

SAYYID SHIHAB VISITS NORTH, SOUTH AL BATINAH TO INSPECT CYCLONE SHAHEEN DAMAGE

His Highness Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik Al Said, the Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, visited affected areas in the governorates of North and South Al Batinah to inspect damage caused by tropical cyclone Shaheen. **>A3**



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HM SENDS GREETINGS TO FIJI

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to President Jioji Konrote of the Republic of Fiji on his country's Independence Day anniversary. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere greetings and wishes to the president and his country's people. **-ONA**



Founded 1975 · Volume 46 No. 158 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

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Companies assigned road rebuilding task post-cyclone

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Two companies have been assigned to rebuild and repair roads damaged by cyclone Shaheen.

Strabag Oman and Al Sarooj Construction will undertake the repair works in North and South Batinah governorates, restoring

roads damaged during the adverse weather. They were assigned the task by the Ministerial Committee set up to assess damage caused by the cyclone.

The committee was formed by His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik to analyse the impact of the cyclone and take measures to assist people and restore normalcy.

The scope of the second package includes repairing the damages to the Wadi Bani Omar Road, Wadi Al Jahour Road, Wadi Al Sarmi Road, Wadi Al Qunoot Road, Wadi Al Hawasneh Road and Sohar - Yanqul Road. Meanwhile, the committee, led by Sultan Salim Al Habsi, the minister of finance, looked at other

forms of support and assistance that could be provided to people to help alleviate the impact of Shaheen.

Efforts are also underway to restore telecommunication services.

All companies have been instructed to find alternative measures to restore services, reported the Oman News Agency.



VOLUNTEERS ANSWER THE CALL TO HELP REBUILD POST-SHAHEEN



More than 15,000 volunteers, including Rangers and Rovers, from different parts of Oman are assisting the massive effort

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Thousands of volunteers living across Oman answered the call to help clean up and rebuild the areas battered by cyclone Shaheen.

To help speed up the reconstruction and rebuilding efforts in the Batinah regions, as well as other places where Shaheen's impact was felt most, government and charitable organisations put out calls for people to help their brethren during their hour of need.

When volunteers answered, they did so selflessly and with little afterthought, coming from all corners of Oman, including the heights of Jabal Akhdar, and faraway Salalah in the southern Dhofar region. More than 15,000 volunteers in total are likely to assist.

Among them are hundreds of Rangers and Rovers – adult members of Oman's Scouts and Guides movement, which naturally attracts to its ranks people who have always sought to serve the greater good.

"We have about 400 people from

the divisions of our Rangers and Rovers, as well as leaders of the groups of our Scouts and Guides troops," said Dr Yaqoub Khalfan Al Nadabi, director general of Scouts and Guides at the Ministry of Education. "The numbers continue to increase. This is how our sons and daughters have demonstrated the importance of giving back to society every day."

"They are on the frontlines and are willing to make sacrifices for their homeland and its leadership," he added. "A salute to our loyal sons and daughters of Oman."

The volunteers' endeavour go hand-in-hand with the efforts of the ministerial committee set up by His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik to assess the damage caused by the cyclone, and with the rebuilding plan of the various bodies that make up the National Committee for Emergency Management.

Volunteers are helping provide a number of services in the cyclone-stricken areas, including hygiene and sanitation, distributing basic necessities and food supplies to people, and providing the required support needed by agencies organising the relief and reconstruction efforts.

Those who do report for duty in North and South Al Batinah are being assigned duties on the basis of the requirements of each area, which differ between one location and the next, said Ahmed bin Abdullah Al Riyami,

the assistant coordinator of the relief and shelter sector.

Volunteers assigned to Al Khabourah are sent to one of seven sectors: the first is from South Al Bidaiya to Ghalil Al Masa'id, the second from Ghalil Al Hanadis to Al Hujaira Al Sahel, the third from Al Khuwairat to Hillat Al Husn and the fourth from Hillat Al Hosn to Khor Russoul. The fifth is from the heights of Al Qasabiah and its surroundings to the interior, while the sixth and seventh sectors are from Wadi Bani Omar, Wadi Al Hawasna, Al Ghaizin, Sana'a, Bani Ghafer and other villages.

"We expect the number of volunteers coming to help to cross 15,000," said Al Riyami. "We are working in cooperation with the Sultan's Armed Forces and other groups to supervise and organise roles assigned to them. I ask all volunteers to pool their resources so that we can together help accomplish the tasks required of us, and so that aid reaches all those in need."

"The Sultan's Armed Forces are directly coordinating with volunteer workers who help organise and deliver supplies to those affected by the cyclone," he added. "We have also drawn up a field survey process that will assess all those areas that are hard to reach, so that they can be immediately sent relief supplies." Aid in Khabourah is brought to the Khabourah Club, where it is sorted into relief baskets that are then sent to people. **>A3**

THOSE WHO WISH TO CONTACT THE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRE TO OFFER THEIR SERVICES CAN DO SO ON THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS: 26061103, 26061102, 26061105, 26061120, AND 26061118.

SPORTS

Amerat the perfect launch-pad for Oman cricket to aim for big league

PANKAJ K SHARMA
pankaj@timesofoman.com

MUSCAT: Nestled in the lap of brown mountain ranges, the lush green turf of Amerat cricket ground provided the perfect launch-pad for Oman Cricket to get into the big league.

The Oman-Sri Lanka match on the picturesque ground was a milestone moment for the cricket aficionados in Oman.

With milky high mast lights on in the evening, the green grass presented a shimmering spectacle to the eyes.

Though the gentle breeze in the afternoon lowered the surrounding temperature, for the officials who were organising this big match for the first time, the heat was palpable as they wanted the event to pass on with needle precision.

With the event becoming a great success, it brought smiles back on the faces of organisers in the end. And the Omani cricket team did



not let them down with their courageous fightback. They put the Sri Lankans under pressure right from the word-go. Had the Omani team not dropped some catches and the openers given them a decent start, the visitors would have been biting the dust.

Some lusty hitting in the end brought the Oman team supporters back on their feet. Among the most vociferous supporters was the Oman Cricket Chairman Pankaj Khimji who cheered every run

scored by the home team, not to speak of the maximums. Despite the best efforts of hosts, the island nation scraped through victory.

A boisterous crowd of Sri Lankan fans gave a stupendous support to their team with the sound of drum beats reverberating in the stadium. The music, quite soothing to the ears, made the match much more entertaining. The presence of the Sri Lankan Ambassador further boosted the morale of the visiting team. **>A5**

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TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Khabourah, Suwaiq schools to reopen soon

1 Schools in the wilayats of Khabourah and Suwaiq will remain shut until Thursday, 14 October, with academics set to resume on Sunday the 17th. The decision was taken by the Ministry of Education, as a result of the impact caused by cyclone Shaheen. **>A3**

WORLD New insights from UAE Mars Mission

2 New images challenging the existing conception of atmospheric gases on Mars have been released by the Emirates Mars Mission. **>A7**

MARKET Digital land selection service launched

3 The launch of an electronic land selection service for investors in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm has been announced. **>B1**



OMAN



PRAYER
TIMINGS



Dhuhr.....11:59pm
Asr.....3:20pm
Maghrib.....5:51pm
Isha.....7:01pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....4:47am

TIMES OF OMAN

Chief Editor RANA N. PARVEZE

VOL. 2, NO: 33

MUSCAT, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1976

PRICE BAIZAS 200

SAF NOW STRONG ENOUGH TO HELP OUR FRIENDS

H.M. THE SULTAN

Salalah : (By our Correspondent)

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos has said that the valiant armed forces of Oman are not only in a position now to fully safeguarding the territorial integrity of the country and annihilating the common enemy, but are also competent enough to help the friends of the Sultanate. The magnitude, capabilities and morale of the Sultan's Armed Forces will continue to excel with the passage of time, he declared. His Majesty expressed his full confidence in the patriotism of the armed forces and said that his incessant endeavours would continue to make SAF one of the finest armies of the world.

Addressing a large public gathering in the auditorium of Rabat palace in Salalah on Monday evening, His Majesty said that he would spare no efforts to remove all obstacles in the way of the modernization of SAF and turn them into a strong force feared by the enemy and also capable of boosting the morale of our friends. The SAF can stand any scrutiny, he emphasized. His Majesty asked the soldiers to implement the noble teachings of Islam and work with a spirit of bellicose patriotism.

His Majesty's speech came shortly after he handed over the flags of the Border and Southern Regiments at a function attended by the Minister of Youth Affairs and Deputy Defence Minister H. E. Sayyid Fahr Bin Taimur, the Governor of Dhofar H. E. Sheikh Brek-Bin Hamoud Al Ghafiri, the Magistrate of the Southern region's Law Court, Sheikh Malik Bin Mohammad Al Abri, the Press Advisor to His Majesty Mr. Hafeez Al Ghasani, the Ambassador of Kuwait Mr. Ahmed Abdul Aziz Aljaseem, the Commander of the Dhofar Brigade, the Deputy Governor of Dhofar, and senior government officials.

Oil agreement with Elf-Erap

Muscat : (By our Staff Reporter)

The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Petroleum and Minerals, H.E. Saeed Ahmad Shanfari is to sign today (Sunday) a participation agreement with the Elf-Erap currently engaged in oil-drilling in Musandam, north of Oman. The company was granted oil drilling contract in Oman in 1973.

Cairo : (UPI)

The Arab League has threatened to withdraw its peace-keeping force from a truce zone in central Beirut after sniper fire forced the closure of the only crossing point between the two zones in the city.

Zawawi meets Arab Foreign Ministers

Muscat : (By our Staff Reporter)

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, H. E. Qais Abdul Munim Zawawi currently in New York to attend the United Nations General Assembly session, held talks with the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia H. H. Emir Saoud al-Faisal on matters of mutual interest. The Minister also held meetings with the Foreign Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber, as well as the Foreign Minister of Bahrain Sheikh Mubarak al-Khalifa. Mr. Zawawi also attended the luncheon hosted by the Iraqi Foreign Minister Dr. Sadoun Hamadi.

Port Qaboos development

Muscat : (By our Staff Reporter)

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos has issued instructions to further develop and promote the administration and services of Port Qaboos to meet the growing requirements of the development activities in the Sultanate. This was disclosed here by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs H.E. Qais Zawawi. Mr. Zawawi said that the instructions were issued by His Majesty at a recent meeting with the shareholders of the Oman Port Services and members of the Port Qaboos Authority.

At a meeting of the Development Council held recently in Salalah under the chairmanship of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, a review was made of the steps taken to implement the development projects in the Southern region. The Council, he said, discussed the planning for Salalah's commercial and industrial localities and introduced certain modifications in the designs prepared for them in the light of regional requirements.

Royal assent for loan agreement

Muscat : (By our Staff Reporter)

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos has approved the minutes of agreement by virtue of which the Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development has offered a loan of 60,000,000 UAE Dirhams to the Sultanate of Oman. The loan is refundable over a period of sixteen years, the first repayment to be made in January 1980 with an interest of 3½ per cent. The loan will be utilized to finance the natural gas fields project in Eibal with a view to transferring it to Muscat for power generation, water desalination and many other industrial purposes. The project includes the digging of wells, construction of buildings for gas processing, installation of connecting pipelines, extension of a main 20-inch diameter pipeline of 325 kilometers length for civil and mechanical installations, and the establishment of a reception centre in the capital. The project also includes the supply and installation of the necessary equipment as well as the introduction of the techniques regarding connection, measurement and remote control.

Conference on Rhodesia is to be held in Geneva on October 25.

South African Prime Minister Mr. Vorster has rejected a call by black leaders for a multi-racial constitutional conference.

His Majesty's letter for Bahraini Emir

Muscat : (By our Staff Reporter)

H.E. Sayyid Turki Bin Mahmood al-Saeed has left for Bahrain. Mr. Sayyid Turki carried with him a letter from His Majesty Sultan Qaboos addressed to the Emir of Bahrain, His Highness Sheikh Essa Bin Salman al-Khalifa.

Military take over in Thailand

Bangkok : (UPI)

The military have seized power in Thailand after three years of civilian rule. The coup followed several hours of bloody fighting between right and left-wing groups in the capital. A group calling itself 'The National Reform Administration Party' has seized power and martial law is enforced throughout the country. Parliament has been dissolved, the constitution abrogated and all political parties banned.

Continued on Page 10



H.M. Sultan Qaboos addressing Officers of the Border and Southern Regiments of SAF.

Photo : Mohammad Mustafa



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Sayyid Shihab visits cyclone-hit areas to assess damage, reviews relief work

The visit is part of the unrelenting national efforts to reduce the impact of the tropical cyclone Shaheen

Times News Service

MUSCAT: His Highness Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik Al Said, the Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, visited affected areas in the governorates of North and South Al Batinah to inspect damage caused by tropical cyclone Shaheen.

“His Highness Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, paid

a field visit to affected areas in the governorates of North and South Al Batinah and a number of field deployment sites for the Sultan’s Armed Forces, and other departments of the Ministry of Defence deployed in the two governorates, as part of the unrelenting national efforts to reduce the impact of the tropical cyclone Shaheen,” said the Oman News Agency.

His Highness listened, during his visit to the Said bin Sultan Naval Base, to a briefing about the Royal Navy of Oman and the tasks and roles it plays in securing coastal areas affected by the situation, ensuring maritime safety, and the aspects of support it provides to all sectors concerned with search and rescue and medical transport.

At the headquarters of the Advanced Command of the National Committee for Emergency Management in the Wilayat of Suwaiq, His Highness listened to a briefing on the national efforts undertaken by the Main Military Commit-

tee in coordination with the concerned authorities, in accordance with their national plans.

In addition, he also surveyed the extent of the impact to the affected areas and the joint roles taken towards restoring them to their previous condition. His Highness, during his visit to the headquarters of the Military Sub-Committee for Emergency Situations Management in South Al Batinah Governorate, was briefed on the latest developments of the effects of Shaheen.

His Highness also visited the headquarters of the Military Sub-committee in North Al Batinah Governorate and listened to a briefing on the efforts of the Sultan’s Armed Forces in coordination with the concerned authorities, within the roles of the Main Military Committee’s plan for emergency management involving the Sultan’s Armed Forces, in their deployment areas various in the two governorates.



FIELD VISIT: His Highness Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, paid a field visit to affected areas in the governorates of North and South Al Batinah and a number of field deployment sites for the Sultan’s Armed Forces, and other departments of the Ministry of Defence deployed in the two governorates.

Call for licenced electricians to register with authorities



With efforts being made to restore electricity connectivity to homes, and replace socket and wiring that were damaged by floodwaters, the National Committee for Emergency Management has called on licenced electricians to register with the authorities, should they wish to provide their services.

As of Saturday, October 9, 2021, volunteers helped clean mud and debris from 1,700 homes.

Contact for shelter

People whose homes have been damaged by the cyclone and are looking for places to stay are requested to contact the relief and

shelter sector, while people in the surrounding areas have also been encouraged to take them in.

Those who wish to contact the emergency operations centre to offer their services can do so on the following numbers: 26061103, 26061102, 26061105, 26061120, and 26061118.



EDUCATION

Khabourah, Suwaiq schools to resume on October 17



SAFETY FIRST: The decision to suspend academics, therefore, was also taken keeping in mind the safety of school students.

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Schools in the wilays of Khabourah and Suwaiq will remain shut until Thursday, 14 October, with academics set to resume on Sunday the 17th.

The decision was taken by the Ministry of Education, as a result of the impact caused by cyclone Shaheen. It confirmed, however,

that most private and government-run schools in North and South Al Batinah were ready to operate from today onwards.

Collaboration

Suspension of school activities in these two wilayats comes as part of the collaboration between the parents’ councils in the schools of the two wilayats, and the General

Directorate of Education in the Governorate of North Al Batinah. There are still many students who attend school in these areas who are unable to attend classes, because of the aftermath of cyclone Shaheen. The decision to suspend academics, therefore, was also taken keeping in mind the safety of these students, reported the Oman News Agency.

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‘Simply 100’: A virtual art exhibition



A Secret Chat - Radhakrishnan ST



Minds - Ashwini Kelkar



Sanctuary 01 - Asawari Deoras



Awakening - Jayalakshmi M

NO LESS than forty-two artists of Rangrez came together to put up a show of forty-eight paintings under the title of ‘Simply 100’.

This show was part of the on-going celebrations of the Indian Embassy leading to 75 years of India’s Independence.

It was opened by the famous Colombian artist of Muscat Rebecca Nigrinis.

Rangrez is the artist group of the Indian Social Club, Muscat led by Dr. Satish Nambiar.

‘Simply 100’ was called so because each painting was a metre by a metre. The theme was left to the imagination of the artists.

This was the ninth virtual art exhibition by team Rangrez for this year.

