

HIS MAJESTY GREETSPRESIDENT OF ESTONIA

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Alar Karis of the Republic of Estonia on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Karis and the people of his country. - **ONA**



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SPECIAL RELATIONS

HM sends written message to President of Iran



TEHRAN: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a written message to Dr. Ibrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The message is related to the advanced bilateral relations binding the two countries and their people.

The message was handed over by Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Bussaidi, Foreign Minister when the Iranian President received him at the presidency headquarters on Wednesday. During the meeting, Sayyid Badr conveyed greetings and best wishes of His Majesty the Sultan to President Raisi and the Iranian people. On his turn, the Iranian President asked Sayyid Badr to convey his appreciation to His Majesty and his best wishes of further progress and prosperity for the Omani people.

The meeting stressed the special relations between Oman and Iran in various spheres and means of promoting them to serve the joint interests. **>A5**

OMAN CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE

Book lovers keen to experience Muscat Book Fair

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Book lovers in Oman are eager to visit the Muscat International Book Fair which begins at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre today.

Set to launch under the patronage of His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, the book fair will continue till 5 March and host an elite selection of literati, media personnel, publishers and exhibitors.

Omar Al Balushi, an Omani national added: "The book fair has a wide variety of books covering extensive subjects and is definitely a place anyone will enjoy. There is no habit in the world as good as reading. It stimulates the



mind, encourages you to think creatively and helps develop your intelligence.

"It's a good thing to encourage children to read at a young age and just like they have in the past book fairs, I am sure they will be looking forward to this one as well," he said. **>A4**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN How non-Indians can study in Indian schools

1 Indian school authorities have listed the procedural details for non-Indians to sign up for Indian schools. **>A3**

WORLD

Biden announces new curbs on Russia

2 US President Joe Biden on Tuesday announced new sanctions against Russia over Ukraine. **>A6**

MARKET

Madayn highlights investment avenues

3 Madayn is promoting the investment opportunities in Oman's industrial cities at Expo 2020 in the UAE. **>B1**

OMR120MN TO COME FROM RATIONALISATION OF SALARIES



The rationalisation programme has helped in reducing allowances and incentives

MUSCAT: A sum of OMR120 million is expected to be generated this year and the next, thanks to the 'Salaries and Incentives Rationalisation Programme' of Oman Investment Authority (OIA) and its affiliate entities.

OIA has disclosed that OMR80 million was generated in 2021 through the same programme.

This was unveiled during a media forum held at Al Bustan Palace Hotel here on Wednesday on the 'Code of Governance for OIA Entities.' OIA Chairman Abdulsalam Al Murshidi said in a statement during the forum that the rationalisation programme helped shrink

the items on allowances and incentives at OIA-owned companies from 80 to 12 items.

Salient elements

The salient elements targeted by the programme include the end of service gratuity, personal loans, residential loans, office vehicles and other incentives, Al Murshidi added.

In a visual presentation, Al Murshidi reviewed the goals and themes of 'Rawabit' programme launched by the OIA in September 2020 with the prime aim of cementing collaboration and integration among its firms, besides

enhancing the in-country value (ICV), governance, social investment, research, innovation, development and strategies.

Rawabit programme

Ayyad Ali Al Balushi, Assistant Chairman for Finance and Accreditation at OIA, who also acts as general supervisor of Rawabit programme, laid emphasis on the significance of applying governance to OIA firms to bolster their financial and operational performance, raise their productivity and establish a comprehensive system of decision making.

Al Balushi added that governance will enable the OIA firms to issue guiding principles and policies pertaining to procurements, tenders, investment, risk management, workflow and information security, based on the specialties/tasks assigned to the OIA under Royal Decree No. 57/2021.

> See also **A4**

OMAN MEDICAL JOURNAL

More than 50% of drowning victims are children

Times News Service

MUSCAT: More than half of the drowning incidents in Oman involve children under the age of six, a report published in the *Oman Medical Journal* has said.

The report, published by four researchers at Sultan Qaboos University, studied the circumstances and consequences of drowning involving children in Oman, by studying patients aged 18 and under who were admitted to Sultan Qaboos University Hospital's emergency department over a span of 10 years from January 2008 to December 2017, for complications related to drowning.

The study was conducted by Niranj Lal Jeswani, Abdullah Al Reesi and Muhammad Faisal Khilji from the Department of

Emergency Medicine at Sultan Qaboos University Hospital and Syed Rizvi from the Faculty of Family Medicine and Public Health at the College of Medicine and Health Sciences at Sultan Qaboos University.

Preventive measures

Their research read: "A total of 74 patients were included in the study; 54 were male and 47 were aged less than six years. More than half (59.4 percent) of the drowning incidents happened in swimming pools, 21 children were unsupervised during the incident and 39 required cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Out of all studied subjects, three were brain dead and two developed severe neurological injury.

"Our study suggests that children, especially males under



the age of six with no swimming ability, need strict supervision next to bodies of water," the study added. "Furthermore, preventive measures might include raising community awareness about the risk factors of drowning, commencing public CPR lessons and strict pool safety regulation by related authorities."

Irina Samakar, a swim coach at the Nautilus Swimming Club in Oman, said that while it is important for children to learn swimming, it is doubly vital that parents also learn to do so.

"Oftentimes, I see that some of the adults who accompany their children to pools do not have any swimming abilities of their own," she said. "Adults feel ashamed on admitting they don't know how to swim. However, this is an extremely important skill that is needed when you are put in a position where you need to save your child's life.

"Let us not forget the unfortunate news we sometimes read of children and adults drowning in wadis because they did not know how to swim, and because there wasn't anyone around to immediately save them," she added. **>A5**



PRAYER
TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....	12:25pm
Asr.....	3:44pm
Maghrib.....	6:11pm
Isha.....	7:22pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	5:18am

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NATIONAL MUSEUM

Statue, model from royal possessions of Late Sultan Qaboos displayed

MUSCAT: The National Museum has displayed a statue likely to be that of a senior administrative official, religious official, or military commander of Oman at the World gallery, and a model of the satellite station in the Wilayat of Al Amerat in the Timeline gallery.

The displayed items are from the royal possessions of the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimour, as they were given for the National Museum to be available to all visitors.

The statue dates back to the Iron Age, the period known as the Kingdom of Southern Arabia (Yemen), specifically from the areas of Qataban, Ma'rib, or al-Jawf region, and it is carved from pure marble, which indicates the ingenuity of ancient Yemeni craftsmen.

As for the model, it was presented by the Higher Committee for the National Day Celebrations to the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said,



on the occasion of the 6th National Day (25 Thil-Qi'dah 1396 AH/ 18 November 1976), and it is made of gold, silver, coloured enamel, marble and velvet.

It is worth noting that the Na-

tional Museum announced earlier that it would display a number of the late Sultan's royal possessions in a number of the National Museum's galleries, to be available to all visitors. -ONA

SPECIAL OCCASION

Sri Lankan School Muscat marks 33rd anniversary

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Sri Lankan School Muscat has commemorated the 33rd anniversary of its establishment on February 15, 2022.

Gracing the occasion as the chief guest, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the Sultanate of Oman, Ameer Ajwad planted a Sri Lankan fruit sapling named "Woodapple Fruit (Keth fruit)" on the school premises at Wadi Al-Kabir, Muscat, to mark this special occasion.

Speaking during the event, Ambassador Ameer Ajwad stated that the Sri Lankan School Muscat (SLSM) is an asset of Sri Lanka in Oman and paid tributes to the visionary leadership of the group of Sri Lankan nationals who gave birth to the Sri Lankan School 33 years ago.

He also commended the services of all the members of the Sri Lankan community who contributed to the growth of the Sri Lankan School Muscat which has now become a leading international school in Oman.

Speaking during the occasion, Anselm Perera who is the most senior Sri Lankan national living in Oman, the founder and a former chairman of the SLSM, briefed the success story of the SLSM.

Assistant Director of the International Schools Section of the Ministry of Education of the



Sultanate of Oman, Al Azhar bin Saud bin Salem Al Salmi and the founder and former Chairman of SLSM, Anselm Perera graced the occasion as the guests of honour. Chairman of the SLSM Anura Shantha Basnayaka and the members of the Board of Directors, Acting Principal Crisant Jayawardena, staff and the students of the SLSM participated in the event.

Guests of Honour and the participants joined Ambassador Ameer Ajwad in planting Sri Lankan fruit sapling to commemorate

the birth anniversary of the SLSM at the end of the event.

The Sri Lankan School Muscat was established in June 1988 by a group of Sri Lankan professionals and was ceremoniously opened on 15th February 1989 with 27 children and 3 teachers headed by Lionel Jayasinghe, the first Principal of the SLSM. Since then, the school has transformed into one of the leading International schools in the Sultanate of Oman, catering to over twenty nationalities. Currently, the school is home to around 1,200 students.

BLUE ECONOMY

Oman takes part in GCC, Yemen blue transformation meeting

DUBAI: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources took part on Wednesday in a meeting of GCC countries and Yemen on blue transformation and its contribution in fishing.

The event was hosted in the UN's Forum during the Food, Agriculture and Livelihood week in Expo 2020 Dubai.

During the meeting, Eng. Yaqoub Khalfan Al Busaidi, the Ministry's Undersecretary for Fisheries, pointed out that blue transformation is a modern global strategic vision adopted by FAO for the sustainability of healthy food and diverse water



resources. The vision, said Eng. Yaqoub, also aims to secure the future of the people working in the blue economy.

He added that the strategy contributes to enhancing the

effective management of fisheries to ensure their sustainability, and the development of food products by modernizing food chains, adding value and integrating digital solutions to reach different markets.

He confirmed that the fisheries sector in Oman witnessed continuous growth over the previous years. Fish production in 2020 reached 840,000 tonnes, comprising a rise of 44.5 percent compared to 2019. The value of production went up by 19 percent to reach OMR364 million in 2020. Further, Oman's fish exports reach the markets of 66 countries all over the world, according to the statistics of 2020. -ONA



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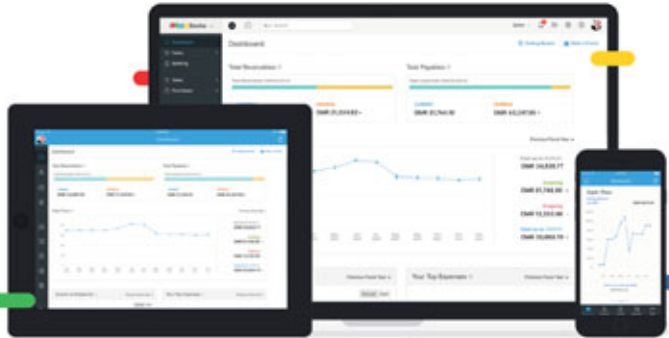


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EDUCATION

How other nationalities can seek admission to Indian schools in Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: With the Indian school system in Oman actively encouraging children of other nationalities to apply for admission, school administrators in the country have explained the ways of doing so for the new academic year.

