

HM GREETES PRESIDENT OF IRAN

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Dr. Hassan Rouhani of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the occasion of the Iranian New Year (Nowruz). In the cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes of good health and happiness to President Rouhani and the people of Iran further progress and prosperity. — **ONA**



HIS MAJESTY THE SULTAN GREETES PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Dr. Arif Alawi of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes of good health and happiness to President Alawi and the people of Pakistan further progress and prosperity. — **ONA**



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SAYYID THEYAZIN RECEIVES QATARI AMBASSADOR

His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth received in his office yesterday Jassim bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, Ambassador of Qatar to Oman. The meeting reviewed the bilateral relations between the two countries. It also discussed aspects of cooperation in the areas of culture, sports and youth. — **ONA**



BILATERAL RELATIONS

HM receives written message from Mauritanian President

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has received a written message from President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

The message deals with the bilateral relations and fields of co-operation between the two brotherly countries.

The message was received by His Highness Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers, when he received yesterday Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Cooperation and Mauritians Abroad, Envoy of the Mauritanian President.

The guest conveyed greetings of President of Mauritania and best wishes to His Majesty the Sultan.

The meeting comprehensively reviewed the relations binding the Sultanate and Mauritania and means of promoting cooperation in several fields, besides discussing regional developments and matters of common concern.

On his turn, the Mauritanian Foreign Minister expressed his

country's appreciation for the Sultanate's balanced policy at the regional and international levels and its constructive role in promoting understanding and rapprochement among countries.

He reaffirmed the desire of the Mauritanian leadership to expand cooperation with the Sultanate to serve the joint interests.

The meeting was attended by Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi Foreign Minister and Mohamed Vall Ould Ahmed, Mauritanian Ambassador to the Sultanate. — **ONA**

See also >A2



The donation of organs by a person, either during their lives or after death, is a noble act that helps save people whose lives are in danger

Families can choose to donate the organs of the brain dead in keeping with legal procedures in the country

DONATE ORGANS, SAVE LIVES

Efforts must be taken to intensify awareness about organ donation in the country

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Organs donated by a single person after they die can help improve the lives of up to eight patients suffering from organ failure, a senior official at the Ministry of Health has said.

More need to be done to spread

awareness of the importance of donating organs to help people in need, said Dr Ahmad Al Busaidi, from the ministry's National Organ Transplant Programme.

"A person wishing to donate his organs after death must educate him/herself about their intentions, and take information from

reliable sources," he said.

"They must then discuss this with their family, and aim to correct any misconceptions about organ donation they might have. Once they have been convinced, the person in question must ask them to carry out their desires, should something happen to the donor, which could include a situation in which doctors decide they are brain dead.

"The donation of organs by a person, either during their lives or after death, is a noble act that helps save people whose lives are in danger," added Al Busaidi.

"For example, while (s)he is still alive, a person can donate a kidney,

a lobe from their liver, or some of their bone marrow, while after they have passed on, a person's organs can be donated to save as many as eight people who are suffering."

Since 2017, 293 patients have undergone kidney transplants using organs donated by their relatives, and a further 17 were donated by people who wished to give their organs to others once they died. 11 patients have also undergone liver transplants since then.

However, these figures represent a very small number of patients who require transplants. There are in Oman some 3,000 patients who undergo regular haemodialysis because they suf-

fer from kidney failure. Families can choose to donate the organs of brain dead, in keeping with legal procedures in the country.

"More efforts must be taken to intensify the awareness of organ donation, both while donors are alive and after their death," explained Al Busaidi, who went on to list the laws governing organ contribution and transplants in the country.

These are regulated under Ministerial Resolution No. 179/2018, which set the conditions for people donating organs while they are alive, and even after death.

Article 4, which states the conditions for a living donor, mention they must not be minors, and must

be fully capable to donate organs. The donor must also have a relation up to the fourth degree with the recipient. However, non-relatives can receive an organ if needed urgently, once this has been approved by the relevant committee.

Article 10, which governs donation of organs from deceased persons, states that they can only be donated if stipulated in their wills. Alternatively, organs and tissue transplants from deceased persons can be carried out with the permission of their guardian.

The second criterion for donations from dead people is that their deaths should have been conclusively proved.

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Privatisation Law of Sultanate decoded

1 Investors need to bid for government firms being privatised in keeping with the Privatisation Law. **>A3**

WORLD

AstraZeneca vaccine 79 per cent effective

2 AstraZeneca's Covid-19 vaccine showed 79 per cent efficacy against symptomatic disease. **>A5**

MARKET

Sohar Port quay wall development pact

3 A pact has been signed for the construction of a 700-metre quay wall in an area of Sohar Port. **>B1**

SAHALA PLATFORM

Institutional quarantine booking platform launched

Times News Service

MUSCAT: People arriving in Oman can now book rooms for institutional quarantine through the Sahala platform to make it easier for those entering isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The platform will be run by the Relief and Shelter Sector of the Ministry of Social Development, in collaboration with other authorities. Under current regulations, arrivals into the country must compulsorily enter institutional quarantine, and are only allowed to board their flights to Oman on presenting a negative PCR test taken up to 96 hours before take-off. Another PCR test is taken on arrival at the airport, while a further test is taken on the 8th day of the isolation period.

Before flying, passengers need to "complete traveller registration and hotel bookings through the Sahala platform, and print the completed traveller registration form (TRF)," said an advisory from eMushrif, the Omani com-



pany that has set up the platform and oversees quarantine processes in the country.

Passengers also need to download the Tarassud+ coronavirus monitoring app, and the HMushrif app, which helps track people under quarantine. Passengers can also complete their form on www.covid19.emushrif.om, by selecting the "Traveller Registration" option.

The advisory said: "Make sure you have the following: Your trav-

el document (passport or Omani national ID/Oman residency card), and a debit card or a credit card for online payment.

The hotel reservation charge is separate from the registration fee. The registration portal allows you to register for yourself and your accompanying travellers (e.g. family members)

"Please keep a soft or hard copy of your payment receipt, once you have completed the payment," explained the advisory. "This receipt

needs to be presented at your port of entry upon arrival. Results of the COVID-19 PCR test will only be available upon verification of an Omani phone number in this registration form. You may add your phone number later. Otherwise, you can view your results on the Tarassud+ app."

Passengers exempt from presenting hotel reservations before check in at the airport of departure include foreign diplomats working in the Sultanate, as well as their families, and visiting dignitaries, arrivals aged 18 or under if travelling alone, people aged 60 and above, and aircrew, subject to the precautionary measures of the Ministry of Health.

Sick passengers who need special attention are also exempt from quarantine, provided they submit the attached health form, as are those who plan to spend their isolation period at a private centre accredited by the Relief and Shelter sector, provided they show the authorities their isolation centre code. **>A4**



Eight-page special supplement on 'Pakistan Day' with this edition



>A6-7



Dhuhr.....	12.19pm
Asr.....	3.45pm
Maghrib.....	6.24pm
Isha.....	7.34pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4.53am

HONOUR

Gandhi Peace Prize conferred on late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2019 has been conferred on the late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimour.

Gandhi Peace Prize is an annual award instituted by the Government of India since 1995, the 125th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

The jury for Gandhi Peace Prize is chaired by the Prime Minister of India and comprises two ex-officio members, namely the Chief Justice of India and the leader of the single largest opposition party in the Lok Sabha.

Two eminent members are also part of the jury, namely the

Speaker of the Lok Sabha, and Bindeshwar Pathak, Founder of Sulabh International Social Service Organisation.

The jury met on 19th March, 2021, and after due deliberations, unanimously decided to select the Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimour as the recipient of the Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2019, in recognition of his outstanding contributions for social, economic and political transformation through non-violent and other Gandhian methods.

Other recipients

The past awardees include luminaries like Dr. Julius Nyerere, Former President of Tanzania; Dr. Gerhard Fischer, Federal Republic



GANDHI PEACE PRIZE: The late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimour played an important role in supporting peace efforts in various regional disputes and conflicts.

of Germany; Ramakrishna Mission; Baba Amte (Shri Murlidhar Devidas Amte); Late Dr. Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa; Grameen Bank of Bangladesh; Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa; Shri Chand Prasad Bhatt & Indian Space Research Organisation. Recent awardees include Vivekananda Kendra, India (2015); Akshaya Patra Foundation, India and Sulabh International (Jointly, for 2016); Ekal Abhiyan Trust, India(2017) and Shri Yohei Sasakawa, Japan(2018).

The award carries an amount of Rs.10 million, a citation, a plaque and an exquisite traditional handicraft/handloom item.

“His Majesty Sultan Qaboos was a visionary leader whose twin

policy of moderation and mediation in addressing international issues won him praise and respect across the globe. He played an important role in supporting peace efforts in various regional disputes and conflicts.