It was curated by a group of three. Uma Gopinath, who is a key member of the group, Soubam Priyanda, who deals with the aesthetic aspects of posters and design for the artist group and Sushmita Gupta, the convenor and the driving force of this active group.

The paintings were exquisite to say the least. All of the forty-eight paintings were divided into sections of abstract, landscapes, human figures, animals and Oman. There were multiple entries from three artists that made it to the exhibition. Uma Gopinath made two, Asawari Deoras submitted three and Sushmita Gupta painted four.

The curators thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Soubam said, “I am thankful to



Sharing Thoughts - Rashmi Dauria

Sushmita and Uma for considering me as one of the curators for the online art exhibition— ‘Simply 100’. Indeed it was a good learning experience to work with them. I also thoroughly enjoyed the process of curating from the ideation to the execution.”

Uma said, “This is the best time to be an Indian artist in Oman. The platform that Rangrez has provided us Indian artists is unparalleled. With each event we have had wonderful works rendered by our members. From always being behind the scenes to curating this

exhibition has been a great experience for me. It opened my eyes to look beyond what is seen in a painting to what is being told and why an artist paints what she paints.”

Sushmita said, “Rangrez artists had never before been challenged by any of the curators in the group before to go as big as a 100X100 cms. This challenge came with a freedom of expression because there was no binding on the topic. Therefore it was truly a journey into the mind of the artists and it turned out to be an experience worth cherishing.”



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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF QALHAT



The ancient city of Qalhat in Sur has witnessed an ancient Omani civilisation and its history dates back to the Bronze Age, when it was a major city and the first capital of Oman. Also, due to many characteristics that augment its unique and distinctive location, and being an important city and port, it had the advantage of attracting travellers, explorers and seekers after knowledge. In the thirteenth century it was the main commercial port linking Oman and abroad.

The city of Qalhat is in the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites for its historical significance and its role in Oman’s evolution between the 11th and 15th centuries.

The ruins of Qalhat include Bibi Mariam’s shrine who is said to be an elderly woman who built a mosque, while some historical sources mentioned that she was the governor of Qalhat during the reign of King Hormuz (Kotob Eddine Yam-

tuhin). At the shrine entrance, there is a crypt leading to underground corridors beneath the floor of the shrine.

According to UNESCO, “The Ancient City of Qalhat presents a unique testimony to the Kingdom of Hormuz, as it prospered from the 11th to 16th century CE. Ancient Qalhat presents exceptional evidence of a major trade hub, which came under the rule of the Princes of Hormuz and profited from its geopolitical position in the region.”

“It was a seasonal residence and refuge to the Princes of Hormuz, which has given it the title of a secondary capital of the larger kingdom,” the statement added. UNESCO has recognised the city’s urban plan and excavated buildings that are typical of the Kingdom of Hormuz. The United Nations body also notes that the archaeological remains provide further potential for a more detailed understanding of Qalhat’s ways of life and trade.

The Tourism Ministry said that Qalhat was once a shining

jewel along the Omani coastline. “The Indian Ocean trade route brought many people through the ancient city, which Italian explorer Marco Polo described as having ‘fine bazaars and one of the most beautiful mosques,’” added the Ministry. “In the late-Middle Ages, when it was Oman’s first capital, the city was notably encircled by a fortified wall and was bustling with shops, bazaars, and houses.”

“Today, a single mausoleum is all that bears witness to the city’s former glory. Some say the lonely tomb was built by Baha al-Din Ayaz, king of the Hormuz Empire, for his wife, Bibi Maryam. But others maintain that it was indeed her who built it for him,” said the Ministry.

Recently The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism signed an agreement with the Oman Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Company to rehabilitate the ancient city of Qalhat. A statement issued online by the Oman News Agency, (ONA) said: “The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism signed an agreement with the Oman Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Company to finance the first phase of project for rehabilitation of the ancient city of Qalhat in the Wilayat of Sur, which consists of establishing management and protection offices for the site, visiting paths, signboards, viewing platforms and other such basic facilities.”



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MOMENTOUS OCCASION



Oman, Sri Lanka mark 40th anniversary of relations

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Sri Lanka and Oman ODI cricket match began ahead of T20 World Cup with the commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Sri Lankan and Omani national cricket teams played their first ever ODI cricket ahead of the ICC T20 World Cup 2021 on October 7, 2021 at Al Amerat cricket ground in Muscat to mark the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and Oman which coincidentally falls this year.

Sri Lanka ambassador to Oman,

Ameer Ajwad and the Chairman of Oman Cricket (OC), Pankaj Khimji, together with the members of Oman Cricket Board inaugurated the first international cricket match between the two teams by ceremonially cutting a cake to mark the occasion of the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

Sri Lankan and Omani national team squads led by their respective captains Dasun Shanaka and Zeeshan Maqsood together with Sri Lankan cricket manager Manuja Kariyapperuma and Oman's chief cricket development officer and national team coach Duleep Mendis, who was the former Sri Lanka

cricket captain, were also present during the inauguration.

The ambassador presented 40th Anniversary memorial logo pin to the Chairman of Oman Cricket and the members of the Oman Cricket Board to mark this momentous occasion in the history of cricket of Sri Lanka and Oman.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Ameer Ajwad said that the rise of Oman's cricket and the amazing development of its cricket infrastructure is remarkable and that the cricket would play a significant role in further enhancing Sri Lanka and Oman relations into new areas of co-operation in the years ahead.

CRICKET

FROM A1 Missed chances

With COVID-19 protocols strictly enforced, visitors in mask had to present their double vaccination certificate to the authorities at the entry gate. A posse of Royal Oman Police personnel kept a hawk eye on the entire proceedings.

The players were kept in bio-bubble with others prevented from going near them.

When the ball was hit for a maximum or crossed the boundary for four, nobody touched it and only the players were allowed to take back the white ball. And once when a spectator touched the ball after it was hit for a maximum, the leather had to be sanitised by the umpire.

After the end of the match, Duleep Mendis, the Oman cricket team coach, rued the missed chances and said had the top order given a good start, the story would have been different. But it was a good show by the Oman team at the big stage and they did not disappoint the cricket lovers in Oman.

EXPO 2020 DUBAI

Over 81,000 visit Oman's pavilion

Times News Service

MUSCAT: More than 81,000 people have visited the Sultanate's pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai in the first week.

Khalid bin Salem Al Zuhaimi,

director of the Sultanate's pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai, said that the number of visitors to the pavilion during the first week of the exhibition's launch reached 81,071, with an average of 11,500 visitors per day.

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Ministry of Defence

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

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

SULTAN'S ARMED FORCES

SAF committee holds review meeting

MUSCAT: The Main Military Committee for Emergency Management at the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) reviewed yesterday the efforts extended by SAF and other departments at the

Ministry of Defence.

The committee also followed with the work of other military committees in the Governorates, all formations, airbases, naval bases and operating field units, in

accordance with the general plan of the Main Military Committee for Emergency Management and in coordination with the National Committee for Emergency Management. — ONA

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CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN

Pact inked for combating money laundering

MUSCAT: The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) and the National Centre for Financial Information (NCFI) have signed a cooperation programme aimed at exchange of information in the field of anti-money laundering and combating financing terrorism.

Tahir bin Salim Al Amri, CEO of CBO signed the cooperation programme on behalf of the Bank,

while from the side of the NCFI, it was signed by Abdulrahman Amer Al Kiyomi, Chief Executive Officer of the NCFI.

The programme aimed to enhance the joint cooperation between the two sides and to set a framework for exchange of information on anti-money laundering and combating financing terrorism. — OMA



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



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

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

'JOHNNY AND CLYDE'



Megan Fox showcases her unrecognisable transformation for upcoming thriller film

WASHINGTON: Actor Megan Fox has transformed her look for a wicked new role in the upcoming thriller film 'Johnny and Clyde'.

The 35-year-old star shared a glimpse of her unrecognisable transformation on her Instagram account. Fox, who is playing a crime boss in the movie, debuted a flowing, silver hairstyle on Friday. The photo was taken on the set of the movie, which recently began filming. "This is what the devil's daughter looks like. #JohnnyAndClyde. Coming Spring 2022," wrote Fox, who typically sports dark brown hair and had some roots showing with her new style.

The actor, who famously made her debut in the horror film world with the 2009 comedy 'Jennifer's Body', is playing a crime boss named Alana Hart in the new film, reported E! Online.

'Johnny and Clyde', whose title is inspired by the real-life, late "Bonnie and Clyde" criminal couple, focuses on two eponymous serial killers who are madly in love and plan to rob a prosperous casino run by Fox's character and guarded by a demonic slayer that she commands.

"Megan's character is very dark," director and co-writer Tom

DeNucci told Bloody Disgusting.

DeNucci added, "I don't want to give away too much, but visually we wanted her to almost be like a Disney princess, but a messed up, very dark, twisted version of that. Her look is just incredible... this kind of almost evil princess character. I went into a weird kind of Disney path. A lot of that vintage Disney stuff was kind of dark, you know?"

He continued, "I think horror fans can look forward to a Megan Fox that nobody has ever seen before. I'm not gonna say anything, but there's something very different about her characteristically, in her appearance, that she's never attempted to put out there before. A very bold performance by Megan, just something that she really, really leaned into. She bought into this philosophy, all this preparation that we've been doing, she really bought into it. It was a pleasure to work with Megan, and we can't wait to showcase this character that she brought to the table."

Preacher's Tyson Ritter, Bail Ling and Vanessa Angel are also set to star in the movie, while the names of the actors playing Johnny and Clyde have not yet been announced. — ANI

China has a 'glorious tradition' of opposing separatism, Xi said at Beijing's Great Hall of the People



BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Saturday called for peaceful reunification with self-governed Taiwan.

Xi made the comments in Beijing just days after mainland China carried out record military incursions into Taiwan's air defense zone.

Taiwan split from mainland China in 1949 and views itself as an independent state, while Beijing claims it is a breakaway prov-

ince. China has a "glorious tradition" of opposing separatism, Xi said at Beijing's Great Hall of the People.

He was attending an official celebration to mark the anniversary of the revolution that overthrew China's last imperial dynasty in 1911.

"Taiwan independence separatism is the biggest obstacle to

achieving the reunification of the motherland, and the most serious hidden danger to national rejuvenation," Xi added.

He said that peaceful "reunification" best meets the overall interests of the Taiwanese people. He also stressed that China will protect its sovereignty and unity.

"No one should underestimate the Chinese people's staunch determination, firm will, and strong ability to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity," Xi said. "The historical task of the complete reunification of the motherland must be fulfilled, and will definitely be fulfilled."

Taiwan's presidential office said on Saturday that the future of the island rests in the hands of its people and that mainstream public opinion is very clear in rejecting China's "one country, two systems" model.

This model permits two systems of governance to be practiced within the sovereign state of the

People's Republic of China.

Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council, in a separate statement, called on China to abandon its "provocative steps of intrusion, harassment and destruction."

Xi's last major mention of Taiwan was in July when he vowed to "smash" any attempts at formal independence.

In 2019, he directly threatened to use force to bring the island under Beijing's control.

China has not stopped at verbal threats of violence. Beginning October 1, over the course of four days, the People's Liberation Army flew fighter jets, bombers and airborne early warning aircraft 149 times toward Taiwan.

The largest maneuver involved a record 56 jets at once. This was the largest number since Taiwan's Defense Ministry began releasing such reports in September last year.

Xi did not mention the incursions in his speech. — DW

ARMY SOURCES

India, China to address military stand-off

NEW DELHI: India and China are set to hold on October 10, the 13th round of talks to address the ongoing military stand-off between the two Asian countries, according to Army sources.

The sources also divulged that the talks will be held at Moldo (Chusul) on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Resolution of friction point at Hot Springs will be discussed during the talks, added the source.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Thursday had said that it expected China to work towards early resolution of the remaining issue along the Line of Control (LoC) in Eastern Ladakh by fully abiding by bilateral agreements and protocols.



Addressing a weekly media briefing, the MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said, "It is our expectation that China will work towards early resolution of the remaining issue along the Line of Control (LoC) in Eastern Ladakh while fully abiding by bilateral agreements and protocols."

Earlier, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, met Chinese counterpart Wang Yi and both the leaders discussed the border tensions and disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in

border areas.

Soldiers of India and China clashed last year resulting in the loss of several lives on both sides. The clashes erupted after the transgression by Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) in Galwan Valley. More than a year had passed since the incident, but tensions continue to simmer between the two Asian giants.

More than 12 rounds of military talks and a series of diplomatic parleys were held between India and China, but the tensions still continue.

There has been some disengagement, but India says full disengagement will only result in de-escalation. Some disengagement has indeed taken place recently, but it is not complete. — ANI

FUEL SHORTAGE

Power outage in Lebanon as grid shuts down

BEIRUT: Lebanon which is already grappling with already skyrocketing inflation and shortage of essential items is now facing an acute power crisis due to fuel shortage.

Lebanon's electricity grid has shut down entirely after the country's two main power stations ran out of fuel, Sky News reported citing media reports.

The al Zahrani and the Deir Ammar power stations stopped working after supplies of diesel were apparently exhausted, and energy production dropped to below 200 megawatts, said Sky News report. "The Lebanese power network completely stopped working at noon today, and it is unlikely that it will work until next Monday, or for several days," an official told Sky News.

According to Al Jazeera, Lebanon's continuing economic crisis has created a fuel shortage, adding extended power cuts to the miseries of its people.

While experts have said a proposal recently put forth by the US ambassador in Lebanon to revive a transnational gas pipeline running from Egypt to Lebanon could help alleviate the problem, it is far from a long-term solution for the country's continuing failure to generate sufficient

electricity. "It's not a new idea. From 2009 to 2010, gas was being pumped through Egypt to Jordan and through Syria to Lebanon," Diana Kaissy, a board member of the Lebanese Oil and Gas Initiative and an expert on energy governance, told Al Jazeera.

That arrangement, using the Arab Gas Pipeline, ended when Lebanon defaulted on payments and attacks on the pipeline in Egypt disrupted supplies. Studies are also still needed to address what damage Syria's war may have done to the pipeline.

"Technically speaking, it could be done by the end of this year if there is serious political will," Kaissy said. Meanwhile, Energy ministers from Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan met in Amman on Wednesday where they affirmed their willingness to facilitate transfers of gas to energy-strapped Lebanon.

Lebanese officials have said the World Bank has offered to provide funding for the gas but provided no other details.

Lebanon in the past two years has been offered a number of international loans and grants, including from the IMF, on the condition that the country implement reforms with regards to transparency and corruption. — OMA

Oman Charitable Organization announces that opening of donation to help those affected people by climatic conditions

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WORLD



Emirates Mars Mission unveils new insights into Martian atmosphere

New observations show unexpected behaviours in Mars' atmosphere as EMM Data shared with global community

DUBAI: The Emirates Mars Mission, the first interplanetary exploration undertaken by an Arab nation, released unique new images of Mars that challenge our existing conception of how the planet's atmospheric gases behave and interact. Taken by the Mars Hope probe's EMUS instrument, the observations show dramatic variations in the concentrations of both atomic oxygen and carbon monoxide in the dayside atmosphere of Mars.

"These observations contain features that were completely unexpected and we believe will have far-reaching consequences for our existing models of the Martian atmosphere and our understanding of its behaviour. We simply hadn't



anticipated structures of this magnitude and complexity," said Emirates Mars Mission Science Lead, Hessa Al Matroushi.

The new findings are included in the first data release from the Mission, which was opened up to public access on 1 October 2021, and follow on from the Mission's revolutionary observations of the Martian discrete aurora. Both

new observations come early in the Mission's lifetime and have significant implications for our understanding of the Martian atmosphere and its interaction with solar radiation.

The observations confound scientist's preconceptions of the distribution of ultraviolet light emitted from the upper atmosphere of Mars, showing vast structures at



a range of wavelengths suggesting a higher than expected variation in the density of atomic oxygen and pointing to unusual levels of atmospheric turbulence. Taken at a time when Mars was near the aphelion of its orbit (furthest from the Sun) and when solar activity was low, the images are at their most striking and remarkable in emissions from oxygen at the 130.4 nm wavelength.

"It was so unexpected that we initially thought the structures might be artefacts in the image, caused by contaminating light from longer wavelengths that the instrument is designed to reject," said EMM Deputy Science Lead Justin Deighan. "We had expected to observe a relatively uniform emission from oxygen at 130.4 nm across the planet and yet here we are, faced with unpredicted variations of 50% or more in the bright-

ness. The science team is currently refining their models to come up with a robust interpretation of these findings. It's very exciting to be challenged this way; this is exactly the type of science the mission was designed to pursue."