A detailed list of steps that parents and children seeking admission to Indian schools in the capital area has been provided on the website of the Board of Directors of Indian Schools in Oman, and can be visited at: www.indian-schoolsinoman.com/admit.aspx

Online registration form

Admissions are currently open for classes from kindergarten to grade IX. All applicants must fill in the online registration form.

“The centralised admission system with online registration introduced by the Board of Directors, Indian Schools in Oman has facilitated the entire admission process, making it convenient for parents and schools to take care of the rush for admissions,” said the board in a circular.

Entering the online admissions portal requires a unique identification number and password that will be sent to parents by SMS and/ or email, once they submit an application form for their child. The application form can

be obtained at the above address. Once filled in, the form needs to be sent to the board of directors on bod.general@gmail.com

Parents also have to pay a non-refundable fee of OMR15 for each application. The transfer should be made out to the “Board of Directors Indian School”, and remitted to Bank Muscat account number 0333 00581788 0017.

No objection certificate

A scanned copy of the signed application form, the fee receipt and supporting documents (copy of passport and resident ID card) must then be emailed to the admissions team. Non-Indian nationals must also obtain a no-objection certificate from the embassy of their country at the time of seeking admission.

“Considering the COVID pandemic situation, admission procedures have been made completely online,” added the board. “Parents, therefore, do not have to visit the schools for submission of documents or the remittance of admission processing fee. Instead, the scanned copy of the application form duly signed by the parent, along with the copy of the processing fee receipt/deposit slip shall be emailed to admissions2022@indianschoolsoman.com with the unique login registration number of the application

form as the subject of the email.”

The email should also include the name of the student, the mode of remittance (online transfer/ CDM deposit), and the date of remittance. If any parent has challenges in remitting the fee online, the application form, along with OMR15 in cash can be submitted in either Indian School Muscat or Indian School Al Maabala.

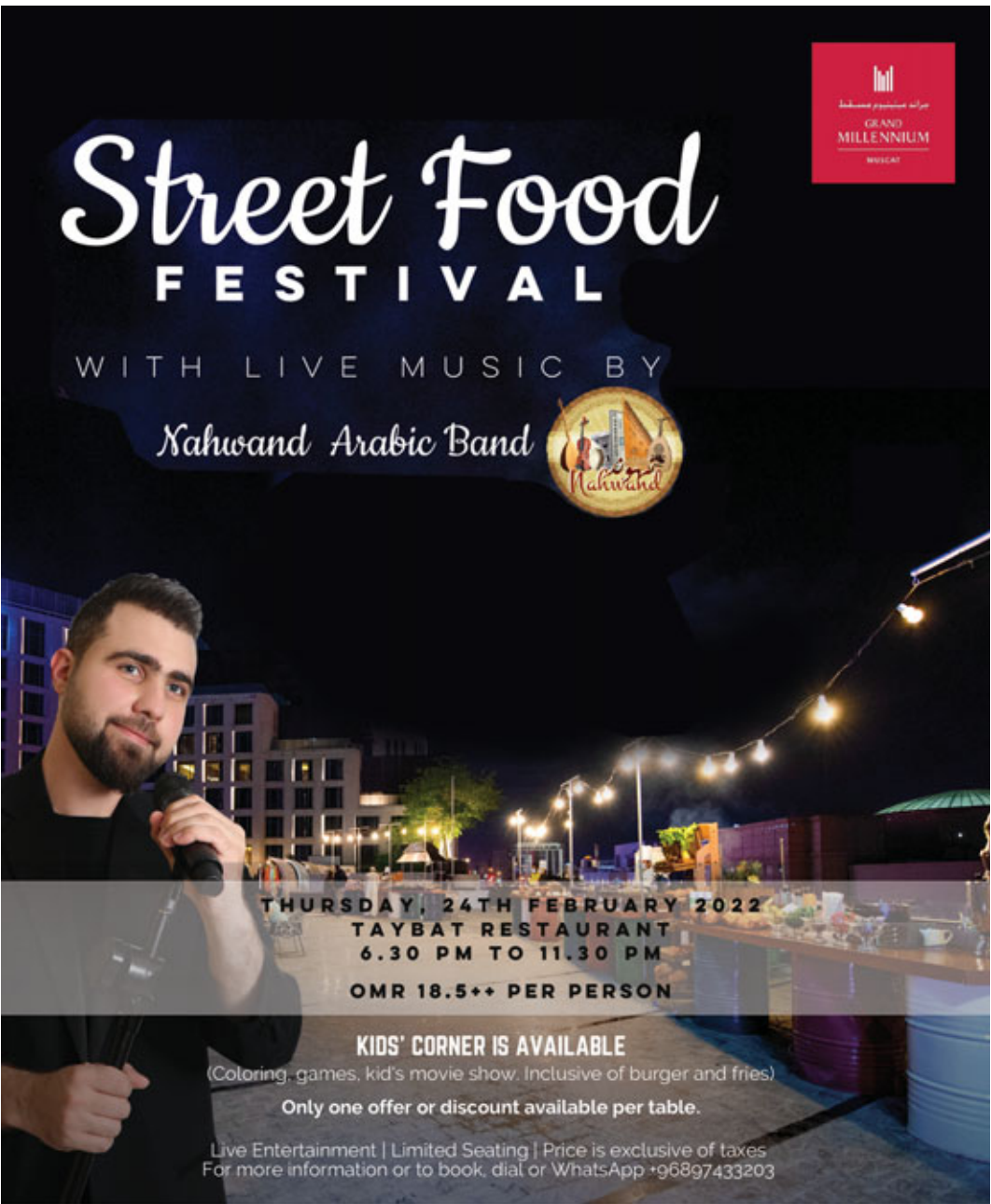
Computer draw

Once parents have received their unique identification number and password, they can enter the portal at www.indianschoolsinoman.com/admit.aspx and choose the schools to which they are seeking admission. Parents are required to list at least one school as their first choice, while also listing alternatives for their children. Children will be provided admission to schools based on a randomly-generated computer draw.

Seven schools in the capital are part of the online admission process: Muscat, Bousher, Darsait, Wadi Kabir, Ghubra, Seeb and Maabala. For admission to the international schools in Wadi Kabir and Al Ghubra, parents need to approach these two institutions directly. Parents who currently live in the interior and need to move their child to a capital school if they are relocating to Muscat must also enter the draw. Furthermore, should a parent want their child to study in the same school as their sibling, that can also be entertained, but only if the chosen school is clearly marked as first choice during the application process.

“The draw is open to all Indian nationals and expatriate students,” said a member of the board. “We understand that education is a fundamental right and as a community school, we cannot deny that to anyone if we have space to accommodate them.

“However, Omani students are not able to seek admission with us, as the Ministry of Education has stipulated that they must be educated in their own schools,” he added. “Of course, there are some rare exceptions, we can admit them once they receive clearance from the relevant organisations from their side.”



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Trending ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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42,354 REACH

Children of all nationalities will be allowed to seek admission to Indian schools in Oman for the new academic term.

Story about Indian Schools

A story about Indian Schools reached 42,354 people and had 4,902 engagements on Facebook.

MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

535 LIKES

Oman govt employee who embezzled orphans' funds gets 5 years in jail

Photo story on a government employee being jailed for embezzlement

A photo story on a government employee being jailed for embezzlement had 535 likes on Instagram.

MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

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BILATERAL RELATIONS

Oman, Iran discuss ways to boost mutual investment opportunities

TEHRAN: Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister and Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Islamic Republic of Iran, held at the headquarters of the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tehran on Wednesday a session of political consultations and talks.

Cooperation in trade
During the session, the two sides discussed several fields of cooperation in trade, economic and cultural affairs, expertise exchange and investment opportunities to serve the joint interests of the two friendly countries.
The two sides welcomed the outcomes of the 19th session of the Omani-Iranian Joint Committee, which was held this month in Muscat under the chairman-



ship of the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion from the Omani side and the Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade from the Iranian side.
At the political level, Sayyid Badr and his Iranian counterpart

reviewed a range of issues and developments, particularly the Vienna talks on returning to the nuclear agreement "The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)". The two ministers also underscored the plan's strategic

importance within the context of enhancing regional and global security and stability.
The meeting was attended by Ibrahim Ahmed Al Maeeni, Oman's ambassador to Iran and officials from both sides. — **ONA**

REVIEW MEETING



VISIONS OF SECTORAL COMMITTEES: The two sides are considering ways of improving the investment climate and devising proper policies and frameworks in a manner that encourages investors to set up joint ventures. — **ONA**

Omani-Saudi business council holds its first meeting of the year

MUSCAT: The Omani-Saudi Business Council held its first meeting of the year at Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) here on Wednesday.
During the meeting, the Omani side unveiled the visions of sectoral committees.
Ali Hamad Al Kalbani, Head of the Omani side at the Business Council, underscored the need

to foster communication among private sector entities in both countries.
Investment climate
The two sides are considering ways of improving the investment climate and devising proper policies and frameworks in a manner that encourages investors to set up joint ventures.

The meeting looked into a wide range of economic opportunities that could spur business and investment ties and augment the levels of commercial exchange.
The meeting revised the current mechanisms of investment attraction and studied views of the sectoral committees of the Business Council. — **ONA**

SQU STUDY

Incidents of drowning in the country are quite common

The SQU study included 32 infants aged 12 months and under, 30 toddlers aged between one and three years, 15 preschoolers between the ages of four and six, 17 children of a school-going age from seven to 14 and 10 adolescents between the ages of 15 and 18.
The study also found that there is a high likelihood of drowning among people in three age groups: Children aged five and under, adolescents, and the elderly.
The usual places of drowning for children are swimming pools, bathtubs, buckets and natural

bodies of water. Epilepsy, medical illness and use of alcohol or illicit drugs are risk factors for drowning among children and adolescents.
Reasons
Lack of parents' education, infants left unsupervised and children under five (especially males) are factors that enhanced significantly the risk of drowning. Given Oman's vast coastline that covers most of the southeastern edge of the Arabian Peninsula, the researchers discovered that incidents of drowning

in the country are quite common, especially in wadis and involving those who do not know how to swim.
A vast majority of drowning incidents (68 out of 74) occurred at night.
Summer, when temperatures are hot and people take to swimming to cool off, was also the season when the largest proportion of drowning incidents occurred: Twenty-nine drownings occurred in the summer months, significantly more than during the autumn (18 incidents), winter (nine) and spring (18).

