

HM SENDS GREETINGS

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to President-elect Gustavo Petro of the Republic of Colombia. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments to President-elect Petro, wishing him success in realizing aspirations of the Colombian people. His Majesty also wished the relations between the two countries further development and growth. **-ONA**



HM THE SULTAN CONDOLES KING OF KSA

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) on the death of Prince Turki bin Faisal bin Turki bin Abdulaziz bin Turki Al Saud. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sympathies to King Salman, praying to Allah the Almighty to rest the deceased's soul in peace in paradise and to grant his family patience and fortitude to bear the loss. **-ONA**



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ROYAL DECREES

HM issues two Royal decrees

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Monday issued two Royal decrees reading as follows:

Royal decree No. (49/2022) on approving the organisational structure for the Royal Court Affairs and the powers of the Secretary General.

Article (1) approves the organisational structure of the Royal Court Affairs as per the annex attached to this decree.

Article (2) states that the Secretary General of the Royal Court Affairs shall assume the powers assigned for the minister in the Law Concerning the Financial System Of The Diwan Of Royal Court promulgated by Royal decree No. (128/1991), the Law on Pensions and End of Service Gratuity for Omani Employees of the Diwan of Royal Court promulgated by Royal decree No. (86/1996), the Law Concerning The Employee System Of The Diwan Of Royal Court promulgated by Royal decree No. (97/1997), and any other laws related to the administrative divisions of the Royal Court Affairs. **>A3**

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, STATE COUNCIL TO SAFEGUARD VALUES OF THE SOCIETY



Focus is on constant coordination among all state institutions for comprehensive development

MUSCAT: His Highness Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers and members of the Council of Ministers on Monday received Sheikh Abdulmalik bin Abdullah Al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council and members of the Council. The meeting was held within the context of joint coordination of the Council of Ministers and the Council of Oman.

The joint meeting was held between the Council of Ministers and the State Council Office in the presence of their highnesses and ministers who are members of the Council of Ministers. These meetings are held as per stipulated in the Basic Law of the State and the State Council Law. The meetings explore means of constant coordination among all state institutions in a bid to reach joint visions that assist in upgrading tracks of comprehensive development being

witnessed by the Sultanate. At the outset, Sayyid Fahd underscored the importance of the role of the State Council in conjunction with the Council of Ministers in performing its responsibilities represented in the implementation of the state general policies and ensuring the provision of best services to citizens. The meeting also affirmed that the government attaches an importance to enhance the constructive

cooperation and share views to achieve the supreme interest of the country. The Council of Ministers hopes that the State Council contributes in conducting studies and providing proposals on the topics that back the efforts of the government to implement development plans and programmes and elevating the march of national action, thanks to the national expertise and competencies enjoyed by the State Council. **>A4**

LOST FOR 10 DAYS

Ordeal of missing men's families comes to an end

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Family members of the two missing Omanis who were rescued off the coast of Pakistan after being lost for 10 days at sea can now breathe a sigh of relief after going through what they call the hardest period of their lives.

21-year-old Salim Al Jaafari and 29-year-old Ali Al Jaafari were rescued by Pakistani naval vessels on 19 June, after a fishing boat had spotted them a day earlier. Asked to assist by Oman, the Pakistan government did try to find their location by tracking the signal of the satellite phone lent to Salim by one of the Pakistani fishermen so that he could call his brother Mohammed back home



and inform them about their situation.

The number was shared with the Pakistani authorities by their Omani counterparts, but rough weather over the Arabian Sea meant they lost the signal before it could be traced, said Dr Moham-

med Omar Al Marhoun, the ambassador of Oman to Pakistan.

"When I was told they had been found, my first thought was 'I can't believe what I'm hearing'", said Hamad Al Jaafari, a cousin of the two men, who are from Al Ashkharah in Wilayat Jalan Bani Bu Ali in

South Sharqiyah.

"We are so eager to see and embrace them, we have been through the hardest period of our lives over these last 10 days, which have been filled with anxiety and fear... and hope," he added. "I cannot describe to you what our psychological state was like during this time."

Salim also contacted his family once he and Ali arrived safely in Karachi, where the Consulate General of Oman confirmed they had arrived. "The Consulate General in Karachi received the Omanis Salim Al Jaafari and Ali Al Jaafari, who were missing at sea, from the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency, and thanked them for the cooperation and efforts made by them," said Oman's Consulate in a statement. **>A3**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Yoga Festival in Oman

1 Yoga shows the path to holistic health and well-being. **>A2**

WORLD Sara Duterte sworn in

2 Sara Duterte is the new vice-president of the Philippines. **>A6**

MARKET Profit for airlines

3 Airlines will return to profit in 2023, according to a new report. **>B1**

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PRAYER TIMINGS



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Asr.....	3:31pm
Maghrib.....	7:01pm
Isha.....	8:24pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	3:53am

‘Yoga Festival in Oman blazes a trail for universal health and well being’



BY AMIT NARANG
Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman

Diabetes, back & joint pain, blood pressure, heart disease – all too common ailments that do not differentiate between nationality, ethnicity, region or religion. Rich, poor or middle class, all of us are equally vulnerable. World Health Organization estimates that non-communicable or chronic diseases kill around 41 million people every year, equivalent to 71 per cent of all deaths globally.

Prevention from such diseases, as also from disorders linked to modern lifestyles such as stress, anxiety and depression, is possible by following a holistic approach to wellness, by bringing about a balance between the mind and body and by enhancing our body's natural tendency toward health and self-healing.

Yoga, the ancient tradition

from India, shows the path to holistic health and well-being, offering physical and mental health benefits for people of all ages, everywhere.

Requiring little more than a mat and comfortable clothes, Yoga is the path to everyday health. Its daily practice is simple, affordable and accessible. It promises innumerable benefits, recognised and endorsed by health professionals around the world.

In 2014, the overwhelming response to the United Nations General Assembly call to recognize June 21 as the International Day of Yoga underlined the universal appeal of this ancient discipline for physical and mental health. Since then, the International Day of Yoga has been marked globally with great fervor.

COVID pandemic reinforced to the world the imperatives of natural immunity and good health practices and brought the benefits of Yoga to the centre of global imagination once again.

As the world marks the 8th International Day of Yoga today, Yoga has already transformed into a mass movement, transcending all barriers and bringing people from all over the world on to a common platform for attaining better health, reinvigorating an inner consciousness and promoting harmony and peace.

The theme for this year's International Day of Yoga is “Yoga for Humanity”, showcasing the important role Yoga has played in helping humanity cope with the devastating effects of the Covid pandemic.

As a combination of care-



ful body postures, breathing and meditation, yoga can help achieve harmony of the body, mind and soul. It helps boost immunity and resistance to common illnesses, stress and anxiety – just what is required

these days. The holistic practice of Yoga not only benefits the mind and body, it also inculcates love, generosity and compassion towards others, promoting a humanity of the heart so needed in today's world.

People of Oman have taken to Yoga as an elixir for better health with great enthusiasm. Yoga as a health regimen is increasingly popular among all sections of the Omani population.

In the run up to the celebration of 8th International Day of Yoga, Embassy of India, Muscat launched in April this year a unique Yoga Festival in the form of ‘Muscat Yog Mahotsav: 75 Days, 75 Events’ – a festival of peace, health and wellness. Timed to commemorate 75 glorious years of India's independence, the Muscat Yoga Mahotsav was a veritable marathon of

Yoga practices across 75 days culminating in the International Day of Yoga today.

Over the past 75 days, this unique festival of health featured not just 75, but well over 100 events in online and offline mode all across Oman. Indian community and Omani people came out in large numbers for numerous yoga sessions held since then on diverse themes including Yoga for general fitness; strengthening nervous system; relieving mental stress; controlling diabetes, thyroid, insomnia and high blood pressure; improving flexibility, immunity, concentration and memory; boosting child and adolescent health etc at different locations all across Oman.

This iconic yoga marathon and the enthusiastic participation of people of all age groups signifies not only the growing popularity of Yoga in Oman, but also the time-tested bonds of fraternity between Indian and Omani people.

We are grateful to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik and the Government of Oman for their constant support and to the kind people of Oman for their wholehearted embrace of Yoga for health.

Yoga is a bridge of friendship, bringing the people of India and Oman together in a common quest for personal good health, community well-being and peace and harmony all over.

FROM 6TH TO 16TH OF JULY



6 Omani students to attend Maths Olympiad in Norway

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Education, represented by the Department of Innovation and the Scientific Olympiad, will continue its training camp this week for the six participating students from the Sultanate of Oman in the 63rd edition of the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) 2022, scheduled to be held in the Kingdom of Norway from the 6th to 16th of July 2022.

On the importance of the Omani students getting a course of preparation and training for the all-important world contest, Ma'en Al Hinai, Senior Scientific Olympiad specialist in the Ministry, said: “The Ministry sought to discover students who are good at mathematics, select the elite among them and refine their skills through training on scientific subjects in all the four areas of mathematics, namely, algebra, geometry, number theory and combinations. The selection of participating students went through three stages: First, the nomination of educational directorates in different governorates for selection of students who were good at mathematics during



Dr. Mahmoud bin Muhammad Al-Hashami

the academic year, second, a virtual training programme with more than thirty participating students in cooperation with a group of academics to select a national team to participate in this global scientific forum, and third establishment of an intensive training camp (in-person attendance) in which six students were trained ten hours in a day for a full week, in solving global exercises and problems inspired by previous international Olympiads to familiarise them with the patterns and methods of solving different questions.”

Dr. Mahmoud bin Muham-

mad Al-Hashami, a mathematics teacher from Mazen bin Ghadouba School in the Governorate of Al Dakhiliyah, and a mathematics trainer for the students said: “The students participating in this camp are among the best in the Sultanate and they are all trained in the four topics of mathematics, and various international problems and tests. I see in them enthusiasm and diligence and hope they will achieve advanced positions in this Olympiad.”

The participating students, on their part expressed their eagerness to participate in the world contest in the Kingdom of Norway and expressed their appreciation of the efforts made by the Ministry to provide training to them, to impart knowledge to them that touches their passion, and to enhance their psychological and mental readiness to represent the Sultanate in the World Olympiad. The training courses play a major role in developing students' skills and building up their self-confidence, in addition to improving their academic level and expanding their knowledge base in mathematics in its various branches.

PREMIER AIRLINE ALLIANCE

Oman Air to join oneworld

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Air will join the oneworld®Alliance, further strengthening the premier airline alliance's leading position in the Middle East.

Based in Muscat, Oman Air was elected as a oneworld member designate in Dohaby the oneworld Governing Board, comprising the Chief Executives of all oneworld member airlines. oneworld member Qatar Airways will act as sponsor for Oman Air's entry into oneworld, providing guidance and support as the airline integrates into the alliance.

Oman Air is expected to be implemented into oneworld in 2024, following which it will provide the full range of oneworld benefits to customers travelling on its flights. Members of Oman Air's Sindbad frequent flyer programme will be able to earn and redeem miles on all oneworld member airlines, with top tier members receiving additional benefits including lounge access when travelling with other oneworld members.

Oman Air's entry into oneworld will provide even more flights and destinations to customers planning global travel across the alliance's members, making oneworld the only global airline alliance with three members in the Middle East after Qatar Airways and Royal Jordanian. Oman Air's joining will add new destinations to the oneworld network including Duqm and Khasab in Oman and Chittagong (Bangladesh). oneworld Emerald, oneworld Sapphire and premium cabin customers will also gain access to three Oman Air lounges at Muscat, Salalah and Bangkok.