One of three instruments on board the Mars Hope Probe, EMUS' principal science goal is the measurement of oxygen and carbon monoxide in Mars' upper atmosphere and the variability of hydrogen and oxygen in the exosphere. EMUS (Emirates Mars Ultraviolet Spectrometer) is the most sensitive ultraviolet instrument yet to orbit Mars.

"We have been refining our processing pipeline, readying for our first science data release to the global science community, which took place as scheduled on the first of October," commented Al Matroushi.

"These observations, and our previously announced observations of Mars' discrete aurora, will form part of that initial data release, which includes observations made by Hope between 9 February to 22 May 2021. From now onwards, we will be releasing new data sets every three months without embargo and free for use to the community."

The Emirates Mars Mission is studying the relationship between the upper layer and lower regions

of the Martian atmosphere, giving the international science community full access to a holistic view of the Martian atmosphere at different times of the day, through different seasons.

The Mission's Hope Probe is following its planned 20,000 – 43,000 km elliptical science orbit, with an inclination to Mars of 25 degrees, giving it a unique ability to complete one orbit of the planet every 55 hours and capture a full planetary data sample every nine days throughout its one Martian year (two Earth year) mission to map Mar's atmospheric dynamics.

EMM and the Hope probe are the culmination of a knowledge transfer and development effort started in 2006, which has seen Emirati engineers working with partners around the world to develop the UAE's spacecraft design, engineering and manufacturing capabilities.

Hope is a fully autonomous spacecraft, carrying three instruments to measure Mars' atmosphere. Weighing some 1,350 kg, and approximately the size of a small SUV, the spacecraft was designed and developed by MBRSC engineers working with academic partners, including LASP at the University of Colorado, Boulder; Arizona State University and the University of California, Berkeley.

-WAM

CONGOLESE HEALTH MINISTRY

WHO to investigate new Ebola case in Democratic Republic of Congo

GENEVA: The World Health Organization (WHO) said on Saturday that it was working with health authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo to investigate a new Ebola case.

The Congolese Health Ministry reported late on Friday that a 3-year-old boy, who had been hospitalised with the disease, died on October 6.

The boy had tested positive near the eastern city of Beni, in North Kivu province. Beni was one of the epicenters of the deadly 2018-2020 Ebola outbreak.

"North Kivu has been battered by Ebola outbreaks during the past few years," said WHO's regional director for Africa, Matshidiso Moeti Moeti, "but this has built up local expertise and community awareness, paving the way for a fast-moving response."

Health Minister Jean Jacques Mbugani on Friday said that following the child's death earlier this week, about 100 people who may have been exposed to the virus had been identified.



INTERNAL REPORT: An internal report from Congo's biomedical laboratory said that three of the toddler's neighbours had also presented symptoms consistent with Ebola last month. — DW

Ebola symptoms

He added they were being monitored by authorities to see if they developed any Ebola symptoms.

"Thanks to the experience acquired in managing the Ebola virus disease during previous epidemics, we are confident that the response teams ... will manage to control this outbreak as soon as possible," Mbugani said.

An internal report from Congo's biomedical laboratory said that three of the toddler's neighbours had also presented symptoms

consistent with Ebola last month. They died as well, but hadn't been tested for the disease.

The most recent Ebola outbreak in North Kivu ended five months ago.

It is not unusual for sporadic cases to occur following a major outbreak, health experts say.

Congo has recorded 12 Ebola outbreaks since it was first discovered near the Ebola river in 1976. The disease spreads through contact with body fluids, and its symptoms include severe vomiting and diarrhea.

The 2018-2020 Ebola outbreak killed more than 2,200 people. It

was the second deadliest outbreak of the disease on record.

Ebola typically kills about half of those it infects, though advances in medical treatments, including highly effective vaccines, can significantly reduce death rates when detected early.

— DW

US COMMITMENT

Biden authorises new refugee cap of 125,000 for 2022

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden has officially announced the United States commitment to resettle up to 125,000 refugees, informed US Secretary Antony Blinken on Friday.

The move demonstrating that America will continue to lead in providing refuge to those fleeing persecution so they can start new lives in safety, he added. "@POTUS has made official the US commitment to resettle up to 125k refugees, demonstrating that the United States will continue to lead in providing refuge to those fleeing persecution so they can start new lives in safety," Blinken said in a tweet.

President Biden sent a memo to Secretary of State Antony Blinken authorising a new refugee cap of 125,000 for the fiscal year 2022 due to humanitarian and national interests.

"By the authority vested in me as

President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States... and after appropriate consultations with the Congress, I hereby make the following determinations and authorise the following actions: The admission of up to 125,000 refugees to the United States during Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 is justified by humanitarian concerns or is otherwise in the national interest," Biden said on Friday (local time), reported Sputnik.

He also set regional caps for five global regions, in addition to setting aside 10,000 spots to be allocated at a later date should the need arise. The authorisation allows for 40,000 refugees from Africa, 15,000 from East Asia, 10,000 from Europe and Central Asia, 15,000 from Latin America and the Caribbean, and 35,000 for the Near East and South Asia in addition to the 10,000 unallocated spots, it further reported. — ANI



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. — ANI

BILATERAL MEETING

PM Modi an inspiration for rest of the world: Danish Prime Minister



Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen. — ANI

NEW DELHI: Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen on Saturday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has set an ambitious climate target for renewable energy, is an inspirational figure for the rest of the world.

"You (PM Modi) are an inspiration for the rest of the world as you have set some very ambitious targets when it comes to clean water for over one million households and renewable energy. I'm proud that you have accepted my invitation to visit Denmark," said the Danish PM after holding a bilateral meeting with PM Modi. PM Modi has set very ambitious targets in India. The target of 450 gigawatts by 2030 of renewable energy is regarded as a challenging goal.

Frederiksen noted that both

democratic nations believe in an international system based on rules. "Cooperation between India and Denmark is a great example of how green growth and green transition can go hand in hand," she added.

Exchanged four agreements

The Danish Prime Minister made these remarks after the two countries exchanged four agreements.

PM Modi said that the Green Strategic Partnership between India and Denmark is a symbol of the far-reaching thinking in both nations.

"A year ago today, we took the historic decision to establish a Green Strategic Partnership between India and Denmark in our virtual summit. This is a sign of

far-reaching thinking and respect for the environment in both our countries," said PM Modi.

Green Strategic Partnership

"During our virtual summit, we had decided to establish a Green Strategic Partnership between our two countries. Today, we reviewed and reiterated our commitment on this," he added.

The four agreements signed between India and Denmark include the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research-National Geophysical Research Institute, Hyderabad, Aarhus University, Denmark and Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland on mapping of groundwater resources and aquifers.

The second agreement was signed on the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library Access Agreement between the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research and the Danish Patent and Trademark Office.

The third MoU was signed between the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru and Danfoss Industries Private Limited to establish a Centre of Excellence towards natural refrigerants for tropical climates with potential applications.

The fourth agreement was a Joint Letter of Intent between the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Government of the Republic of India and The Government of the Kingdom of Denmark. — ANI

SOHAR PORT DONATES

Sohar Port and Freezone has donated OMR250,000 to the Oman Charitable Organisation (OCO) to aid Cyclone Shaheen recovery efforts. The staff volunteered to work with government entities and local NGOs to support relief activities within the region.

MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2021



US AVERTS DEFAULT

The US Senate voted to extend the country's debt limit by \$480 billion (€415.3 billion). The narrow 50-48 vote to pass the bill ends weeks of partisan fighting.

Opaz launches electronic land selection service for investors

This service allows investors to select the plot of land directly as soon as an investor determines the type of project and the required space of the plot

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) announced the launch of an electronic land selection service for investors in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad).

Introducing the new service reflects Opaz efforts to facilitate and expedite procedures for investors in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, reduce the time and effort, and ensure transparency and fairness for all investors in the zone. Opaz plans to extend this service



NEW SERVICE: Introducing the new service reflects Opaz efforts to facilitate and expedite procedures for investors in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, reduce the time and effort, and ensure transparency and fairness for all investors in the zone. - File picture

during the coming period to include other free zones.

This service allows investors to select the plot of land directly as soon as an investor determines the type of project and the required

space of the plot. Based on the application's details, the system displays the vacant plots in the master plan for investors via the Geographic Information System (GIS), which has become one of

the modern technologies used in achieving governance of procedures. The new service assists the investor to easily make the investment decision by selecting the appropriate location of the land

while providing a spatial description that reinforces the decision.

Moreover, the service is distinguished by allowing investors to select the plot of land in interactive maps for more than 800 differ-

ent economic activities.

It also brings other features, including the possibility of measuring the distance between the selected land and the key landmarks in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, providing accurate information about the level of land's altitude above sea level, merging joint lands, getting full measurements of lengths and spaces, determining the geographical location coordinates, and sharing the approximate distance of the land from the nearby utilities such as electricity, water, telecommunications, and roads.

Further, investors could also access the service of searching and inquiring about information on interactive maps, printing maps, obtaining modern satellite images of the area, data of the masterplan, public services and nearby landmarks. Likewise, investors can request land with different specifications, as concerned employees will act upon the investor's request.

Investors can access the newly launched service through the digital portal (eoss.duqm.gov.om) from all over the world. To obtain the service, they have to register in the portal, submit the usufruct request, pay the fees, and then choose the land, which is appropriate for their projects.

SHARIA AWARENESS INITIATIVE

Alizz Islamic Bank's initiative to introduce role of Islamic banks in sustainable economy

MUSCAT: In continuation of its pioneering role in launching initiatives that serve the community, Alizz Islamic Bank has announced the launch of the 'ManarAlizz' Sharia awareness initiative, on October 12, at the Grand Millennium Muscat Hotel, under the patronage of Taher bin Salem bin Abdullah Al Omari, Executive President of Central Bank of Oman.

The ceremony will be attended by their highnesses and excellencies, CEOs of various companies and institutions in Oman, members of the Bank's Board of Directors and the Sharia Supervisory Board.

The launch of the 'ManarAlizz' initiative comes as an umbrella programme for Alizz Islamic Bank for cultural awareness of Islamic economics and the Islamic banking sector services.

This initiative constitutes one of the roles of Alizz Islamic Bank to enhance the bank's sustainable and strategic knowledge, which aims to serve different segments, whether from inside or outside the Sultanate, such as researchers conducting research studies, university students, educational institutions, various entities, and the public in general.

'ManarAlizz' initiative aims to spread awareness about the Islamic economy and its developmental role, introduce the role of Islamic banks in the sustainable economy, and provide researchers and scholars with important knowledge related to the Islamic banking industry overall and the



Omani experience with regards to Islamic banks. It also invites researchers and scholars from outside the Sultanate to get acquainted with the Omani experience of Islamic banking, educating the various segments of society with Islamic banking products, urging banking innovation, and enabling the bank's experts to contribute knowledge, each in its specialisation, and other objectives that stem from achieving benefit mainly for the community.

Commenting on this upcoming event, Sulaiman bin Hamad Al-Harthi, CEO of Alizz Islamic

Bank, said, "It is customary in all situations to distinguish between theory and practice. Since the application requires immediate and direct action, this is what we seek by launching this initiative. As we all participate in performing a great service for this dear country and continue to persevere in strengthening the relationship between Alizz Islamic Bank and the various segments of society, we aim to achieve the maximum benefit and broadcast awareness about Islamic banking and the services and products accompanying the sector. What matters is not the

names, but the goals that we will all achieve, God willing, through 'ManarAlizz'.

Al Harthi added, "We always strive to facilitate customer needs and to overcome what is difficult, by innovating various methods, systems and initiatives that achieve benefits for the community before the bank, and we will not stop here. By extending its services and products to people wherever they are, at Alizz Islamic Bank we are committed to supporting the growth and prosperity of our communities. We believe that we have a responsibility to give back and bring about positive change in the communities in which we live and work, recognising that when communities thrive, so do individuals and businesses."

The "ManarAlizz" programme, is an awareness initiative that is based on diversifying its activities between conferences, workshops, meetings and lectures; and hosting researchers, scholars and university students locally and internationally. Both directly and indirectly, the role of Sharia contracts is to enrich the Islamic banking experience and other topics related to Islamic banking.

It is worth mentioning that Alizz Islamic Bank seeks to provide innovative products and an enriching experience, whether for the bank's customers or the community in general and providing an exceptional customer experience remains the main focus of the bank's strategy.

PANEL DISCUSSION

ICAI Muscat Chapter organises virtual CFO meet

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Muscat Chapter of the Institute of the Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI Muscat Chapter) conducted a virtual Omani CFO meet recently representing the key sectors of the Oman economy.

Indian Ambassador to Oman, Munu Mahawar was the chief guest of the event and CA Nihar Jambusaria, President of ICAI, was the guest of honour.

The panel discussion was moderated by Fatick Al Balushi, CFO of Oman Cements and supported by Khamis Al Hashmi, CFO of Oman LNG, Abdul Razaq Al Balushi, CFO of Ooredoo Oman, Haithem Al Saadi, CFO of Oman Flour Mills and Sulieman Al Ghannami, Economic and financial expert, were part of the panel discussed the topic 'Current Economic Scenario and Future'.

Addressing the virtual gathering CA Ravi Deora, Chairman of ICAI Muscat chapter, mentioned, "It is a proud moment for us to host the Omani CFOs of listed companies and the topic is selected very carefully to address the challenges and opportunities of present and future."

The chapter also felicitated Munu Mahawar who is completing his mission in Oman for all the support extended to the Chapter during the past years. In



his speech, Mahawar said, "ICAI Muscat chapter has been very active and has done a wonderful job, not only in developing its members but also in promoting an economic relationship of Oman and India in general."

CA Nihar Jambusaria mentioned in his speech that the "right topic has been selected looking at the fact that the role of CFO's is more important in the challenging pandemic times."

Abdul Razaq Al Balushi explained the challenges faced by the digital and telecom sector and highlighted the need for new technologies. Pandemic was a great learning experience, mentioned Haithem Al Saadi, talking about the enormous disruptions in the supply chain, lessons learnt and ways forward. Khamis highlighted the importance of environmental protection while considering investments for the future. Sulieman Al Ghannami spoke about the challenges in raising the funds and he also very well pointed out the need to support start-ups facing challenges in sourcing finance.

HUAWEI TECHNICAL INVESTMENTS COMPANY

Huawei steps up to deliver relief goods in the wake of Shaheen



Times News Service

MUSCAT: As the state institutions prepared for crisis management ahead of Cyclone Shaheen, the Omani citizens were also prepared to withstand and absorb its shock. The nationals and residents of this land are proud of withstanding the effects of such a big cyclone. In the aftermath, many organisations and companies came forward to offer help during this time of need. Among them was Huawei Technical Investments Company, which provided relief to affected people.

Six trucks filled with various relief materials were distributed among people of Al Mussanah, Al Suwaiq, Al Khaboura and Saham.

Six trucks filled with various relief materials were distributed

The entire consignment was contributed by the general manager of the company himself. Everyone in the company rolled up their sleeves and went out to volunteer with enthusiasm and determination. What the Omanis and expatriates have done during this period, in all the affected areas, deserves attention.

 MARKET

US averts default after Senate approves debt ceiling hike

Legislation to temporarily raise borrowing by almost half a trillion dollars avoids the threat of an unprecedented default that could have wreaked havoc on the global economy

NEW YORK: The US Senate on Thursday voted to extend the country's debt limit by \$480 billion (€415.3 billion). The narrow 50-48 vote to pass the bill ends weeks of partisan fighting.

"Republicans played a dangerous and risky partisan game and I am glad that their brinksmanship did not work," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said following the vote.

How significant is the debt ceiling raise?

It staves off the short-term threat of the US being unable to borrow money or pay off loans for the first time ever. That potential historic default in an estimated 11 days

would have had serious repercussions for the world economy.

The increase, which would lift the debt ceiling to a \$28.9 trillion limit, is expected to be exhausted on the day of another major funding deadline.

Under a pro tem measure passed earlier this month, the funding for most federal programmes is set to expire on December 3 — when the government's coffers theoretically run dry, closing federal services and properties and crippling much of Washington and beyond.

Connell on Wednesday backed a short-term extension of the government's borrowing authority after leading GOP opposition to a longer extension.

The offer followed President Joe Biden's statement that changing the Senate's filibuster rules —



FUNDING: Under a pro tem measure passed earlier this month, the funding for most federal programmes is set to expire on December 3 — when the government's coffers theoretically run dry, closing federal services and properties and crippling much of Washington and beyond. -DW

which require 60 of the 100 members to agree on most legislation — was a "real possibility."

Not all Republicans supported McConnell's move and it took long, closed-door talks to garner enough Republican votes to advance the measure.