“The late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos was the architect of the special ties between India and Oman. He had studied in India and always maintained a special relationship with India,” a statement from Ministry of Culture said.

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DEAL OF THE DAY



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OMAN, MAURITANIA REVIEW RELATIONS

His Highness Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers, with Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Mauritians Abroad, Envoy of the Mauritanian President, on Monday. -ONA



MESSAGE

Oman's stand on Syrian crisis 'positive': Mekdad

MUSCAT: Dr. Faisal Mekdad, Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, has described Oman's stand on the Syrian crisis as "positive" and "precise" because it stems from the enlightened thought of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik.

In a statement, Mekdad commended Oman's balance, quiet and sustained policy and its sense of responsibility which, he said, earned the Sultanate the respect and appreciation of the world. He valued the efforts exerted by Oman to end the Syrian people's

suffering caused by the war.

Mekdad said that his visit to the Sultanate was the first to be made to an Arab state after his appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates.

The visit, he added, aims to deepen ties between the two countries and peoples. He underscored the Sultanate's role backing the stabilisation of Syria to help allow the country attend to its Arab, regional and international concerns. Speaking about the return of Syria to the Arab League, Mek-

dad said, "Syria is the pulsating Arab heart. Syria has not exited the Arab League through Arab consensus." In this context, he observed, "blaming the conditions in Syria will only prolong the Syrian crisis", adding that his country's absence from the Arab League is "a shortfall in joint Arab action".

Asked to comment on efforts towards "Syrian reconciliation", Mekdad said that the government of his country works for the Syrian people and for the realisation of their aspirations. -ONA

STATISTICAL INDICATORS

NCSI makes a mark in field of mass data

MUSCAT: The National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) made an international achievement in the field of mass data through the analysis of mass data from mobile phones. This constitutes a major source for the production of official statistical indicators in the fields of tourism, population and traffic in Oman.

Recognised by the UN as a pioneering accomplishment, the project developed by the NCSI constitutes a turning point in producing official, high-quality indicators that serve as a mainstay for the management of a comprehensive scheme that supports decision making in Oman.

The scheme covers social, economic, environmental and cultural indicators to assess development performance.

The project aims to cut down the volume of statistical field surveys, increase the rate of response to requirements of development plans, limit the recurrence of family and corporate visits aimed to conduct field studies and cover new statistical fields that might be needed in development plans. Steps are underway to make the results of this project available shortly via NCSI portals and apps. The aim is to generalise benefits from this successful statistical experience in the local and international arenas. -ONA

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Bidders for Govt firms must follow Privatisation Law

Under the rules of the Privatisation Law, existing government bodies can be transformed into joint-stock companies wholly owned by the public sector

Times News Service

MUSCAT: People who plan to bid for government companies in Oman that have been made available for privatisation need to make sure they do so in keeping with the country's Privatisation Law.

The law was made official under Royal Decree No. 51/2019, and details the steps investors need to follow, as have been laid out by the Public Authority for Privatisation and Partnership, simply known within the text of the law as the 'authority'.

Among the rules listed within are the need for privatisation projects to be "evaluated by independent consultants who satisfy the conditions for technical competency, good reputation, and international expertise, selected by the authority through procedures that take into consideration the principles of transparency, publicity, equal opportunity, non-discrimination, and free competition.



"The regulation shall specify the criteria and standards for evaluation and the procedures that must be followed by the consultants, and the evaluation shall be approved by the authority," said the law. "The authority may call for meetings with the winning bidder to negotiate with him certain issues relating to technical and financial conditions."

Negotiations cannot discuss matters deemed to be non-negotiable, or those not mentioned in the bid accepted by the authority. No changes to the contents or plans submitted in the bid can also be made.

In case

Should negotiations with the winning bidder fail, the Public Authority for Privatisation and Partnership can negotiate with other bidders until a final agreement is reached with one of them. It can, however, choose to also reject all remaining bids for a project. Authorities, however, cannot renegotiate with a bidder whose initial proposals for privatisation have failed.

All privatisation projects must follow policies of transparency,

publicity, equal opportunity, non-discrimination, and free competition. Regulations issued by the authority shall decide the rules and procedures regarding making projects available to private investors, as well as the manner in which bids are decided.

Information that must be included in such bids, such as financial information and other key documents, will also be specified by the authority. Bids are expected to be of a competitive nature.

The law states that "the procedures for floating a privatisation project shall be cancelled in any of the following circumstances: If a sole bid is submitted, or if a single bid remains after the disqualification of other bids, or if all or a majority of bids include substantial reservations that are not compliant with the conditions and specifications of the project, or if it is impossible to evaluate them technically and financially."

Specific privatisation opportunities can also be cancelled if negotiations with bidders fail, or if it is in public interest to not proceed with the privatisation of a particular project.

Winning bidders are to establish an Omani joint-stock company in which all of the properties, assets, and liabilities – both tangible and intangible – are to be listed. The regulations under which a company operates must be based on the following: its capital, its division into shares, and the provision of an initial public offering.

Under the rules of the Privatisation Law, existing government bodies can be transformed into joint-stock companies wholly owned by the public sector, to improve its efficiency and operations, or in preparation of a future privatisation plan.

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VIRTUAL MEETING

Indonesian embassy, OCCI Dhofar aim to boost economic cooperation

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Mohamad Irzan Djohan, Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to the Sultanate, held a virtual meeting with the Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) Dhofar branch, Eng. Hussein bin Hathith Al Bathari, to discuss various potentials of economic cooperation.

Accompanied by Ahmad Ma'rufi (First Secretary) and Pilar Paradewi (Third Secretary), Indonesian Ambassador reiterated the commitment to continue working with OCCI including OCCI Dhofar branch to enhance trade volume and investment cooperation.

Chairman of OCCI Dhofar branch, Eng. Hussein bin Hathith Al Bathari, mentioned the excellent reputation of Indonesian industry and the potentials to work with its business counterparts in



the Sultanate especially Dhofar Governorate.

Chairman of OCCI Dhofar branch pointed out to the opportunities of cooperation in the field of mining, logistics, sea fishing, manufacture, and tourism development as these are the priority sectors in Oman Vision 2040.

Chairman of OCCI Dhofar branch also encouraged Indonesian companies to invest in Salalah Free Zone and take advantage

of Salalah being a trade hub for export to other countries in the Gulf and east Africa.

Ambassador Irzan Djohan welcomes the opportunities and in the framework of following them up proposed holding a virtual business forum that will gather businessmen and potential investors from Indonesia and the Sultanate especially Dhofar Governorate.

Ambassador Irzan Djohan in-

vites the Chairman of OCCI Dhofar and businessmen in Dhofar Governorate to visit Indonesia if the situation allows to explore and discuss further opportunities of cooperation with their counterparts in Indonesia, especially during the occasion of Trade Expo Indonesia that will be held in Jakarta on October 23-24, 2021.

During the meeting, Ambassador Irzan Djohan also took the opportunity to present the company profile of 10 Indonesian companies that produce and export automotive spare-parts, medicines and medical equipments, frozen foods, living livestock, optical devices for military, health equipment, and furniture.

During the virtual meeting, Chairman of OCCI Dhofar branch was accompanied by Mohammad Al Barami (Director) Ghazi Al Hamar (Deputy Director) and Amir Al Mashani (Economic Analyst).

Oman's Royal Cavalry horse wins first place

ABU DHABI: Royal Cavalry's horse 'Jabalani' under the supervision of horse trainer Ibrahim Al Hadhrami, secured the first place in the competitions of the fourth round race held at the racecourse of Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club.

The fourth round organised for a distance of 2,200 metres was allocated for Arabian thorough-bred horses.

Horse Jabalani, which main-

tained the first place was followed by Horse Jawal A'Reef for owner Saif Al Mazroai under supervision of horse trainer Ahmed Al Muhairbi.

The third place was secured by Horse Wadih.

The fourth round of the race was one of the rounds that have seen tough competition among 14 horses holding international rating. — **ONA**



COVID ADVISORY

<FROM A1 Quarantine for seven days

Passengers who have not prepaid their registration and hotel costs can do so upon arrival. These forms then need to be handed over to immigration, following which a PCR test must be taken at the airport.

"You will need to be fitted with an HMushrif bracelet that will be paired with your HMushrif mobile app," said the advisory. "You will be required to quarantine for seven days (if you are exempted

from the institutional quarantine, you will still need to self-isolate at home)."

People under quarantine are required to wear their bracelet and retain the mobile phone on which the HMushrif app is downloaded for the entire isolation period. Not doing so will result in a fine and legal action. Those who do experience COVID symptoms can report them through the Tarassud+ app.