Launched in 1993, Oman Air is the national carrier of the Sultanate of Oman. From its roots as a domestic airline, it has transformed into an international carrier serving 41 destinations in more than 20 territories. It operates a modern fleet of more than 40 aircraft comprising Boeing 737s, 787s and Airbus A330s. Configured in a two or three-class



cabin, Oman Air's aircraft offer exclusive First Class Private Suites on longer-haul flights. Known for its exceptional in-flight hospitality, the airline has received several awards including most recently the APEX Passenger Choice Award for Best Seat Comfort in the Middle East.

Oman Air operates to five oneworld member airline hubs – Amman, Colombo, Doha, Kuala Lumpur and London Heathrow – and already codeshares with four oneworld member airlines: Malaysia Airlines, Qatar Airways, Royal Jordanian and SriLankan Airlines. Joining oneworld will pave the way for additional codeshare opportunities, further enhancing global connectivity across the alliance's network.

Following its entry into oneworld, Oman Air will be the third new member of the alliance in five years, marking another achievement in oneworld's rapid growth. Royal Air Maroc joined the alliance in April 2020, adding oneworld's first full member in the African continent. This was followed by Alaska Airlines in March 2021, making oneworld the only global airline alliance with two members in the United States.

oneworld Governing Board Chairman and Qatar Airways Group Executive Akbar Al Baker said: “Today marks a new milestone in oneworld, as our friends at Oman Air become a member elect of our award-winning alliance. Passengers of Oman Air

will be offered a seamless travel journey, connecting them to more than 900 destinations across 170 countries. As the Chairman of oneworld, we look forward to welcoming Oman Air into our alliance as they will bring great benefits, allowing passengers to discover not just a new member with an excellent reputation, but a beautiful country.”

oneworld CEO Rob Gurney said: “We are delighted that Oman Air has chosen oneworld as its global airline alliance partner. With its network in Muscat and award-winning customer service, Oman Air will reinforce our position as the premier airline alliance for global travellers. As the global travel industry continues to recover from the pandemic, the significant growth of oneworld in recent years demonstrates how important alliances and partnerships will continue to be.”

Oman Air CEO Eng. Abdulaziz Al Raisi said: “Oman Air's admittance into oneworld represents a defining moment in our journey to provide passengers with greater travel options through our developing partnerships and alliances. We're delighted to be joining the world's foremost airline alliance at a time when demand for travel is on the rise. We look forward to welcoming oneworld members onboard Oman Air to experience the height of Omani hospitality and all that the Sultanate of Oman has to offer in terms of history, culture and natural beauty.”



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Oman, Tanzania joint investments likely to touch \$1.5bn: Analysts

While neither side put a figure on the under-consideration joint investments, business analysts estimated the total would not be less than \$1.5 billion

SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

MUSCAT: Oman and Tanzania have embarked on talks for joint investment that may run up to \$1.5 billion following the visit of President Samya Suluhu Hassan to the Sultanate.

The Tanzanian President, the first woman head of state of the country, arrived in Oman last Sun-

day on a three-day visit to meet His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik.

She had talks with members of the ministerial cabinet as well as leading business people in a bid to iron out new investments strategy between the two countries.

In a flurry of official statements released by the government offices during his visits, the two countries agreed to hold further

talks to invest jointly in projects from agriculture, mining, fisheries, tourism projects to oil and gas ventures. Neither side put a figure on the joint investments between them but business analysts estimated the total cost will be “substantial”.

“For the scope of the joint investments which they put on the table, it would not be less than \$1.5 billion. It is a substantial outlay that involves many ventures in different fields in the next five years. Taking into account their historical ties in the last few centuries, the two countries have a lot in common and that is why they feel it is the right time to move forward into business investments,” Mohammed al Harthy, an independent analyst, told Times of Oman.

While President Hassan, the first Zanzibari-born to become

President of Tanzania, was in Oman, the two countries established a joint investment fund between them but the amount was not specified.

She also wooed private investors into investing into private projects when she met business owners in a meeting at the Bustan Palace Hotel.

“We have already made it easier for investors to enter the Tanzanian market, including guaranteeing the safety of their investments with political certainty. Oman is special to us since both sides have families in the two countries bound by our shared long history,” she told Omani business people who attended the meeting.

Zanzibar, which was an independent country, united with Tanganyika to form the Republic of Tanzania in April 1964.

SUMMER SOLSTICE

Longest day of the year in Oman today

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman will receive more than 12 hours of sunshine on the longest day of the year, known as the summer solstice.

Set to fall on Tuesday, 21 June, the sun will rise over Muscat at 5:19am on that day, and set a full 13 hours and 35 minutes later at 6:54pm. Over Salalah in the south, sunrise is at 5:51 am, and sunset some 13 hours and eight minutes later, at 6:59pm. “Most parts of Oman will have clear and sunny skies with some scattered clouds, but for the most part, the weather

will be dry,” said a meteorologist at the Civil Aviation Authority. “However, it will be cloudy over the Dhofar governorate and its adjoining areas, because that area is already feeling the effects of monsoon,” she added.

The weather report for Tuesday, released by the CAA, added that there was a “chance of late night to early morning low-level clouds or fog patches over South Al Sharqiyah and Al Wusta governorates,” as well as dusty winds over deserts and open areas.

On Wednesday, 22 June, however, there is likely to be some rain

over areas overlooked by the Hajar Mountains, as there is a “chance of convective clouds over Al Hajar Mountains toward afternoon with chances of isolated rain and occasional thundershowers.”

Many places in Oman are likely to experience temperatures above 40 degrees. Buraimi, Fahud and Sohar (all 46 degrees) are the hottest places in Oman on Tuesday, with Haima, Thumrait, Marmul, Ibra and Adam also sweltering under temperatures of 44 degrees. Temperatures of 43 degrees are forecast for Yanqul, Samail, Ni-zwa, Bahla and Mudheibi, while

Rustaq, Khasab and Al Amerat (42 degrees) are also experiencing high levels of mercury. Sohar, Suwaiq and Sur are all likely to record temperatures of 40 degrees.

People living in Duqm and Muhut will experience cooler weather (36 degrees), both Jabal Shams and Jabal Samhan (both 27 degrees) and Jabal Qamar (23 degrees) are some of the most pleasant places to be in. While the summer solstice on 21 June has the longest period of daytime, the winter solstice, slated to fall on Thursday, 22 December, will have the least daylight time.

ROYAL DECREE

Appointments at Royal Court Affairs

< FROM A1 Article (3) cancels Royal decree No. (44/2004) and Royal decree No. (27/2012) and all that contradicts this decree or contravenes its provisions.

Article (4) says that this decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from its date of issue.

Royal decree No. (50/2022) on conducting appointments at the Royal Court Affairs.

Article (1) appoints Sheikh

Said bin Hilal bin Ali Al Khalili as Head of the Human and Financial Resources and Support Affairs, along with his current grade and financial allocations.

Article (2) appoints Eng. Hilal bin Mohammed bin Humaid Al Wa'eli as Head of the Royal Horses, Camels, Farms and Gardens Affairs, with the special grade.

Article (3) says that this decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from its date of issue.

-ONA

ORDEAL ENDS

< FROM A1 Fishermen missing at sea for 10 days in good health now

In coordination with a doctor of the agency, consular officials conducted medical examinations to ascertain the health status of the missing Omani fishermen. The two men are in good health.

“I advise fishermen to take all precautions and listen to the weather forecast before heading out to sea,” said Dr Mohammed Omar Al Marhoun, ambassador of Oman to Pakistan. “I also want to thank the Pakistani authorities and Pakistan’s Maritime Security Agency for their assistance.”

Adding to this, Mohammed Imran Ali Chaudhry, the ambassador of Pakistan to Oman, said: “To survive an extended time out at sea is no easy matter, and thanks to god that these men were well, even after facing the rigours of the open water for so long,” he said, before explaining how navies prepare for and stay alert during search and rescue missions. “While some of the joint naval exercises that we carry out with other countries are directed towards warfare,

“I advise fishermen to take all precautions and listen to the weather forecast before heading out to sea,” said Dr Mohammed Omar Al Marhoun, ambassador of Oman to Pakistan.

the main objective of these drills is to help navies detect smaller craft and assist people, by preventing activities such as smuggling, and rapidly responding to distress calls.”

Trending ON SOCIAL MEDIA



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Story on IKEA opening its first store in Oman

A story on IKEA opening its first store in Oman reached 51,030 people and had 7,996 link clicks on Facebook.



MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

4,000 VIEWS



Midday Minute news update

The Midday Minute news update had 1,800 views and reached 4,000 people on Facebook.



MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

1,190 VIEWS



Morning Minute video on Summer Solstice

The Morning Minute video on Summer Solstice had 1,190 views and 56 likes on Instagram.



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JOINT MEETING REVIEWS A WHOLE SPECTRUM OF ISSUES



< FROM A1 THE CHAIRMAN of the State Council and members of the Council's Office expressed their happiness for this meeting and the topics of significance for the upcoming stage which were raised during the meeting. The joint meeting also reviewed the agenda that covers a spectrum of topics such as supporting integration among the state institutions to serve the public interest, means of activating the State Council's role in providing studies and proposals to consolidate genuine values of the society and enhancing awareness on the current challenges with the aim of safeguarding the achievements of sustainable development. Emphasis was also laid during the meeting on continuing to exert maximum efforts to serve more accomplishments being witnessed by the country under the enlightened leadership. **-OWA**





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UPSTREAM BUSINESS



OQ Group produces 218,000bpd of oil

MUSCAT: OQ Group on Monday celebrated its achievements made by the upstream business of the Group. The ceremony was held under the patronage of Eng. Salim Nasser Al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, The achievements come as part of the efforts made by the Omani government to diversify economic resources to achieve the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

Al Aufi said, “OQ Group plays a major role in oil, gas, petrochemical and alternative energy investments. The efforts are in line with the Group’s strategy that aims to diversify its portfolio of investments. We are proud to see OQ’s evolution as a global energy player which is exporting its products to more than 60 countries while applying the highest international standards.”

“OQ Upstream achievements are clearly visible in the increased oil production from its concession areas. This, coupled with proper management of investment partnerships, enabled the Group to increase its daily production to 218,000 barrels per day (bpd). This figure accounts for 12.6 per cent of the Sultanate of Oman’s total oil production, making OQ Group one of the main oil producers,” Al Aufi added.

Talal Hamid Al Aufi, CEO of OQ Group, said “OQ investments portfolio covers oil, petrochemical and clean energy sectors, which enabled the Company to maximise its direct contribution to the national economy and the realisation of the government’s economic diversification objectives as outlined in Oman Vision 2040. OQ’s contribution to the growth of the national economy has also been evident through its support to SMEs, in particular, and private sector, in general, through local procurements in addition to the Group’s wide range of ICV initiatives.”

“The Group has made notable achievements across its Upstream investments, represented by an enhanced level of efficiency and increased production, in particular from Block 60 concession area. Production from Block 60 has increased to 50,000 barrels per day, and we plan to increase it further to 60,000 barrels per day by the end of this year”.

Talal Al Aufi pointed out that OQ Gas has been successful in delivering the required gas to power plants and factories across the Sultanate of Oman through its 4,100-km network. More than 100 million cubic metres of gas are transported daily to industrial consumers and power plants. Additionally, in recognition of its outstanding performance and for applying the best global standards in asset management, OQ Gas Network has been awarded the ISO 55001 Certificate”.

Ahmed Said Al Azkawi, CEO of OQ Upstream, pointed out that OQ Upstream achievements are important value additions to the efforts made by the Sultanate of Oman, in general, and the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, in particular, to enhance oil production and state revenues from oil and gas reserves.