"What is needed now is a long-term solution so we don't go through this risky drama every few months, and we hope Republicans will join in enacting a long-term solution to the debt limit in December," Schumer said. "We are ready to work with them."

The bill — which passed the Senate along party lines with no Republican support — still has to be rubber-stamped by the House of Representatives.

The House is expected to approve the debt ceiling bill and send it to Biden's desk by next week. -DW

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CYCLONE SHAHEEN

Sohar Port donates OMR250,000

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Sohar Port and Frezone has donated OMR250,000 to the Oman Charitable Organisation (OCO) to aid Cyclone Shaheen recovery efforts.

Relief work will start immediately to repair infrastructure, restore vital services, shelter for residents and will also provide food, clean water and medical supplies throughout the governorate. Staff also volunteered to work with government entities and local NGOs to support relief activities within the region. The company is also encouraging employees to donate a percentage of their salaries to the cause.

"Oman is a strong nation and its people always do all they can to support each other in times of need. The dedication of our staff and tenants to help the community shows how close they are to our hearts and we are committed to supporting the recovery of the country in any way we can," said, Mark Geilenkirchen, Chief Executive Officer of Sohar Port.

The Oman Charitable Organisation is accepting donations through the electronic portal for charitable organisations, www.donate.om.

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China to raise gasoline, diesel retail prices

BEIJING: China will significantly raise the retail prices of gasoline and diesel starting Sunday, the country's top economic planner said Saturday.

The price of gasoline will go up by 345 yuan (about 53.4 US dollars) per tonne, while that of diesel will increase by 330 yuan, according to the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC).

Rising demand

The international crude oil prices may still go up in the short term supported by global economic growth and rising demand, said the NDRC.

Under the current pricing mechanism, if international crude oil prices change by more than 50 yuan per tonne and remain at that level for 10 working days, the prices of refined oil products such as gasoline and diesel in China will be adjusted accordingly.

Stable supplies

China's three biggest oil companies, namely China National Petroleum Corporation, China Petroleum & Chemical Corporation, and China National Offshore Oil Corporation, have been asked to maintain oil production and facilitate transportation to ensure stable supplies. - Xinhua

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Contact 99453198 / 99069777

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3 BHK Duplex (With Maid Room)
Split A/Cs, Free Unlimited Broadband WiFi, Security access system, & Secured car park

Opposite Kims Hospital Al Falaj

Contact: 99657906 or 24702141

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Super Deluxe 1, 2 & 3 BHK Flats with Ducted VRF A/Cs. Free central gas, Built in wardrobes, Kitchen appliances, 24x7 CCTV, Security access system, Free Unlimited High Speed Fiber Optic WiFi & Secured car park.

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JOB VACANCIES

RESTAURANT OPERATIONS MANAGER

Responsibilities:

- To manage operations and production of the restaurant.
- To liaise with the respective Government/ Statutory Authorities to procure the necessary licenses and documentations.
- To lead the operations and production team to deliver within specific standards and schedules required.
- To manage overall costs including material, equipment, manpower, etc.
- To manage production planning, forecasting, purchasing and stock control.
- To maintain and improve the overall performance of the restaurant on a regular basis including cost analysis and monitoring of processes.
- Provide on-job coaching and guidance to team members, managing their performance to ensure a smooth operation.
- To work along with the Marketing team to develop Marketing Strategies and Promotion plans to successfully market the restaurant in the relevant media platform.
- Manage and supervise the food & beverage staff to ensure maximum utilization of the manpower allocated.
- Ensure strict compliance with all relevant Hygiene and Safety legislation and requirements.
- To maintain close, professional and effective links with all external contractors/suppliers to ensure that they deliver to mutually accepted agreements and highest quality levels.
- To handle responsibilities for the special orders made at the restaurant. It involves all planning associated with each event, right through to delivery.

Educational Qualifications & Experience:

- Post Graduate/Graduate or equivalent qualification.
- Minimum 05 years of experience in a supervisory level at F&B, Catering, Hotels and Hospitality establishments.
- Knowledge of food hygiene and Health and Safety requirements.
- A good understanding of quality assurance, procedures and protocols.
- Excellent communication skills both verbally and written English/ Arabic.

Key Skills Required:

- Excellent co-ordination skills
- Strong presentation and communication skills, verbal and written.
- Effective planning, management and organizing skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills to work with internal teams and external suppliers and customers.
- Must possess neat and pleasant grooming habits.
- Proactive approach to problem solving.
- Change orientated to make business improvements.

If you feel you are right for the position and for any further information, please write us at **oman2020marketing@gmail.com**

WE ARE HIRING

SPACE MARKETING for Online Directory

Responsibilities:

- Contact potential clients to describe advertising opportunities. This usually takes the form of cold calling over the telephone but may involve face to face contact as well.
- Contact existing clients to arrange the placement and design of advertisements they have agreed on and ensure an ongoing relationship.
- Research client needs and explain the benefits of buying advertising space, responding to any objections.
- Explain pricing costs to potential clients and negotiate a fee, if necessary.
- Account manage an existing client

to ensure their needs are satisfied and they are happy with the service.

- Work with production teams to ensure that agreed advertisements are carried in the right place and at the right time.
- Track purchases and keep record of sales, contacts and deals.
- Work to maximize sales and meet targets.
- Deliver sales reports to management.

Key Skills: Excellent telephone manner, ability to persuade clients, outgoing, and sociable

Education: Any degree, candidates with marketing background will be preferred.

If you feel you are right for the position and for any further information, please write us at **oman2020marketing@gmail.com**

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JOB WANTED

ACCOUNTS/FINANCE

Senior Accountant, B.Com, MBA, with 15 years of accounting experi-ence in Oman seeks Senior/Manage-rial Level Post. NOC available. Please contact 78581435

Senior Accountant, B.Com with MBA Finance, with 15 years of ac-counting experience in Oman seeks Managerial Level Post. Ready to join immediately.NOC available. Please contact 78581435

Female, Senior Accountant. Available for part time accounting and audits. Contact 97019955

Senior Accountant with 21 years experience having DL available for immediate joining, NOC available. Contact 95060390

Chief Accountant/Senior Account-ant, Indian Male, MBA finance, having more than 12 year's GCC including Oman & Indian experience in AP, AR, Cash flow, VAT, BRS, Trade-Finance, P&L, BS etc. With Valid D/L. Contact 9359 6524, Email: shahoo.mhs@gmail.com.

Indian Male MBA. 25 years old, 4years experience in India, Well experienced in Tally, Excel, Oracle & MS office. Contact 968 98944397/72218339

Part time Accounts doing up to finalization seeking Job. Contact 79102100

Indian male Accountant with 8 years exp in GCC (4 Years in Oman), doing up to finalization of Accounts, Look-ing for suitable placement, Oman D/L & NOC available, Mob: 93849217, Email: ishaque150@gmail.com

43 Yrs Male B-Com 19 Yrs of Exp in Accounts (17 yrs in Oman) until Finalisation Currently working in a reputed company. Contact 95349498

Female ACCA qualified member, 4+ years work experience in Oman, D/L, NOC available, looking to join a fi-nance or accounts team. # 95785272

Male, CFA level 2 candidate, 3+ years work experience in Finance sector, D/L, NOC available, looking to join a finance team. # 96902962

Indian male Senior Accountant with 18 years of experience in accounts and finance up to finalisation with Tally ERP 9 & Focus, holding a D/L. Contact 99716207

ADMIN/HR

Indian Female MBA (HR), PGDBM, B.E. 7 Yrs. of experience in HR & Administration (5 yrs in Oman) with Omani D/L Looking for suitable placement. Contact 92474376

Indian male having 20+ years' ex-perience in Oman seeks suitable job in HR/Admin. Contact 95425764

Indian male, smart, excellent English, Masters, Arabic speaker, 18years rich Oman experience in EPC, Media, Healthcare, Aviation. NOC.Contact 99283938

Indian female 8yrs exp. Admin, project, audit assistant, sales coordi-nator. GSM 92243552/91190552

Indian Male, MBA, BCOM having 7 years Gulf & 4 years India experi-ence in HR / ADMIN & Purchaser looking for suitable placement. Contact 97914340, 95388417. Email: sampathrajkv@gmail.com

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Lady Informatics Engineering, web-site development and design for both (frontend and backend)with platform WordPress, 2 years experience, avail-able visa in Oman, GSM 96097995

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B.Tech Civil Engineer With 11.5 yrs Exp, Seeking Suitable placement (Construction/Consultancy), hav-ing Omani D/L and NOC available, Contact 78365008

Graduate Civil Engineer having over 20 years of experience in Oman is looking for immediate placement in contracting/consultancy firm. NOC/Release available. Contact 99446786 or 93251306

6+ years of experience looking for job as Civil Engineer, ready to join. D/L available. Contact 92146076. Email: tauqir.akbar@yahoo.com

Electrical Engineer, 8Years experi-ence, Mega projects,Operation and maintenance, O&G, project manage-ment, GSM: 97778314

B.E. civil engineer having 9 yrs Oman experience mainly in building construction - Estimation/Tender-ing/Execution looking for a suitable position. Contact 90337574

B.E Electrical/MEP Engineer, hav-ing 13+Yrs experience in construc-tion industry is looking for suitable placement. NOC available. Contact 97238959

Indian male BE civil engineer 4+ yr experience in site execution, quan-tity survey, autocad. NOC available. Contact 94194752

MEDICAL

Female Doctor, MBBS, General Prac-titioner, 11 years' experience with MoH Oman is looking for a place-ment in Clinic/Polyclinic at Sohar. Contact 97783061

PURCHASE/PROCUREMENT

Inventory, Purchase, Sales: Indian, male 30, having 8 years experience in Retail, F&B operations, Accounting and various other skills, NOC avail-able. Contact 96219904 Email: khanshah98@gmail.com

Indian male (37), B.COM 11+years of purchase & procurement experience in Oman with valid D/L and NOC looking for a suitable position. Contact 94038075

Pakistani young man having 07 yrs Oman exp. in purchase/procurement as senior level with master degree, looking for suitable placement. NOC & VDL is available. Contact 92587919, jahanzeb_athar@yahoo.com

JOB WANTED

IT/ HR / ACCOUNTS

Indian Male MCA 15Yrs Exp in Oman, Seeking a job in IT, HR, Payroll, Accounts or any suitable post. NOC & D/L available.

Contact: 95297497

ACCOUNTANT

Indian Male Accountant available for instant joining; Having B.com higher grade graduation with 6 years of acquaintance and comprehension on major accounting platforms, well versed in Microsoft and profound communication skills, NOC Available.

Contact No: +968-94649272
Email: sherin.am01@gmail.com

Projects Manager

Indian Male, having 12 years of Experience in Oman, presently working as Projects Manager, NOC available.

Contact 92636569
Email: nisarg_shah35@yahoo.com

Graduate in B.A

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Indian female with valid driving license currently on family visa. Looking for suitable placement.

Contact 92550471/96736832

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GSM 92166848 / 94110108

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Contact No. Oman-96359802, India++91 9400032844.
Email: mollythomas53@rediffmail.com

FINANCE

M Com - Financial Professional, 17 years of Experience in Oman, Currently working as a finance Manager is looking for suitable placement, available from 10th November 2021.

Mob # 92301318
abdulrasheedlulu@gmail.com

GROUP FINANCE MANAGER

with 20 yrs+ experience seeks suitable placement

Contact 92578435
Email: 1974KSD@gmail.com

SR. MECHANICAL / MEP ENGINEER / MEP Manager

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Contact: +96899075683
allirod1975@gmail.com

MEP Supervisor

Indian male, 36years old, diploma graduate having 15+years of Oman experience in MEP supervisor role in an excellent grade construction and trading com-pany with good practical knowledge, have MEDC, CEP, MEDC Electrician license. NOC available, is looking for suitable opening. Oman D/L.

Contact +968 96135973
Email kddhaya2@gmail.com

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Indian HSE Officer, diploma in Mechanical Engineering & Diploma in fire and safety engineering. NEBOSH, OSHA AND QA/QC Holder. 5 years Experience in HSE seeks suitable placement.

Contact 7974 3601

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Contact: +968-78539053
Email: rkkambat@gmail.com

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Email: QSCIVIL@YAHOO.COM

FINANCE

Indian Male, Manager Accounts, M.Com with over 20 years of experience in Oman and India, in Accounts, Finance and Software implementation is looking for an immediate opening in senior level post. NOC available.

GSM: 92334161

HR/ADMIN

Female with 13yrs of experience in HR/Admin or Similar field is looking for job opportunities. Available to start immediately.

CONTACT 79285929

Senior Manager (HR/Administration/Operations)

Indian male, 42, MBA, 12yrs' experience in Senior management role with international exposure in many countries including Europe, worked as HR and Admin Head of company in Qatar. Also having Experience in Education Industry (India) in a senior Management Position. Presently in Muscat (family visa).

Contact 94326527
Email: sreekanth.kerala987@gmail.com

Process Engineer (Omani)

Bachelor degree from German University of technology in Oman, 3 year experience in process and Contract engineering worked with Multiple Water and wastewater companies in Oman in different Sites and STPs.

Contact number: 92115804
Email: Faiza112@outlook.com

Finance Head

CPA, CMA, CIA with 19 years' experi-ence in Strategic finance, Banking, Financial reporting, Budget, VAT. Looking for Senior management position in finance/ internal audit. Available to join shortly.

Contact 92148608

ADMIN / FINANCE

Indian male, MBA (Finance), having D/L, 22 years exp in finalization in Accounts, Internal auditing, MIS and Admin in various sectors. 15 years exp in Gulf & 13 Years in Oman looking for a suitable SR position.

GSM: 96974637
Email: goutam14b@gmail.com

ACCOUNTANT

Indian Male 39 years, B com, having 14 years Gulf experience as Accountant. Looking for suitable placement. Having Oman driving license and NOC available.

Contact: 97998397
Email: salafcs@yahoo.com

Chemical Engineering

Knowledge of quality control, process control, simulation, refinery operations with GCC resident visa and a valid GCC D/L. Currently doing Nebosh IGC course seeks suitable placement.

Contact: 72201210/93379169
Email: waasifkaruthedath@gmail.com

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TIPS TO COMPLETE OUTDOOR CHORES WITH VIGOUR AS YOU AGE

When it comes to healthy, active ageing, it's all about making simple adaptations. This is especially true of outdoor chores, which can put a strain on wrists and hands.

Here are three simple tips to help you tackle your tasks —and maintain your favourite hobbies — with vigour as you age:

Go Low-Maintenance

A few smart landscaping choices can make maintaining your home's curb appeal much easier to manage. For example, by selecting native plant species, your lawn and garden will more easily thrive with less intervention from you. You can also eliminate some upkeep by using groundcover plants in certain places instead of grass, or by landscaping with succulents that require minimal watering or even with decorative stones.

Seek Out Ergonomic Tools

Stock your tool shed with items created to make your life easier. Fortunately, some product manufacturers understand the needs of older adults and are designing products accordingly. For example, smart fuel containers are operated with a squeezing action,



making them much easier to use than other types of fuel containers, which require twisting a spout or holding down a button.

"We should never count seniors as 'down and out' from life's activities. Instead, they're continuing to thrive at home, as well as fuelling their passions of boating, motorcycling, jet skiing and other activities," says Daniel Marshall, vice president of marketing and business development with Scepter based in the US.

Stretch, Strengthen and Rest

As with any exercise that puts strain on a particular area of the body, while doing outdoor chores it's important to both know your limitations and to take steps to keep yourself healthy. Yoga and stretching exercises that target your hands and wrists can improve mobility and boost strength, aiding in injury prevention. And remember, it's okay to stop for breaks or to divide your chores up over multiple days. By making a few tweaks to your outdoor chore routine — including seeking out products designed to be easy on hands and wrists — healthy ageing and an active lifestyle can go hand-in-hand.

-Statepoint

FEATURE



2021 VIENNA COFFEE FESTIVAL

The 2021 Vienna Coffee Festival is held at the Ottakringer Brewery from October 8 to October 10, attracting over 60 exhibitors from all over the world. – Xinhua/Guo Chen



ROUND-UP

Youth Sada, BP Oman launch 2nd cycle of ‘Habbah’ programme

The ‘Habbah’ programme is a well-integrated educational and training programme that includes open-to-public activities and specialised training courses as well as consultation sessions, follow-up sessions and site visits from various experts in entrepreneurship

MUSCAT: In partnership with BP Oman, Youth Sada launched its second cycle of the ‘Habbah’ programme, which aims to develop and enhance the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the Al Dhahirah Governorate, targeting 15 SMEs this year for a duration of three months starting from October to December 2021.

The ‘Habbah’ programme is a well-integrated educational and

training programme that includes open-to-public activities and specialised training courses as well as consultation sessions, follow-up sessions and site visits from various expertise in entrepreneurship. The participating SMEs’ performance will also be evaluated and analysed in many aspects that are focused on in this programme.