BILATERAL RELATIONS

Several key issues discussed

It also touched on the latest developments at regional and international arenas.
Stability in the region
The two sides underlined their

keenness to enhance pillars of security and stability in the region, as well as adopting the approach of dialogue in addressing different issues and challenges.
The meeting was attended by

the Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Iran, members of the delegation accompanying Sayyid Badr and some officials from the Iranian side. — **ONA**

IN FUJAIRAH



OCCI participates in international summit on mineral resources

FUJAIRAH: A businessmen delegation, representing Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), took part in the 16th Arab International Conference on Mineral Resources, being held in Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The delegation was led by Dr. Salim Salayum Al Junaibi, OCCI First Deputy Chairman, Head of the OCCI branch of the Governorate of Al Wusta.
During the sessions of the conference, the Sultanate of Oman presented specialised papers in

the field of mineral wealth.
The conference focused on the new dimensions of mineral resource surveying, extraction and processing to achieve sustainable development. It also discussed means of encouraging mining investment and promoting the available opportunities in the Arab countries, as well as enhancing the use of advanced technologies in mining sector. As many as 300 participants from more than 35 countries took part in the conference. — **ONA**

ANNUAL MEETING

Minister meets with deans of private higher education institutions

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, represented by the Directorate General of Private Universities and Colleges, held its annual meeting here on Wednesday with deans of private higher education institutions in Oman.



Enhancing the quality
Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation highlighted matters of common interest which contribute to enhancing the quality of higher education in Oman and upgrading its position internationally.
She also touched on connecting higher education with labour segments and industry sectors.

The meeting aimed to identify challenges facing the march of private higher education institutions. It also proposed several recommendations to overcome those challenges and to enhance the quality of educational outputs. — **ONA**

Bank Muscat Oryx Fund

Chairman Statement for FY 2021

Dear Unit-holders,

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Management Body, to present the results of the Bank Muscat Oryx Fund for the twelve month period ending 31st December 2021.

2021 has been a year of big transition for all of us as we progressed through the Covid-19 pandemic. With the big breakthrough of the vaccination, the world started to reopen with businesses and people adjusting themselves to the 'new normal'.

2021 was also a very successful year for the GCC markets with all the markets in the region delivering double digit returns and S&P GCC index up gaining 34.4%, thus becoming one of the best performing market in the world. While the 50% improvement in the oil prices remained one of the key driver for the markets, higher vaccination rates, supportive Government policies and higher domestic consumption also helped the businesses to grow, thus reflecting into the market sentiments. The vibrant capital market activity in the region also improved the market depth and liquidity. This was well reflected in the market turnover for GCC, reaching USD 790 bn in 2021, an increase of 20% over 2020.

Global equity markets remained muted during 2021 with global economic rebound, logistics constraints, inflationary pressures and labour shortages driving the market performance. MSCI World index is up 20.1%, mainly aided by the 26.9% gain in the US market, while MSCI emerging markets came under pressure with decline of -4.6%.

The Oryx Fund maintained its track record of consistently outperforming the benchmark and peers. The fund NAV gained 55.3% during 2021 as against the gain of 31.4% for the benchmark, thus generating outperformance of 3.9%. The fund remains best performing fund in the MENA region over medium to longer term. This is a testament to the investment team and investment

process of the fund. The Fund's strategy has been proven over various market cycles. The fund not only achieved the best performance but with a size of over USD 100 million, is also the second largest fund in the region.

Considering the robust fund performance, it is proposed to pay the dividend of 66 balsa per unit for 2021. The proposed dividend represents an increase of 3.12% compared to the dividend of 64 balsa per unit paid during 2020.

Looking into 2022, we believe the regional markets are poised to build on the gains made in 2021, given the continued recovery in the oil prices and economic diversification efforts. The positive trend in the oil is expected to benefit the Government finances thus improving the overall project activity. The higher participation by the private sector also expected to create opportunities for the corporates. UAE and Qatar also expected to benefit from the specific events such as FRA 2022 and EXPO2020. We also expect stable recovery in the domestic consumption as outcome of the ongoing reforms especially in Saudi Arabia. The valuation of regional markets is still in line with the long term average with better earnings growth during 2022. All this augurs well for the fund thus resulting in better performance going forward.

I would like to thank the Capital Market Authority and the Muscat Stock Exchange for their commitment to a well-regulated and transparent stock market. Above all, I would like to express our gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said, whose visionary leadership continues to inspire us all.

Chairman - Management Body

Audited Statement of Comprehensive Income for year ended 31 st December 2021		
	31-Dec-21 RO'000	31-Dec-20 RO'000
Income		
Dividends	1,195	1,097
	1,195	1,097
Expenses:		
Management fees	(751)	(641)
General and administrative expenses	(534)	(704)
	(1,285)	(1,345)
Net Investment Income	(90)	(248)
Fair value Gain or (Loss)	6,583	3,971
Realised Gain or (Loss) on sale	5,530	(5,642)
Net Profit for the period	12,023	(1,919)
Earnings per unit	0.665	(0.095)

Audited Statement of Financial Position as at 31 st December 2021		
	31-Dec-21 RO'000	31-Dec-20 RO'000
Assets		
Investments	41,426	35,974
Bank & Cash	250	60
Other Receivable	-	25
Total Assets	41,676	36,059
Liabilities:		
Creditors and accruals	(85)	(67)
	(85)	(67)
Net Assets	41,591	35,992
Composition of net assets:		
Units issued	16,915	19,190
Retained Earnings	24,676	16,802
	41,591	35,992
Net Asset Value (NAV) per unit (Rial)	2.459	1.876

Record date for the dividend of Oryx Fund is 09th March 2022. The book closure will be on 08th March 2022. Any investor wishing to receive the dividend in cash should fax their request to the fund managers on 24704478 not later than 08th March 2022.

Note: Due to figures displayed in OOO's, immaterial variance is likely with actual numbers. The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any Unitholder who requests them, in either Arabic or English, as requested, within 7 days of receipt of request.

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Ukraine's national security council calls for state of emergency

A state of emergency would initially last 30 days and increase document and vehicle checks, among other measures

KYIV: Ukraine's national security council on Wednesday called for the declaration of a state of emergency across the entire country except for the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk controlled by Russian-backed separatists, where a state of emergency has been in place since 2014.

A state of emergency would initially last 30 days and increase document and vehicle checks, among other measures. The council's recommendation requires parliamentary approval before going into effect.

Ukraine also recommended that its nationals leave Russia.

Kyiv pushes for more sanctions on Russia

Earlier Wednesday, Kyiv urged Western nations to impose more sanctions on Russia following a sweeping round of restrictions from the US and other Western nations targeting the economy and Russian President Vladimir Putin's inner circle.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba wrote in a tweet that more sanctions were necessary "to stop Putin from further aggression." Kuleba added: "Now the pressure needs to step up to stop Putin. Hit his economy and cronies."

The European Union foreign ministers agreed on a package of sanctions targeting individuals and entities that "undermine Ukrainian integrity," the bloc's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said Tuesday.



EMERGENCY ANNOUNCED: Earlier, on Wednesday, Kyiv urged Western nations to impose more sanctions on Russia following a sweeping round of restrictions from the US and other Western nations.

Those sanctions moved one step closer to being finalized Wednesday as EU ambassadors agreed to the package. The full sanctions package is expected to be announced later Wednesday after final approval from foreign ministers.

In a preview of what form those sanctions may take, The Wall Street Journal reports EU sanctions will target Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and the Internet Research Agency, a troll farm. Bloomberg adds the EU is also set to ban the purchase of Russian government bonds as well.

On Wednesday, US deputy treasury secretary Wally Adeyemo said the US is prepared to cut Putin's Russia off "from Western technology that's critical to advancing the military, cut him off from Western financial resources that will be critical for feeding his economy and also to enriching himself."

Western nations are using sanctions in part in response to a speech given by Putin on Monday that declared Russia had the right to seize Ukraine as part of the na-

tion's "spiritual continuum" while also violating international law by declaring the eastern Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk "independent."

DW's Russia affairs analyst Konstantin Eggert said, "Eventually Putin will say that the newly recognized states need to have their full territory under control and then that means we will have a real confrontation, a real battle between Russian and Ukrainian forces is very much possible."

Zelenskyy calls up reservists

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed a decree Wednesday calling up reservists between the ages of 18 and 60, Ukraine's armed forces said in a statement.

The border guard in Ukraine also issued new restrictions prohibiting foreigners from accessing the border area at any time as well as restrictions on video and photo recordings of border guard installations amid fears an invasion

could be imminent.

With nearly 200,000 Russian troops massed on Ukraine's borders, Western countries are poised to throw down further sanctions should the US, UK and NATO warnings about an imminent invasion prove accurate.

DW's Nick Connolly in Kyiv said, "Definitely things are getting more nervous here."

In a video statement released to coincide with the annual Defender of the Fatherland Day, Putin said Russia would always put its national security first.

"Russia's interests and the security of our people are unconditional," he said. "We will continue to strengthen and modernise our army and navy."

Markus Ziener, a senior fellow at the German Marshall Fund in Berlin, told DW that Putin's speech earlier this week was "very disturbing."

Ziener said, "It looked like he is in a bubble. He is in a mindset that is not really allowing much more room to maneuver." **DW**

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PEACEFUL SOLUTION

UN chief calls for peaceful solution to Ukraine's crisis



NEW YORK: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday said that the world body will never give up on finding a peaceful solution to the Ukraine crisis.

"We must rally and meet this challenge together for peace, and to save the people of Ukraine and beyond from the scourge of war," Guterres said at a media stakeout here in New York.

"It is high time to return to the path of dialogue and negotiations," he said, adding that he is "fully committed to" all efforts to resolve this crisis "without further bloodshed."

The UN chief said that he is "deeply troubled" by the latest developments regarding Ukraine -- including reports of increased ceasefire violations across the contact line and the real risk of further escalation on the ground.

Terming the Ukraine situation as the "biggest global peace and security crisis" in recent years, Guterres said the latest develop-

ments in Ukraine are testing the entire international system.

Deeply troubled by the latest developments regarding Ukraine, Guterres highlighted reports of increased ceasefire violations across the contact line and "the real risk of further escalation on the ground".

The Secretary-General again criticized Russia's decision to recognize the 'independence' of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

"Let me be clear: The decision of the Russian Federation to recognize the so-called 'independence' of certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions is a violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine," the top UN official said.