“They also serve to boost the petrochemical activities, and make the best use of Oman’s natural resources as well as clean energy. These projects come in response to the Royal directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to diversify the sources of national income and to enhance the contribution of the energy sector to the GDP,” he added.

“Despite increased production, OQ Group has been able to achieve significant savings in the cost of oil production as a result of using state-of-the-art technologies and the collaboration of efforts by all its staff members. Moreover, significant cost savings have been also made in the joint venture” Al Azkawi furthered.

“As for the ICV, OQ Upstream has implemented a number of initiatives to increase procurement from the local market, maximising gains from oil investments and creating direct and indirect jobs and business opportunities for SMEs.” – **ONA**

FROM KING OF JORDAN

HM receives thanks cable

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from King Abdullah II Ibn Al Husain of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in reply to His Majesty’s greetings cable on the occasion of his accession to the throne anniversary.

In the cable, King Abdullah II expressed his utmost appreciation for His Majesty’s sincere sentiments that reflect the advanced relations between the two countries, praying to Allah the Almighty to protect His Majesty and to grant him good health and wellbeing.

He also wished the Omani people further progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of His Majesty. - **ONA**

CREATIVITY & INNOVATION

Cultural Week commences at UTAS Salalah

SALALAH: The Cultural Week kicked off on Monday in the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS) of Salalah.

The Cultural Week, themed ‘Students’ Creativity and Innovation’ aims to promote a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation. It also targets highlighting the talents of the students.

The events of the Cultural Week include seminars and lectures on writing, photography, the environment, architecture, intellectual property and patents, as well as cultural and sport competitions. – **ONA**

AL BURAIMI

Municipal Council meet

AL BURAIMI: The Municipal Council of the Governorate of Al Buraimi on Monday discussed the one stop station for investment project that aims to ease procedures for investors.

The 6th meeting of the council also reviewed several proposals of locations allocated for oil stations. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Sayyid Dr. Hamad Ahmed Al Busaidi, Governor of Al Buraimi and Chairman of the Municipal Council. – **ONA**

COMMENTARY

Agrobusiness can make Oman’s economy strong



By Mohammed Anwar Al Balushi

One of the places where I spent my childhood was Rumais. It is a 15-kilometer drive from Barka and is famous for “Naseem Park”. Every now and then, I come here to find my lost childhood. Yet this time my visit spurred me to think like an economist and to jot down a few lines.

Even though it is a very small bazar, in the evenings it has a bustling crowd, and the market looks effective and efficient. It’s like a free market, the buyers and sellers both look charming at the same time.

I dropped my wife and

mother off at a relative’s house and then went to the market. On my right, I could see small grocery stores and electronics shops. On my left, there was the football pitch I used to play on in my teenage years.

The entire experience reminded me of my childhood and I can picture myself going to the grocery store as a child to buy groceries. Yes, I can also see the barber shop where I used to get my hair cut for four hundred baizas. In front of me, I can see the mosque that I used to go to memories of my school’s lessons since the area was quiet after the prayers.

“How much does a rock melon cost?”, I asked the Omani who was selling rock melons from his white-colored pick-up truck. “Just pay me one riyal and take eight pieces”, he replied. His appearance, despite his age, showed a very lively person who was enjoying what he was doing. I bought eight pieces for one rial.

“Can I take your photo?”, I requested him. “My photo!”, he surprisingly laughed. “What would you do with my photo?”, he asked me. “It’s good to let the world know that someone

in your age is still active and working like a young man, and this might motivate and inspire others to follow you”, I persuaded him and took his photo. “Let me look good, in the picture”, he said.

“I have a farm in Barka and cultivate these fruits, then sell them here at night”, he answered me when I asked him about his activities. “How much do you earn per day?”, I asked him. “Speaking honestly, I don’t earn that much, but I can still feed my family and I’m satisfied.

“In some days, I earn ten rials, but on other days more or less”, he said. Instead asking his name from the beginning of the conversation, I asked him at the end. “What is your name?”, I asked. “I am Saeed Al Wahibi”, he answered me with a smiling face, the face which made me energetic and happy.

Rumais is one of the areas where dozens of farms exist. The agrobusiness should be promoted in the market and financial intuitions should be developed to support such business. Often, commercial banks offer “fund raising” services in this market.

VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Ministerial meeting held in Muscat

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources took part on Monday in the 32nd ministerial meeting of the GCC Agricultural Cooperation Committee.

Oman’s delegation was headed in the meeting, held via video conferencing, by Dr. Saud Hamoud Al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources. The meeting discussed a spectrum of topics, including matters related to food security, agriculture and fisheries, among others. The meeting also touched on the cooperation between the GCC and the Kingdom of Morocco. – **ONA**



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TENDER NOTICE
Ref: ISB/Tender/2022-23 dated 21/6/2022

Bids are invited from interested parties for the following tenders:

Sl. No.	Name of Tender	Tender No.	Qty.	Tender Documents available from	Tender Submission Date
01	Appointment of Cafeteria Contractor	A008/2022-23		21/6/2022	03/07/2022
02	Car park and shade for school open areas	A009/2022-23	1492 sq. mt	21/6/2022	03/07/2022

Tender documents can be collected from ISB office, till a day before the date of submission. Tender documents can be collected from ISB office, till a day before the date of submission. Enquiries and requests for clarifications regarding above Tenders shall be submitted through emails to facilitymanager@isboman.com

Sealed tenders, inscribing the tender name and number **only**, on the envelope to be dropped in the tender box placed in ISB, on/before **12.30 PM** of the tender submission date; along with all necessary details and supporting documents (CR and company Profile). Indian School Bousher reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reasons whatsoever.

Note: Site visit for both the Tender will be arranged on 26th June 2022 @ 10 a.m.



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CIVIL DEFENCE AND AMBULANCE AUTHORITY

‘Nida’ app launched for citizens and residents to report emergencies



MUSCAT: The Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority on Monday launched an app named ‘Nida’ or ‘Call’, that enables citizens and resident to report emergencies. Users can call an ambulance by pressing a button through the SOS system and communicate with the authority’s operations centre in emergency cases. This feature targets people who cannot speak and those with a hearing impairment. Emergencies that can be reported through the app include accidents, injuries, losses, fires, drowning incidents and other emergencies. The app also includes various other services. -**ONA**

ELECTIONS

Sara Duterte sworn in as vice president of Philippines after emphatic victory

MANILA: Sara Duterte, daughter of the outgoing populist president of the Philippines Rodrigo Duterte, was sworn in as the country’s 15th vice president on Sunday. “The voice of 32.2 million Filipinos was loud and clear – with the message to serve our motherland,” she said, referring to the votes she received. Duterte, 44, won a landslide victory in the May elections despite her father’s human rights record while he was president that saw thousands of drug suspects gunned down. Rodrigo Duterte’s presidency has been marked by a brutal anti-drugs campaign that led to thousands of suspects shot dead by police or vigilantes. The drug killings are being investigated by the International Criminal Court as a possible crime against humanity. -**BW**

SAYYID BADR RECEIVES SUDAN ENVOY’S CREDENTIALS

Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister received in his office on Monday a copy of credentials of Salah Al Din Al Hajj Muhammad Al Kando, Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan appointed to the Sultanate of Oman. Sayyid Badr wished the ambassador success in carrying out his duties. - **ONA**



MEETING

Foreign Minister receives Japanese Parliamentary Deputy Foreign Minister

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister received on Monday Taro Honda, Parliamentary Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

Reviewed

The two sides reviewed relations of friendship and bilateral cooperation between the two countries, particularly in cultural, economic, business, renewable energy and technology fields. They also reaffirmed the joint keenness of enhancing those relations towards broader horizons coinciding with the 50th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between Oman and Japan.

Exchanged views

The two sides also exchanged views on several regional and international matters of common interest. They affirmed the continuation of consultations between the foreign ministries of the two countries to promote cooperation and contribute to achieve peace



and stability in the region and the world at large. The meeting was attended by Khalid Hashel Al Muselhi, Head

of the Minister’s Office Department and Jota Yamamoto, Ambassador of Japan to the Sultanate of Oman. -**ONA**

RIGHT MAJORITY

Macron’s alliance loses parliamentary majority

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron’s centrist alliance has fallen short of an absolute majority in the second round of France’s parliamentary election, according to preliminary official results.

Provisional results showed that Macron’s Ensemble (ENS) alliance won 245 of the 577 seats in the National Assembly, the Ministry of the Interior announced early on Monday morning after vote counting ended.

An absolute majority would require 289 seats.

Socialist veteran Jean-Luc Melenchon’s new leftist NUPES coalition secured 131 seats, becoming the main opposition force.

Melenchon hailed the result as “above all an electoral failure” for

the president.

The election results will likely severely complicate the newly re-elected president’s second-term agenda.

Macron’s ability to pursue further economic reforms would hinge on his ability to rally moderates outside of his alliance behind his legislative agenda.

A hung parliament would open up a period of political uncertainty that would require a degree of power-sharing among parties not experienced in France since the 1988-1991 presidency of Francois Mitterrand.

Alternatively, it would result in political paralysis and even possibly repeat elections.

In April, Macron defeated far-



right candidate Marine Le Pen to be the first French president to win a second term since Jacques Chirac in 2001.

Le Pen’s National Rally (NR) party, which had just eight seats in the outgoing parliament, saw its biggest parliamentary success

in decades, winning 89 seats and becoming the third power in the legislature, according to the preliminary results.

The conservative Les Republicains (LR) got 61 seats, potentially making them kingmakers.

Macron presides over a deeply disenchanted and divided country where support for populist parties on the right and left has surged due to the cost of living crisis among other issues.

Melenchon’s NUPES alliance – the New Ecological and Social People’s Union – campaigned on freezing the prices of essential goods, lowering the retirement age, capping inheritance and banning companies that pay dividends from firing workers.

Macron’s political allies cast Melenchon as a “sinister agitator” who would wreck the country.

The results are “far from what we hoped”, Budget Minister Gabriel Attal said on the TF1 channel, while Justice Minister Eric Dupond-Moretti told BFM television: “We’re in first place but it’s a first place that is obviously disappointing.”

Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne, who won a seat in Western France, said that her government would get to work from Monday to reach out to potential partners in order to rally a majority behind it.

“I have trust in all of us and in our sense of responsibility,” said Borne, telling voters: “We want to continue to protect you and ensure your security.” -**BW**

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WORLD

Wildfires force Germany, Greece, and Spain to evacuate residents

Residents of about 20 villages were ordered to evacuate due to a forest fire that has been burning since Friday

BERLIN: High early summer temperatures and stronger winds reached the eastern states of Germany on Sunday, fanning a wildfire in an area southwest of the capital, Berlin.

The country's national weather agency said the mercury topped 38 Celsius (100.4 Fahrenheit) at some measuring stations in the east after reaching similar temperatures in the west of the country a day earlier.

Residents of about 20 villages were ordered to evacuate as a forest fire, that has been burning since Friday, approached their homes. Others were told to prepare to leave in the next few hours.

Earlier, a fire brigade spokes-



person said the wildfire's area had spread to "around 100 to 110 hectares," about 70 kilometres (43 miles) from Berlin.

A military helicopter was deployed to help in the firefighting operation.

Emergency teams have so far managed to prevent the flames from crossing a major road, the B102, which has been closed to traffic.

The local town hall in Treuenbrietzen in the state of Brandenburg is serving as an emergency shelter for those being evacuated.

Germany has seen numerous wildfires in recent days following a period of intense heat and little rain.

However, forecasters said thunderstorms would likely bring cooler weather in from the west by Sunday evening.