Shamsa Al-Rawahi, BP Oman Social investment manager, com-



mented, “This cycle of the programme aims to enhance and evolve the SMEs, especially the ones which were heavily affected by the pandemic’s economic impacts on the businesses and the market. It also focuses on solving

the main marketing and financial challenges faced by the SMEs, in efforts to contribute towards their stability and sustainability.”

Mahmood Al Sarkhi, Project Manager of the ‘Habbah’ programme at Youth Sada, added,



“The programme strives to offer valuable knowledge for young entrepreneurs and interested young Omanis wishing to specialise in entrepreneurship. We expect a high turnout this year, as a total of 15 businesses from various sectors

such as commercial, service and industrial sectors within Al Dhahirah Governorate participated last year and over 500 attendees from all regions of Oman benefited from the workshops as part of the programme as well.”

CYCLONE SHAHEEN

talabat Oman donates profits of October 7 to relief efforts



MUSCAT: talabat Oman, Oman’s leading food and q-commerce delivery app, announced today that it will donate 100 per cent of all profit made on Thursday, October 7, 2021, to Cyclone Shaheen relief efforts, facilitated through the Oman Charitable Organisation.

‘Giving back’

This is in addition to the platform already providing customers with the ability to donate to Dar Al Atta’a’s Cyclone Shaheen relief fund - where they have donated over OMR33,000 in the last two

days, as well as a list of other charities found under the “give back” collection launched.

Mohamed Zourob, Managing Director of talabat Oman, says that talabat stands in solidarity with the people of the Sultanate of Oman during this time.

“I would like to first express our sincerest condolences to those families who have lost loved ones in Cyclone Shaheen.

“The whole Sultanate is mourning with you. I would also like to offer our support to those families that have been displaced, or whose

property has been destroyed due to Cyclone Shaheen,” Zourob said.

“Through donating, either through the Dar Al Atta’a relief fund or through our profits from talabat Oman of 7th of October to the Oman Charitable Organisation - we are privileged to facilitate and help in a small way to those that need aid the most,” Zourob added.

Customers can download the talabat application from the Google Play Store, IOS App store or Huawei App Gallery to order from talabat, or donate through any of the listed charities on the platform.

Customers can download the talabat application from the Google Play Store, IOS App store or Huawei App Gallery to order from talabat, or donate through any of the listed charities on the platform



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ROUND-UP

Kia Telluride: Powered to take you beyond

Packed with thrilling performance capability and space enough to comfortably carry your loved ones and your adventure equipment along, the Telluride is engineered to settle for everything but routine

MUSCAT: The powerful Kia Telluride SUV loads up your desires to go places and live the moment. Packed with thrilling performance capability and space enough to comfortably carry your loved ones and your adventure equipment along, the Telluride is engineered to settle for everything but routine. Customers looking forward to pulsating moments in the Telluride

SUV can benefit from paying no VAT (5 per cent VAT on net selling price will be borne by Kia Oman). The offer is valid until December 28. Powering the Telluride ahead on every journey is the 3.8L GDI engine that produces 291 hp and 36.2 kg.m. Torque. For exciting performance, the engine is paired with 8-speed automatic transmission. Built rugged to go beyond on



every journey the full-size Kia Telluride SUV is a perfect companion to navigate your way across terrains. The Telluride with its advanced technology and features helps you stay in control wherever your desires take you. The Telluride's stylish exterior highlights its every arrival, encouraging more than just second stares.

Contributing to this are the Bi-Function Projection Headlamps, LED Daytime Running Lights, 20" Alloy Wheels, LED Rear Combination Lamps and more. Arming you with the advantage of having a great start to your days is the Remote Engine Start.

TRAINING ON TF TITAN CANTER

Fuso Oman conducts product training

MUSCAT: Keeping all staff trained to the highest standards has always been a priority at General Automotive Company (GAC), the official distributor of Fuso trucks in Oman. As a testament to this fact, GAC recently hosted a detailed Sales Training Programme on the upcoming Light Duty Fuso TF Titan Canter model. The training programme was conducted by Raju Bisht, Sales Head of Fuso Oman. It was attended by over 14 members of the regional and Muscat sales staff as well as senior management. Manoj Ranade GM of GAC said, "The Fuso brand and General Automotive Company are synonymous with quality, performance, and outstanding customer service. This success hinges on a well-trained and self-motivated work-



force, as well as ensuring the first point of contact with the brand, which in most cases is our sales personnel, leaves a lasting positive impression. Therefore, investing in training our employees is extremely important for our business growth, especially in the case of a new vehicle being introduced

in the near future. We conducted this sales training program to ensure our sales staff have the best tools at their disposal for handling any inquiries regarding the new Canter and, in turn, allow them to provide a greater level of overall service to our customers." The full-day course was focused

on the upcoming Light Duty 6.5 tonne GVM, TF Titan Canter. This latest version of the brand's bestselling model brings with it new styling combined with fuel economy, power, comfort, and improved safety. Powering the new Canter is a 4-cylinder intercooler turbo engine, driven through a smooth-shifting 6-speed manual transmission. "In addition to keeping our employees motivated, these training workshops also help them better deal with customer inquiries, demands, or requirements. As a result, their teams improve sales, and the company as a whole operates more efficiently. I would like to congratulate everyone on successfully completing the training. I am confident their newfound knowledge will help them to better serve their customers," concluded Raju Bisht.

OMAN CANCER ASSOCIATION

OCA celebrates month of Global Breast Cancer Awareness

MUSCAT: As pink colour is considered a global symbol of breast cancer awareness, the most famous cities in the world wear pink during October every year. Breast cancer affects annually about two million women around the world. It is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in women. The idea of dedicating the month of October to raising awareness of breast cancer for women in particular and the community, in general, arose more than 25 years ago in the United States. It is a joint project between a group of medical bodies, organisations and US government agencies. The goal is to raise awareness of the disease and share information about it. In addition, it aims to provide detection and screening services related to it. At the global level, the World Health Organisation has encouraged the idea and its application in countries due to the role it plays in raising awareness of breast cancer. Studies have confirmed, especially the ones reported in the American Journal of Oncology that the rate of breast cancer deaths is declining. This is thought to be due to the high percentage of women who undergo periodic examinations. This emphasises the importance of early detection as it is one of the most important ways to help in a better prognosis.

Based on the importance of early detection, the Mayo Clinic, in conjunction with the American Medical Association and the American Cancer Society, issued a report recommending that women over the age of 40 should undergo mammography annually. In addition, according to the 'European Journal of Radiology', 3D mammography is preferred to be used as it allows professionals to see the breast tissues more clearly thus, detecting breast cancer more accurately with minimum chances of misdiagnosis. Several factors play a role in breast cancer, such as heredity, genes, obesity, and others. However, scientists have so far not been able to understand the mechanism of the disease specifically. In Oman, during October, different institutions including governmental, non-governmental, and all sectors work to establish awareness campaigns about the disease, including its causes and methods of prevention, with a special focus on early detection and screening methods e.g. self-breast examination, clinical breast examination and mammogram. The Oman Cancer Association (OCA) serves the community in all these areas and welcomes women for mammography through the Mobile Mammography Unit that tours the various governorates and wilayats of the Sultanate.

ONLINE MARKETPLACE

OTE strengthens digital presence with launch of new online store

MUSCAT: Celebrating a new milestone in its digital transformation journey, OTE Group –one of Oman's most prestigious business houses– is extending into electronic commerce to widen its reach and sell the popular brands it distributes directly to its customers. OTE has now launched an online marketplace (otestore.com) to complement its extensive countrywide network of brick-and-mortar stores that display its reputable brands. The user-friendly online store, initially showcasing three of OTE's most popular electronics brands – LG, Bosch and Hisense – has been conceptualised and designed to provide a seamless shopping experience for customers. Users can navigate otestore.com from the comfort of their desktops or via their smartphone browsers. Optimised for convenience, otestore.com makes it possible for visitors to obtain a 360-degree overview of each product, along with model features, special offers, warranty details, and so on. Search and filtering options, add-to-cart and wish-list features, make for a convenient and relaxed online browsing experience. Thus, from the safety and convenience of their respective com-



fort zones, customers can check out the latest innovations from LG, Bosch and Hisense – world-leading electronics brands that are exclusively distributed in the Sultanate by OTE Group. A sought-after name in home electronics, LG is best known for its market-leading OLED TVs,

GENERAL SALES AGENT



SalamAir's GSA partner opens new office in Riyadh and Dammam

RIYADH: Offering a boost to its network strength in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sultanate's fastest-growing value-for-money airline, SalamAir along with General Sales Agent (GSA) partner Arjaa Travel & Tourism has opened a refurbished sales office in Riyadh and Dammam. Part of the well-known Al-majdouie Group, Arjaa Travel & Tourism is an International Air Transportation Association (IATA) approved agent. The reputed travel agent provides comprehensive and holistic travel solutions for all travel needs encompassing holidays, business, leisure and group tours. The newly branded SalamAir offices are located at Makkah Al Mukarraamah branch road in As Sulimaniyah in Riyadh and at Al Dawasir Area, King Saud Street in the Sekio Area in Dammam. The opening event of the new SalamAir office was attended by Sayyid Faisal Turki Mahmood Al Said, the Ambassador for KSA who said, "It is a special moment for me to attend the opening of the new SalamAir office here in Riyadh. We are very happy to see SalamAir expand in the Kingdom with a good partnership. I wish SalamAir all the success and we hope they expand their wings further to service this market."

Currently, Salam Air flies daily to three Saudi Arabia destinations including Dammam, Riyadh and Jeddah. Captain Mohamed Ahmed, CEO of SalamAir said, "We are thrilled to set up our GSA office

in Riyadh. We are delighted to have a reputable name like Arjaa Travel & Tourism as our partner to lead our sales and service activities in Saudi Arabia. With its strong presence in Saudi Arabia, travellers in the country will have direct access to Salam Air's services. We are committed to strengthening our operations in Saudi Arabia. "This partnership reflects the strong ties between Oman and Saudi Arabia. With unmatched Omani hospitality, SalamAir offers impeccable service and are happy that travellers continue to enjoy flying with us. We will continue to increase our network across the world to meet the requirements of both business and leisure travellers." The other Salam Air office is located in the Gulf Plaza at Madinah in Road Jeddah. SalamAir meets the nation's growing demand for affordable travel options and aims to generate further opportunities for employment and business creation in various Oman sectors. In a short span, SalamAir has achieved growth in its operations and has expanded its reach across the region serving customers across a cross-section of society. SalamAir flights are also open for sale through SalamAir.com, its call centres and appointed travel agents. All operations are subject to strict adherence to the travel mandate issued by the civil aviation authorities and other COVID-19 related guidelines issued by respective authorities.

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EMPOWERING INDUSTRIES



OMAN
DATAPARK



Oman Data Park launches Nebula AI service in the Sultanate as a Cloud Service Provider in the NVIDIA Partner Network

MUSCAT: As one of the vital enablers contributing to the improvement of productivity in economic sectors and a key pillar driving the national economy for technological transformation, Oman Data Park (ODP), the Sultanate's first IT-managed and cloud services provider, has launched Nebula AI service on October 6 by joining the NVIDIA Partner Network (NPN) Cloud Service Provider Partner Program.

The launching ceremony was under the patronage of H.E. Dr. Ali bin Amer Al Shidani, Undersecretary for Communications and Information Technology, Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology in presence of high-level VIP delegations, business, and media representatives. The event was also graced by both virtual and physical presenters covering various aspects of AI and its benefits and was live streamed to a wider audience.

The launch of the Nebula AI platform, the first of its kind in Oman, comes in line with Oman's vision for 2040 and within the Sultanate's exerted efforts to keep pace with the latest technological developments in the field of computing, compatible with the requirements of the fourth industrial revolution and AI.

The Sultanate had advanced 11 positions in the government's



MAQBOOL AL-WAHAIBI: The launch of Nebula AI service enables the Sultanate to store its data internally.

readiness index for implementing AI in 2020, while it ranked 48th globally and sixth in the Middle East, according to the Oxford Insight Index.

Highlighting the Importance of AI for Oman's economy, Eng. Maqbool Al Wahaibi, CEO, Oman Data Park stated: "AI is transforming every industry, whether it is by improving customer relationships in financial services, streamlining manufacturer supply chains, or helping doctors deliver better outcomes for patients. It gives us great pleasure to be at the forefront to provide this platform, which will enhance the technological transformation processes in the Sultanate in order to accelerate the utili-

zation of AI in various economic fields in Oman."

"As the launching of Nebula AI service will contribute to sealing Oman's entry into the world of AI, Oman Data Park has practically proven its success of bringing innovative services to Oman to fuel further economic growth. Coupled with our impeccable track record of over nine years of service in the cloud services industry, we now look forward to helping businesses leap ahead on innovation and profitability through the use of AI, both locally and beyond," Maqbool Al Wahaibi added.

Joining virtually for the event, Mr. Jaap Zuiderveld, vice president, EMEA at NVIDIA, stated,

"AI is transforming every industry, helping nations and businesses solve their biggest challenges in agriculture, healthcare, climate and more. As an NVIDIA NPN partner, Oman Data Park is helping to grow the nation's AI expertise to create new opportunities with the world's leading AI systems."

Al Wahaibi also said that the utilization of AI services is considered an important factor for improving the productivity of many economic sectors, such as banking and finance, energy, healthcare, logistics and retail. It saves time and money and enhances operational efficiencies, as well as leads to an increase in revenue. AI also enhances the performance of sophisticated intellectual tasks such as decision making and problem solving, as well as increases customer services proactively.

He also highlighted that the Nebula AI service platform is powered by the NVIDIA DGX A100 system, which is suitable for all AI workloads, offering unprecedented compute density, performance, and flexibility in the world's first 5 petaFLOPS AI system. This will enable both government and private sector entities to explore the various benefits of AI with the guarantee of data sovereignty, security, and reliability.

A teaming agreement was also signed at the launch, between ODP's CEO Eng. Al Wahaibi and Bikal UK's CEO Mr. Raj Sandhu, which was attended by James Goldman, Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy Muscat.

A statement from H.E. Mr. Bill Murray, Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman stated, "Technology is an area of strength for the UK in particular, with London recognised as the 'AI capital of Europe.' The potential for collaboration between the UK and Oman in the technology sector is vast, and I am excited by this partnership between Oman Data Park and Bikal. It will create job opportunities and support the development of Oman's tech ecosystem and local talent in alignment with Vision 2040. Congratulations to ODP and Bikal!"

"Our collaboration with Oman Data Park is key to the creation of new AI and 5G technologies in Oman and the GCC. Having a forward-looking partner in the region will enable Bikal to bring UK university researched innovations with the ability to develop the tech locally. This partnership will open joint opportunities in Oman and the UK over the coming years," said Raj Sandhu, CEO, BIKAL UK.

According to a PWC research, AI is estimated to contribute

around 15.7 trillion USD globally by 2030, while the Middle East is estimated to accrue 2% of the total global benefits of AI in 2030, which is equivalent to 320 billion USD. The forecast reports also show that annual growth is expected to range between 20-34% per year across the region.

Forecasts from Gartner indicate that by 2025, 50% of enterprises will have devised AI orchestration platforms to operationalize AI, up from fewer than 10% in 2020. By 2025, AI will be the top category driving infrastructure decisions, due to the maturation of the AI market, resulting in a tenfold growth in compute requirements. And by 2025, 10% of governments will use a synthetic population with realistic behaviour patterns to train AI while avoiding privacy and security concerns.

It is noteworthy that ODP has greatly contributed to providing cloud computing services, cloud storage, cloud networking, as well as web hosting and cyber security services. ODP operates an advanced Virtual Data Center across Oman in the field of cyber security based on the latest industry standards, helping customers mitigate risks with its services and save up to 55% on the total cost of ownership compared to traditional data centres.