"On the 8th day, you'll be guided to take the PCR test," said eMushrif. "If the result is positive, the quarantine period is extended for 10 days. If the result is negative, the bracelet will be removed."

Omani nationals in Muscat can get their bracelets removed at a Ministry of Health centre, while expatriates need to go to an accredited private centre, where a fee might be charged for its removal.

TAXATION AUTHORITY

Workshops on VAT held

MUSCAT: Taxation Authority has organised a number of workshops for its employees as part of the training activities related to Value Added Tax (VAT), which would be implemented with effect from April 16.

The workshops have tackled the concept of VAT, supply of goods and methods of supply, goods and services not subjected to tax and the mechanisms for registration in the portal of the Taxation Authority, details of calculation of the VAT, taxable goods and services and supplies exempted from tax.

The workshop also tackled the mechanisms of tax control, methods of collection of VAT and reconsideration of tax estimates, postponement of tax payment, tax disputes and penalties among other issues.

The workshops came following issuance of the Executive Regulation of the VAT, published in the Official Gazette and which included over 13 chapters and 211 articles. — **ONA**



Ministry of Social Development

Tender Announcement

The Internal Tender committee of Ministry of Social Development hereby announces the following tender :-

Tender No.	Tender Subject	Grade	Last date for obtainment of tender document	Last date for tender submission	Tender Document Price (non-refundable)
8/2021	Closing of the central square in al-wafa rehabilitation center for persons with disabilities at nizwa	second	Thursday 8-4-2021 02:00 PM	Thursday 29-4-2021 10:00 AM	R.O. 25/=

- ❖ Specialized Companies, registered with the Tender Board may obtain the Tender documents at the Tender Board e-tendering digital portal link (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) , On Tuesday 23/3/2021
- ❖ Tender shall be submitted in compliance with the technical specifications and terms along with a local bank warranty at (1%) of the tender value, valid ninety (90) days from the date of e-submission.
- ❖ The original (1%) bank warranty to be submitted at same day of submitting at tender box located in Directorate of Finance & Administration at MOSD HQ.
- ❖ For Inquiry , please contact through the e-tendering website (reg@tenderboard.gov.om) tel. (24402222 or 24166670)

“ The lowest or any other tender shall not be binding to the Ministry “

www.mosd.gov.om



شركة المطاحن العمانية (ش.م.ع.)
Oman Flour Mills Company (S.A.O.G.)
P.O Box 566, P.C 112, Jibroo, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

REF: OFM/TD-21-011 Tender Hiring of Skip & Hook Trucks Services

Oman Flour Mills SAOG, (OFM) invites specialize vendor to participate in our tender for the "Hiring of Skip & Hook Trucks Services" as per the scope of work and specifications.

Tender Ref no.	OFM/TD-21-011
Tender subject	Hiring of Skip & Hook Trucks Services
Nature of work	Removal of waste in flour mills and silo port
Tender fee	RO 25/- (non-refundable)
Start date for tender collection	23.03.2021
Last date for tender collection	30.03.2021
Site Visit (Mandatory)	31.03&01.04.2021
Last date for receiving the technical queries	04.04.2021
Closing date of the tender	05.04.2021
Mode of payment of tender fee	By cash
Email address for communication	tender3@omanflourmills.com
Mode of submission	All bidders are required to submit their proposals addressed to the Chairman of Tender Committee and deposited in the tender box located at the reception of our Atyab Investment building on the 05 April 2021.

- Vendor selection will be based on "best and final offer". OFM is not bound to select the lowest bidder.

- Each bidder must leave a business card with contact details for required communication. .

- All tender communication must be addressed to: tender3@omanflourmills.com.

- Notwithstanding the specific terms in the Tender Documents, Tender fee is not refundable

- Bids submittal shall consist of 2 separate sealed envelopes (Technical) & (Commercial), with bidder name on each and tender reference number (OFM/TD-21-011 (Hiring of Skip & Hook Trucks Services)).






شركة المطاحن العمانية (ش.م.ع.)
Oman Flour Mills Company (S.A.O.G.)
P.O Box 566, P.C 112, Jibroo, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

REF: OFM/ADM-01-2021 Scrap Sell

Oman Flour Mills SAOG, (OFM) invites specialize vendor to participate in our tender for the "Scrap sell" as per the scope of work and specifications.

Tender Ref no.	OFM/ADM-01/2021
Tender subject	Scrap sell
Tender fee	RO.100/- (refundable)
Start date for tender collection	23.03.2021
Date for Visit location	25.03.2021
Closing date of the tender	31.03.2021
Mode of payment of tender fee	By cash
For communication	Mr. Mohamed Al Balushi # 93912022
Mode of submission	Please provide the contact details of the authorized person for final discussions. Reception of our Atyab Investment building on 31 March 2021.

Vendor selection will be based on "BEST and FINAL OFFER" process, please provide the contact details of the authorized person for final discussions. Interested parties need to submit the bids separately in a sealed envelope with our ref. no duly mentioned and drop them at the tender box of our Atyab Investment Building






شركة المطاحن العمانية (ش.م.ع.)
Oman Flour Mills Company (S.A.O.G.)
P.O Box 566, P.C 112, Jibroo, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

REF: OFM/TD-21-017 Tender for Providing Pest Control service

Oman Flour Mills SAOG, (OFM) invites specialize vendor to participate in our tender for the "Providing Pest Control Service in OFM" as per the scope of work and specifications.

Tender Ref no.	OFM/TD-21-017
Tender subject	Pest Control
Tender fee	RO 25/- (non-refundable)
Start date for tender collection	23.03.2021
Last date for tender collection	28.03.2021
Last date for receiving the technical queries	29.03.2021
Closing date of the tender	30.03.2021
Mode of payment of tender fee	By cash
Email address for communication	tender3@omanflourmills.com
Mode of submission	All bidders are required to submit their proposals addressed to the Chairman of Tender Committee and deposited in the tender box located at the reception of our Atyab Investment building on the 30 March 2021.

- Vendor selection will be based on "best and final offer". OFM is not bound to select the lowest bidder.

- Each bidder must leave a business card with contact details for required communication.

- All tender communication must be addressed to: tender3@omanflourmills.com.

- Notwithstanding the specific terms in the Tender Documents, Tender fee is not refundable

- Bids submittal shall consist of 2 separate sealed envelopes (Technical) & (Commercial), with bidder name on each and tender reference number (OFM/TD-21-017 (Providing Pest Control Service)).






شركة المطاحن العمانية (ش.م.ع.)
Oman Flour Mills Company (S.A.O.G.)
P.O Box 566, P.C 112, Jibroo, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

REF: OFM/TD-21-012 Tender for Heavy Vehicles Cleaning & Lubrication

Oman Flour Mills SAOG, (OFM) invites specialize vendor to participate in our tender for the "Heavy Vehicles Cleaning & Lubrication" as per the scope of work and specifications.

Tender Ref no.	OFM/TD-21-012
Tender subject	Heavy Vehicles Cleaning & Lubrication
Tender fee	RO 25/- (non-refundable)
Start date for tender collection	23.03.2021
Last date for tender collection	01.04.2021
Last date for receiving the technical queries	04.04.2021
Closing date of the tender	05.04.2021
Mode of payment of tender fee	By cash
Email address for communication	tender3@omanflourmills.com
Mode of submission	All bidders are required to submit their proposals addressed to the Chairman of Tender Committee and deposited in the tender box located at the reception of our Atyab Investment building on the 05 April 2021.

- Vendor selection will be based on "best and final offer". OFM is not bound to select the lowest bidder.

- Each bidder must leave a business card with contact details for required communication. .

- All tender communication must be addressed to: tender3@omanflourmills.com.

- Notwithstanding the specific terms in the Tender Documents, Tender fee is not refundable

- Bids submittal shall consist of 2 separate sealed envelopes (Technical) & (Commercial), with bidder name on each and tender reference number (OFM/TD-21-012 (Heavy Vehicles Cleaning & Lubrication)).








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US CLINICAL TRIAL

AstraZeneca vaccine is found to be 79% effective against symptomatic COVID-19

WASHINGTON: AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine showed 79 per cent efficacy against symptomatic disease and 100 per cent efficacy against severe disease and hospitalisation in a new, US-based clinical trial, the company said Monday. The findings from the new Phase 3 trial, which included more than 32,000 participants, may boost confidence in the vaccine, which was originally developed by the University of Oxford, as reported by CNN. The trial showed that the vaccine was well-tolerated and identified no safety concerns, the company said. An independent commit-



tee "found no increased risk of thrombosis or events characterized by thrombosis among the 21,583 participants receiving at least one dose of the vaccine," according to AstraZeneca.