Greek island hit by fire

Also on Sunday, a wildfire continued to rage out of control in central Evia, Greece's second-largest island.

Fanned by strong winds, the blaze spread across the slopes of a mountainous forest in Gaia.

Authorities ordered the evacuation of the village of Kremastros as a precaution as the blaze got as close as 800 meters (roughly 2,600 feet) from some homes.

About 70 firefighters were battling the blaze on the ground, assisted by nine fire dousing planes and four helicopters.

Evia suffered devastating forest fires last summer that destroyed about a third of its forest cover.

Meanwhile, firefighters in Spain struggled to contain wildfires that have raged for several days as a result of the heat wave that brought record temperatures for June.

Thermometers have risen above 40 Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) in many Spanish cities this week — temperatures more typically seen in August.

The worst damage has been in the northwestern province of Zamora, where over 25,000 hectares (61,000 acres) of land have been scorched, regional authorities said.

The fire was started by a strike from an electrical storm on Wednesday, although a lack of rainfall and gusting winds created the conditions for the blaze to thrive.

Temperature drops across Spain

Spanish authorities said temperatures dropped on Sunday morning, giving some respite to the 650 emergency workers battling the burning vegetation.

Supported by water-dumping aircraft, they were able to establish a perimeter around the fire that started in Zamora's Sierra de la Culebra, while 18 villages have been evacuated.

Wildfires were also active in three parts of northeastern Catalonia: in Lleida, in Tarragona and in a nature park in Garraf, just south of Barcelona. Firefighters said they have responded to over 200 different wildfires just in Catalonia over the past week.

Experts have warned the high temperatures were caused by worrying climate change trends.

"What we're witnessing today is, unfortunately, a foretaste of the future," said Clare Nullis, a spokeswoman for the World Meteorological Organization in Geneva.

She said summers were likely to be hotter if concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere continued to rise and push global warming toward 2 degrees Celsius higher than pre-industrial levels.

-DW

SEVERE FLOOD

BOMB BLAST

20 killed, millions stranded after monsoon storms hit Bangladesh

DHAKA: At least 20 persons were killed, including cops, on Monday after monsoon storms in Bangladesh unleashed devastating floods that left millions of others stranded.

Millions of people have still been left marooned or homeless by the severe floods in about a dozen Bangladesh districts, reported Xinhua. According to the daily flood report of the country's Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, at least eight people have died in lightning in the flood-hit areas of four Bangladesh districts while four died in a landslide in southeastern Chittagong district since June 16.

Another death was reported Monday from Sylhet's Sunamganj district, some 296 km northeast of Dhaka, where the body of a policeman who was washed away in flood waters on Thursday night was recovered on Saturday night.

Also, an ill-fated baby was swept



away by the major Teesta after he slipped from his mother's lap on their way to a flood shelter on Sunday in Bangladesh's Gaibandha district, some 268 km northwest of capital Dhaka.

Apart from them, six more people died on Sunday with tens of thousands evacuated to nearly 1,000 flood shelters, mainly in the country's northeastern Sylhet and

about 10 Bangladesh districts.

Local TV reports showed widespread damage to habitation, crops, roads and highways across vast swathes of the country's mainly northeastern region due to the flooding.

According to Flood Forecasting and Warning Center, water levels in different rivers of the country may rise again this week, leading to fresh flooding in some areas.

Md Kamrul Hasan, secretary of Bangladesh's Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, had earlier told Xinhua that tens of thousands of policemen, Bangladesh Army soldiers and emergency service staff members have been deployed in parts of the country to assist search and rescue efforts.

"Bangladesh Army soldiers have already been deployed as floods devastated the north-eastern districts of Sunamganj and Sylhet," he said. **ANI**

US to help Pakistan negotiate IMF deal

ISLAMABAD: The United States has agreed to help Pakistan negotiate a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) amidst unprecedented economic instability in the country, reported local media, citing diplomatic sources.

In order to muster international aid for the looming economic crisis in the country under the new Shehbaz Sharif government, Islamabad is seeking Washington's support to revive its Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with the IMF.

Being the largest stakeholder of the IMF, the US exercises considerable influence over the global lender's daily operations and is expected to catalyse the process.

As per reports by the Dawn newspaper, Pakistan signed a 39-month USD 6 billion EFF in July 2019, but IMF halted the process of roughly USD 3 billion after the previous Imran Khan-

led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government backed out of its commitments.

Currently, Islamabad is not only requesting for the disbursements to revive, but is also asking for the expansion of the program's size and duration.

As per another report by the Dawn publication, a top Finance Ministry official confirmed on Sunday night that they had not yet received the first draft of the memorandum of economic and financial policies (MEFP) from the IMF because certain matters still remain unsettled.

"Without broader agreement on the basis of framework, no one could help Pakistan," Geo News quoted the official as saying.

To convince the Fund to revive the program, the government has adopted the toughest of measures to end fuel subsidies and has hiked the fuel prices to new highs. **ANI**



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Pakistan School Muscat

ANNOUNCEMENT OF TENDER

PSM intends to offer Annual Contracts & Development Work for the year 2022 - 2023. The contractors with relevant experiences are invited for following bidding:

Tender No.	Tender's Name	Tender Collection Date & Time	Site Visit Date & Time	Final Submission Date & Time
2022/001	Annual Contract Cleaning Services	June 21 to June 24, 2022 09:00 AM To 01:00 PM Working Days/Hours	June 25, 2022 09:00 AM To 01:00 PM	Before and Until June 28, 2022
2022/002	Supply & fixing of Smart Boards for Classrooms			
2022/003	Construction of sheds			
2022/004	Supply & Fixing of Astroturf			
2022/005	Renovation of school Washrooms			
2022/006	Construction of new washrooms & Open shower			
2022/007	White wash of school buildings			
2022/008	Water proofing of School Building Roof			
2022/009	Supply & fixing of new doors & frames			
2022/010	Supply & fixing of Blinds for classroom windows			

Experience contractor(s) having relevant experience of at least 3 years of similar nature jobs preferably in Oman, who wishes to participate in the bidding may collect the documents after payment of RO. 20,000 (non-refundable) per Job.

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In case of any query you may contact 00968 93690691
Email: tulaib@pakistanschool.edu.om, directorfinancebods@pakistanschool.edu.om

The tenders shall be submitted in Original and complete with all relevant documents. Tenders not in compliance with tender's requirements shall not be considered.

Tender Documents shall be submitted in sealed envelope with clearly mentioned Tender Number/name, Company Name and POC's Number/name. The sealed envelope shall be dropped in the Tender Box available at Admin Office on or before the date mentioned above and addressed to:

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Roach, Brathwaite shine in West Indies' win over Bangladesh

Chasing a target of 84, WI lost captain Kraigg Brathwaite and Raymon Reifer for single-digit scores in the second over



ST JOHN'S: Pacer Kemar Roach and captain Kraigg Brathwaite shined for West Indies, helping them seal a seven-wicket win over Bangladesh in the first Test of the two-match series at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Sunday. It was a memorable outing for the Windies, outplaying Bangladesh in all departments. With this win, they have taken a 1-0 lead in the series. Chasing a target of 84, Windies lost captain Kraigg Brathwaite and Raymon Reifer for single-digit scores in the sec-

ond over. All-rounder Nkrumah Bonner was dismissed next for a duck, sinking WI to 9/3. John Campbell and Jermaine Blackwood took control of the West Indies innings next. The duo ensured that their side achieved the target without any further hiccup by seven wickets. Campbell finished with an unbeaten 58 while Blackwood with 26. Put to bat first by West Indies, Bangladesh were bundled out for just 103, with skipper Shakib Al

Hasan (51) posting an important half-century and Tamim Iqbal (29) posting some useful runs to prevent absolute humiliation for their side. Pacers Jayden Seales (3/33) and Alzarri Joseph (3/33) were the stars for the Windies with the ball. In the second innings, WI was bundled out for 265/10, pushing them 162 runs ahead in the match. Captain K Brathwaite (94) and Blackwood (63) played powerful knocks that drove their

side to a solid lead. Bangladesh in the third innings were dismissed for 245/10. Shakib Al Hasan (63), wicketkeeper-batter Nurul Hasan (64) and Mahmudul Hasan Joy (42) delivered solid contributions for their side, though not enough to ensure a solid lead for their side. Bangladesh could only attain a lead of 83 runs, giving WI a target of 84 runs which they chased down comfortably. Pacer Kemar Roach won the 'Man of the Match' for his 2/21 and 5/53. **ANI**

FORMULA ONE



Max Verstappen wins Canadian GP ahead of Sainz, Lewis Hamilton

MONTREAL: Red Bull Racing's Max Verstappen claimed a comfortable victory at the Canadian Grand Prix 2022, resisting strong pressure from Ferrari's Carlos Sainz following a late Safety Car to extend his championship lead over team-mate Sergio Perez to 46 points on Sunday.

With Sainz second, Lewis Hamilton took his first podium finish since the opening round of the season, with the Mercedes driver finishing ahead of team-mate George Russell and Ferrari's Charles Leclerc who battle through to fifth place from 19th place on the grid. Verstappen was looking well-placed for a comfortable victory over Sainz at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve when a Safety Car was called on Lap 49 of 70, after Yuki Tsunoda hit the Turn 2 barriers after exiting the pits.

Racing resumed with 16 laps remaining, Verstappen holding off the attacks of the fresher-tyred Sainz to claim his sixth victory of the season, and his 26th overall, as Sainz took his fifth podium of the year - although the Spaniard's wait for his first victory continues.

Hamilton had been scathing in his assessment of the Mercedes W13 on Friday, but the car looked handy on race day in Canada, as the seven-time champion completed the podium, his first rostrum appearance since the Bah-

rain season opener. George Russell backed up his teammate in P4, while Charles Leclerc was able to recover to P5 for Ferrari, having started 19th after a raft of power unit element changes.

Despite starting P2 after a sensational qualifying on Saturday, Fernando Alonso finished a frustrated P7 behind his Alpine team mate Esteban Ocon, as Valtteri Bottas led home his Alfa Romeo team mate Zhou Guanyu for P8, Zhou taking his second-ever points score. Home hero Lance Stroll rounded out the top 10 for Aston Martin.

A slow stop for Daniel Ricciardo contributed to him finishing just outside the points in P11 for McLaren, ahead of the Aston Martin of Sebastian Vettel, with Alex Albon taking 13th for Williams.

Pierre Gasly encountered problems early on and was left to come home 14th for AlphaTauri, ahead of McLaren's Lando Norris - who also had a slow stop - Williams' Nicholas Latifi and Haas's Kevin Magnussen, the Dane dropping from P5 on the grid to P17 after a tough day in Canada.

Tsunoda was joined by Haas's Mick Schumacher and Red Bull's Sergio Perez in the retirements category, both Schumacher and Perez pulling up at Turn 8 early doors with technical issues. **ANI**

FOOTBALL

Antonio Rudiger shirt number revealed at Real Madrid unveiling

MADRID: Antonio Rudiger on Monday has been unveiled as a new Real Madrid player. The event took place at Real Madrid City, getting underway with a video of the player's best moments. Prior to the presentation event, Antonio Rudiger signed his new

four-year contract with Los Blancos in the meeting rooms at Real Madrid City, accompanied by club president Florentino Perez. Having signed the deal, the German centre-back was given a watch, a replica of the Santiago Bernabeu and a jersey printed with his name and the number 22.