OMAN DATA PARK

THE TORCHBEARER IN INTEGRATING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO SUPPORT OMAN'S VISION 2040

ODP employs advanced technologies especially in the field of Artificial Intelligence that find applications in diverse fields without human intervention to change their algorithmic or physical structure



SECTOR	ABSOLUTE CONTRIBUTION IN IN 2030 (US\$ BILLIONS)	CONTRIBUTION OF AI TO MIDDLE EAST GDP BY INDUSTRY (IN %)
Construction and Manufacturing	\$99	12.40%
Energy, Utilities & Resources	\$78	6.30%
Public sector, including health and education	\$69	18.60%
Financial, Professional, Administrative Services	\$38	13.60%
Retail, Wholesale Trade, Consumer Goods, Accommodation and Food Services	\$23	19%
Transport and Logistics	\$12	15.20%
Technology, Media, Telecommunications	\$10	14%

SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL DATA COLLECTION

Despite the setback caused by the global pandemic, Oman has much to look forward in its march towards achieving the visions set for 2040. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is expected to be an accelerator in the Sultanate's exerted efforts to keep pace with the latest technological developments in the field of computing compatible with the requirements of the fourth industrial revolution and artificial intelligence across the industry segments that would take forward the nation in the days ahead. Artificial Intelligence is estimated to contribute to round USD 15.7 trillion to the global economy by 2030 with 6.6 trillion likely to come from increased productivity and the rest to come from consumer benefits. The Middle East is expected

to have a share of 2% (USD 320 billion) with 34.8% of this coming from the GCC countries. The annual growth in AI is expected to be in the range of 20-34% with Saudi Arabia and UAE being the major players contributing to USD 231.2 billion by 2030.

While AI is expected to contribute to 25% of GDP in China and 15% in North America by 2030, in the GCC, it is expected to contribute roughly 10% and whilst the volatility in oil prices is taking its toll on the economic prospects of the region, it is creating the need

for governments to seek alternative sources for revenue and growth. The development of non-oil sectors through investment in AI technologies could strategically position the region for the years to come. Here's the estimated value of AI in Middle East across industry sectors in 2030.

For Oman's vision of a competitive economy that is productive and diversified based on innovation, integration of roles and equal opportunities, and driven by both the public and private sectors, it is imperative that the advancements

in AI and its applications in the various sectors be leveraged and optimised.

Stretching the frontiers in AI in Oman is Oman Data Park (ODP) which is the Sultanate's premier IT Managed Service Provider. As the launching of Nebula AI service will contribute to sealing Oman's entry into the world of AI, the service is a testament of ODP's support towards the advancement of the 4th Industrial Revolution's digital economy where humans and machines collaborate to leap ahead on innovation and profit-

ability through the use of Artificial Intelligence.

In the present digitally evolving fast age, the Sultanate had advanced 11 positions in the government's readiness index for implementing artificial intelligence in 2020, while it ranked 48th globally and sixth in the Middle East, according to the Oxford Insight Index. As the Sultanate's reliance on a sophisticated IT infrastructure to support its industries is increasing, it would only be prudent to foresee a future where AI holds the key to vital information, data gathering and analysis that serves as inputs for decision making and efficient execution that would otherwise be prohibitively time consuming and expensive in a competitive world. Needless to say that Data Centers and Cloud Services has been identified as one of the key digitisation areas of focus where there is huge opportunity to be explored and exploited.

The launch of Nebula AI offers an opportunity for accelerated adoption of cloud services by the Government and also for Oman to be a frontrunner in offering a gateway for AI enabled cloud services in the region. The good numbers of submarine cables available in the Sultanate, qualifies it to host data centers, high-speed computers and cloud services that are used to process artificial intelligence algorithms. Furthermore, the large number of IT graduates who can be qualified and trained in the field of artificial intelligence and advanced technologies also works to Oman's advantage.

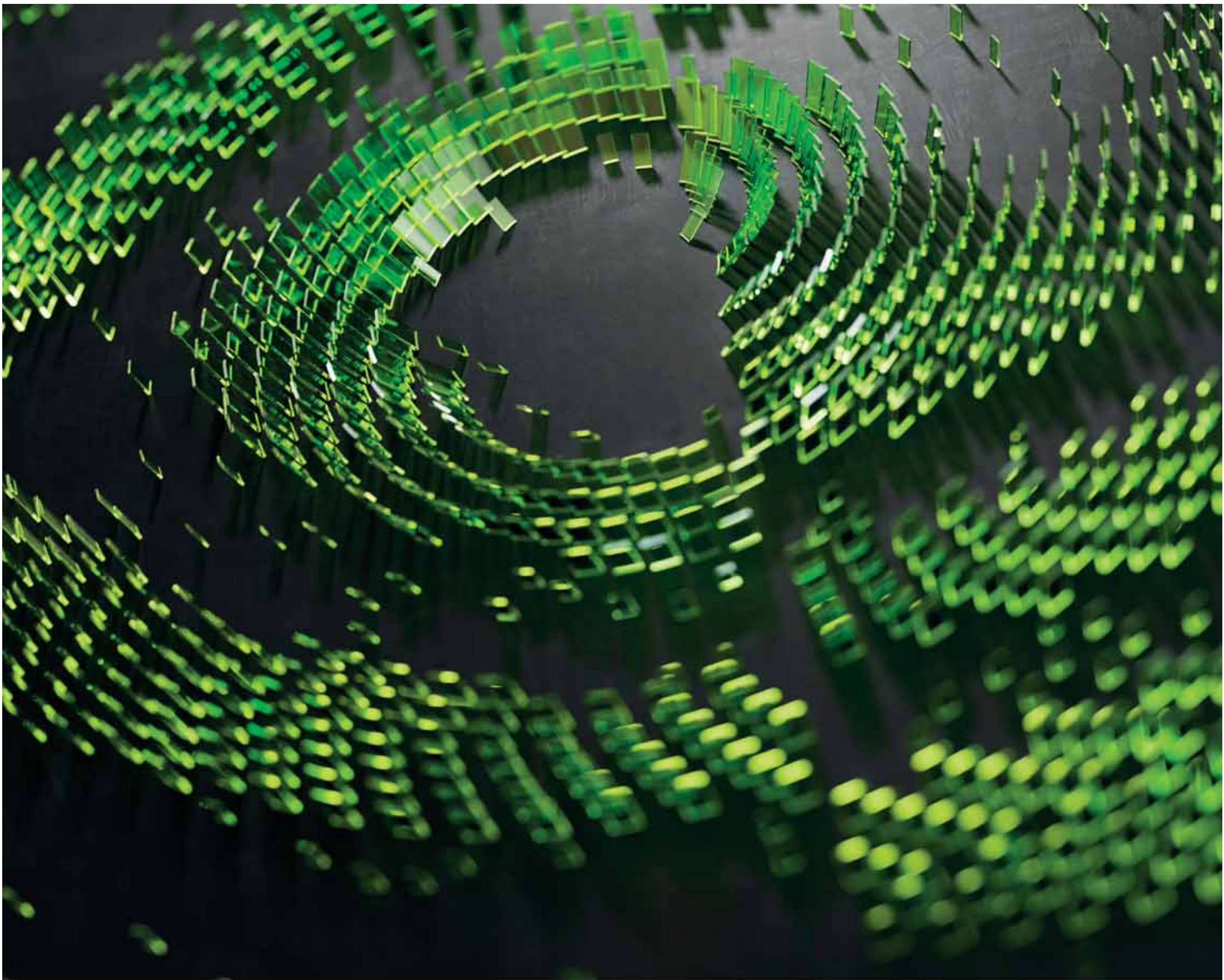
Oman Data Park as the torchbearer leading the AI revolution in Oman is helping to enhance the productivity of sectors targeted for economic diversification by adopting AI in sectors contributing to economic growth and social impact through cohesive application of smart technologies in fisheries, agriculture, transport, logistics,

energy, mining, industry, health and tourism. Furthermore the locally hosted Nebula AI infrastructure also enables transfer of AI technologies by supporting R&D in building algorithms, libraries and software tools, in addition to building and adopting open source software that enable AI and its applications.

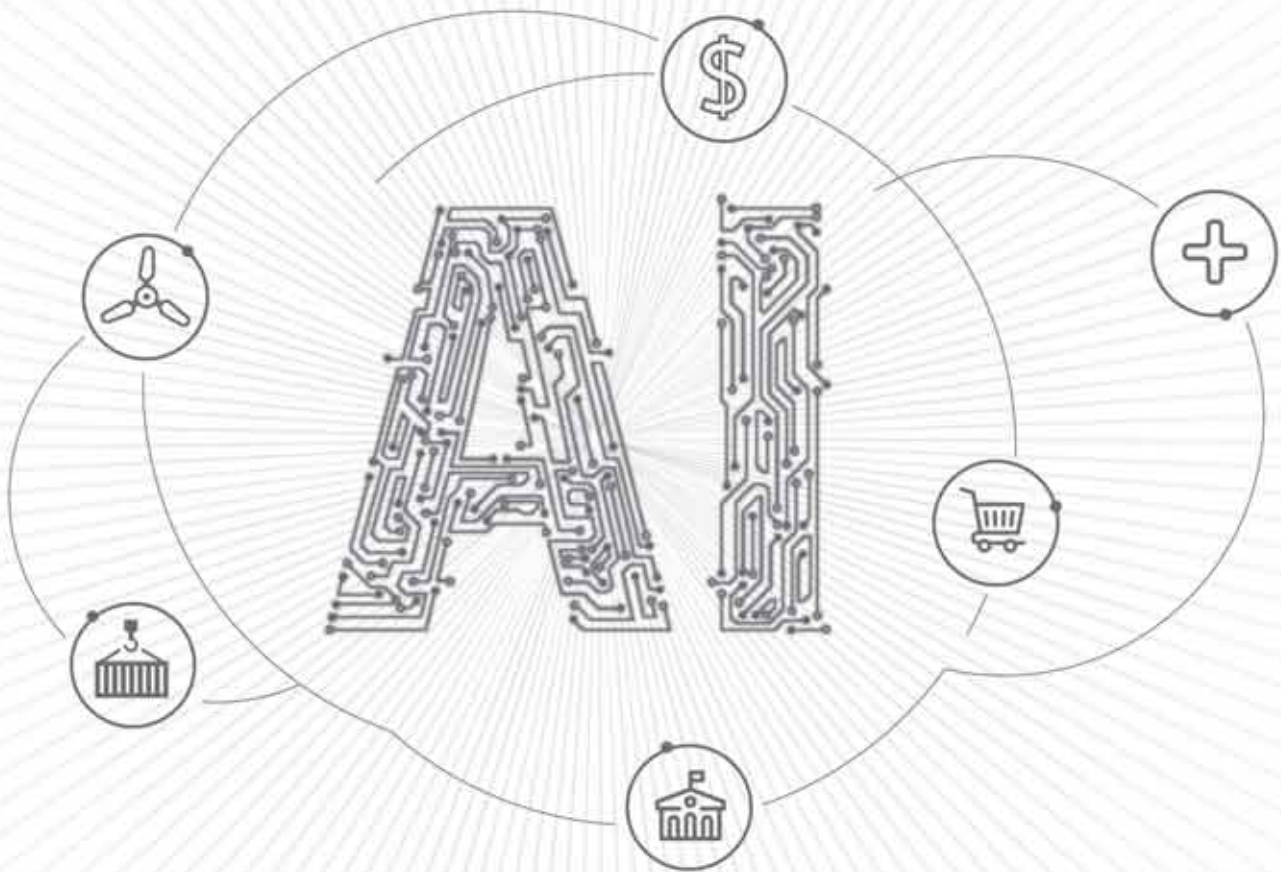
Oman Data Park also works in enhancing the application of AI technologies in cybersecurity and also in supporting the upgrading of the local cloud computing infrastructure to process AI applications.

With digitisation becoming a national priority across industry segments in both manufacturing and service sectors, AI will play a vital role in automation and data processing that would not only increase efficiency and throughput time but also improve Human Resource Allocation for higher value operations. Oman Data Park's envisions an active role for itself in enhancing the performance of various sectors in Oman through its AI technology services.

Some of the key sectors where Oman Data Park is looking to make further inroads and create a significant impact in Oman through it's advanced technologies in AI services in the days ahead are; Banking & Finance, Retail, logistics, Healthcare and Energy. Right from simplifying and reducing the lead time required to convert an individual's or a corporate's loan application, to early detection of illness and providing appropriate information for optimum treatment, predicting consumer behavioural patterns for retail solutions, to optimising routing of merchandise based on information and data efficient or harnessing of power in the energy sector, ODP's Nebula AI will be at the forefront with constant innovations in technology and AI solutions.



**CONGRATULATIONS TO
OMAN DATA PARK ON THE
LAUNCH OF NEBULA AI WITH
NVIDIA DGX A100 SYSTEMS**



[nvidia.com](https://www.nvidia.com)



NVIDIA's invention of the GPU sparked the PC gaming market. The company's pioneering work in accelerated computing—a supercharged form of computing at the intersection of computer graphics, high performance computing and AI—is reshaping trillion-dollar industries, such as transportation, healthcare, and manufacturing, and fuelling the growth of many others.



EMPOWERING AI INDUSTRIES



BANKING

HEALTH CARE

Unlock the potential of smarter banking with AI

AI HAS THE ABILITY To transform the way banks operate. By helping identify key insights in vast amounts of data, calculate risk, and automate routine tasks—all at unprecedented speed and scale—every line of business and function can be enhanced. This enables the AI-powered bank to increase productivity, expand services, reduce risk, and dramatically improve customer service.

THE AI-POWERED BANK
The key to successful AI implementation is a full-stack solution that includes both hardware and software—AI as a platform. This implementation of a shared, centralized infrastructure for AI consolidates expertise, productivity, and scale; shortens the life cycle from development to deployment; and drives down total cost of ownership with efficient utilization of compute and storage resources. Enterprises that successfully embrace AI as part of their operation get an additional benefit that sets them apart—they become the kind of organization that attracts the world's best talent. The people who lead AI innovation come to companies that offer these tools and scale, enabling them to do their life's most important work. The private AI cloud can run thousands of simulations and analyze millions of data points in a fraction of the time that it could before. As a result, the customer banking experience is transformed with a new generation of smart applications. And that's just the beginning. It reduces client calls and enables faster delivery of applications to clients thanks to the accelerated performance of the Graphics processing units and automated orchestrated containers.

In handling the Capital markets, AI enables to train thousands of statistical models in parallel to cover the vast space of possibilities. This would be impossible without



a distributed and fully automated environment. Now the entire cluster could be populated with a single click using the automated pipeline.

FRAUD DETECTION
Some of the biggest AI wins are those related to fighting transaction fraud for banks and credit card companies—a multi-billion-dollar problem. Detecting true fraud is critical, but traditional systems have historically generated many more false-positive than true-fraud signals. AI offers solutions that enhance the detection and cuts false positive rates by employing advance machine learning techniques AI is revolutionizing multi-trillion-dollar industries like financial services and powering growth around the world. From PayPal to American Express to Ping An, firms are leveraging AI to improve customer outcomes, reduce costs, and combat fraud.

ENHANCED CUSTOMER SERVICE
Conversational AI is enabling consumers to manage all types of financial transactions, from bill payments and money transfers to opening new accounts. AI through significant computing can help train Chatbots to communicate and engage customers in life like conversations in real time. By offering these self-service interactions, banks can free customer service

agents to focus on higher-value interactions and transactions.

PERSONALISED BANKING OFFERS
On some of the largest commercial platforms, recommendations account for as much as 30 percent of revenue, which can translate into billions of dollars in sales. This is one area where AI makes a significant contribution in a recommender system by recording and analysing every consumer action from visiting a webpage to prioritizing which debt to pay off first. Recommenders increase conversion by providing personalized messages to consumers, improving customer loyalty and satisfaction with the bank.

ACCELERATING FINANCIAL SERVICES WITH AI
Massive datasets, perpetual market fluctuations, remote workforces, intelligent technology can all address critical challenges within the modern financial services industry. Institutions can boost risk management, improve data-backed decisions and security, and enhance customer experiences with AI—including, deep learning, machine learning, and natural language processing.

ACCELERATED COMPUTING FOR TRADING
Faster processing results in smarter trade strategies, more successful

trade execution, and increased revenue. AI with GPU-powered hardware acceleration decreases time to insight, allowing operations to remain competitive respond faster to market fluctuations.

PAYMENTS
From transferring money to friends and family, paying bills online, using your phone to check out at the grocery store, payments—online, mobile, in-store, business to consumer and Business to Business, AI can help banking firms better their detect mechanism and prevent payment fraud and improve processes for anti-money laundering (AML) and know-your-customer (KYC) systems. With AI's accelerated machine learning and deep learning platforms, data scientists can deliver results in days, instead of the weeks more traditional methods require AI in payments enables greater security and more transparency, creating a better experience for both firms and customers.

INSURANCE
Firms are moving beyond traditional claims management by embracing digital opportunities and adopting a fully analytics-driven approach. This includes using AI to automate claims handling for simple and clean cases, implementing AI-powered services to fast-track complex cases, and creating new digital services to increase customer satisfaction.

FINTECH
Fintech is driving global innovation that is transforming how companies, consumers, and money interact across industries, from financial services to retail to transportation and beyond. Utilizing AI, fintech interactions are more personalized with recommendation engines, self-service is improved via conversational AI, and transactions are more secure because of deep learning fraud detection models.