According to Guterres, such a unilateral measure not only conflicts directly with the principles of the UN Charter but is also inconsistent with the so-called Friendly Relations Declaration of the General Assembly. **ANI**

SANCTIONS

President Biden announces new sanctions against Russia

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden on Tuesday announced new sanctions against Russia and called President Vladimir Putin's moves in eastern Ukraine the "beginning of a Russian invasion".

This comes after President Vladimir Putin recognised the independence of breakaway regions Donetsk and Luhansk and ordered Russian troops there. Speaking on the Russia-Ukraine crisis from the White House, Biden also called Putin's moves the "beginning of a Russian invasion" of Ukraine as he announces new sanctions against Moscow.

"We are implementing full blocking sanctions on two large Russian financial institutions: VEB and their military bank," Biden said adding, "We are implementing comprehensive sanctions



on Russia's sovereign debt. That means we have cut off Russia's government from Western financing. It can no longer raise money from the West and can not trade in

its new debt on our markets or European markets either."

"Who in the Lord's name does Putin think gives him the right to declare new so-called countries on

territory that belongs to his neighbours?" Biden asserted from the White House podium.

In his remarks, Biden, further said, "We will also impose sanctions on Russia's elites and their family members. They share in the corrupt gains of the Kremlin policies and should share in the pain as well," adding, "We have worked with Germany to ensure that Nord Stream 2 will not ... move forward."

Following Putin's announcement, Biden on Monday signed an Executive Order that will prohibit all new investment, trade, and financing by U.S. persons to, from, or in the "so-called Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics".

The US strongly condemned Putin's decision to recognize the "so-called Donetsk and Luhansk Peo-

ple's Republics" as "independent."

US Ambassador to UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield supported Ukraine's call for an Urgent Meeting of the UN Security Council. She criticized Russia's announcement and said that it is "nothing more than theatre, apparently designed to create a pretext for a further invasion of Ukraine."

Notably, Putin has also ordered the sending of the Russian Armed Forces to Ukraine's breakaway regions after recognizing their independence in his Monday address to the nation.

Notably, in March 2014, Russia invaded and then annexed the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea. In April pro-Russian separatists in the Donbas region declared independence. The war continued in

the eastern Ukrainian region and then spread westwards. Roughly 13,000 Ukrainian soldiers and civilians eventually died in the conflict.

In April 2019, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, a former comedian, was elected by a large majority as President of Ukraine on a promise to restore Donbas to the country. The crisis deepened in January 2021, when Zelenskyy appealed the US President Biden to let Ukraine enter NATO. In the spring of 2021, Russia started massing troops near Ukraine's borders in what it said were training exercises.

Russia stated that its troop deployment is in response to NATO's steady eastward expansion. It argued that its moves are aimed at protecting its own security considerations. **DW**



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India look to carry on dominant run in T20Is, eyes on Bishnoi

India and Sri Lanka will square off in three T20Is and two Tests, with the first match of the series to be played in Lucknow

LUCKNOW: After clinching the T20I series against West Indies, Team India will now look to carry their form into the three-match series against Sri Lanka, beginning Thursday.

The likes of Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant and Shardul Thakur have been rested for the series against Sri Lanka and hence it will give a chance to the likes of Ruturaj Gaikwad and Shreyas Iyer to show what they are capable of. The duo failed in the third T20I against West Indies, but they would hope that they impress against Sri Lanka.

Sanju Samson has also been drafted into the squad and it would be interesting to see whether the management gives him a go in the playing XI. Spinner Ravi Bishnoi also impressed in his maiden T20I series and he will look to march ahead with the momentum. Jasprit Bumrah is also back for



INDIA VS SRI LANKA: The likes of Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant and Shardul Thakur have been rested for the series against Sri Lanka.

the series against Sri Lanka and the bowling attack will get strengthened further. Bhuvneshwar Kumar showed what he is capable of in the series against Windies and that emerged as a big positive.

However, the highlight over the last week has been Venkatesh Iyer. The way he has managed to finish off matches for India has been a big sign and if he manages to improve his bowling, the management can have a world-class all-rounder.

Talking about Sri Lanka, the

side suffered a 1-4 defeat at the hands of Australia and the side was let down by batting time and again. Skipper Dasun Shanaka would hope that the batting side gets the act together and is able to give a fight to Team India.

Squads: India: Rohit Sharma (Captain), Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shreyas Iyer, Surya Kumar Yadav, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan (wicket-keeper), Venkatesh Iyer, Deepak Chahar, Deepak Hooda, Ravindra Jadeja, Yuzvendra Chahal, Ravi Bishnoi, Kuldeep Yadav,

Mohd. Siraj, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Harshal Patel, Jasprit Bumrah (vice-captain), Avesh Khan.

Sri Lanka: Dasun Shanaka (c), Pathum Nissanka, Kusal Mendis, Charith Asalanka, Dinesh Chandimal, Danushka Gunathilaka, Kamil Mishara, Janith Liyanage, Wanindu Hasaranga, Dushmantha Chameera, Lahiru Kumara, Binura Fernando, Shiran Fernando, Maheesh Theekshana, Jeffrey Vandersay, Praveen Jayawickrama, Ashian Daniel (subject to ministerial approval). **ANI**

Nadal matches his best start to ATP tour, Medvedev makes winning start

ACAPULCO: Rafael Nadal in his first action since his record-breaking 21st Grand Slam title defeated Denis Kudla on Tuesday at the on-going Mexican Open.

The Acapulco fourth seed picked up where he left off with a 6-3, 6-2 win over Kudla. Nadal was in command throughout on the Mexican hard court and showed few signs of rust after three weeks out of competition. With the win, he matches his best start to an ATP Tour season at 11-0. Nadal also won 11 straight matches to start the 2014 season, before losing to Stan Wawrinka in the Australian Open final.

He dropped just four points on serve in the match and spent the bulk of it in cruise control after early breaks in both sets soothed any nerves. Earleir, Daniil Med-

vedev began his pursuit of the No. 1 ATP Ranking when he defeated Benoit Paire 6-3, 6-4 in the opener.

If the Russian wins the ATP 500, he is guaranteed to pass Novak Djokovic for the top spot on Monday regardless of the Serbian's performance this week in Dubai.

Later in the day, Stefanos Tsitsipas earned his 200th tour-level win at the Mexican Open, where he overcame Serbian Laslo Djere 7-6(7), 7-6(4) to reach the second round.

In a hard-fought battle, the Greek saved two set points in the first set at 5-4, 40/30 on Djere's serve and then at 6/7 in the tie-break, before he edged a tight second set to advance after two hours and 15 minutes at the ATP 500 event. **ANI**



INDIAN SKIPPER

Great to be captain of India in all three formats: Rohit Sharma

LUCKNOW: Indian skipper Rohit Sharma on Wednesday said that it is a great feeling to be leading India in all three formats of the game.

India and Sri Lanka will square off in three T20Is and two Tests, with the first match of the series to be played in Lucknow on Thursday. Last week, Rohit was named as the Test skipper.

"It is a huge honour and it is always a great feeling to be captaining India in all three formats. I have a lot of challenges to look forward to, once the opportunity came through, I was glad and very happy to be captaining the team, we have a solid bunch of guys, so looking forward to leading them onto the park and seeing what we can create on the field," said Rohit during a virtual press conference.

When asked about having Jasprit Bumrah as vice-captain in the T20I series, Rohit said: "It does not matter too much whether it is a batter or bowler who is the vice-captain. It is the mind that matters and Bumrah has a great mind



of the game. I have seen it closely. Honestly, yes, it is a good way for him to step into the leadership role now."

"He has taken his game to the next level, I am sure he wants to do it even further. I am sure this is going to add further to him getting confidence. It is nice to have him as vice-captain for this particular series, let's hope everything works out. I do understand what sort of cricketing brain he has, it is nice to have him in this role," he added.

Suryakumar Yadav and Deepak Chahar have been ruled out of the T20I series against Sri Lanka. While the likes of Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant and Shardul Thakur have been rested. Sanju Samson has been included in the T20I squad.

"Samson has got talent man, whenever you see him bat in the IPL, he has produced that innings where everyone goes over the moon watching that innings, he has got the skillset to succeed. That is the whole point about the

sport, a lot of people have skill and talent, how you utilise it is the most critical part," said Rohit.

"It is now up to Sanju Samson how he wants to use that talent and maximise it because as team management, we see a lot of potential and a lot of talent in that individual. I hope we give him that confidence whenever he gets an opportunity.

"He is definitely into consideration and that is why he is part of the team. His backfoot play is superb. When you go to Australia, you need that shot-making ability, Samson has it in him. I just hope he utilises his potential," he added.

India squad: Rohit Sharma (Captain), Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shreyas Iyer, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan (wicket-keeper), Venkatesh Iyer, Deepak Hooda, Ravindra Jadeja, Yuzvendra Chahal, Ravi Bishnoi, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohd. Siraj, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Harshal Patel, Jasprit Bumrah (vice-captain), Avesh Khan.

-ANI

US SOCCER

Equal pay dispute resolved, US Soccer, women's team reach \$24mn agreement

WASHINGTON DC: US Soccer and the Women's National Team (USWNT) players have announced an agreement to resolve the outstanding equal pay claims in litigation that has been pending since March 2019.

The parties released the following joint statement on the settlement agreement. The newly released agreement will mean that the women's and men's national teams will receive an equal rate of pay in all friendlies and tournaments, including the World Cup. As per a report in CNN, US Soccer will be paying USD 22 million to the players in the case and it will also provide an additional USD 2 million into an account to benefit the USWNT players in their post-career goals.

"We are pleased to announce that, contingent on the negotiation of a new collective bargaining agreement, we will have resolved our longstanding dispute



over equal pay and proudly stand together in a shared commitment to advancing equality in soccer. Getting to this day has not been easy. The US Women's National Team players have achieved unprecedented success while working to achieve equal pay for themselves and future athletes," read an official joint statement.

"Today, we recognize the legacy of the past USWNT leaders who helped to make this day possible,

as well as all of the women and girls who will follow. Together, we dedicate this moment to them. We look forward to continuing to work together to grow women's soccer and advance opportunities for young girls and women in the United States and across the globe," it added.

In March 2019, US Women's National Team had filed a gender discrimination lawsuit against US Soccer. **ANI**

FOOTBALL

Havertz, Pulisic help Chelsea defeat Lille

LONDON: Goals from Kai Havertz and Christian Pulisic helped Chelsea defeat Lille OSC in the first leg of the round of 16 fixtures in the ongoing UEFA Champions League here at Stamford Bridge.

Chelsea defeated Lille 2-0 as Havertz and Pulisic registered goals in the 8th and 63rd minutes of the game respectively. On the other hand, Juventus was held to a 1-1 draw by Villarreal in the first leg of their round of 16 fixture in the ongoing Champions League.