Rudiger has inherited his jersey from Isco, with the four-time Champions League winner leaving as a free agent this summer. "This is a very special day for my family and for me. I'd like to thank my parents because without them, I never would have got here. They have always supported

me and that's been hugely important throughout my life. I'd also like to thank the president for giving me the chance to play for this great club. I can promise you that I'll give my all for this club to win every possible trophy. Hala Madrid y nada mas!" the defender said during the presentation. **ANI**

FOOTBALL CLUB

Chelsea chairman Bruce Buck to step down after club takeover

LONDON: Chelsea Football Club on Monday announced that Bruce Buck, who has served as chairman since 2003, will be stepping down from his role effective June 30.

He will continue to support the club as a senior advisor. During Buck's chairmanship, Chelsea solidified its position as one of the world's elite football clubs and a globally recognised brand followed by millions.

In that time, the men's team earned 18 major trophies (more than any other English club) while Chelsea FC Women won 12 major trophies.

The Club also grew its commercial revenues significantly, established world-class training facilities at Cobham, and developed one of the best youth academies in football. In 2010, Buck, as Trustee and Chairman, helped establish

The Chelsea FC Foundation, which supports a broad range of initiatives including increasing access to youth athletics, hosting education and employment programmes, and leading anti-discrimination campaigns.

"I am proud to have helped Chelsea realize great success on the pitch and make a positive



impact in the community," said Buck.

"Now is the right time to step down and let new ownership build on the strong foundations we have in place. The owners have a compelling vision for Chelsea's future, and I look forward to helping them achieve it in this new role alongside our incredible staff, players, coaches and supporters."

"Bruce has led Chelsea Football Club to the highest levels of international and domestic football, while also developing one of the most active social responsibility projects in sport," said Todd Boehly, Chelsea Football Club co-

controlling owner.

"We thank Bruce for his service and his commitment to the Club," he added.

Last month, Chelsea announced that the ownership transfer of the club to the consortium led by Todd Boehly has been completed.

The consortium also includes Hansjorg Wyss, founder of the Wyss Foundation, and Mark Walter, co-founder and CEO of Guggenheim Capital. Walter and Boehly are owners of the Los Angeles Dodgers, the Los Angeles Lakers, and the Los Angeles Sparks. **ANI**

FINAL GAME

Ons Jabeur clinches Berlin Open title after injured Bencic retires

BERLIN: No.1 seed Ons Jabeur clinched her third career title on Sunday, taking the Berlin Open trophy after No.8 seed Belinda Bencic had to retire due to injury in the summit clash.

Bencic suffered an ankle injury in the final game of the opening set, and though the No.8 seed continued for three more games, she quit the match while trailing 6-3, 2-1. Jabeur advanced to an initial 3-0 lead in the match, but Bencic made a comeback on serve to pull to 4-3. Jabeur, though, played a

stunning game to break again, shooting elegant lobs and consistently grazing the sideline to lead 6-3.

After Jabeur served out the first set, Bencic contested the first three games of the second set, but after being broken for 2-1, last year's Olympic gold medalist had to stop play.

"From what I know of Belinda, she would have taken me to three sets today," said Jabeur, who wished her rival a speedy recovery before Wimbledon.

"The most important thing for me is that she is okay," she added.

In the finals women's doubles final of the Berlin Open, No.1 seeds Storm Sanders and Katerina Siniakova took the doubles title on Sunday, defeating unseeded Alize Cornet and Jil Teichmann 6-4, 6-3.

Sanders and Siniakova won 34 of their 40 service points to ease to triumph in one hour and 10 minutes. For Australian Sanders, it marks her fourth career doubles title and second of the year. **ANI**

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OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by August 2022 reaching \$108.51, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by \$7.82 from the price of Friday, which was \$116.33. - **ONA**

MARKET BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,134.54 points, up by 0.34 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.27 per cent at 454.45 points. Al Batinah Development Company, up 8.16 per cent, was the top gainer while, Gulf Mushroom Products, down 7.14 per cent, was the top loser.

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Airline traffic to return to profit in 2023: IATA

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) at a meeting in Doha announced an upgrade to its outlook for the airline industry's 2022 financial performance as the pace of recovery from the COVID-19 crisis quickens

PANKAJ SHARMA
pankaj@timesofoman.com



“Airlines are resilient. People are flying in ever greater numbers. And cargo is performing well against a backdrop of growing economic uncertainty. Losses will be cut to \$9.7 billion this year and profitability is on the horizon for 2023

Willie Walsh
IATA's Director-General

DOHA: Airline industry losses are expected to reduce to \$9.7 billion (improved from the October 2021 forecast for an \$11.6 billion loss) and air traffic will return to profit in 2023, according to a new report.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) at a meeting in Doha announced on Monday an upgrade to its outlook for the airline industry's 2022 financial performance as the pace of recovery from the COVID-19 crisis quickens.

"Industry-wide profitability in 2023 appears within reach with North America already expected to deliver \$8.8 billion profit in 2022," said Willie Walsh, IATA's Director-General.

Efficiency gains and improving yields are helping airlines to reduce losses even with rising labour and fuel costs (the latter driven by a 40 per cent increase in the world oil price and a widening crack spread this year), he added.

Strong pent-up demand, the lifting of travel restrictions in most markets, low unemployment in

most countries, and expanded personal savings are fuelling a resurgence in demand that will see passenger numbers reach 83 per cent of pre-pandemic levels in 2022, he said. "Airlines are resilient. People are flying in ever greater numbers. And cargo is performing well against a backdrop of growing economic uncertainty. Losses will be cut to \$9.7 billion this year and profitability is on the horizon for 2023," Walsh said.

"It is a time for optimism, even if there are still challenges on costs, particularly fuel, and some lingering restrictions in a few key markets," IATA's Director General added.

Regional round up

In the Middle East, this year's re-opening of international routes and long-haul flights, in particular, will provide a welcome boost for many, IATA said. "Region-wide, net losses are expected to narrow to \$1.9 billion in 2022, from a \$4.7 billion loss last year with demand

revenue passenger kilometres expected to reach 79.1 per cent of pre-crisis (2019) levels, and capacity 80.5 per cent."

"Financial performance in all regions is expected to improve in 2022 compared with 2021 (all regions improved in 2021 compared with 2020 as well)," IATA said in its latest report.

North America is expected to continue to be the strongest performing region and the only region to return to profitability in 2022. Supported by the large US domestic market and the re-opening of international markets, including the North Atlantic, net profit is forecast to be \$8.8 billion in 2022. Demand RPKs (revenue passenger kilometres) is expected to reach 95.0 per cent of pre-crisis (2019) levels, and capacity 99.5 per cent.

In Europe, the Russia-Ukraine war will continue to disrupt travel patterns within Europe and between Europe and Asia-Pacific. However, the war is not expected

to derail the travel recovery, with the region edging closer to profitability in 2022, with a net loss of \$3.9 billion forecast. Demand (RPKs) is expected to reach 82.7 per cent of pre-crisis (2019) levels, and capacity at 90.0 per cent.

For Asia-Pacific airlines, strict and enduring travel restrictions (notably in China), along with an uneven vaccine rollout, have seen the region lag in the recovery to date. As the restrictions diminish, travel demand is expected to increase quickly. Net losses in 2022 are forecast to decline to \$8.9 billion. Demand (RPKs) is expected to reach 73.7 per cent of pre-crisis (2019) levels, and capacity at 81.5 per cent.

Outlook drivers

Revenues are rising as COVID-19 restrictions ease and people return to travel. The challenge for 2022 is to keep costs under control.

"The reduction in losses is the result of hard work to keep costs under control as the industry ramps up. The improvement in the financial outlook comes from holding costs to a 44 per cent increase while revenues increased 55 per cent. As the industry returns to more normal levels of production and with high fuel costs likely to stay for a while, profitability will depend on continued cost control. And that encompasses the value chain," Walsh said. "Our suppliers, including airports and air navigation service providers, need to be as focused on controlling costs as their customers to support the industry's recovery," he added.

Revenues

Industry revenues are expected to reach \$782 billion and flights operated in 2022 are expected to total 33.8 million, which is 86.9 per cent of 2019 levels (38.9 million flights).

Passenger revenues are expected to account for \$498 billion of industry revenues, more than double the \$239 billion generated in 2021. Scheduled passenger numbers are expected to reach 3.8 billion, with RPKs growing 97.6 per cent compared with 2021, reaching 82.4 per cent of 2019 traffic. As pent-up demand is released with the easing of travel restrictions, yields are expected to rise by 5.6 per cent.

CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN



CBO Board of Governors review new challenges facing financial stability

MUSCAT: The Board of Governors of the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) convened its second meeting for 2022.

The board commenced its meeting by welcoming the International Monetary Fund's Statement in the conclusion of its Mission to Oman. This visit came within the framework of the preparations for 2022 Article IV consultations.

The statement commended the substantial efforts exerted by the Omani government to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and foster recovery, as well as the fiscal measures targeting social support and helping private sector recovery in the pandemic's aftermath. It also lauded the banking system ability to overcome the recent shocks, supported by substantial capital and liquidity buffers and the CBO's continued efforts in

strengthening regulatory and supervisory frameworks. The board underscored the importance of moving forward with the efforts to further enhance the financial and economic situation in Oman.

During the meeting, the board also reviewed CBO's financial position, the status of its reserves and the performance of its foreign investments. The Board also examined the reports on the prospects and challenges facing financial stability, as well as the quarterly report of Oman Credit and Financial Information Centre (Mala'a). The Board was briefed on the financial safety reports of the banks. The Board also discussed a number of requests related to Payment Service Providers (PSPs) licenses.

The meeting also discussed a number of other topics on the agenda, and took the appropriate decisions on the same. -**ONA**

SMART DESTINATION FOR BUSINESS

Expo City Dubai to open in October

DUBAI: His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, announced the opening of Expo City Dubai, on October 2022. The new city is an ideal smart and futuristic destination for business and innovation, driven by sustainability, innovation, education and entertainment.

Expo City Dubai – the legacy plan of Expo 2020 Dubai and part of the Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan – builds on the momentum

and resounding success of the six-month World Expo to create an environmentally friendly, tech-enabled city of the future.

Opening October 1, it will feature several of Expo 2020 Dubai's flagship pavilions, entertainment and technology offerings, while also carrying forward the event's magic, energy and excitement. With an array of diverse attractions, the comprehensive city will feature offices, leisure facilities, food and entertainment venues, sports facilities and a mall. -**WAM**

ECONOMIC REVIEW

Growth slowing but risk of stagflation in India low

NEW DELHI: There is a "distinct possibility" of widespread stagflation in the world, but in India, the risk of stagflation is low as the country has adopted prudent stabilisation policies, said a report released by the Finance Ministry on Monday.

As forecasts of real GDP growth across economies drop at regular intervals, it will be the consequence of rising input costs, higher cost of living and tightening stabilisation policies pursued by central banks the world over to rein in inflation, the Finance Ministry said in its Monthly Economic Review May 2022.