Paradigm shift to AI healthcare

HEALTHCARE demands new computing paradigms to meet the need for personalised medicine, next-generation clinics, enhanced quality of care, and breakthroughs in biomedical research to treat disease. Healthcare institutions can harness the power of artificial intelligence and high-performance computing (HPC) to define the future of medicine. Today's healthcare system is facing unprecedented challenges. To meet them, healthcare workers, from doctors to researchers, need powerful, flexible computing tools that will let them work from anywhere—whether they're in the hospital, in the field, or at home.

POWERING HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS WITH ACCELERATED COMPUTING

DRUG DISCOVERY
Drug development can cost billions and take up to 14 years but only 8% of drugs make it to market. AI helps researchers make smarter decisions about which potential medicines to invest their time developing. AI analyzes simulations 100x faster than traditional screening methods to determine whether a potential treatment works against its target. With AI accelerated computing, researchers can virtually model millions of molecules and screen hundreds of potential drugs at a time, reducing costs and speeding time to solution.

GEONOMICS
Using High Performance Computing to accelerate genome analysis in population and cancer genomic

studies can help identify rare diseases and bring tailored therapeutics to market faster, advancing the journey to precision medicine. Faster analysis leads to quicker diagnosis and better treatment outcomes. Understanding individual rare disease patients at the molecular level is critical to assessing what their future may hold and for optimizing treatment approaches.

MEDICAL IMAGING
AI-powered tools can be an extra set of "eyes," helping clinicians to quickly read images, calculate measurements, monitor changes, and identify urgent findings to optimize workflows and enhance patient care. Several ailments including heart disease, various manifestations of cancer, dementia, diabetic retinopathy etc can be detected early and outcome predicted using non invasive, faster and smarter AI medical imaging tools.

SMART HOSPITALS & MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS
From smart sensors to medical instruments that support real-time, advanced image processing, AI at the edge can deliver immediate insights, optimizing patient care and realizing the promise of smart hospitals. AI offers visual intelligence to safeguard patients and staff. They also enable surgeons who need to work in demanding situations where that must operate with a narrow field of view. AI also helps reduce healthcare workers' needs to interact with information systems allows them more time to do what they do best focus on caring for patients.

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RETAIL

Retail operations through AI-enabled solutions

From Walmart and Meijer to Domino's and Stitch Fix, innovative retailers and disruptive startups are using AI to transform how they operate. They're using deep learning and machine learning algorithms to streamline logistics, cut operational costs, prevent shrinkage, increase revenue, and improve decision making. Recent estimates from Accenture suggest that AI has the potential to create \$2.2 trillion worth of value in retail and wholesale by 2035 by boosting growth and profitability.

And this new wave of smart retailers is looking beyond improved operations to improving the overall customer experience. Combining in-store analytics with online customer behavior enables retailers to better understand their customers and their buying preferences, so they can tailor promotions to drive revenue and deliver better shopping experiences, both in store and online. Leading retailers are leveraging AI to reduce shrinkage, improve forecasting, automate warehouse logistics, determine in-store promotions and real-time pricing, enable customer personalization and recommendations, and deliver better shopping experiences—both in stores and online.

INTELLIGENT STORES
Using data from cameras and sensors, retailers are leveraging AI to reduce shrinkage, eliminate stock-out, and gain insight into customer behavioural patterns. The same infrastructure can also power faster checkouts. Retailers are using AI to create intelligent stores in the context of public safety, asset protection, store analytics, autonomous shopping, and store operations.

ASSET PROTECTION IN INTELLIGENT STORES
Theft can happen in the blink of an

eye, so it requires quick detection. Using existing camera systems, retailers can install intelligent video analytics (IVA) applications to improve loss prevention and significantly reduce shrinkage. With GPU-accelerated IVA, asset protection applications can detect ticket switching and mis-scans in real time at the point of sale. They can detect shrinkage with up to 99 percent accuracy and immediately notify sales associates for intervention.

INTELLIGENT STORE ANALYTICS
Online-shopping data and in-store data generated from points of sale, cameras, and sensors are ripe with insights that can help determine customer preferences. IVA data can provide customer demographics as well as identify popular and unpopular store aisles, customer dwell time, and the number of unique visitors.

With a better understanding of shopper behavior, retailers can improve store merchandising, increase overall sales, and deliver a better omni-channel experience for their customers. They can even break down product interest by age and gender to group similar products for the target customer.

AUTONOMOUS SHOPPING IN INTELLIGENT STORES
The convenience of intelligent grab-and-go stores, where customers can use their mobile phones for cashierless checkout, is jumping in popularity. Autonomous checkout locations are expected to increase 4X annually in the next three years. With autonomous checkout, retailers can provide customers with frictionless and faster shopping experiences, while increasing revenue and margins.

Autonomous checkout solutions range from frictionless AI-



enabled shopping carts, to nano stores and smart cabinets, to fully autonomous stores. These solutions reduce costs while delivering a much better and faster shopping experience.

INTELLIGENT STORE OPERATIONS
Store associates are the face of retail organizations, so it makes sense to reduce the time they spend on tasks that aren't customer facing, such as performing inventory counts, replacing misplaced items, or scanning for out-of-stock situations.

Large retailers are using robotics to handle these basic, repetitive, and tedious tasks, freeing store associates to spend more time helping customers. The technology can scan items on store shelves to check stock levels, correct shelf location, and price accuracy. It can also sort items unloaded from trucks based on priority and department, allowing associates to shift inventory from storage to the sales floor more efficiently.

FORECASTING & INVENTORY MANAGEMENT
Using AI and predictive analytics, retailers are improving demand forecasting and inventory management. By tapping into data insights from various sources, they're the right products are in the right store

at the right time and optimizing their supply chains. Walmart is using GPU-accelerated technology for product forecasting of more than 500 million store-item combinations each week.

RECOMMENDATION & VISUAL SEARCH
Understanding customer behavior has never been more critical for retailers looking to drive growth. AI applications powered by video analytics can give retailers the same insight into customer behavior in stores as they currently have online. The AI can give data on sectional footfalls, throughput and browsing to conversion data which serves as vital inputs in the store sections alignment and resource allocations. With insights into popular aisles, dwell times, and demographics, retailers can improve merchandising and offer real-time promotions in store to increase revenue and provide a better experience. For e-commerce, retailers are using AI algorithms for faster, more accurate recommendation engines to boost revenue.

CONVERSATIONAL AI
Natural language processing (NLP) helps retailers personalize customer experiences, turn

consumer data into actionable insights, and improve customer service. Retailers build and deploy AI applications by fusing deep learning models for speech recognition and speech synthesis, language understanding, and vision.

POWERING SMARTER RETAIL WITH AI
AI is fundamentally changing the retail space, from customer experience and how they engage with retailers to store operations and logistics. By taking advantage of the massive amounts of sensors and data available, retailers can move from traditional to disruptive technologies that will increase revenue and delight customers.

Leading retailers are looking to capitalize on these trends and transform their business with a top-down AI strategy. But to do that, they need access to advanced resources, including state-of-the-art infrastructure, a rich ecosystem of software, and a team that's trained in the technology.

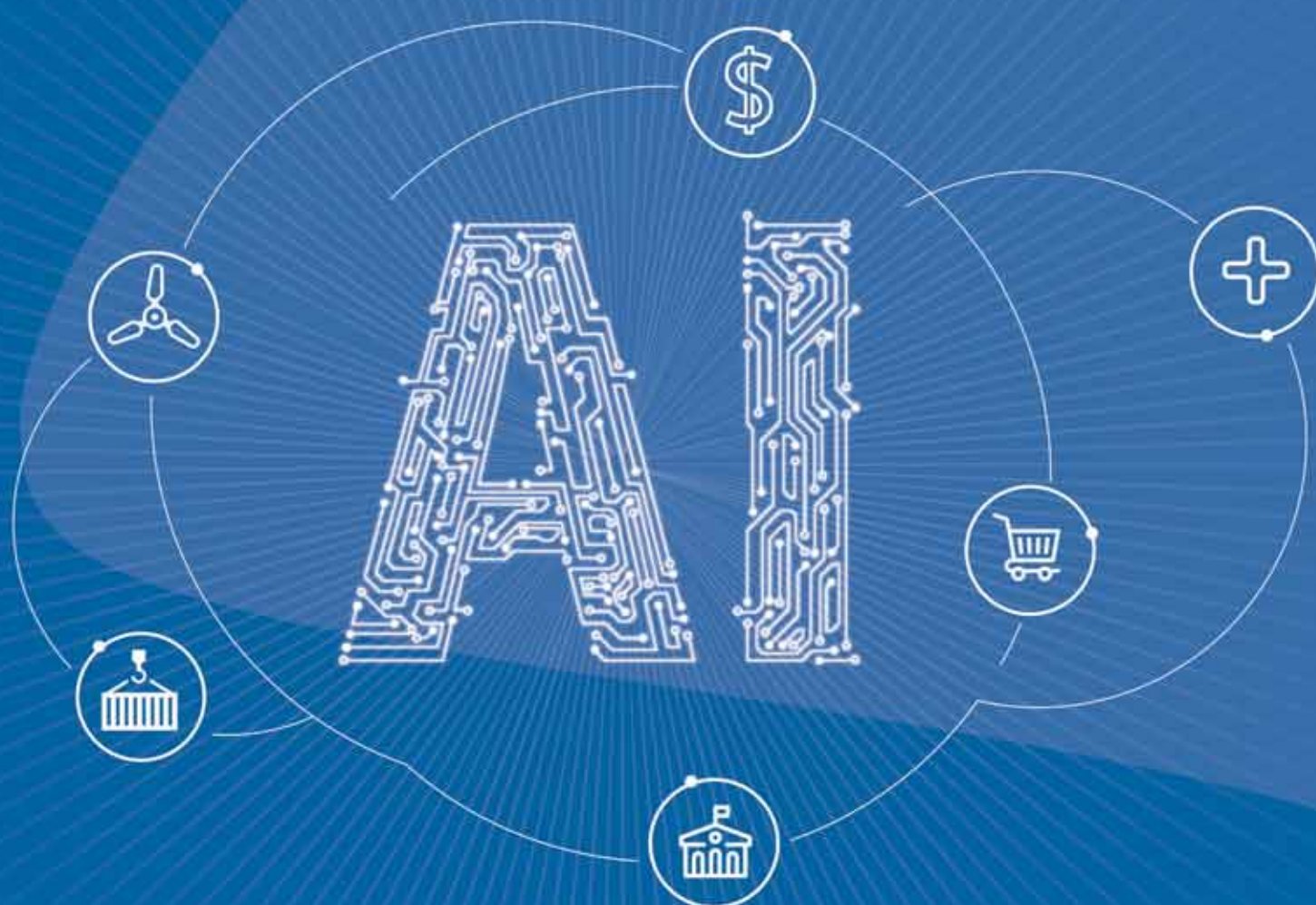
REMOTE WORK CHALLENGES IN RETAIL
With the recent changes to consumer buying behaviors, retailers need to become more agile than ever and respond in real-time to shifts in customer

buying trends, while keeping employees and customers safe. This requires that data scientists continue to develop AI applications that help with daily forecasting, optimizing supply chains, and automating self-checkout. From data scientists to IT managers, professionals in the retail industry are accustomed to working in highly customized, onsite work environments. But as working remotely becomes a necessity in times of emergency, these professionals find themselves navigating uncharted waters with dispersed teams working from home. This creates unprecedented complexity in day-to-day functions. Data scientists who routinely train their algorithms in data centers, or on GPU hardware in their offices, now need cloud, virtual GPU access, or GPU-powered laptops to develop and train algorithms.

AI allows large retailers to centralize data and applications in the data center, delivering virtual workspaces with improved manageability, security, and performance, while reducing downtime and support costs. IT can also easily manage large-scale virtualization deployments with end-to-end visibility of the organization's infrastructure and proactive monitoring. AI also enables IT organizations to remotely manage, install, and update software across thousands of distributed devices, without the need to do so individually in each store. Even without access to local compute resources, or with limited access, organizations can still provide users with the resources they need to be productive. Many applications can be accessed from the cloud, and these solutions can be leveraged to provide compute cycles for specific initiatives.

A partnership for success

Congratulations to Oman Data Park on the launch of Nebula AI. We look forward to supporting Oman's government & business entities with trusted solutions to leap ahead on innovation and profitability through the use of Artificial Intelligence.



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Bikal is a UK-based company with strong foundations in research & product development in Artificial Intelligence. Bikal brings proven expertise in the use of GPU in video analytics. Our work in big data and data science is built around focusing on business challenges, disruption and delivery. In the UK, Bikal empowers utility companies, telcos, private sector & government entities and other specialist industries to design, test and implement solutions. Bikal believes in engaging with clients for the longer term to leverage the potential of evolving technologies in the fourth industrial revolution.

EMPOWERING

INDUSTRIES

ENERGY



Energy touches every aspect of modern society, from impacting world economies to enhancing individual ways of life. Today, the industry faces challenges with exploring new resources, reducing costs, maintaining safe conditions for workers and communities, and ensuring reliable delivery to customers. In response, leading companies are using AI technologies to expedite energy production, increasing asset utilization, streamlining oil refinement and distribution, and reducing environmental impact.

CUTTING EDGE COMPUTING

By collecting and analyzing data at

the network’s edge, companies can predict mechanical problems in areas like oil pumps more quickly. Today’s industrial edge computing requires GPU-powered compute capabilities for industrial inspection and robotics in factories and predictive maintenance for equipment in the field. This calls for a single, unifying foundation for AI applications and frameworks.

COMPUTING IN DATA CENTERS

AI creates efficiencies through high-performance computing, data processing, and data management that support the unique requirements of the Energy sector’s key segments and processes. GPU-accelerated so-

lutions dramatically speed up training of deep learning and machine learning models to deliver insights that were previously not possible.

DEMOCRATIZE THE DATA CENTER WITH CLOUD

AI helps deliver power from suppliers to consumers using cloud computing to save energy, reduce costs, and increase reliability.

PIPELINE OPTIMISATION

Leverage big data and AI systems to optimize how you fill a pipeline, detect corrosion to identify potential leaks, and automate ultrasonic flow meters to increase throughput. These technologies can also be used to monitor the locations of trans-

ports and verify their security. Other areas include demand forecasting to optimize commodity trading and shipping and pipeline capacity optimization.

PREDICTIVE MAINTENANCE

AI helps avoid blackouts, downtimes, and unnecessary maintenance costs by identifying discrepancies in machinery in real time and predicting the remaining useful life of equipment. With GPU-based deep learning servers well operators can visualize and analyze massive volumes of production and sensor data such as pump pressures, flow rates, and temperatures. Other areas of focus include capacity optimization, economic forecasting,

site surveillance and electricity retail where it helps prediction of future load demand by using advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) data in machine learning models.

PERFORMANCE OPTIMISATION

AI assists to increase the reliability and performance of your refining assets by identifying the root cause of underperformance, virtually testing operational or asset changes, and minimizing unanticipated risks of proposed changes.

POWER GENERATION & DISTRIBUTION

Accelerate the transition to a more

sustainable future with resilient grids that use AI to forecast demand, generate power, and manage energy resources. Some of the other areas in the energy sector where AI can be used effectively include exploration of new energy deposits and discovery of available hydrocarbon reserves with seismic processing. It also helps build accurate models of the subsurface in less time. Optimization of renewable energy production and reduction of operational costs, such as wind turbine inspection and maintenance and improvement of performance of complex power grid operations are also areas that can be effectively optimised with AI.

LOGISTICS

Artificial intelligence in warehouse logistics

WAREHOUSE logistics, more specifically “intralogistics operations,” is the art of integrating, automating, and managing the flow of products in fulfilment or distribution centers. AI solutions deliver a level of consciousness to the supply chain. With intelligent video analytics, robotics, automation, and management, operations become more efficient, process throughput accelerates, and warehouse robots deliver end-to-end visibility, increasing the accuracy of orders picked, packed, and shipped.

AI IN SMART WAREHOUSES

Smart warehouses are using cutting edge technologies in AI to automate inventory processes, simplify general package handling, and optimize real estate when receiving orders and sending packages to other distribution centers. Developers can leverage the different components of building, training, and deploying algorithms for inference at the edge.

ROBOTS FOR PACKAGE HANDLING

In store staffs are the face of retail organizations. To maximize time

with customers, retailers are working to reduce the time they spend on non-customer-facing tasks, such as inventory counts. Large retailers are using robotics technology to unload and sort items based on priority and department, check stock levels, correct shelf locations, and ensure price accuracy. To resolve throughput challenges from the scale and variety of products, companies are using AI based edge computing to detect, classify, estimate the size of, and position packages, automatically adjust the speed of conveyors and optimize mechanical sorting. This helps to minimize product damage and machine downtime.