For Juventus, Dusan Vlahovic opened the scoring in the opening minute of the game, but Villarreal managed to stage a comeback as Dani Parejo scored a goal in the 66th minute of the game. Later in the day, Manchester United will be in action against Atletico Madrid while Benfica will lock horns against Ajax in the premier European competition. **ANI**

FORMULA ONE

Leclerc quickest for Ferrari as Formula 1 new-generation cars begin Barcelona test

BARCELONA: The brand-new generation of Formula 1 cars finally emerged on track on Wednesday, as pre-season running began in Barcelona - and it was Ferrari's Charles Leclerc who set the fastest time on the opening morning in Spain. Leclerc established the early benchmark and later improved, conditions warming up after a chilly start, to set the quickest lap of 1m 20.165s on the morning of Day 1.

The Ferrari driver tallied nearly 80 laps and ended up three-tenths ahead of Lando Norris - the McLaren driver having improved for P2 with 13 minutes remaining. Mercedes' George Russell was, therefore, bumped to P3 as the 1pm deadline approached, but completed a productive 75 laps, with Aston Martin's Sebastian Vettel in fourth. Reigning champion Max Ver-

stappen enjoyed the highest lap count (80) as he finished sixth, behind AlphaTauri's Yuki Tsunoda in P5. The Red Bull RB18 turned heads, its form differing massively from the launch version offered earlier in February.

Fernando Alonso was seventh for Alpine, while Nicholas Latifi was eighth for Williams, three seconds off the leading pace.

In the camouflaged Alfa Romeo C42, reserve driver Robert Kubica completed a handful of installation laps as he finished 10th after a late flying effort, the Haas of Nikita Mazepin having eclipsed him for P9 in the dying moments of the morning session.

We are set to see Carlos Sainz take over from leader Leclerc for Ferrari in the afternoon, while Lewis Hamilton gets to take the wheel of the Mercedes W13. **ANI**



MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,044.86 points, down by 0.33 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 1.12 per cent at 489.78 points. Sembcorp Salalah, up 5.19 per cent, was the top gainer while, Al Jazeera Services, down 9.81 per cent, was the top loser.

DUBAI EXPO

Madayn highlights investment opportunities at Expo 2020



PROMOTION: Madayn officials are present at Oman's pavilion at Expo 2020 to promote Madayn Investment Complexes in four industrial cities. - Supplied picture

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates - Madayn is promoting the available investment opportunities in its network of industrial cities at Expo 2020 in the UAE.

This comes in line with its vision in enhancing the Sultanate's position as a leading regional centre of manufacturing, ICT, innovation and entrepreneurship excellence, and its mission in attracting industrial investments and providing continued support,

through regionally and globally competitive strategies, good infrastructure, value-adding services, and easy governmental processes.

Madayn officials are present at Oman's pavilion at Expo 2020 to promote Madayn Investment Complexes in four industrial cities. At Sur Industrial City, investment opportunities are available in food investment complexes on an area of 42,000 sqm, and multiple industries investment complexes on an area of 41,000 sqm.

Moreover, Samail Industrial City is offering investment opportuni-

ties in food investment complexes (53,000 sqm), multiple industries investment complexes (22,000 sqm), and logistics investment complexes (61,000 sqm). The available investment opportunities at Sohar Industrial City include food investment complexes (60,000 sqm), multiple industries (60,000 sqm), and plastic industries investment complexes (50,000 sqm). Al Buraimi Industrial City also offers investment opportunities in food investment complexes (27,000 sqm) and multiple industries investment complexes (32,000 sqm).

It is also promoting investment opportunities for industries derived from feasibility studies, as Madayn in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion identified the investment opportunities in the industrial sector based on preliminary feasibility studies on the local and international markets. As these opportunities have been identified, the investor needs to carry out detailed feasibility studies for the targeted sectors such as plastic industries, food industries, building materials industries, among others.

CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN

CBO issues treasury bills worth OMR177mn

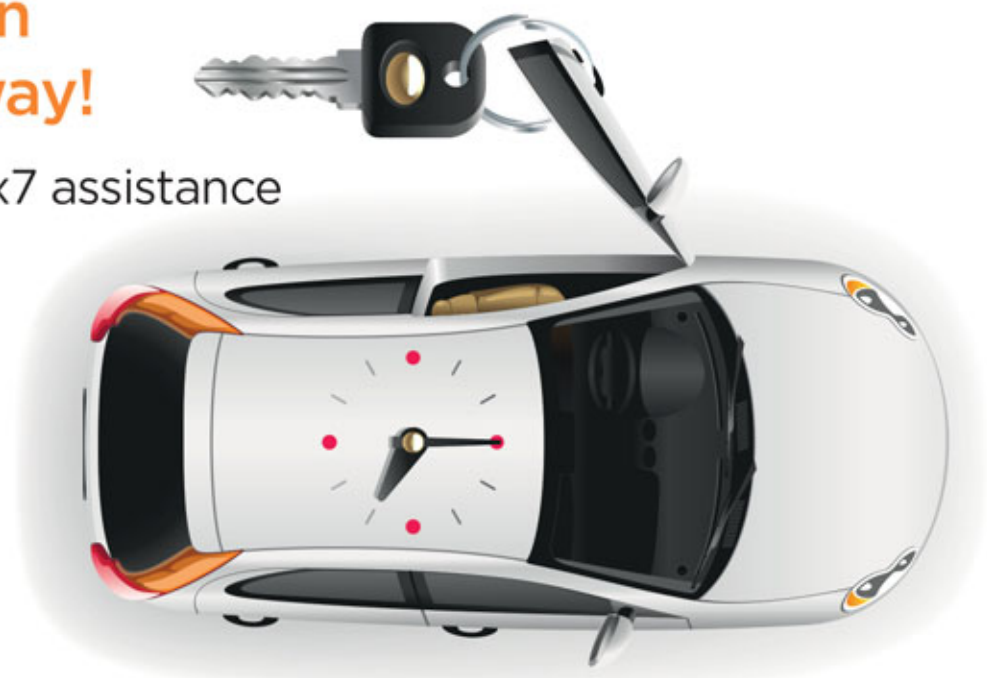
MUSCAT: The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) raised OMR177 million by way of allotting treasury bills on Wednesday.

The treasury bills are for a maturity period of 91 days, from February 23 until May 25, 2022.

The average accepted price reached OMR99.822 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR99.820 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 0.71461 per cent and 0.71589 per cent, respectively. Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds. CBO acts as the Issue Manager and provides the added advantage of ready liquidity. -ONA

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MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Sembcorp Salalah, up 5.19 per cent, was the top gainer while, Al Jazeera Services, down 9.81 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,044.86 points, down by 0.33 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 1.12 per cent at 489.78 points. Sembcorp Salalah, up 5.19 per cent, was the top gainer while, Al Jazeera Services, down 9.81 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Vision Insurance were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded while Omantel was the most active in terms of turnover. A total number of 499 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR1.87 million, with more than 10 million shares changing hands. Out of 45 traded securities, 8 advanced, 21 declined and 16 remained unchanged. At the session close, Domestic investors were net sellers

for OMR336,000 while foreign investors were net buyers for OMR204,000 followed by GCC & Arab investors for OMR132,000 worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 6410.24 points, down by 0.43 per cent. Prices of National Finance, Vision Insurance and Al Madina Takaful were up by 2.52 per cent, 1.91 per cent, 1.04 per cent respectively. Prices of Muscat Finance, Al Omaniya Financial Services, Global Financial Investments, Ominvest, and Al Anwar Investment were down by 3.23 per cent, 2.86 per cent, 1.39 per cent, 1.36 per cent, and 1.27 per cent respectively. Industrial Index closed at 5693.21 points, down by 1.07 per cent. Services Index was down by 0.33 per cent before closing at 1627.88 points. — United Securities

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES							
Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%	
MSX 30 INDEX	4,056.17	4,033.37	4,044.86	4,058.07	-13.21	-0.33	
FINANCIAL INDEX	6,439.21	6,410.23	6,410.23	6,437.81	-27.57	-0.43	
Industry Index	5,756.92	5,679.97	5,693.20	5,754.71	-61.50	-1.07	
Services Index	1,633.85	1,616.97	1,627.88	1,633.33	-5.45	-0.33	
MSX Shariah Index	495.84	487.75	489.79	495.32	-5.53	-1.12	
MSX TR INDEX	4,882.60	4,855.16	4,868.99	4,884.89	-15.91	-0.33	
Trading Summary							
Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
10,069,601	1,874,186	499	22,002,460,772	8	21	16	45