The report noted that tightening fiscal and monetary policies can address inflation only from the demand side, insofar as they can smother pent-up demand and roll-back stimuli announced as part of the COVID-19 relief package. -**ANI**

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MARKET



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MSX index ends higher

Al Batinah Development Company, up 8.16 per cent, was the top gainer while, Gulf Mushroom Products, down 7.14 per cent, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,134.54 points, up by 0.34 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.27 per cent at 454.45 points. Al Batinah Development Company, up 8.16 per cent, was the top gainer while, Gulf Mushroom Products, down 7.14 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Nizwa were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 336 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR1.14 million, with more than 7.62 million shares changing hands. Out of 47 traded securities, 15 advanced, 15 declined, and 17 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net buyers for OMR217,000 while GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for OMR215,000, followed by foreign investors for OMR3,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 6,662.27 points, up 0.8 per cent. Prices of Al Batinah Development Company, HSBC Bank Oman, Oman Arab Bank, Taageer Finance and Bank Nizwa were up by 8.16 per cent, 6.45 per cent,

5.04 per cent, 1.19 per cent and 1.08 per cent respectively. Prices of Ahli Bank, Global Financial Investments, Ominvest and Bank Muscat were down by 2.46 per cent, 1.49 per cent, 0.65 per cent and 0.38 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,799 points, down 0.14 per cent. Prices of National Aluminium, Jazeera Steel Products and Raysut Cement were up by 3.53 per cent, 2.86 per cent and 1.3 per cent respectively. Prices of Gulf Mushroom Products, Oman Flour Mills, Voltamp Energy, Oman Fisheries and Al Anwar Ceramics were down by 7.14 per cent, 4.61 per cent, 1.87 per cent, 1.79 per cent and 0.48 per cent respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.16 per cent before closing at 1,574.3 points. Prices of OIFC, Dhofar Generating, Ooredoo, Oman National Engineering and Muscat Desalination were up by 2.22 per cent, 1.67 per cent, 1.24 per cent, 0.98 per cent, and 0.91 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Suwadi Power, Renaissance Services, Shell Oman Marketing, Oman Oil Marketing and Sembcorp Salalah were down by 2.04 per cent, 1.89 per cent, 1.48 per cent, 1.48 per cent and 1.41 per cent respectively. — United Securities

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,139.52	4,109.05	4,134.54	4,120.55	13.99	0.34
FINANCIAL INDEX	6,674.18	6,591.18	6,662.27	6,609.27	52.99	0.80
Industry Index	5,820.91	5,796.55	5,799.00	5,806.98	-7.98	-0.14
Services Index	1,577.18	1,564.16	1,574.30	1,576.78	-2.48	-0.16
MSX Shariah Index	455.69	452.56	454.45	455.69	-1.25	-0.27
MSX TR INDEX	5,216.59	5,178.19	5,210.31	5,192.65	17.63	0.34
FINANCIAL TR IDX	6,977.88	6,891.10	6,965.43	6,910.02	55.40	0.80
SERVICES TR IDX	1,630.77	1,617.31	1,627.79	1,630.35	-2.56	-0.16
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,041.13	6,015.84	6,018.39	6,026.66	-8.28	-0.14

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
7,623,875	1,135,958	336	22,320,966,633	15	15	17	47

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, JUNE 20

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	P&A VALUE	MARKET CAP
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REGULAR MARKET

OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	15,650	5,584	6	0.350	0.380	0.350	0.360	0.350	0.010	2.857	0.360	0.350	0.384	0.100	44,963,266
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST& FIN.	11,469	1,563	2	0.135	0.138	0.135	0.138	0.135	0.003	2.222	0.138	0.132	0.138	0.100	32,706,000
OM0000007407	DHOFAR GENERATING	159	9	1	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.080	0.001	1.867	0.081	0.080	0.082	0.100	13,556,640
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	14,049	4,559	6	0.322	0.326	0.322	0.326	0.322	0.004	1.242	0.326	0.326	0.328	0.100	212,307,819
OM0000003281	TAAGEER FINANCE	241,471	20,737	15	0.084	0.087	0.084	0.085	0.084	0.001	1.190	0.085	0.085	0.088	0.100	21,986,253
OM0000001183	OMAN NAT ENG.	51,454	5,300	8	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.102	0.001	0.989	0.103	0.106	0.106	0.100	14,420,000
OM0000001458	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	700,169	143,948	25	0.205	0.207	0.204	0.207	0.206	0.001	0.485	0.207	0.207	0.207	0.100	338,570,858
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSUR.	500	170	1	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.000	0.000	0.340	0.336	0.340	0.100	34,000,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	32,811	8,072	3	0.246	0.246	0.246	0.246	0.246	0.000	0.000	0.246	0.244	0.260	0.100	81,394,687
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INV.	4,250	383	3	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.090	0.088	0.090	0.100	8,100,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INT. BANK	1,626,693	170,209	34	0.105	0.105	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.000	0.000	0.104	0.104	0.105	0.100	310,966,478
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	3,378	1,716	1	0.508	0.508	0.508	0.508	0.508	0.000	0.000	0.508	0.508	0.530	0.100	27,940,000
OM0000002226	ALAAZEERA SERVICES	15,732	4,125	9	0.282	0.287	0.282	0.287	0.288	-0.001	-0.373	0.287	0.282	0.267	0.100	16,341,541
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	243,675	128,713	20	0.530	0.530	0.528	0.528	0.530	-0.002	-0.377	0.528	0.528	0.530	0.100	1,981,688,624
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	3,752	1,568	1	0.418	0.418	0.418	0.418	0.420	-0.002	-0.476	0.418	0.410	0.418	0.100	91,960,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	12,759	3,878	5	0.300	0.306	0.300	0.304	0.306	-0.002	-0.654	0.304	0.304	0.308	0.100	203,183,090
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV. H.	148,479	9,866	13	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.087	-0.001	-1.493	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.100	13,200,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SER.	567,280	237,266	18	0.410	0.422	0.410	0.416	0.424	-0.008	-1.887	0.416	0.416	0.440	0.100	98,346,560
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	6,592	790	2	0.130	0.130	0.119	0.119	0.122	-0.003	-2.459	0.119	0.119	0.120	0.100	232,009,238
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	5,700	3,306	3	0.580	0.580	0.580	0.580	0.608	-0.028	-4.605	0.580	0.570	0.580	0.100	91,350,000
Total		3,707,006	751,762	176												

Parallel Market

OM0000002366	AL BATINAH DEV.	14,000	742	2	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.049	0.004	8.163	0.053	0.051	0.053	0.100	1,590,000
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	490,125	62,642	19	0.124	0.132	0.124	0.132	0.124	0.008	6.452	0.131	0.131	0.131	0.100	264,041,288
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	13,179	1,647	5	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.119	0.006	5.042	0.125	0.118	0.125	0.100	208,676,250
OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD.	118,985	10,471	8	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.085	0.003	3.529	0.088	0.088	0.092	0.100	2,954,288
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	4,298	669	4	0.157	0.157	0.155	0.156	0.154	0.002	1.299	0.156	0.155	0.167	0.100	31,200,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	2,586,178	241,160	44	0.083	0.084	0.083	0.084	0.083	0.001	1.075	0.094	0.094	0.096	0.100	210,373,585
OM0000007084	MCT DESALINATE	2,800	311	1	0.111	0.111	0.111	0.111	0.110	0.001	0.909	0.111	0.112	0.120	0.100	17,266,094
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	67,642	7,843	5	0.114	0.117	0.114	0.117	0.116	0.001	0.862	0.117	0.110	0.122	0.100	350,573,118
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	110,644	16,354	9	0.148	0.148	0.146	0.148	0.148	0.000	0.000	0.148	0.146	0.148	0.100	12,580,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	75,000	5,025	3	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.000	0.000	0.067	0.066	0.067	0.100	20,578,804
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	17,600	14,918	10	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.000	0.000	0.084	0.084	0.092	0.100	16,800,000
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	1,330	117	1	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.088	0.090	0.100	30,724,708
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	1,383	156	1	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.000	0.000	0.113	0.113	0.000	0.100	61,139,041
OM0000002804	ASAPTA FOODS	5,000	740	2	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.000	0.000	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.100	17,769,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	17,208	1,790	5	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.000	0.000	0.104	0.104	0.105	0.100	21,110,590
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	100	5	1	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.050	0.000	0.049	0.100	12,500,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	64,952	3,109	7	0.049	0.049	0.047	0.048	0.046	0.000	0.000	0.046	0.045	0.047	0.100	32,394,597
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	13,000	637	3	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.000	0.000	0.049	0.049	0.051	0.100	71,667,472
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	2,500	174	2	0.069	0.070	0.069	0.070	0.071	-0.001	-1.408	0.070	0.069	0.070	0.100	66,820,037
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MTK.	1,500	1,200	5	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.812	-0.012	-1.478	0.800	0.796	0.800	0.100	76,000,000
OM0000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	1,000	800	1	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.812	-0.012	-1.478	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.100	40,000,000
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	59,852	6,634	7	0.111	0.111	0.110	0.110	0.112	-0.002	-1.788	0.110	0.110	0.111	0.100	20,028,624
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	15,137	1,620	7	0.107	0.107	0.105	0.105	0.107	-0.002	-1.869	0.105	0.105	0.107	0.100	8,547,289
OM0000004833	AL SUWADI POWER	60,458	2,953	4	0.050	0.050	0.048	0.048	0.049	-0.001	-2.041	0.048	0.048	0.051	0.100	34,291,504
OM0000002297	GULF MUSHROOM P.	1,000	260	1	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.280	-0.020	-7.143	0.260	0.270	0.300	0.100	10,817,370
Total		3,904,869	381,976	157												

PARTNERSHIP

Pfizer to buy 8.1% stake in French vaccines company Valneva

PARIS: Pfizer agreed to invest 90.5 million euros (\$95.24 million) to buy an 8.1 per cent stake in French vaccines company Valneva.

The companies announced developments in their partnership to tackle Lyme disease.

Pfizer will buy the stake in Valneva and is also working on its COVID-19 vaccine for 9.49 euros per share, via a reserved capital increase, Reuters reported.

Shares in Valneva rose sharply, surging by 14.5 per cent in early session trading to 9.09 euros.

Valneva will use the proceeds from Pfizer's equity investment to support its Phase 3 development contribution to the Lyme disease programme.

Valneva and Pfizer updated the terms of their collaboration and license agreement which they announced on April 30 2020 for the Lyme disease vaccine candidate VLA15.

"Pfizer's investment in Valneva



highlights the quality of the work that we've done together over the past two years and is a strong recognition of Valneva's vaccine expertise," said Valneva chief executive Thomas Lingelbach.

Pfizer plans to initiate the Phase 3 study of VLA15 in the third quarter of 2022.

Valneva will fund 40 per cent

of the remaining shared development costs compared to 30 per cent before.

Pfizer will pay Valneva tiered royalties ranging from 14 per cent to 22 per cent and the royalties will be complemented by up to \$100 million in milestones payable to Valneva based on cumulative sales, added the companies. —BNA

REPORT

Multinational firms still regard China as important destination

JINAN: Although the global supply chain has entered a new round of reconstruction, China is still an important investment destination for multinational companies around the world, said a report.

The report was released by the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation under the Ministry of Commerce at the third Qingdao Multinationals Summit in the coastal city of Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province on Sunday.

Most foreign manufacturing businesses in China still see China as a major investment destination with investment confidence continuously rising, it said. —Xinhua

STOCKS

Asian shares turn lower, no dodging recession risks

SYDNEY: Asian shares were unable to sustain a rare rally on Monday as Wall Street futures shed early gains amid worries the US Federal Reserve would this week underline its commitment to fighting inflation with whatever rate hikes were needed.

The euro also softened slightly after French President Emmanuel Macron lost control of the National Assembly in legislative elections on Sunday, a major setback that could throw the country into political paralysis, Reuters reports.

Trade was thinned by a US holiday and Nasdaq futures soon went flat, having been up more than 1 per cent at one stage, while S&P 500 futures eased 0.2 per cent. EUROSTOXX 50 futures fell 0.6 per cent and FTSE futures 0.3 per cent.

The S&P 500 fell by almost 6 per cent last week to trade 24 per cent below its January high. Analysts at BofA noted this was the 20th bear market in the past 140 years and the average peak to trough bear decline was 37.3%.

