom and view it to believe it.

• Barka • Sohar • Nizwa • Sur • Salalah

The campaign will run from 13th January to 15th January 2025 and is valid only while stocks last. VAT will be applicable on the stated prices. As part of the offer, customers can choose between a Free 50,000 KM/3-Year Service Package, a RO 100 Lulu Gift Voucher, or a 3M Ceramic IR Protection Glass Tinting Voucher with a 5-year warranty. The vehicles shown are for illustrative purposes only, and actual specifications may vary. Specifications are subject to change without prior notice. This offer is only applicable for 2024 model vehicles.

SCAN HERE
FOR HAPPINESS





Discover your passion for hospitality with MHA

Join us & explore exciting career opportunities. Learn more about our programs and meet our expert faculty.

Registrations are now open.

Partial scholarships for all students.

 Call 9931 4332 for more info.

mha-om.com

 @mha_oman



Beach Staycation

A PARADISE YOU CAN CALL HOME

Make the most of this season and enjoy a beachside getaway
at Oman's most loved family-friendly resort.



Al Bandar from OMR 55++



Al Waha from OMR 65++

Up to 2 adults and 1 child, including breakfast and access to:
Lazy River | Multiple Pools | Access to Various Dining Venues & Spa

Exclusive for residents of Oman only. T&Cs apply.

Price is for the starting room category, per night and excludes applicable taxes.

 24776262  79269247