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23

	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (R)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PREV. VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	20,000	2,600	2	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.127	0.003	2.362	0.130	0.120	0.127	0.100	11,050,000
OM0000003988	OREDOO	130,000	46,540	4	0.358	0.358	0.358	0.358	0.350	0.008	2.286	0.358	0.352	0.358	0.100	233,038,034
OM0000008920	VISION INSURANCE	1,575,000	188,825	33	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.105	0.002	1.905	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.100	10,700,000
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	160,703	68,435	10	0.424	0.430	0.420	0.426	0.424	0.002	0.472	0.430	0.422	0.432	0.100	93,720,000
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSUR.	27,000	10,368	9	0.384	0.384	0.384	0.384	0.384	0.000	0.000	0.384	0.376	0.392	0.100	38,400,000
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	6,000	714	3	0.119	0.119	0.119	0.119	0.119	0.000	0.000	0.119	0.117	0.125	0.100	232,008,238
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INV	10,000	900	2	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.090	0.088	0.092	0.100	8,100,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	242,320	126,647	12	0.524	0.524	0.520	0.522	0.522	0.000	0.000	0.520	0.520	0.522	0.100	1,865,875,841
OM0000003000	AI MAHA MARKTING	2,000	1,398	1	0.684	0.684	0.684	0.688	0.688	0.000	0.000	0.684	0.684	0.690	0.100	47,472,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	377,102	304,890	25	0.804	0.812	0.804	0.808	0.808	0.000	0.000	0.812	0.812	0.812	0.100	606,000,000
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	315,865	119,996	26	0.386	0.386	0.378	0.380	0.382	-0.002	-0.524	0.378	0.380	0.388	0.100	186,575,841
OM0000003398	SOHAR INV BANK	215,000	22,435	4	0.104	0.105	0.104	0.104	0.105	-0.001	-0.952	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.100	310,966,478
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	287,208	181,856	5	0.680	0.684	0.680	0.680	0.688	-0.008	-1.163	0.684	0.680	0.688	0.100	107,100,000
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDSTR	8,125	7,760	2	0.960	0.960	0.952	0.956	0.968	-0.012	-1.240	0.952	0.968	0.972	0.100	85,753,200
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	674,969	52,556	39	0.079	0.079	0.078	0.078	0.079	-0.001	-1.268	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.100	15,600,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	143,444	32,963	7	0.233	0.233	0.230	0.230	0.233	-0.003	-1.288	0.230	0.230	0.250	0.100	76,100,723
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	56,347	16,389	4	0.290	0.292	0.290	0.291	0.295	-0.004	-1.356	0.292	0.292	0.300	0.100	194,494,339
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SER	80,000	35,200	3	0.440	0.440	0.440	0.440	0.448	-0.008	-1.786	0.440	0.440	0.448	0.100	194,023,400
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST & FIN.	281,248	41,622	14	0.148	0.148	0.146	0.148	0.151	-0.003	-1.987	0.148	0.140	0.148	0.100	35,078,000
OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FIN.	25,335	3,446	2	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.140	-0.004	-2.857	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.100	39,703,183
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	785,301	46,178	36	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.080	0.082	-0.002	-3.228	0.082	0.082	0.086	0.100	18,428,780
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	228,917	101,388	17	0.440	0.448	0.430	0.442	0.458	-0.016	-3.493	0.448	0.448	0.466	0.100	24,310,000
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	64,620	11,816	9	0.188	0.188	0.182	0.183	0.190	-0.007	-3.684	0.183	0.171	0.183	0.100	36,600,000
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	338,400	96,520	38	0.300	0.300	0.285	0.285	0.316	-0.031	-9.810	0.285	0.285	0.285	0.100	17,443,218
Total	24	6,014,904	1,501,441	307												
Parallel Market																
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	137,000	11,045	6	0.081	0.081	0.080	0.081	0.077	0.004	5.195	0.080	0.078	0.080	0.100	77,320,328
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	21,885	2,670	2	0.122	0.122	0.122	0.122	0.119	0.003	2.521	0.122	0.119	0.127	0.100	66,030,115
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	527,200	36,941	24	0.070	0.071	0.070	0.070	0.069	0.001	1.449	0.070	0.070	0.071	0.100	8,750,000
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	487,010	47,265	23	0.097	0.098	0.096	0.097	0.096	0.001	1.942	0.097	0.096	0.097	0.100	18,971,000
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	302,083	29,604	6	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.000	0.000	0.098	0.097	0.102	0.100	196,030,653
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	13,800	852	2	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.000	0.000	0.070	0.070	0.073	0.100	8,531,250
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MKK	21,075	18,883	5	0.896	0.896	0.896	0.896	0.896	0.000	0.000	0.896	0.888	0.896	0.100	85,120,000
OM0000002333	SALALAH PORT SR	5,000	2,800	1	0.560	0.560	0.560	0.600	0.600	0.000	0.000	0.560	0.540	0.600	0.100	107,902,440
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	585,000	46,773	18	0.080	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.079	0.075	0.079	0.100	27,931,553
OM0000002804	ASAFIA FOODS	750	104	1	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.000	0.000	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.100	15,120,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	5,404	259	2	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.048	0.050	0.100	32,394,597
OM0000004933	ALSUWADI POWER	104,807	5,136	9	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.000	0.000	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.100	35,005,911
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	115,000	5,378	7	0.049	0.049	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.048	0.050	0.100	70,204,870
OM0000007084	MCT DESALINATE	18,210	2,222	6	0.122	0.122	0.122	0.122	0.122	0.000	0.000	0.122	0.122	0.122	0.100	18,977,149
OM0000006912	AHLIA INSURANCE	10,000	3,240	1	0.324	0.324	0.324	0.324	0.326	-0.002	-0.613	0.324	0.324	0.324	0.100	32,400,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	1,047,213	100,547	19	0.096	0.097	0.096	0.096	0.097	-0.001	-1.031	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.100	214,747,491
OM0000003281	TAGEER FINANCE	20,789	1,703	3	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.083	-0.001	-1.205	0.082	0.082	0.085	0.100	20,794,380
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV H.	213,967	15,234	19	0.071	0.072	0.071	0.071	0.072	-0.001	-1.388	0.072	0.072	0.075	0.100	14,200,000
OM0000003821	GALFAR ENGINEER	31,600	2,180	5	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.070	-0.001	-1.429	0.069	0.069	0.070	0.100	14,006,065
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT. ENG.	211,394	24,372	19	0.116	0.118	0.115	0.115	0.119	-0.004	-3.361	0.115	0.113	0.115	0.100	14,950,000
OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD.	178,630	15,333	20	0.088	0.088	0.084	0.086	0.091	-0.005	-5.495	0.084	0.083	0.085	0.100	2,887,145
Total	21	4,054,697	372,744	192												

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CLEAN ENERGY

India's green energy exports may rise to \$500 billion in 20 years

MUMBAI: Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani on Wednesday said India's annual export of green energy would rise to \$500 billion in the next 20 years. "India's technology and digital exports have risen to \$150 billion

from less than \$10 billion 20 years ago. By 2030, I believe they will exceed half a trillion dollars. Similarly, India's clean and green energy exports in the next 20 years at the end of 20 years also has the potential of half a trillion dollars of export," Ambani said in a virtual chat at the Asia Economic Dialogue.

He also said energy transition will determine geopolitical transition in the 21st century. "When wood was replaced with coal, Europe overtook India and China to emerge the world leader. Similarly, with the emergence of oil, the US and West Asia outgrew others. -ANI

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ECONOMIC CRISIS

\$2 billion World Bank support to Argentina

WASHINGTON: The World Bank will support Argentina with \$2 billion in 2022 amid a severe economic crisis in the country, the bank's managing director of operations said. The bank, which last year committed a record \$2.1 billion to the South American country, "has a project pipeline under preparation of at least \$2 billion for 2022," according to a statement. "The World Bank is committed to supporting Argentina on its growth path and recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 crisis," said managing director of operations Axel van Trotsenburg after a meeting with Argentinian Finance Minister Martín Guzmán. "Bank support has been key to sustaining basic services for the poor, and financing the much-needed vaccines to protect lives and reactivate the economy," Guzmán said that the investment would translate to some \$830 million of net financing of "innovation, infrastructure, health, social inclusion and environment projects." Argentina suffers from a bloated state apparatus, low productivity in industry and a large shadow economy that deprives the state of much tax revenue. -ANA

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Teaching Children How to Protect BIRDS



Part of being a good environmental steward is passing on this wisdom to the next generation. Here are three hands-on ways parents and grandparents can teach children to protect the birds in their very own backyard.

BUILD A BIRD FEEDER

Build bird feeders using natural or recycled materials to teach two earth-friendly lessons in one: the importance of reducing waste and the need to take care of local wildlife. Bird feeders can be crafted from milk cartons, tin cans, mason jars or even natural materials like pinecones. As you decorate your bird feeders, talk to your kids about how birds are not just beautiful, but also a vital part of the ecosystem and how you are offering these creatures a chance to rest and refuel. Fill your finished products with birdseed and choose a safe spot to hang them. Experts recommend bird feeders be positioned either closer than three feet or farther than 30 feet from windows.

KEEP A LOG

Now that you've invited birds to your yard and have taken steps to protect them, inspire young naturalists to keep a log of flying visitors. Kids can draw pictures of the birds they see and note their observations. Visit Audubon for Kids at audubon.org for a birding guide, activities, games and additional projects that can help kids learn to identify various bird species by sight and sound. - Statopoint

PROTECT FLIGHT

Birds in flight are prone to strike windows. Fortunately, there's an easy home project you and your children can complete together that will help prevent this from happening. Applying decals that reflect ultraviolet sunlight to your home's windows, particularly windows that are highly reflective of open sky, has been proven to substantially reduce the likelihood of bird strikes.



ROUND-UP

Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392: Fastest and most powerful vehicle arrives in Oman

The Wrangler Rubicon 392 is equipped with a 6.4-litre V8 engine that produces 470 horsepower and 70 lb-feet of torque of legendary off-road performance to meet the needs of enthusiasts looking for a new level of on-road performance

MUSCAT: Dhofar Automotive, the official distributor of Jeep, Dodge, Chrysler, Fiat, Alfa Romeo and Ram vehicles in the Sultanate of Oman, announced the arrival of the fastest and most powerful ever Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 to its showrooms. The Wrangler Rubicon 392 is equipped with a 6.4-litre V8 engine that produces 470 horsepower and 70 lb-feet of torque of

legendary off-road performance to meet the needs of enthusiasts looking for a new level of on-road performance. Mated to an 8-speed Torque flight automatic transmission with smooth-shifting and a Silicon-Trac permanent transfer case, this engine gives the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 a 0-100 km/h acceleration in 4.5 seconds and a quarter-mile crossover capa-



bility in just 13 seconds. Highlighting the arrival of the vehicle, Hatem Al-Najjar, General Manager of Dhofar Automotive, said, "We are delighted to welcome the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 to our showrooms to meet the needs of brand enthusiasts herein Oman. It boasts of special features, including the increased height added by

the manufacturer and the larger torque at low revs provided by the V8 engine making the Rubicon 392 a legend, both off-road or on road. Whether taking it through rugged terrain, crossing slopes or on paved roads, the Wrangler Rubicon 392 delivers superior performance and responds quickly and easily." "We believe that the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 will be very popular and well-received by all our valued customers here in the Sultanate of Oman, which is renowned for its diverse terrain. With its special modifications, it will seek to attract adventure fanatics, whether they take on dunes or challenge off-road terrain," he added. The adoption of the 6.4-litre engine marks the first time that a V8 engine has been available from the company for a Wrangler after an absence of nearly 40 years. This engine and its functional cover design were specifically modified for the Wrangler Rubicon 392, to

deliver 470 horsepower and 470 pound-feet of torque. The engine delivers approximately 75% of the Wrangler's Rubicon 392's maximum torque at just above rpm, which is critical for on-road and off-road performance. This feature provides impressive performance, whether accelerating from zero to 100 km/hour in 4.5 seconds or when travelling gradually on steep slopes. The TorqueFlite eight-speed automatic transmission gives the car smooth and fast gearing during demanding and normal driving conditions. This transmission allows the driver to engage with two new aluminium steering wheel paddles, the first time this feature has been used in a Wrangler, or with an electronic field-clutch which produces a gear perfectly proportioned to the requirements of any type of driving. The powertrain in the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 distributes power to all four wheels continuously.