The new data came from a Phase 3 clinical trial conducted in the US, Chile, and Peru.

According to CNN, in the trial, more than 32,000 volunteers were recruited across all ages who received either two doses of the vaccine or a placebo vaccine at a four-week interval.

Oxford said the findings add "to previous trial data from the United Kingdom, Brazil and South Africa, as well as real-world impact data from the United Kingdom".

The Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine became the subject of controversy earlier in the month when a number of European countries including Norway, France, and Denmark decided to temporarily suspend its rollout

due to reports of blood clotting in patients post-inoculation.

An emergency investigation by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) was done on Thursday which revealed that the vaccine is "safe and effective" in preventing coronavirus and "not associated with an increase in the overall risk of thromboembolic events, or blood clots".

Co-designer of the vaccine and professor of Vaccinology at Oxford University Sarah Gilbert hailed the data for providing "further confirmation of the safety and effectiveness" of the vaccine, read CNN. **AM**



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EUROPEAN UNION

EU to impose sanctions in response to Myanmar coup

NAYPYITAW: The European Union is set to approve sanctions against individuals tied to the Myanmar coup, the bloc's chief diplomat Josep Borrell said Monday as he arrived for a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Brussels.

"We are going to take sanctions against 11 persons involved in the coup and the repression of the demonstrators," Borrell said, adding that the ongoing crackdown in Myanmar was intensifying. The names of the individuals will be made public once the sanctions are officially agreed to by the ministers. The sanctions would mark the most significant EU response so far

to the coup. At least 250 people have been killed so far in violent crackdowns on the ongoing anti-junta protests.

Germany calls for 'peaceful solution'

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said Monday that the EU intends to only target individuals who are responsible for violence in Myanmar.

"The number of murders has reached an unbearable extent, which is why we will not be able to avoid imposing sanctions," Maas told reporters as he arrived in Brussels.

"We don't intend to punish the people of Myanmar but

those who blatantly violate human rights," he said.

"We are still pushing to stay in dialogue for a peaceful solution," he added.

UN calls for 'firm' measures

UN rapporteur Tom Andrews had urged the international community to cut the coup leaders' access to resources and called for sanctions in response to their "ruthless" attacks on people. "The world must respond by cutting their access to money and weapons," he tweeted. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres also condemned the military's continuing violent crackdown. **AW**

Invitation to Tender

Dhofar Power Company S.A.O.C (DPC) invites reputable Contractors for carrying out the following works in Dhofar region on turnkey basis

TENDER REFERENCE NO.	TITLE OF THE TENDER
DPC/Tender/2021/024	CONSTRUCTION OF 33/11KV, 1X6MVA PRIMARY SUBSTATION DESIGNATED AS HADBEEN
DPC/Tender/2021/025	UPGRADATION OF EXISTING 33/11KV JARZIZ PSS FROM 2X20MVA TO 3X20MVA CAPACITY

Contractors participating in the tendering process shall be at least Grade-A registered electrical contractor with Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP), Sultanate of Oman. Apart from the above, the Contractors participating in the tendering process shall have Competent Electrical Person (CEP) certified by DPC and copy of the valid CEP certificate shall be submitted along with bid without which the bids will not be considered for evaluation.

The tender documents detailing the scope of work can be obtained from DPC's office by paying an amount of RO. 150/- (each Tender) at the address provided below. The schedule for the tendering process is as below:

- Last date for issue of tender documents : 3:00 PM 6th April 2021
- Scheduled site visit : 10:00 AM 7th April 2021
- Last date for seeking pre-bid clarifications : 3:00 PM 12th April 2021
- Pre-bid clarification shall be responded by : 3:00 PM 15th April 2021
- Last date for submission of Proposals : 2:00 PM 22nd April 2021

Tenderers are requested to note that the bids accompanied with Tender Bond (2% of the quoted bid price) shall only be considered for evaluation.

Any Queries Please Contact: Phone 23232554; lawrances@dpcoman.nama.om; praveena@dpcoman.nama.om



Dhofar Power Company S.A.O.C
23rd July Street behind West Salalah Health Centre
P.O. Box: 2609, P.C.: 211, Salalah, Sultanate of Oman
Phone: 23232523; Fax: 23201183
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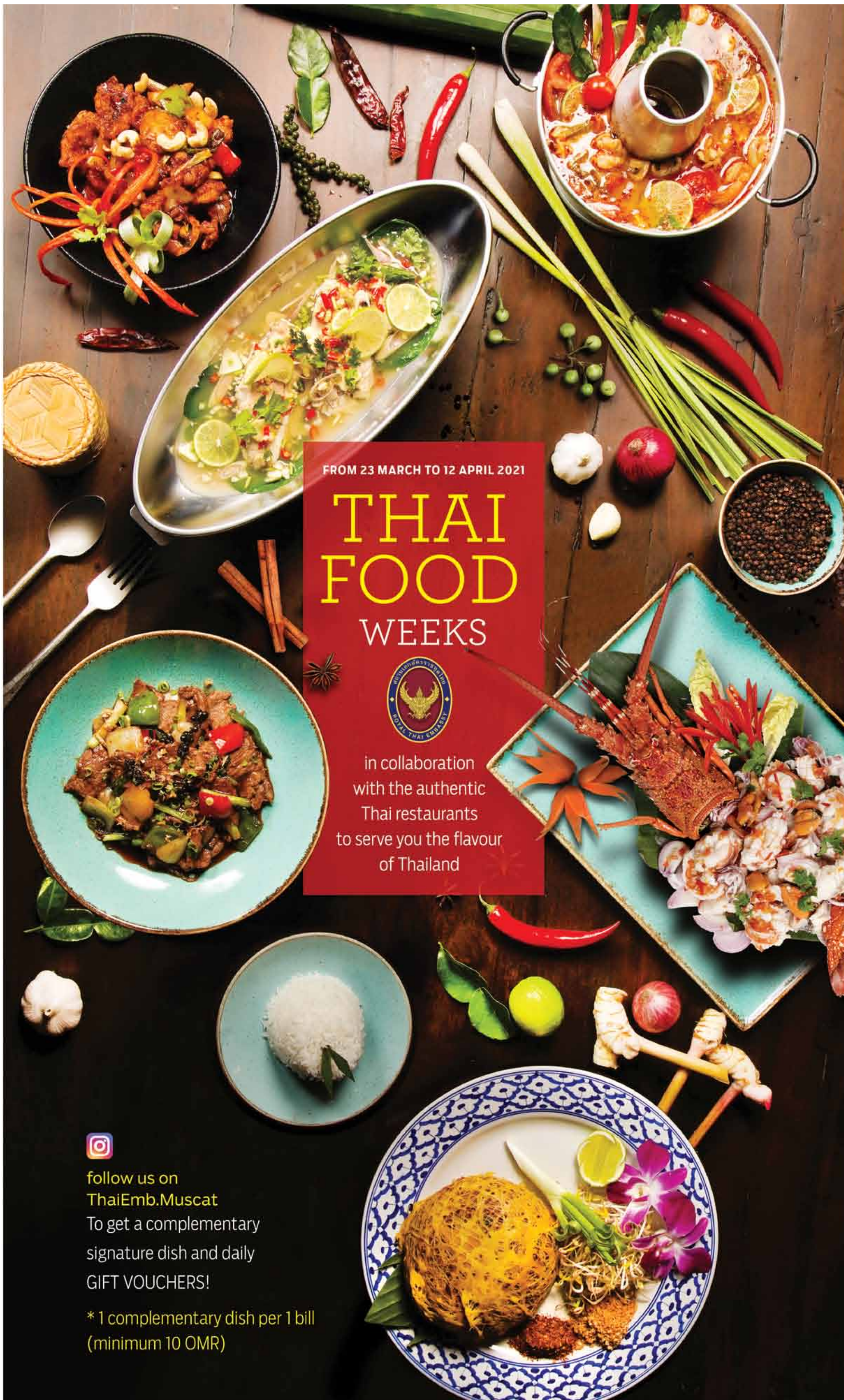
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* 1 complementary dish per 1 bill (minimum 10 OMR)

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tiptara

Thai Corner

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... diversity of tastes
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It is delicious, enjoyable and delightful.

H.E. Suwat Kaewsook
Ambassador of Thailand

Thai food is known for its exquisite flavours and well-crafted tastes of hot, sweet, sour, salty and spicy. Like no other, the essence of authentic Thai cuisine lies on variety of herbs and spices which, for centuries, have been contributing to the making of savourous and healthy recipes that reflect the true spirit of Thainess.