Investors will be hoping it does not match the average duration of 289 days, given it would not end until October 2022.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan lost 0.8 per cent and Tokyo's Nikkei 1.4 per cent.

Chinese blue chips held steady perhaps aided by news President Joe Biden was considering removing some tariffs on China.

Looming over markets are con-





INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY 2022 KEY TIPS FOR BEGINNERS

Yoga has emerged as the go-to solution for staying fit and healthy over the years. It helps us understand, accept, and appreciate our body by giving better controlling power to the mind. As we celebrate International Yoga Day today, we have a good reason to begin with this beautiful art of being physically and mentally fit. However, some very daunting questions run through our mind the moment we think about yoga, ranging from how to initiate the practice, which asanas to begin with, to what to wear and what points to consider before beginning the yoga routine.

HERE WE HAVE LISTED FIVE KEY TIPS THAT WILL ANSWER ALL YOUR QUERIES AND WILL PREP YOU UP FOR YOUR YOGA SESSION:

SELECT THE RIGHT PLACE AND TIME

An open place with good ventilation and tranquillity is an ideal location for your practice. Choose a place in your garden, on the terrace, on the balcony, or in a room with enough space, good lighting, and free flow of air. Early mornings are the best time to do yoga. It is the time when you are light on the stomach, feeling fresh, and not too tired to do the asanas. If you can't spend a lot of time in the morning, you may break it into two sessions -- mornings for asanas and evenings for pranayama.

KEEP IT CALM

Remember, yoga and tranquillity go together; therefore, keep the premises so calm that you can hear the music of nature. Revel in the sounds of the wind, rain, bird chirps, and your breath!

GET INTO COMFORTABLE CLOTHING

You need to manoeuvre your body. This requires clothing that stays in place and doesn't make you feel suffocated as you begin to breathe hard and sweat. Dress up in such a way that you do not have to focus on the clothes while practicing yoga.

WORK ON A LIGHT STOMACH

Avoid practising yoga after a heavy meal. An empty stomach or a very light intake is recommended. You may eat fruit or drink a glass of milk or juice before starting with your session.

YOGA ESSENTIALS AND ACCESSORIES

Yoga is one of the easiest, effective, and pocket-friendly physical activities. Hence, investing a minuscule amount in yoga essentials is not only affordable but important too. Buy a yoga mat that is anti-slippery, lightweight yet sturdy, and comes with anti-microbial properties, a water bottle to keep you hydrated in between the sessions, and fresh towels to wipe up the sweat and you are all set for your class! Setting up a yoga bag with the required props like yoga blocks, straps, or hip-resistant and body-resistant bands can be the ideal companion for your yoga beginner journey.

These props will be the perfect assistant for your classes and will help you in reaching deeper into the pose, providing flexibility along with maintaining posture and alignment. **-ANI**

Just like any other workout, you are likely to have body pains after the first day. Let that not be a hindrance to your plan. Continue doing yoga even if you have slight discomfort.

If you are pregnant or have health issues such as back pain, or heart problems, take your doctor's advice before planning a yoga schedule.

IN-PICTURES



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Highlight of US Sailing Grand Prix Chicago
Team USA returned to the harbour after the US Sailing Grand Prix Chicago on Lake Michigan. xinhua



Enjoying summer vibes in Turkey
A man jumps into the Bosphorus Strait in Istanbul. Xinhua



Traditional bull race in Pakistan
A farmer guides his bulls as he competes in a traditional bull race on the outskirts of Haripur in Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Xinhua



Zhengzhou-Chongqing High-speed Railway starts full operation
Aerial picture shows train G3401 departs from Zhengzhou East Railway Station in Zhengzhou, central China's Henan Province. With a total length of 1,068 km, the Zhengzhou-Chongqing High-speed Railway started full operation on Monday. xinhua



International dog and cat show held in Riga, Latvia
A woman checks a cat at the 'Latvian Winner 2022' international dog and cat show in Riga, Latvia. xinhua



International Dragon Boat Race Festival held in Toronto
Contestants compete during the 2022 Toronto International Dragon Boat Race Festival in Canada. The event is with the participation of dozens of teams. Xinhua

Sonali Kulkarni attends Sony LIV 2.0 relaunch celebration
Bollywood actress Sonali Kulkarni poses for a picture at Sony LIV 2.0 relaunch celebration, in Mumbai. ANI Photo



Highlight of 19th FINA World Championships
Zhang Yufei of China competes during the women's 100m butterfly final at the 19th FINA World Championships in Budapest, Hungary. Xinhua



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ROUND-UP



2022 INFINITI QX80 flagship SUV arrives in Oman with fresh look

The latest QX80 has been significantly refined in 2022 with a revised centre cluster featuring a single INFINITI InTouch 12.3-inch widescreen HD display that includes wireless Apple CarPlay and USB-based Android Auto compatibility for entertainment on the go

MUSCAT: INFINITI's body-on-frame full-size luxury SUV, the 2022 QX80 has arrived in Oman. The new QX80 features a single, larger interior touchscreen and wireless smartphone charger to complement its opulent interior, across three enhanced grades: SENSORY, ProACTIVE and Black Edition.

The latest QX80 has been significantly refined in 2022 with a



revised centre cluster featuring a single INFINITI InTouch 12.3-inch widescreen HD display that includes wireless Apple CarPlay and USB-based Android Auto compatibility for entertainment on the go. An all-new wireless smartphone charger is included along with a Bose® Premium Sound system.

A senior spokesperson at INFINITI Oman said, "We are delighted to launch the new 2022 INFINITI QX80 in Oman. A design and engineering masterpiece,

QX80 radiates luxury from every angle, for every passenger. It's liberally outfitted with thoughtful touches, with plenty of room to grow in. QX80 is created to handle all of life's roads, so owners can make memories that last."

A Smart Rearview Mirror is standard on ProACTIVE and Black Edition grades and can display a sharp view behind the luxury three-row SUV when engaged, even if cargo or passengers obstruct rearward vision inside. An Around View Monitor with

Moving Object Detection and Front and Rear Sonar System is included to help make navigating tight parking spaces easier. Additional driver-assistance systems are available for the flagship SUV, including Intelligent Cruise Control, Backup Collision Intervention, Lane Departure Warning, Blind Spot Intervention, and Lane Departure Prevention.

Inside, the 2022 QX80 features leather or semi-aniline appointed seats in all three rows, with the option of second-row captain's

chairs. Climate-controlled front seats are also available, as are Bose® Performance Series Audio with 17 speakers.

The new QX80 continues with bold proportions and commanding exterior details such as available 22-inch alloy wheels, dark chrome accents, and chrome exterior accents.

At its heart, the 2022 QX80 is powered by INFINITI's 5.6-litre V-8 that delivers 400 horsepower and 560 Newton-meters of torque, paired with a 7-speed automatic

transmission. Equipped with INFINITI All-Mode® Four-Wheel Drive as standard, the new 2022 QX80 is as capable and comfortable as ever.

The 2022 INFINITI QX80 offers a four-wheel independent, double-wishbone suspension for a calm and confident ride. The standard hydraulic Body Motion Control System provides a more refined ride and rear automatic self-levelling suspension is standard on all models for more confident towing.

The new 2022 INFINITI QX80 SENSORY includes leather-appointed seating in all three rows, 22-inch alloy wheels, a 12.3-inch INFINITI InTouch display, and a Bose® 13-speaker premium audio system, a power liftgate and more.

The ProACTIVE grade builds on that with INFINITI's ProACTIVE safety package, Towing package, satin chrome exterior trim and more.

The Black Edition grade (a GCC exclusive) includes 22" forged aluminium-alloy wheels with dark machined finish, as well as black and dark chrome exterior finishes including outside mirrors, front grille, side fender vents and more.

SBA is largely committed to supporting INFINITI Oman's growth in the Sultanate through a major emphasis on customer satisfaction and by providing world-class after-sales services in Oman. With a national network of more than 40 showrooms, service centres and parts outlets, SBA has further built upon its legacy of trust, excellent customer service and providing value for money to each of its customers.

FINEST DRIVING EXPERIENCE

Lexus RX offers luxury, style & sophistication

MUSCAT: Lexus has made quite a mark with the RX, making it an iconic vehicle that has pioneered advanced technology like a unique combination of petrol engine and hybrid electric motor.

Besides offering impressive luxury, comfort and a host of features, the RX offers some of the finest driving and ownership experiences. The Lexus RX is available in 5 & 7-seater configurations. The Lexus RX embraces Lexus' reputation for engaging performance.

The engineering team has scrutinised every part of the vehicle and has made significant enhancements to the rigidity of the body and suspension system, as well as the shock absorber and brake-control system.

The result is a vehicle with outstanding handling, which enables drivers to trace their desired driving line with incredible precision.

The RX is powered by a choice of two powertrains.



speed and the customer's driving behaviour.

The batteries in the hybrid electric drivetrain are automatically charged by either the petrol engine or when braking and decelerating, eliminating the need to plug in a power cord. A host of advanced technologies ensure the RX 450h drives like any other conventional vehicle, while not requiring special fuel.

Inside the RX a 12.3-inch high-resolution, split-screen Lexus Multimedia System touchscreen positioned closer to the driver, offers control of both audio and climate systems.

The touchscreen also includes a rear-view camera to assist the driver in reversing. Furthermore, the Lexus RX's advanced smartphone integration offers access to in-car connected technology applications from Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, together with a designated phone storage area and USB ports to ensure occupants always remain connected on the go.

As with any Lexus vehicle, safety is a top priority for the new RX. Drivers can enjoy complete peace of mind thanks to the Lexus Safety System+, an advanced safety technology package that includes Pre-Collision System (PCS), an

all-speed range Dynamic Radar Cruise Control (DRCC), Lane Tracing Alert (LTA), and Adaptive High-beam System (AHS).

The vehicle also includes a comprehensive array of safety features designed to protect its occupants, such as SRS airbags, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Traction Control (TRC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) with Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD), Brake Assist (BA), Panoramic View Monitor (PVM), Blind Spot Monitor (BSM), Parking Support Alert (PKSA), Rear Cross-Traffic Alert (RCTA) and Hill-start Assist Control (HAC), among many others.

TOWELL AUTO CENTRE



TAC bags Majestic Mogul award from Total Energies

MUSCAT: Towell Auto Centre (TAC), one of the leaders in the automobile industry in Oman since 1972, has bagged another prestigious award; Majestic Mogul from Total Energies.

The award was received by Krishna Iyer Subramani – AGM of Towell Auto Center during the Total Energies Middle East Distributor Convention held in Istanbul-Turkey on June 5-8.

Majestic Mogul is a very tough contest conducted by Total Energies between many different distributors across the GCC and Middle East. The competition is divided into two categories: heavy weight & lightweight. TAC was awarded the winner of the Majestic Mogul Award in the Heavy Weight category for their overall performance in 2021.

Contestants' performances were judged on "Volume: Volume growth & premium product share." and "Process: (ordering system, online training, and market feedback)". As expected, TAC was ranked number 1 in all 3 parameters. Furthermore, it's important to note that this is the 3rd time TAC has won this award.

A senior spokesperson from TAC said, "It's an honour to receive such a prestigious award. This is the result of relentless effort by the Lubes and Battery Division team of Towell Auto Centre. This would have not been possible without the business support of TOTAL Middle East team members. Towell Auto Centre has been distributing TOTAL Lubricant products in Oman since 2001.

ON-SITE CATERER

Wyndham Garden Muscat signs agreement with Burjeel Hospital



MUSCAT: The Wyndham Garden Muscat Al Khuwair signed an agreement with Burjeel Hospital to be the exclusive on-site caterer for the hospital.