RECOGNITION



Malabar Gold & Diamonds wins 'Brand of the Year - Retail' at Jewellery World Awards

MUSCAT: Prominent jewellery retailer Malabar Gold & Diamonds, with over 280 stores across 10 countries, has won big at the inaugural run of JWA Dubai 2022, the regional edition of the prestigious Jewellery World Awards. The award was conferred in the category 'Brand of the Year - Retail' and is the first business award that specifically honours individuals and companies from the Middle East's rapidly growing jewellery and gemstone trade. In the past years, Chow Tai Fook Jewellery Group Limited, the world's largest jewellery retailer has been the recipient of this prestigious award in Hong Kong. "It is my honour to be a part of the successful launch of JWA Dubai - an awards programme that recognises the achievements of the jewellery industry in the Middle East and celebrates its status as an important market in the global trade. I am proud to say that our inspiring recipients are very deserving of the recognition, especially for the great resilience

they have shown in the face of the pandemic," said Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of DMCC, and Chairman of Dubai Diamond Exchange, one of the principal judges of JWA Dubai. K P Abdul Salam, Vice Chairman, Malabar Group and Shamlal Ahamed, Managing Director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds jointly received the award at an event held in Dubai. "We are extremely proud and honoured to be receiving this prestigious award at the maiden edition of JWA Dubai 2022, which aims to enhance and promote innovation and best business practices in the industry. With innovation being at the core of our products, we have always strived to deliver a world-class experience to our customers and will continue to focus our efforts on becoming the world's most preferred jewellery retailer," said Shamlal Ahamed, Managing Director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

OMAN ARAB BANK

OAB receives award for social responsibility

MUSCAT: Oman Arab Bank (OAB) was recently presented with the Excellence Award in Social Responsibility in acknowledgement of its contributions towards sustainability and sustainable initiatives in 2021. The award was received by Feras Al Farsi, Head of Sustainability and CSR on behalf of Oman Arab Bank. Social responsibility forms the basis of OAB's sustainability strategy and its three main focus areas: community partnerships, environmental responsibility and financial inclusion. The bank's sustainability strategy was designed to add value to society and the environment in parallel with the development and growth of the organisation. OAB recently issued its first GRI-certified sustainability report, which is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Oman Vision 2040. This report makes OAB the third bank in the Sultanate to achieve this distinction. Throughout 2021, OAB collaborated with 12 talented Omani photographers to produce the bank's



first eco-friendly desk calendar made entirely of recycled paper and vegetable ink. The bank also led several awareness campaigns on environmental responsibility highlighting the different native flora and fauna that are at risk of being endangered and shared tips to encourage a more eco-friendly life. For the second time, the bank also sponsored The Environment Society of Oman's virtual fundraiser. As part of its financial inclusion efforts, the bank strives to educate and advise the public regarding financial management to ensure they make optimum use of

the available opportunities. The bank conducted a financial management workshop for members of the Omani Women's Association and partnered with the Oman Banks Association for a financial inclusion campaign from April to May 2021. The bank also developed its social media content to explain the concept of financial inclusion to the uninitiated. Oman Arab Bank has developed a strong relationship with several non-profit organisations over the years and 2021 was no different. All partners can be found and donated to through the OAB app: Dar Al Atta'a, Al Noor Association For The Blind, Oman Charitable Organisation, Takaful, Handicapped Children Association, and Environment Society of Oman. During Ramadan, the bank also ran an awareness campaign with the partners and set up festive competitions with all proceeds being donated to the charities. Throughout 2021, OAB collaborated with several other private and public entities on other initiatives such as financially supporting students with their studies and providing medical equipment to those in need. Due to climate change, Oman saw several natural disasters in 2021 such as the flooding in Sur and then North Batinah, followed by Cyclone Shaheen. For Sur and North Batinah, the Bank donated to the Ministry of Social Development to ensure that the aid reached those who needed it most, in addition to providing a list of SMEs from the affected areas that specialised in construction to facilitate repairs. For Cyclone Shaheen, OAB and Alizz Islamic Bank allocated OMR 300,000 as relief funds for those in need.

MARKETING COOPERATION CONTRACT

MHD-ITICS appointed as regional partner for Siemens Digital Industries in Oman

DUBAI: MHD-ITICS, the infrastructure, technology, industrial and consumer solutions cluster of Mohsin Haider Darwish, has signed a marketing cooperation contract with Siemens Industrial for their digital industries products. Under the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding, MHD-ITICS will now serve as the official regional partner in the Sultanate of Oman for Siemens Digital Industries, a leader in automation and digitalisation. The MoU was signed on February 16 at the Siemens Experience Center in Expo 2020 Dubai, by Jayaprakash Menon, Chief Executive Officer of MHD-ITICS, and Mohammed Khalifa, Chief Executive Officer, Digital Industries, Siemens Middle East, in the presence of Lujaina Mohsin Darwish, Chairperson, MHD-ITICS, and senior officials representing Siemens and MHD-ITICS. Commenting on the association,



Lujaina Darwish said, "Rapidly changing market conditions and an increasingly urgent need for greater sustainability are some of the greatest challenges businesses in Oman's face today. Highly complex challenges such as these can be mastered by exploiting the potential of data and embracing digitalisation and automation. Siemens Digital Industries are world leaders in this segment, and through our

partnership with Siemens Digital Industries, we will be bringing the very best of these technologies to businesses in the country and, in turn, take yet another step forward in our endeavour to be a key enabler for Oman Vision 2040 in the Sultanate." "With our established and comprehensive knowledge of markets, together with that of our partner MHD-ITICS, we can offer our customers cutting-edge technology that will spur them on their digital transformation journey and place them ahead of the competition," said Mohammed Khalifa. He added, "We are glad to have partnered with a company as reputed as MHD-ITICS. Its service network and market expertise in Oman are second to none. I am confident that by working in close cooperation with it, we can be a key driving force for the digital transformation of the industry across the country."

FASHION

Charles & Keith's Spring 2022 collection a celebration of hope

MUSCAT: To ring in the New Year, Charles & Keith's Spring 2022 collection is a celebration of hope and new beginnings - an enticing evocation of a sun-drenched garden filled with flowers. **Key theme** Fresh flowers and delicate pastels are a key theme in the footwear collection, with a cheery floral motif that captures the spirit of spring cropping up on sandals, urban clogs and Mary Janes. Shed the weight of wintry boots and slip



into this season's light and bright spring sandals. Featuring a chunky platform and playful straps that wrap around the ankles, it is the perfect



accessory for sundress season. Bags take on splashes of vibrant orange, pink, periwinkle, and green, epitomising a bolder mood of the collection. This season's key



bag, the Koa, references a distinctive retro silhouette with its timeless boxy shape, single-hued body and large clasp, topped off with a matte finish. 2000s aesthetics are



having a major resurgence, with Y2K influences evident throughout the rest of the collection: dainty mini shoulder bags are contrasted against sculptural crescent shoul-

der bags and panelled top handles for the ultimate cool-girl look. Drawing inspiration from the floral motif used throughout the collection, an Instagram AR filter invites users to experience Spring in Bloom with Charles & Keith wherever they are, with florals blossoming and interacting with the space around them. Rebirth. Renewal. The season of new beginnings. Eclectic influences are drawn into a collection that radiates energy and optimism, just like the first blooms of spring.

ROUND-UP

Changan CS75 Plus crossover impresses with premium design

Ever since its launch in the Oman market, Changan CS75 Plus has been astounding for car enthusiasts for its promising quality of innovation, aesthetics, functionality and stability

MUSCAT: With its premium design, comfortable automotive interior, and highly intelligent configuration, the compact crossover Changan CS75 Plus which comes in luxury and sport variants offers a host of special features.

A spokesperson for Arabian Gulf Automobiles and Equipment LLC (AGAE), part of Bahwan International Group is the official distributor of Changan brand in Oman said, “Ever since its launch in the Oman market, Changan CS75 Plus has been astounding car enthusiasts for its promising quality of innovation, aesthetics, functionality and stability. The model makes driving feel like winning with its stunning design, premium interior and intelligent features. The CS75 Plus is loaded with smart and innovative features that aim to elevate the confidence and sophistication in every drive.”

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

Standard features in the CS75 Plus include power windows, central locking, cruise control, dual-zone auto A/C, 8 speakers, multifunctional steering wheel, USB+AUX ports, 12-inch screen,



Bluetooth, 360 camera, leather ventilated seats, sunroof, fog lamps, parking sensors LED headlamps, panoramic roof, keyless entry and start, and 19-inch wheels. Safety features include dual front, side and curtain airbags, ABS, and hill assist.

Its Blue Core Powertrain Technology, based on the principles of power, clean and quiet, provides owners with a highly efficient and energy-saving performance.

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

To instil confidence and sophistication in every drive, CS75 Plus offers a range of intelligent driving technologies and advanced safety features. To create a premium drive experience, CS75 Plus seamlessly integrates a luxurious interior with high-tech convenience features, coupled with ample space.

Changan CS75 Plus 2.0 T B AT Luxury includes the features of CS75 Plus 2.0 T 8 AT Sport features. Its exterior boasts of piercing front position headlamp, adaptive high and low beam, ORVM with memory and puddle lamps. Its interior features multicolour

ambient lighting, front-seat ventilation, driver seat with memory and luggage cover.

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

Intelligent Adaptive Cruise Control provides a safer and more pleasant driving experience. IACC facilitates smart driving features including heavy traffic assisted driving, lane keep assist, automatic deceleration during turns, intel-

ligent speed limit assist, and voice-activated cruise speed setting.

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

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

In a scenario where you brake suddenly and the car behind you is unaware of this and is approaching you with speed. Your car detects the challenge and alerts you in the screen in front of you and the rear lights of your car start blinking/flashing to capture the driver's (Behind) attention. There are two options for this, the driver either sits in the car or he leaves the car. Under both the options the car parks itself by using sensors and by scanning the nearby areas.

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

The exterior features of Changan CS75 Plus 2.0 T 8 AT SPORT includes 19” dual-tone al-

loy wheels, LED headlamps, front fog lights with cornering, panoramic sunroof, ORVM - electrically adjustable, folding and heating, rear led taillamps, quad exhaust pipes. The interior has sport seats with a two-tone interior (black & red), electrically adjustable front seats, drive mode (normal, eco, sport), leather steering wheel, soft leather dashboard, multifunction steering wheel.

Safety features include front and curtain airbags, ABS, E80 +TCS+ESC+HHC, hill descent control, auto hold, TPMS, 360 camera, adaptive cruise control, automatic emergency brake, front collision warning and electronic parking brake. Infotainment element has 7-LCD instrument cluster, 12” infotainment screen, high-performance audio system with 6 speakers, navigation, mirror link - Android & Apple. The model offers an electric tailgate, remote control engine start/stop, push-button start/stop, rear ac vents, keyless entry and auto AC.