To bring the genuine taste of Thai cuisine to the general public of the Sultanate, the event offers special promotions from the Thai restaurants, along with specially made “cooking videos” which will be launched each day during the first week of the campaign, through Times of Oman and Al Shahiba’s online platforms, both in English and Arabic.



Kaffir lime leaves
Boosts immunity, anti-aging, maintains digestive system

Made by talented and experienced Thai chefs from 5 truly authentic Thai restaurants - Charm Thai, Mai Thai, Soi Soi, Thai Corner and Tiptara, the tailor-made videos will unveil the secret recipes of well-known Thai signature dishes namely, Phat Thai, Tom Yum Kung, Chicken with cashew nuts, Beef with black pepper and steamed fish with lime essence. Each traditional step, method and all ingredients will be introduced to the audiences in a simple way, making a sophisticated Thai dish easy to be prepared at home.

Thai Food weeks also reflects the auspicious occasion of the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Thailand in 2020. In this respect, locally fresh ingredients will showcase as part of those signature dishes of the Thai Food Weeks.



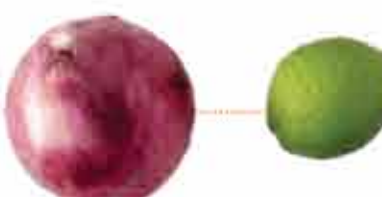
Peppercorns
Fights cancer, improves memory, high in antioxidants

In enhancing the flavour of Thailand, the Royal Thai Embassy is also joining hands with the leading retailer Lulu to bring Halal standard food products, including fresh ingredients from Thailand which will be featured with in-store promotion and online offers in Lulu Hypermarkets across the Sultanate.

Follow us on the Embassy’s Instagram @ThaiEmbMuscat to retrieve a complementary signature dish and find out more gift vouchers from your favorite restaurants every day throughout the event*. The recipes and the methods of cooking will be shared as well on the Embassy’s social media platforms via facebook and Instagram.



Chili
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* Participating Thai restaurants:

Charm Thai, Crown Plaza OCEC	9065 4364
Mai Thai, Qurm	9448 1728
Thai Corner, Qurm	9129 0778
Tiptara, Centara Hotel, Ghala	9426 7178

1 complementary dish per 1 bill (minimum 10 OMR) terms and conditions applied



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Jan Oblak, Luis Suarez keep Atletico at the top of La Liga

Joselu hit his penalty hard, but Oblak guessed correctly to make a vital save

MADRID: Luis Suarez's 500th goal and a late penalty save from Jan Oblak were enough for Atletico Madrid to maintain their four-point lead at the top of La Liga on Sunday.

Suarez's near-post header nine minutes into the second half was enough to give Atletico a 1-0 win at home to struggling Alaves, and although Atletico kept the ball well to deny Alaves any clear chances, a flailing arm from Stefan Savic gifted the visitors a penalty six minutes from time.

Joselu hit his penalty hard, but Oblak guessed correctly to make a vital save to take his side one step closer to the title.

FC Barcelona responded to the pressure in brilliant style as they demolished Real Sociedad in San Sebastian on a special day for Li-



LA LIGA: Suarez's near-post header nine minutes into the second half was enough to give Atletico a 1-0 win at home.

onel Messi, who set a new record of 768 appearances for the club and celebrated with two more goals.

Former Real Sociedad player Antoine Griezmann opened the scoring from close range after Alex Remiro had saved from Ousmane Dembele and Sergino Dest doubled Barca's lead after a pass from Messi.

Dest doubled his tally for the night seven minutes after the break after a fine run from Jordi Alba to set him up, and Messi then celebrated his record by scoring

Barca's fourth of the night just three minutes later.

Ousmane Dembele netted a fifth in the 71st minute and although Igor Barrenetxea pulled a goal back for the home side, there was still time for Messi to add a sixth in the 89th minute to seal an emphatic 6-1 win.

Karim Benzema continued his rich vein of form with two first-half goals as Real Madrid kept themselves in the title race on Saturday. The Frenchman scored in the 20th

and 30th minutes, before Santi Mina got Celta back into things five minutes before half-time.

Iago Aspas hit the post for Celta with seven minutes left to play but Marco Asensio assured Real Madrid's win deep into injury-time.

Sevilla keeper Bono scored a dramatic goal after going forward for a last minute corner to salvage a 1-1 draw away to Real Valladolid, just when it looked as if Fabio Orellana's 44th minute penalty would give Valladolid a vital win.



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Villarreal look to have got their league campaign back on track thanks to a 2-1 win at home to Cadiz. Spain international striker Gerard Moreno scored an early penalty and then set up Carlos Bacca for Villarreal's second in the 68th minute.

Alex Fernandez fired home from close range two minutes later to get Cadiz back into the game, which ended with Moreno having to leave the game with a muscle injury that could cause Spain coach Luis Enrique a problem in the coming days.

Valencia made it four consecutive home wins as they took advantage of Granada's tired legs with a 2-1 triumph in the Mestalla stadium thanks to a fourth-minute goal from Daniel Wass and a 66th minute strike from Alex Blanco, with Roberto Soldado netting a 90th minute consolation for the visitors.

Athletic Bilbao and Eibar drew 1-1 on Saturday in a result which

does little to help Athletic's European ambitions and keeps Eibar in the bottom three.

Yuri Berchiche's spectacular volley put Athletic ahead in the ninth minute, but Kike Garcia equalized eight minutes later after a dreadful error from Unai Lopez.

Elche can thank goalkeeper Edgar Badir for saving a vital point from their visit to Getafe after he saved an 84th minute penalty from Angel Rodriguez in a 1-1 draw.

Pere Milla put Elche ahead in the 20th minute, with Enes Unal leveling from Getafe after good work from Takefusa Kubo.

Huesca managed 15 shots in their home game against Osasuna, but the bottom side failed to make any of them count in a tense 0-0 draw.

On Friday night, Real Betis strengthened their argument for a place in Europe with a 2-0 win at home to Levante, with goals from the impressive Nabil Fekir and Juanmi. **ANI**

CRICKET ROUND-UP

Muscat CT bag T20 crown to complete dream double

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Riding on Sandeep Goud's superb all-round performance, Muscat CT secured an 11-run win over spirited Al Turki NMC on Friday to clinch Premier Division's T20 League crown, completing a dream double after winning the 50-over League title last week.

Unlike the 50-over championship where it was given a run for the money by Al Turki and IT Works, Muscat dominated the T20 league with 18 points, winning nine of the ten games they played, two more than runner-up IT Works which finished with 14 points, ahead of 12



by third placed Renaissance.

Sandeep Goud topscored with a hurricane 42 not out off 18 balls including 5 powerful sixes as Muscat posted a robust 179 for 5 on the board. Shoaib Khan (39) and Jatinder Singh (33) were the oth-

er notable scorers. Jay Odedara bagged 2 for 26.

Al Turki fought hard but struggled to keep pace with the mounting run rate, falling short by 14 runs as it reached 165 for 7 in 20 overs. Gustav Burger (30),

Twinkal Bhandari (25) and Prateek Athavale (25) were its main scorers. Sandeep and Wasim Ali picked up two wickets each.

Nadeem helps IT Works to victory

Muhammed Nadeem's rock solid 45 not out was the highlight of IT Works' 27-run victory against AER in the two teams' last T20 league game that helped the former to the runner-up spot in the team standings.

Studded with a bunch of talented players, including many Oman stars, IT Works gave a good account of themselves in a competi-

tive tournament, promising to improve with each season.

Nadeem's fighting knock saved the day for IT Works as they limped to 109 for 8 in 20 overs. Waseem Akhtar's 21 was the only other notable score. Afzal Khan and Allan Gawdya bagged two wickets each.

AER failed to hold their nerves against a highly experienced IT Works' bowling attack, crawling to 82 for 7 before running out of over. Shakeel Ahmad, tournament's leading wicket-taker with young Muzahir Raza at 16 wickets each, was unplayable, taking 2 for 8 in 4 overs. Khawar Ali also bowled well, taking 2 for 24.

INDIA VS ENGLAND

Umpire's call is creating a lot of confusion, says Kohli

PUNE: India skipper Virat Kohli on Monday said that the 'Umpire's Call' is creating a lot of confusion at the moment and the lawmakers need to look at it so that it does not leave a grey area when a big tournament is being played.

On Saturday, India defeated England in the fifth T20I, and as a result, the hosts won the series 3-2.

Now both teams will lock horns in a three-match ODI series, beginning Tuesday in Pune.

"Look, I have played in the time where there was no DRS. The umpire made the decision whether the batsman liked it or not, it stayed like that. Vice-versa, if the umpire gave it not out and it was out, it stayed like that. Whether it was marginal or not, according to me, umpire's call right now is creating a lot of confusion. When you get bowled as a batsman, you do not expect the ball to hit more than 50 per cent into the stumps to consider yourself getting bowled.