ROUTE OPTIMIZATION FOR LARGE DISTRIBUTION NETWORKS

Warehouse and manufacturing centers are solving the enormous complexities of product flows with AI-powered robots. These robots utilize powerful deep neural networks for perception, segmentation, and pose estimation to perceive their environment, detect objects, navigate autonomously, and move objects. Market leaders are widening their



competitive advantage with increased throughput, per-order customization, and differentiated customer experiences. The big players in the automobile industry easily manage new models and configurations to meet customer demand, using AI technology to innovate factory logistics. With this approach, they can produce high-quality, highly custom-configured vehicles more rapidly on the same production line.

LAST-MILE DELIVERY SOLUTIONS

Several factors can impact the last mile of delivery, including traffic, construction, and weather. Using real-time data from a variety of sources—from GPS data to weather forecasts—routes can be optimized using AI, which can significantly impact fuel, personnel, and other overhead costs. Beyond that carriers can provide more accurate delivery windows, improving the level of service provided to customers. This instills a higher degree of trust, which matters when customers have an array of options for sending and receiving important parcels.

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EMPOWERING AI INDUSTRIES

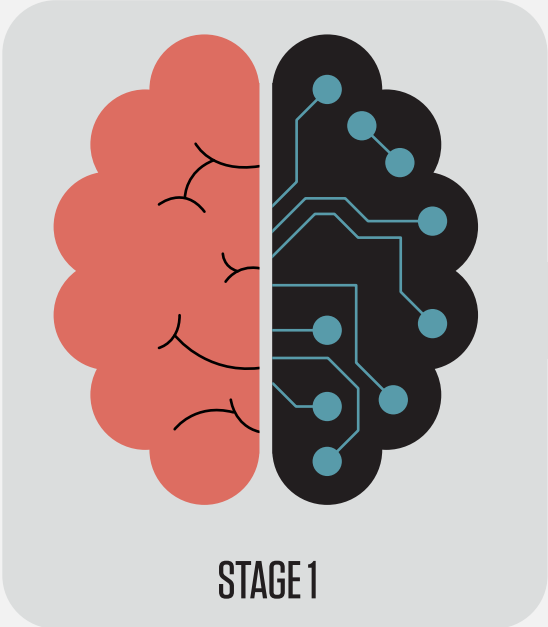


HOW AI WILL INFLUENCE OUR LIVES IN THE YEARS TO COME

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a term used to describe machines performing human-like cognitive processes such as learning, understanding, reasoning and interacting. It can take many forms, including technical infrastructure (i.e. algorithms), a part of a (production) process, or an end-user product. AI looks increasingly likely to deeply transform the way in which modern societies live and work. Already today, smartphones, smart assistants, and cars are connected to this technology. With the rise of AI come the important questions of how much it will affect businesses, consumers, and the economy in more general terms.

THREE TYPES OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

ARTIFICIAL NARROW INTELLIGENCE (ANI)

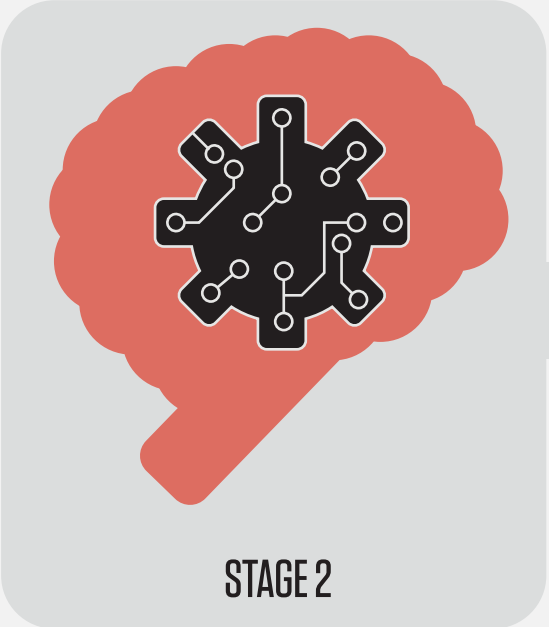


STAGE 1

MACHINE LEARNING

Specializes in one area and solves one problem. It provides systems the ability to automatically learn and improve from experience without being explicitly programmed.

ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE (AGI)

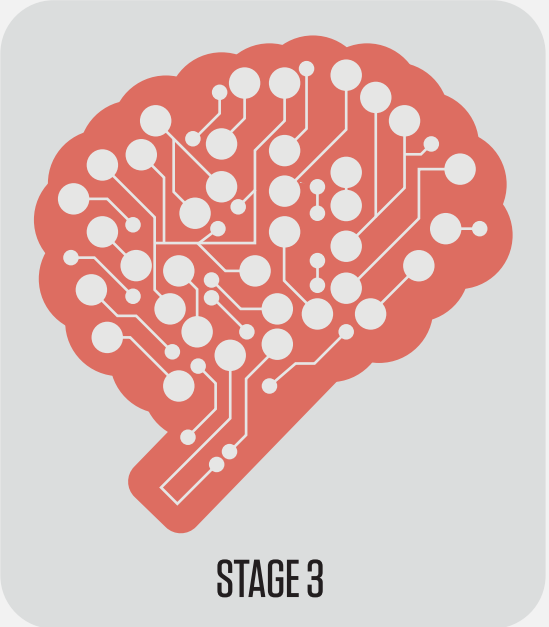


STAGE 2

MACHINE INTELLIGENCE

Refers to a computer that is as smart as a human. It is related to understand human intelligence, but AI does not have to confine itself to methods that are biologically observable.

ARTIFICIAL SUPER INTELLIGENCE (ASI)



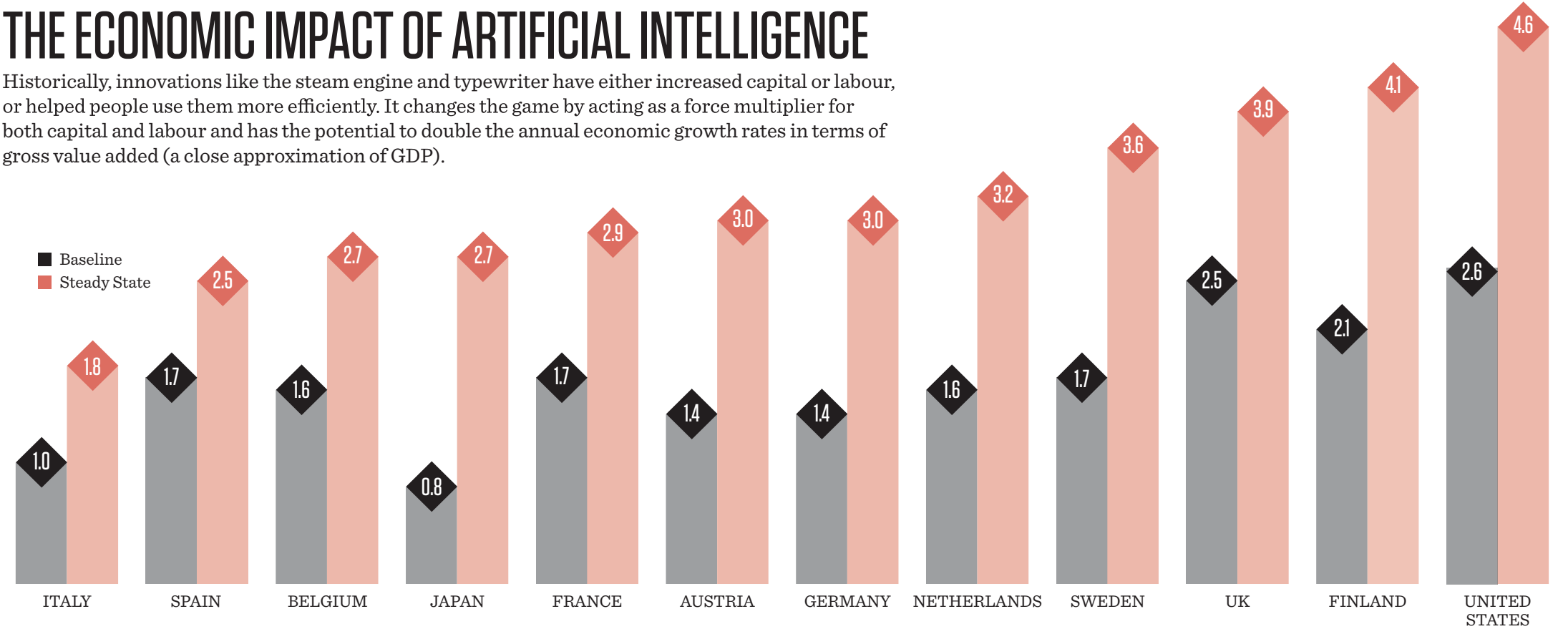
STAGE 3

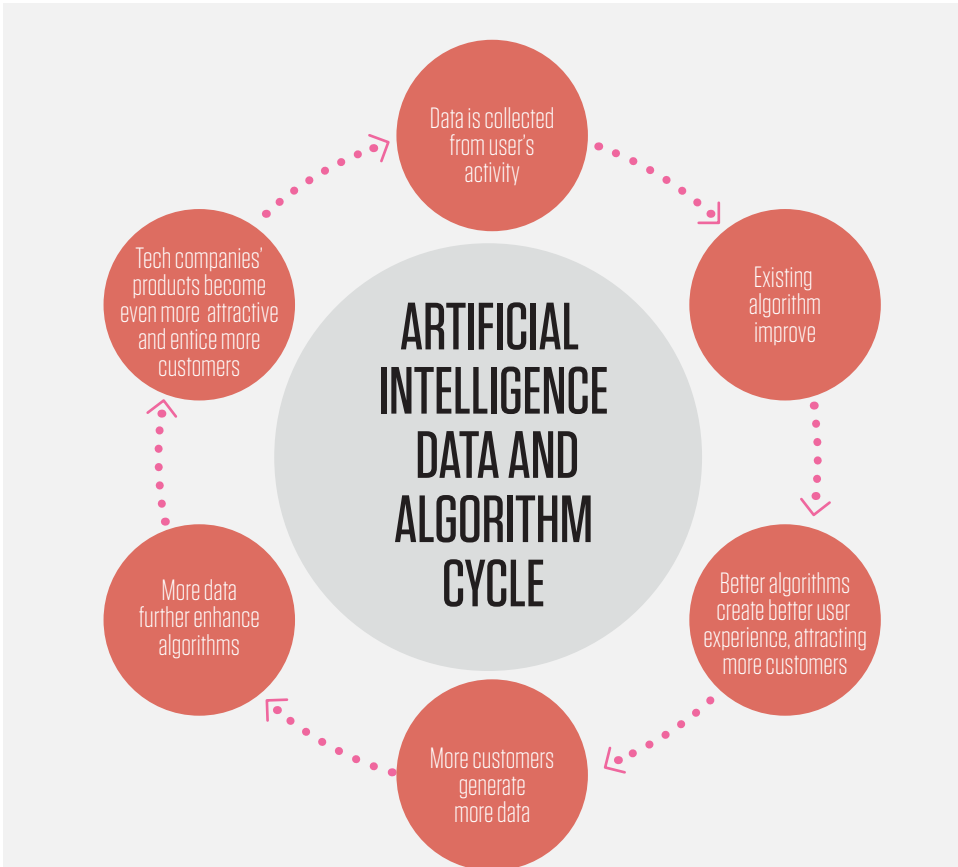
MACHINE CONSCIOUSNESS

Artificial superintelligence (ASI) is a software-based system with intellectual powers beyond those of humans across an almost comprehensive range of categories and fields of endeavour.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Historically, innovations like the steam engine and typewriter have either increased capital or labour, or helped people use them more efficiently. It changes the game by acting as a force multiplier for both capital and labour and has the potential to double the annual economic growth rates in terms of gross value added (a close approximation of GDP).





ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE DATA AND ALGORITHM CYCLE

The cycle consists of the following steps:

- Data is collected from user's activity
- Existing algorithm improve
- Better algorithms create better user experience, attracting more customers
- More customers generate more data
- More data further enhance algorithms
- Tech companies' products become even more attractive and entice more customers

AI gains an upper hand over its competitors, it will be very hard to resist a self-perpetuating cycle of monopolization. Such a company, thanks to the already large set of data, will have advanced algorithms. Advanced algorithms mean better user experience and more features, thereby attracting more customers. More customers, in turn, generate more data, which further improves the existing algorithms and makes the company's products even more appealing, ultimately resulting in an even larger customer base, ad infinitum.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND BANKING

AI can help by facilitating complex analysis of data, automating manual compliance processes such as “Know Your Customer” (KYC), and “Anti-Money Laundering”(AML). Both of these processes rely on gathering data from various systems to understand customer and transactional behaviours.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PAYS OFF FOR BANKING



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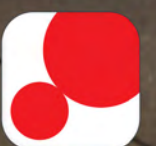
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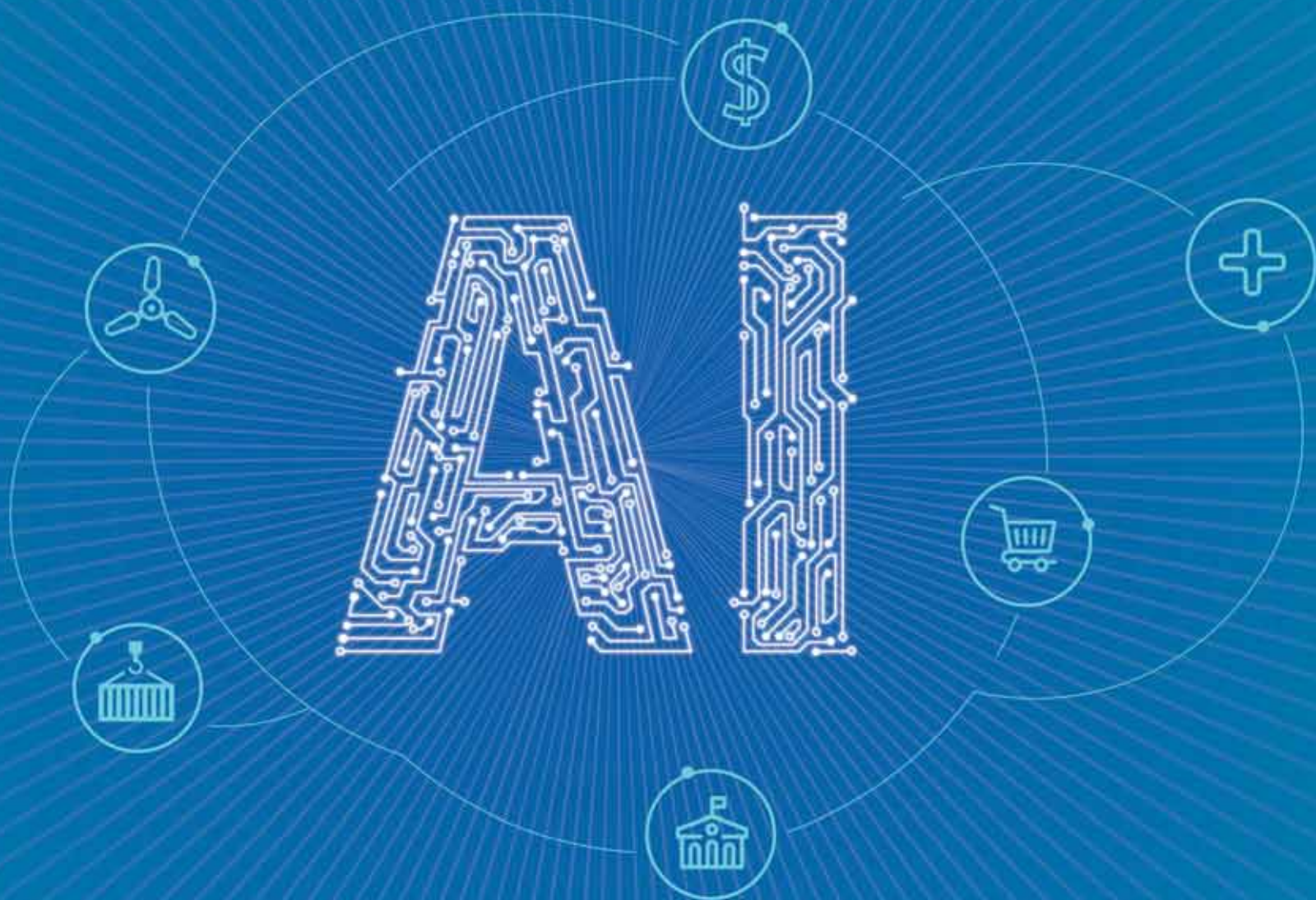


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