Arabian Gulf Automobiles and Equipment, which is part of Bahwan International Group, has set up a spacious and state-of-the-art showroom in Al Qurum and service centre in Ghala, Muscat. AGAE has already tied up for Periodic Maintenance Services in many cities including Salalah, Sohar, Sur, Nizwa, Ibra and Barka etc.

Eshraqa’s Stemazone participates in Muscat International Book Fair

MUSCAT: In reiterating its commitment to promoting a culture of scientific thinking and problem solving within a knowledge-based economy, Khimji Ramdas (KR) Eshraqa’s Stemazone initiative is hosting a booth at the Muscat International Book Fair 2022.

Organised under the patronage of His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, the Fair will take place from February 24 to March 5, at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC).

Established by Eshraqa, the Corporate Social Responsibility arm of Khimji Ramdas, Stemazone is a sustainable educational programme that has been conceptualised in partnership with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Culture, Sports and Youth (MOCSY) to introduce Omani children, between 6 to 16 years, to the marvellous world of science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM).

As a farsighted educational initiative that aims to do its bit towards



achieving Oman’s Vision 2040 by creating a workforce of competent and knowledgeable citizens, Stemazone is providing convenient access to activities and information surrounding its programmes to

Omani students through its interactive pavilion - 1K1 and 1K2 (opposite the kids’ arena) - at the exhibition area of the fair. Stemazone will also be organising a number of activities, including a workshop

each on Coding and Robotics for children attending the Fair.

Commenting on Stemazone’s commitment to inculcate a scientific bent of mind among children in communities and schools across

the Sultanate, Nailesh Khimji, Director –Khimji Ramdas averred, “Muscat International Book Fair is one of the largest cultural events in the Sultanate. First held in 1992, it is among the top 10 book fairs in the Arab world. Stemazone’s participation in it is hence inevitable and is yet another step towards making our programmes more accessible for children, who can enjoy the convenience of visiting our stall, as well as attend workshops held alongside the Book Fair. Through initiatives such as Stemazone and our participation in cultural events of this nature, we are hoping to build a generation of avid readers, thinkers and problem solvers that excel in their future careers.”

Stemazone offers a hybrid learning experience through a physical centre located at the Children’s Museum and a state-of-art online learning system.

Both experiences offer engaging and interactive sessions of creativity for kids. The programmes are designed in a manner such

that they focus on developing children’s skills and knowledge in coding, electronics, 3D design, IoT, smart cities, and design thinking. The sessions also aim at building confidence, teaching public speaking and imbibing leadership, teamwork, and collaboration skills.

Stemazone workshops offer an ideal platform for students to understand the analytics of problem-solving, collaborating, testing ideas, and creating inspirational work; these workshops help them to think critically and creatively, and foster an element of curiosity in them.

Eshraqa has been established on the premise that the private sector has a responsibility towards the development of local communities and towards empowering talented individuals in the Sultanate. By working towards nation-building at the grassroots, Eshraqa aspires to contribute towards the education sector by building infrastructure that will lead to the enhancement of knowledge, skills, and capabilities.



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ROUND-UP

Lexus LX: The most awaited luxury SUV launched in Oman

Whatever the driving conditions, the 2022 LX delivers a constant, rewarding sense of connection, control, and vehicle response with the Lexus Driving Signature

MUSCAT: As part of its relentless pursuit to create Amazing Experiences and meet the diverse and growing aspirations of discerning customers in Oman, the all-new 2022 Lexus LX was launched.

Since its establishment in 1989, Lexus has been committed to the spirit of innovation. The brand has always risen to the occasion with new technologies that provide limitless value to new and existing customers. The Lexus LX was introduced less than a decade later in 1996 and has since become Lexus' flagship SUV due to its high build quality, ride comfort, and driving performance fit for roads the world over, no matter the condition. This has been achieved by refining the LX's founding concepts – reliability, durability, and off-road driving performance. The LX has sold a cumulative total of more than 500,000 units in over 50 countries and regions.

Whatever the driving conditions, the 2022 LX delivers a constant, rewarding sense of connection, control, and vehicle response with the Lexus Driving Signature. An Electric Power Steering system has been adopted for the first time, together with Electronically Controlled Braking to guarantee



optimum on and off-road performance. The suspension systems have also been redesigned and feature both Active Height Control and Adaptive Variable Suspension for agility, stability, and comfort in all driving scenarios.

"The all-new LX promises ease and quality on any road in the world" and is ready to meet the diverse needs of our global customers. The LX is redefining what it means to truly travel in comfort and style," said Takami Yokoo, Chief Engineer of the all-new Lexus LX. "We have achieved this by refining the LX's traditional off-road performance through rigorous field testing, and through the outstanding efforts of our development team and drive-meister to refine on-road performance with a fully-optimised Lexus Driving Signature that delivers the kind of linear response our drivers want and need. We invite you to experience the all-new LX on real roads, built by the hands and aspirations of real people."

The all-new LX is available with a choice of two powertrain options, including two newly developed V6 twin-turbo engines. The V6 twin-turbo 3.5-litre petrol engine achieves class-leading performance that surpasses that of a conventional V8, producing 409 hp and up to 66.28 Kg.m torque. Meanwhile, the V6 twin-turbo engine 3.3-litre diesel variant is capable of 302 hp and up to 71.38 Kg.m torque. Both versions are mated to a 10-speed automatic transmission.

The all-new LX's updated Tazuna cockpit organises the principal controls and information displays within the driver's immediate sight-line for easy, intuitive operation. Its slim instrument panel creates a sense of balance, particularly in off-road driving, giving the cabin a wide and open feel.

The cabin offers a range of advanced features such as dual-centre displays, which include an upper 12.3-inch Multimedia touchscreen display that is com-

The all-new LX promises ease and quality on any road in the world and is ready to meet the diverse needs of our global customers.

patible with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and a lower 7-inch display for navigation, audio, and climate controls as well as other driver support function. It features a colour head-up display, an 8-inch colour Multi-information Display (MID) in the cluster gauge, wireless charging for smartphones, and a 4-zone automatic climate

control system with rear control switches. Owners also benefit from enhanced security with Lexus' first fingerprint-authentication push-button start switch.

Additional features include a 25-speaker Mark Levinson sound system with Quantum Logic Immersion QLI, Clari-Fi & PurePlay technology for precise, lossless audio and amazing 3-D surround sound experience.

As with any Lexus vehicle, safety is a top priority for the all-new Lexus LX. Drivers can enjoy complete peace of mind thanks to the Lexus Safety System+, advanced safety and driver assistance system that includes a Pre-Collision System (PCS) with new features and an expanded detection range. The system also includes Full-Speed Dynamic Radar Cruise Control (DRCC) with Curve Speed Reduction (RSR) that suppresses vehicle speed when entering a curve to offer additional acceleration upon exit. Drivers also benefit from Lane

Tracing Alert (LTA), Lane Departure Alert (LDA), and Adaptive High-beam System (AHB).

In addition, the car features a comprehensive array of safety features such as all-round SRS airbags including side-curtain airbags for the rear seats, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Traction Control (TRC), Anti-lock Brake System (ABS), Brake Assist (BA), Parking Support Brake (PKSB), Blind Spot Monitor (BSM), Multi-terrain Monitor (MTM) including Panoramic View Monitor (PVM), Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA), Downhill Assist Control (DAC), Tyre Pressure Warning System (TPWS) and Drive Start Control (DSC) among many others.

For customers in pursuit of even greater comfort and luxury, the all-new LX has also been made available for the first time in its new Grandeur. The LX Grandeur model boasts exclusive interior features, including two large heated rear seats with ventilation and massage functions, up to 48 degrees of reclinability, a Rear Seat Entertainment (RSE) system with an 11.6-inch anti-reflective screen, and built-in ottoman support for the lower legs and calves.

For those seeking peerless responsiveness and exhilarating performance, the all-new LX is also available as 'Sport Edition'. The LX Sport Edition boasts exclusive interior and exterior features, including a distinctive black 'F' mesh-pattern grille trimmed in satin chrome, and 22-inch forged Black Premium Metallic alloy wheels that set the Sport Edition apart from the rest of its range.

The cabin comes with Aluminium Hadori ornamentation, a unique meter, textured steering wheel, custom-crafted Sporty seats, and aluminium pedals and scuffplates.

Owners can choose from a range of six exterior colours including one exclusive to the LX Sport Edition model, namely White Nova GF. The interior is available in Flare Red and Black variants.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Zubair Automotive Group maps future transformations for 2022

MUSCAT: Zubair Automotive Group continues on the path of digital transformation with a recent meeting held at Bait Al Zubair. Attended by The Zubair Corporation Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Zubair Automotive Group's Chief Operating Officer (COO) and members of the senior management of Zubair Automotive Group, the meeting highlighted future plans for each company within the group, as well as the actions to be taken by each to succeed. On that occasion, "Tawasul" was launched as an internal platform that links digital transformation to daily operations.

Commenting on future steps for the Zubair Automotive Group, Mohammad Al Farei, COO of the Zubair Automotive Group, said, "We are moving towards a more enriched work experience, both internally between staff, as well as with our clients.

"A transformation plan has been prepared that enables us to look at the way we work, and change it for the better. We are looking to restructure Zubair Automotive Group, introducing new products and innovations that drive internal development and change. The same will be introduced to our clients to refine the overall customer experience. Moreover, we are looking to rein-



force our HR initiatives, expanding on our network in the Sultanate efforts towards continuous development."

Covering Zubair Automotive

Group's executive business plan for 2022, the recent meeting focused on new products and core areas, talented Omani staff members, as well as digital transforma-

tion initiatives taking place internally and externally. Presentations were also given by the general managers of the Zubair Automotive Group companies, including

General Automotive Company, Dhofar Automotive, International Heavy Equipment (IHE), and Saryati Leasing, showcasing each company's achievements and de-

velopments over the past year.

During the meeting, Al Farei added, "As we look towards restructuring the group and increasing our market share, we will also be reviewing our operations process and realigning it with our long-term plan.

"This will include a deeper look at the staff, providing training and development opportunities while keeping good communication and an increased level of transparency in mind. The provision of increments, initiatives and rewards for employees that are going above and beyond are just some of the ways we are looking to utilise going forward. For our customers, we will be introducing new value-added services and developing the group companies' branches to boost our footprint in Oman and the region."

"Tawasul will provide a means for each employee to learn more about their respective lines of work by accessing practical and scientific topics on the portal. The portal will link us all with relevant updates, allow us to keep in touch and give employees the opportunity to provide their feedback. Simply put, it is a new form of efficient communication between all employees and members of the management," Al Farei concluded.

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