"If the ball is shown clipping the stumps, basic cricket common sense, I do not think there should be any debates on that, if the ball is hitting the stumps, it should be out. Whether you like it or not, you should lose the review," said Kohli during a virtual press conference on Monday.

"If it hits the stumps or missing the stumps, it should not matter how much the ball is clipping because it is creating a lot of confusion. One more factor that needs to be considered is how the fielding team responds to a dismissal that is claimed. This is somewhere defining the soft signals as well.

You have to question what the spirit of the game is and what those guidelines are because if things like that happen with the Indian cricket team overseas then you are talking about completely different conversation about spirit of the game.

"So look, it is a serious thing which needs to be considered because there is a lot at stake in bigger tournaments. You do not want any grey area hampering the game and it leaves with you no clarity," he added. **ANI**

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Go Further

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES
The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by May 2021 reaching \$63.28, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by 83 cents from the price of Friday, which was \$62.45.

MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSM INDEX ENDS LOWER
Muscat Securities Market (MSM) general index (30) lost 1.9 points, comprising a decline by 0.05 per cent to close at 3,731.85 points, compared to the last session, which stood at 3,733.77 points.

Pact signed to develop quay wall at Sohar Port

Sohar Port and Freezone has signed a deal with Moon Iron & Steel Company and the work for the project is expected to begin at the end of December 2021

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A land development agreement has been signed for the construction of a 700-metre quay wall for an upcoming facility in the eastern area at Sohar Port.

Sohar Port and Freezone has signed the deal with Moon Iron & Steel Company (MISCO) and the work for the project is expected to begin at the end of December 2021.

The signing of the agreement took place between Mark Geilenkirchen, CEO of Sohar Port and Sasikumar Moorkanat, Managing Director & CEO of MISCO.

The overall project will see the construction of 700m quay wall for an upcoming facility in the eastern area at Sohar Port.

Commenting on the agreement, Geilenkirchen said, "In our journey towards becoming a key logistics hub in the region, we continue our endeavours to attract potential businesses to Sohar. In line with our vision, we aim to utilise the



NEW FACILITY: The overall project will see the construction of 700m quay wall for an upcoming facility in the eastern area at Sohar Port. - File picture

available land as an extension of the current Steel and Logistics Cluster. We also seek to keep an eye out for industries that could further develop and strengthen the overall portfolio of services, provided by the port. This way, we can facilitate the growth of the existing industries and tenants, alongside accommodating new types of services, industries and products. In addition, we will see the generation of 250 local job opportunities upon completion of the plant."

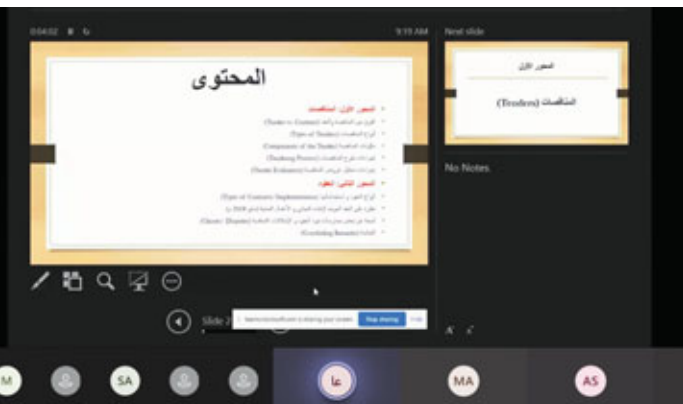
Moon Iron & Steel Company is a front runner within the local iron and steel sector. It hosts an annual production capacity of 1.2 million tons of high-grade reinforcement

bars (re-bars), produced by its state-of-the-art steel plant. With ground-breaking projects in the pipeline, MISCO is positioned to leverage opportunities in the construction industry, both within Oman and in the Middle East North Africa (Mena) region at large.

Moorkanat stated, "With the construction of the land and quay wall for the new plant, we will be able to facilitate the handling of direct reduced iron as raw material for producing steel, as well as hot-rolled coil, which can be used for engineering applications, including pipe manufacturing, cold rolling, galvanising, structural fabrication and more."

The eastern area at Sohar Port is a prime location, hosting cool water access and proximity to the petrochemical, logistics and food clusters. Since plots of land with waterfront access are rare in the GCC, Sohar seeks to lease the land out to potential investors and businesses to partner up with. With a sizable land area of over 880,000 sqm, it is ideal for companies in the logistics and metal sectors. The integrated port and freezone complex, provides an easy flow of business between the two, further enhancing convenience for tenants and investors, who are looking to set up at the rapidly expanding hub.

MADAYN INDUSTRIAL ACADEMY



VIRTUAL WORKSHOP: The workshop highlighted topics related to the fundamentals of tenders and contracts in government and public projects. - Supplied picture

Workshop on contracts and tenders conducted

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates – Madayn, represented by Madayn Industrial Academy, organised a virtual workshop on 'Fundamentals of Contracts and Tenders'.

Moderated by Dr Hammad Al Nasser of Sultan Qaboos University, the workshop highlighted topics related to the fundamentals of tenders and contracts in government and public projects, the difference between tender and contract, types of tenders, components of a tender, tendering process, tender evaluation, types of contracts and their implementation, an overview on the standard contract for building and civil engineering works, in addition to other related topics.

It is worthwhile mentioning that Madayn Industrial Academy was established to offer training opportunities for the national cadres to enhance administrative, financial and technical skills, raise their productivity, provide value-adding services to

Workshop highlighted types of tenders, components of a tender, tendering process, tender evaluation

the investors in the industrial cities, and provide new job opportunities for the national cadres. Madayn Industrial Academy conducts a series of training programmes and events that address trending topics locally and globally. Madayn aims through the academy to develop the skills of the national cadres by providing scientific and practical training opportunities to meet the requirements of the industrial sector in the Sultanate.

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BRANCH CONTACT NUMBER			
Azaiba : 71557547	Wattayah : 71557837	Sohar : 71557753	Sur : 71557329
Salalah : 71557237	Al Manuma : 91796025	Ibri : 91935428	MG WhatsApp : 71557334

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MANUFACTURER'S WARRANTY

MARKET

MSM index ends lower



The report released by MSM

The report added that the value of shares bought by non-Omani investors reached OMR277,000, comprising 11.60 per cent. The value of shares sold by non-Omani investors reached OMR472,000, comprising 19.77 per cent. The net non-Omani investment fell by 8.17 per cent to OMR195,000. — **ONA**

MUSCAT SECURITIES MARKET

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff %
MSM 30 INDEX	3,738.12	3,727.13	3,731.85	3,733.77	-1.92	-0.05
FINANCIAL INDEX	5,781.51	5,760.98	5,775.30	5,773.97	1.33	0.02
Services Index	1,534.45	1,531.52	1,532.24	1,533.90	-1.66	-0.11
Industry Index	4,670.74	4,659.75	4,665.48	4,670.74	-5.26	-0.11
MSM Shariah Index	547.95	546.41	546.57	547.95	-1.38	-0.25
MSM TR INDEX	4,336.15	4,323.40	4,328.88	4,329.37	-0.50	-0.01

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap.....	Up.....	Down.....	Equal.....	Sec. Traded
15,414,797	2,385,466	867	20,509,715,944	11	12	20	43

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, MARCH 22

[illegible]