"This is a great honour for our hotel and a direct result of the hard work of our wonderful staff. Signing this agreement is a great step to grow business for our hotel and leading catering services in hospitals sectors by providing nutritious, healthy diet food to patients in addition to serving staff and visitors," said Mohamed Muhareb, the General Manager of Osool Gulf Investment and owning company.

"Burjeel Hospital, being one of Oman's premier luxury hospitals, have always wanted our patients to experience the best in food services during their stay with us. The hospital has multiple specialities and super specialities services along with an orthopaedic centre of excellence with the MBO wing and the country's only oncology services in the private sector. We are confident that by joining hands with Wyndham Garden, we would be able to enhance the patient's overall experience," said Dr Rohil Raghavan - Regional CEO.

The Wyndham Garden Muscat

is a 143 -room hotel offering guests single, double and suite accommodations designed with an eye for detail and equipped with amenities to ensure ultimate comfort for business and leisure travellers. Guests have access to a fitness centre, business centre, indoor and outdoor swimming pool and free Wi-Fi connectivity. The hotel is near both Muscat Grand Mall and Oman Avenues Mall and is attached to Al Nawras commercial centre enabling customers with great shopping options. The hotel is also easily accessible from the Muscat International Airport,

making it a great accommodation choice. Express café, the in-house café offers a selection of bakeries and a variety of hot & cold beverages. 'Al-Andalus' Restaurant, the brand's International all-day dining outlet offers a wide selection of delightful dishes with a live cooking kitchen and buffet breakfast.

The hotel can also serve as a perfect venue for corporate meetings and training with personalised setup and facilities. Wyndham Garden Muscat Al Khuwair is thus set to capture the hearts of the guests with its unique cuisine, authentic theme and stunning city views.



ROUND-UP



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Bank Muscat launches cutting-edge online direct debit solution

Through this agreement, Bank Muscat continues to leverage its technology prowess to provide customers with the most innovative digital banking solutions that deliver fast and seamless payment and collection solutions, thereby, enhancing their banking experience

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate, has signed an agreement with National Finance for its cutting-edge online direct debit solution. National Finance is a diversified non-banking finance company, which provides a wide array of financial products to a robust base of retail and corporate customers.

Through this agreement, Bank Muscat continues to leverage its technology prowess to provide customers with the most innovative digital banking solutions that deliver fast and seamless payment and collection solutions, thereby, enhancing their banking experience. National Finance, which already uses online banking, will now also use the bank's Collection Solution of Online Direct Debit for managing the payments from their customers.

The agreement was signed by Wafa Ibrahim Al Ajmi, Assistant General Manager - Transaction & Government Banking, Bank Muscat and Juma Al Khamisi, General Manager - Finance & Operations, National Finance.

The Sultanate of Oman is building the strategy, infrastructure and capabilities to be at the forefront of digital societies. In line with the Oman vision 2040, the Central Bank of Oman is spearheading the overall digital transformation



strategy of the financial services sector in the country.

In an endeavour to provide affordable and accessible payment services to achieve an inclusive financial system in the country, CBO has introduced 'Direct Debit' service which is an alternate secure payment option replacing Cheque payment options. The increase in usage of 'Direct Debit' will have a positive effect on the banking system with a reduction of cash in the payment process and digitalizing the entire collection process. CBO has already included the Direct Debit facility in National Payment System Law to provide a legal framework for the facility. This gives proper governance structure, dispute resolution mechanism to the direct debit returns and management of the direct debit facility.

Wafa Ibrahim al Ajmi, Assistant General Manager - Transaction & Government Banking, Bank Muscat said, "Our corporate clients are increasingly focused on improving the end-user experience of their

customers, with integrated solutions that offer more choice and convenience with flexible payment options and simplified user experiences. We are delighted to bring National Finance onboard, a leading non-banking finance company in the Sultanate to our sophisticated Collections Solution of Online Direct Debit.

"Our Online Direct Debit Solution will enable National Finance to collect payments directly from accounts of their customers, thus, automating the entire collection process while minimising credit risk and reducing collection cost. The new digital service is based on the bank's belief in the importance of achieving the highest level of services provided to its customers in a manner that meets their needs and keeps pace with the latest banking trends while providing the highest level of security."

National Finance
Juma Al Khamisi, General Manager - Finance & Operations, National Finance, said, "We are

launching Online Direct Debit for our collections in collaboration with Bank Muscat, which aligns with our strategy of digital transformation of all aspects of our operations. We are proud to partner with Bank Muscat to use the bank's state-of-the-art digital collection solution, which is a smart, innovative and completely digital service helping us to vastly improve our operational efficiencies. This service will greatly enhance our customers' experiences and provide them with a convenient method for making payments for their loan obligations on time. It will also facilitate efficient financial settlement with automated reconciliation processes."

Bank Muscat's online direct debit is a digital collection solution, which provides corporates with a convenient mechanism to manage their recurring payments from their customers. This solution provides improved working capital management and predictability in liquidity management with automation in the collection of

funds. The solution eliminates the need for paper-based payment instructions for recurring payments and manual tracking of payment deadlines. The solution provides the flexibility of submitting debit mandates online and the initiation of direct debit collection by the corporates themselves through a transaction banking platform. The solution also offers Secured 'Host to Host' connectivity for automatic Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) integration.

The Online Direct Debit solution facilitates the collection of utility bills, repayment of loans and mortgages, credit card bills, systematic investments, insurance premiums and more. This solution is available to Corporates, Government Institutions and SME customers.

As the trusted banking partner in Oman, Bank Muscat is committed to supporting corporates to make a mark in digitalisation to create a successful business environment. Bank Muscat provides a complete range of products, ser-

vices and technology-driven digital offerings catering to government entities, corporates, SMEs and the retail industry in the area of Payments, Account services, Collections and Receivables, Liquidity solutions, Point of Sales (PoS) terminals, QR Code Payments, Payment Gateway etc.

Earlier this year, Bank Muscat had announced the launch of its 'Integrated Transaction Banking Platform', as part of the bank's digital transformation plan, which offers a wide range of online capabilities including payments, a consolidated dashboard of bank accounts across all banks, Direct Debit solution, Virtual accounts and Liquidity solutions.

National Finance, established in 1987, has built a reputation as the market leader trusted by thousands of customers across the Sultanate. National Finance offers a wide range of products targeting both individual customers and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) through its 20 branches across the Sultanate.

UNTIL JUNE 30

Enjoy cool drive with Mercedes-Benz Oman's AC summer check offer

MUSCAT: It might be hot outside but with Mercedes-Benz Oman's AC summer check offer, the car will stay cool and comfortable.

Until June 30, customers can bring their vehicle to Mercedes-Benz service centres in Muscat, Salalah and Sohar and get a full AC summer check, starting from just OMR 40 incl. VAT.

With the offer including AC dust filters change (excluding particulate filter), AC cleaning, AC gas top-up, 10-point health check, and wash and vacuum, it's the perfect way to beat the heat this summer.

Shaun Michaels, CEO of Mercedes-Benz Oman, said, "Having a functioning car AC system is essential to keep both drivers and passengers comfortable."

"We recommend getting your car AC checked at least once a year, especially during the summer when it's in high demand. Our current offer comes at the best time, and our team of experts will ensure that everything is working properly and that you and your engine won't be left in the heat."

New StarView solution
With every service carried out by Mercedes-Benz certified technicians, customers can feel confident that their car is in the best possible hands. Utilising the new StarView solution, the vehicle health check is recorded, while a personalised film is shared via e-mail and SMS along with an estimate.

The offer is available across all models registered before January 1, 2019, excluding the Mercedes-Maybach, Mercedes-AMG GT, Mercedes-AMG G-Class, Mercedes-Benz SLR, and the Mercedes-Benz Viano.







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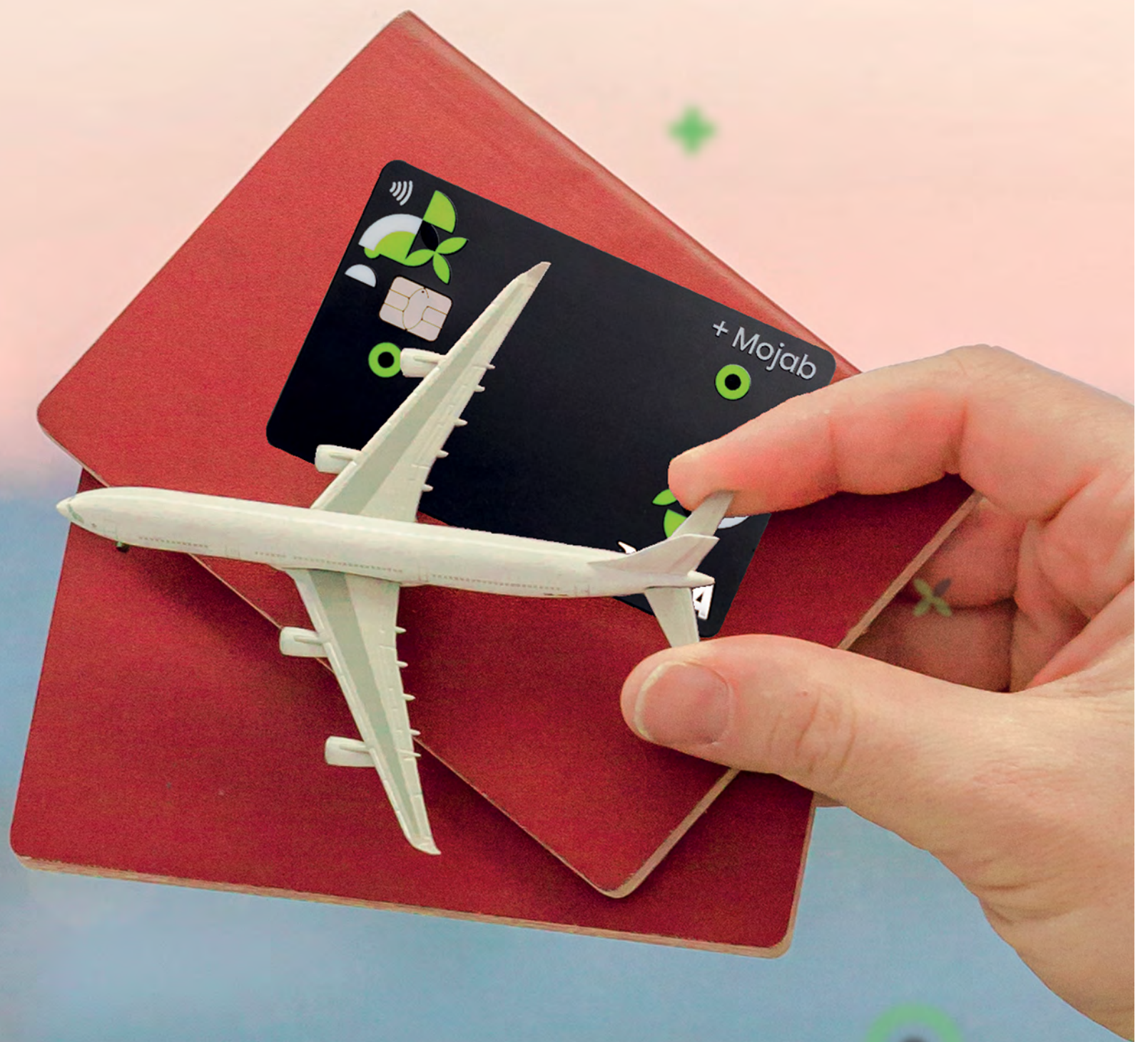


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