Parallel Market

OM00000002549	BANK DHOAF	1,872,000	203,882	25	0.107	0.109	0.107	0.109	0.106	0.003	2,830	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.100	326,602.307
OM00000001319	ALUMINUM PROD.	2,297,847	266,766	200	0.115	0.119	0.113	0.116	0.113	0.003	2,655	0.116	0.116	0.117	0.100	3,884,288
OM00000001152	OMAN NAT GAS	132,000	11,880	2	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.080	0.002	2,378	0.090	0.083	0.095	0.100	117,000.000
OM00000000000	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	2,977,037	35,862	0	0.044	0.046	0.044	0.043	0.041	0.000	0.046	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.000	4,444,444.444
OM00000001178	MUSCAT GATES	4,800	974	2	0.203	0.203	0.203	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.203	0.180	0.203	0.000	6,000.000
OM00000001483	NATIONAL BANK CAN	55,180	8,272	7	0.149	0.151	0.149	0.154	0.150	0.000	0.000	0.151	0.150	0.155	0.100	243,891.953
OM00000001509	DHOAF INT	958	263	1	0.275	0.275	0.275	0.274	0.274	0.000	0.275	0.000	0.275	0.100	7,088,958.260	
OM00000000000	INDO PAPER POWER	300	244	300	0.812	0.812	0.812	0.812	0.812	0.000	0.812	0.812	0.812	0.100	1,449,000.000	
OM00000002200	AHLI BANK	2,000	220	2	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.109	0.109	0.000	0.000	0.110	0.105	0.110	0.100	212,512.664
OM00000002275	SHELL OMAN MKK	45,440	97,261	9	0.820	0.820	0.820	0.820	0.820	0.000	0.820	0.808	0.805	0.820	0.100	77,900.000
OM00000000000	UND FINANCE	139,321	6,134	0	0.044	0.045	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.000	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.000	20,000.000
OM00000003281	TACGER FINANCE	140	11	1	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.081	0.081	0.000	0.082	0.079	0.082	0.100	20,540.790	
OM00000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	173,590	7,812	9	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.000	0.045	0.045	0.044	0.046	0.100	130,410.129
OM00000003661	VOTAMF ENERGY	3,461	410	5	0.114	0.102	0.114	0.119	0.119	0.000	0.000	0.116	0.116	0.118	0.100	9,986,932.927
OM00000000000	BANK NUBA	2,535	241	0	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.094	0.095	0.000	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.000	3,500.000
OM00000004768	MADINA TAFUK	554,373	56,371	32	0.102	0.102	0.101	0.102	0.102	0.000	0.000	0.101	0.101	0.101	0.100	1,785,000.000
OM00000004925	ALBATHAN POWER	508,055	28,419	14	0.052	0.053	0.052	0.052	0.052	0.000	0.000	0.052	0.051	0.052	0.100	35,094.146
OM00000004932	AL SUWADI POWER	312,880	16,496	17	0.054	0.054	0.052	0.053	0.053	0.000	0.000	0.054	0.052	0.054	0.100	37,863.336
OM00000000000	OMAN REFIND	10,250	964	0	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.000	0.094	0.097	0.094	0.094	0.000	14,747,474.747
OM00000000740	DHOAFER SERVICES	39,850	6,397	2	0.160	0.160	0.159	0.159	0.160	-0.001	-0.029	0.159	0.159	0.160	0.100	35,336.160
OM00000002226	ALAZERA GENERATING	8,672	2,736	2	0.316	0.316	0.310	0.316	0.318	0.000	0.625	0.310	0.310	0.318	0.100	19,340.550
OM00000000000	OMAN BANK CAN	390,000	30,600	0	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.000	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.000	5,197,000.000
OM00000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	1,232,000	58,120	28	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.314	0.004	-1,274	0.310	0.308	0.310	0.100	91,826.241
OM00000005963	PHOENIX POWER	385,597	2,898	8	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.047	0.001	-1,218	0.046	0.047	0.046	0.100	67,270.667
OM00000002028	GULF INTL CHEMICAL	114,626	12,399	18	0.110	0.110	0.108	0.108	0.111	-0.003	-2,703	0.108	0.107	0.108	0.100	2,268.000
OM00000004776	TAFUK OMAN	8,460	4,025	2	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.121	-0.006	-959	0.115	0.115	0.117	0.100	11,500.000
Total	26	11,676,110	1,114,478	438												

OIL MARKET

Oil falls as European lockdowns douse recovery hopes

Brent crude was down 60 cents, or 0.9 per cent, at \$63.93 a barrel by 0136 GMT. US oil was off by 68 cents, or 1.1 per cent, at \$60.74 a barrel. Both contracts fell by more than 6 per cent last week.

"The reality is that we're still a long way from a full demand recovery, and it's the record levels of withdrawn production capacity that's the main prop for the oil

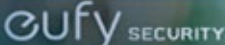
The Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies have put in place unprecedented production cuts in a pact to balance global markets after demand plunged during the COVID-19 pandemic. US drillers are starting to take advantage of an earlier spike in prices on optimism about returning demand. - BNA

INDUSTRY RESEARCH

India's tile industry to thrive exponentially post-COVID

The lockdown may have resulted in stunted growth in every sector in the industry, likewise in the tiles and ceramics sector. However, once the lockdown started to reverse back, the tile industry was the one to emerge out of the crisis stronger than ever. EMCER tiles, a leader in this segment sheds light on the reasons for this exponential growth.

India ranks in the top 3 countries for tile production in the world and the majority of this production takes place in units located in the Morbi cluster in Gujarat. All manufacturing plants were shut at the peak of the lockdown for two entire months and resumed work in June. However, as compared to other industries the recovery for the tile industry was speedy. This is primarily because the majority of the tile industry reckoned the value of their labour unit and decided to protect and care for them during this crisis. - ANI






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MANAGER

Operations Manager (Electrical), 10 years experience in primary and distribution substations and overhead line, D/L available. Contact 95357073

Expert in oil and gas supply chain, operation and commercial management 18 years of Oman experience as mid level executive looking for immediate placement. Contact 95148237

Looking for management position (MBA &BBA), having 15 yrs experience in Oman/KSA, sales, logistics & procurement (FMCG & non food, household, electronics able to communicate 7 language with Arabic. Having D/L. Contact 98056640. email mafascv@gmail.com

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CONNECT

JOB WANTED

ENGINEER

Omani female looking for a job, BSc in Process engineering (Done four different internships in process engineering), marketing experience as well.

Contact: 95119284
alya_alsiyabi93@outlook.com

Omani Information Technology Field

Omani looking for a job, Bachelor degree in IT from the United States of America, 1 year experience in IT.

Contact: 71771213
Email: Hafes707@hotmail.com

HR / Admin

Indian Female looking for job opportunities in HR/Admin or similar field. MBA with 7 yrs of experience in Oman, UAE and India in HR, Admin, Payroll n others. Experience in all HR functions. Available to start immediately.

Contact 99653715

Facility Manager / Project Manager (Civil)

B.E. (Civil) with 24 years expertise in Facilities Management, Civil Construction Management, Project Management, Maintenance Management, Site Inspection & Audit, Process & Documentation, Contracts & vendor management, Budgeting & cash flow. Available to join immediately. Omani DL & NOC is available.

Contact: +968-96180303 shiv60769@gmail.com

MECHANICAL ENGINEER

Sudanese, PMP Certified, 8 years experience in Manufacturing, Maintenance, Water Treatment Plant and pipeline. Seeking for Good Opportunity.

aminol2424@gmail.com
79417515

Sales & Marketing

Indian male, professional in media ad sales and marketing, experienced in business development and planning and rolling out offline & online product promotion campaigns, organising product launch events & other BTL programs, looking for a suitable opportunity.

Contact 78060507 / kerdel2008@gmail.com

SR. MECHANICAL / MEP ENGINEER / MEP MANAGER

Filipino, with over 21 years of experience (airport, seaport, infra, buildings) Working as a consultant since 2010 Having Oman D/L and NOC.

Contact: +96871180492
allirod1975@gmail.com

B.E Civil Engineer

Indian Male 29yrs with 7 Plus years of Experience in handling High End Building Construction Projects, Infrastructure, MEP, Interior finish and Landscaping works looking for any suitable job in immediate. Having Knowledge of MS Project & Primavera P6. NOC & Oman D/L Available.

Contact/ Whatsapp No.: 95051103,
Email: loyannavildsouza@gmail.com

EGYPTIAN CIVIL ENGINEER

2 yrs experience in Site & Design with Driving License seeks job

Contact 97500522
Email: mohamelgelzeiry@gmail.com

ELECTRICAL MANAGER

Graduate Electrical Engineer & MBA (Project Management) with 28 years' experience in Industrial Projects & Maintenance looking for senior role. NOC Available and can join immediately.

Contact: 968-94029112
Email: sakthiveljothi@gmail.com

Project Director / Senior Project Manager / Contracts Administrator

Indian National having 18 years of work experience, 14 years in Oman having master's in Construction Project Management & Construction Law & Dispute Resolution from UK Universities. Experienced in Handling High End Hospitality, Residential & Commercial Projects from initiation till completion. Seeks Placement as Clients or Consultants representative in Oman.

Please contact – 78022980

PROJECT ADMIN/CEO OFFICE MNGMT/HR/OPS CORPORATE & MKTG. COMMUNICATIONS/ADMIN

Indian, Masters, excellent English, Arabic speaker, 17years Oman exp in Airports Project, Hospital, Media in Project Coordination, Corporate & Mktg. Communication, CEO & Chairman Office Mngmt, Operations, Admin, HR. Immediate. NOC.

CONTACT 99283938

FINANCE

Indian Female (MBA Finance) having 15 years (Oman) of work experience in Banking / Finalization / Audit; seeks suitable placement.

Contact 94953826 / 92824146

ACCOUNTANT

A certified VAT professional having Masters degree & 10 years of GCC experience in senior positions, is available to handle accounts & VAT compliance.

Contact 71990782

Finance Head

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

Contact 92148608

CIVIL ENGINEER

B.Sc in Civil Engineering having 13 years experience in Oman. Hand on experience in Ministry of Health, MOD, ROP and RCA prestigious project. Available in Oman with NOC and Valid DL.

Contact No. 92180869
E-mail: mamuns02@yahoo.com

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT (SRI LANKAN)

CA, CPA, BSc. (Accountancy & Business Finance) Special with 12 years of experience (6th year in Oman) is looking for an opening. DL, NOC are available.

GSM: 78259755

IT PROFESSIONAL

With 15+years of experience. Currently working as Head Of IT Support for a reputed company in Muscat for last 7 years. MCSA, CNA, ITIL certified. Experience in IT infrastructure, IT project management, Resource Management & Service Desk seeks suitable placement as IT Manager/System Admin.

Contact 92514687 Email: hi.binu@gmail.com

Indian male, bachelor's degree, Graduate (B.Com, B. Ed) looking for secretary, exec assistant, office administration jobs, 18 years experience, 7 years in Oman.

Call 97015841
Email khalid.bin.umar@gmail.com

GIS Engineer

Indian Male, Age 24, B.E. Computer Engineering and Masters of Science in GIS (Geographic Information System's) from U.K. Seeking suitable placement in GIS field. Having Oman Driving License. Resident of Oman. Ready to join immediately.

Contact: 99738614,
deepitkotian14@gmail.com

FINANCE

Indian, Female, MCOM with B.Ed. Having 2 Years' experience in Office accounts (Inventory Checking, Book keeping, Payroll) and training experience (ICT teaching, Lecture methods-Accounting) in schools. Looking for suitable placement in Accounts/ Admin / Teacher jobs. Currently on Visit visa, Residing in Wadi kabir, Muscat.

Contact 97131091, Email: gokulsbg@gmail.com

ACCOUNTS ASSISTANT

Indian Bachelor, B.Com, 4 yrs experience as ACCOUNTS ASSISTANT seeks suitable placement. D/L & NOC Available.

Contact 96324484

PURCHASE + STORES + ADMINISTRATION

Indian Male 10+ yrs experience in Oman (Currently available in Oman). Experience in Engineering / Construction/Structural Steel Projects, Manufacturing & Trading Concern. With administrative skills with D/L & NOC. Looking for suitable placement.

Contact: 78039935

FINANCE MANAGER

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CONTACT +968 95808315 / 94411825

JOB WANTED

ENGINEER

Sr. quantity surveyor - Civil / contracts with 14+ years of experience in commercial and residential projects in Oman, holder of D/L & NOC available. Seeking for suitable position. Contact no. 93249891

Construction engineer with 10 yrs experience in Oman consulting offices 7 experience in government project. Contact 96965100

Planning engineer, Indian more than 20 yrs experience in Oil & gas, pipeline building & MEP projects scheduling using primavera P6 seeks suitable job. NOC available. Contact 92651105
Email reji-mathai@hotmail.com

Indian male, electric engineer 1 year experience in project coordination and MEP looking for suitable placement. Ready to shift location. Contact: 71148202. Email: Muhammadmuzzammil878@gmail.com

B.E Civil engineer Male, with 2 years of professional experience in municipal house construction project. Equipped with a valid D/L. Fluent in English & Arabic. Contact 96749821
Email mhassan9610@gmail.com

Civil engineer with 9 years exp in Oman. Contact 97646908

Indian female M.Tech in Electrical power system having 4+ yrs of experience in Oman seeking suitable placement. Contact 79733520, 94306164

Project engineer, B.Tech-civil, India, 12yrs Oman experience in all kinds of operation of civil & MEP and interior fit-out field with valued Visa and D/L, 95206259, looking placement

Electrical engineer 9 years experience in primary substations, OHL, and underground cables. With a valid D/L. Contact 98223842

Indian Male B.E Civil 6Y experience currently available in Oman. Ready for Immediate join Looking for Any job. Contact 91406778

Senior Civil Engineer with 12 years Exp in government and private construction projects. looking for a suitable position. Contact 95962450. Email: solanki.ahmed@gmail.com

B.E Mechanical engineer, 25 yrs with 2.5 yrs of experience in MEP execution & estimation is seeking suitable placement. Contact 94846765. Email akshaygopinath@gmail.com

Senior Civil Engineer (RE) with over 10 years of experience on major projects (Residential, Commercial & Industrial). # 78270396

B.E in Mechanical Engineering with 2 yrs of experience in fire fighting & MEP. Currently working as estimation & design engineer is looking for a suitable placement. Contact 94417169

MEDICAL

Optometry, Looking for an optometry job, completed BSC optometry and having 1-year experience, Job-Training also willing, 23yr Indian Female on a family visit. Contact 95905256, 96973213
Email id - jilshaismail@gmail.com

MECHANIC/TECHNIC

HSE adviser IOSH certified with 4 years experience. Contact 71721926. Email mubashirosmen89@gmail.com

Omani National Female with have Bachelor Degree in water technology. Contact 94421774

Technical supervisor, ELV, CCTV, IP/HD, Fire alarm & ups, electrical work. Have D/L. Contact 94625245

Tower crane operator. NOC available. Contact 91519095

PURCHASE/PROCUREMENT

Indian male, 10+ yrs experience in the field of purchase, store, asset coordinator. Valid D/L. Immediately available for joining. Contact 71596360. Email praveenskurup82@gmail.com

Indian male, experience of 12 Years in Oman as a Purchasing officer and store manager, D/L NOC available looking for suitable job. Contact 97099785, maniugcc@gmail.com

Procurement, purchase officer having master degree searching for job. 07 yrs exp in oman in a well known construction & maintenance group of companies. NOC available. Contact 92587919, 99423614. Email jahanzeb_athar@yahoo.com

Indian, purchase assistant, store keeper 9 years working experience in oman. Valid Oman D/L (light) Looking for suitable job. Contact 98615731
Email: sanalk73@gmail.com

Indian male, 16 yrs experience in a multinational freight forwarding & logistic co, worked under the capacity of Senior operation executive/senior accountant (Ocean freight, air freight, land transport, warehouse operations & finance & accounting). NOC available. Contact 93587605

Filipino, male with more than 10 years experience in Oman as Store Incharge, Sales associate, customer service, retail, warehouse logistics and merchandiser with D/L. Contact 95042624

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Indian Male 15 years Experience (MBA) looking for job in Sales & Marketing. Currently in Oman with Valid Driving License and Valid Visa. Contact 91127809

Indian male (30) MBA with Oman experience in sales & marketing, valid Omani D/L on visit. Contact 79755795
Email dhajwani2@gmail.com

34yrs Indian, MBA marketing, B.Com, 9 yrs experience (2 yrs GCC-Dubai) seeking Sales, admin, accounting job. Contact 78167383

Indian male (24) BBA, 2year experience in sales and administration. Contact 94890534
Email: jebinahmed@gmail.com

Mechanical engineer, 4 yrs experience in Oman & 1 yr in India, have Oman valid D/L. Looking for suitable placement. Contact 91521567

Indian male, 38 yrs old MBA graduate, 14 yrs experience in Oman. looking for appropriate placement in sales & marketing job in Muscat region having valid D/L. Contact 92255983
Email vijukrishmann@gmail.com

Indian males Sales officer with 3 years experience capable to manage from quotation till finalization tally. Contact 79880058
Email: rkumarkotian21@gmail.com

TOUR / TRAVEL

Seeking job in Travel & Tourism, 12 years experience, Graduate (B.Sc) IATA Certified professional presently available in Oman. Contact 968 92477622, 79842322
Email: tahaspm@gmail.com

Looking for a Ticketing Staff job. completed bachelor of tourism studies, IATA along with Galileo and Amadeus. 21yr Indian female on the resident visit. Contact 96263312, 96973213
Email farseenapa21@gmail.com

Indian male 29, exp: 03yr-09 months as ticketing reservation executive seeks job. NOC available. Contact 97322323/94478168. e-mail: anwarjailil51@gmail.com

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Five years of success with Awasr

After five years, the company has become a major partner in the technological transformation, whether on a personal level or for business, in the Sultanate of Oman



Abdul Moneim Al Futaisi



MUSCAT: Awasr celebrated the occasion of the fifth anniversary of its establishment.

Since 2016, Awasr has provided many innovative products and services that have enabled it in a short time to gain the confidence of customers, whether they are individuals or business customers.

This celebration was sponsored by Dr Hamad bin Salem Al Rawahi, Chairman of the Board of Directors Awasr and in the presence of the members of the Board of Directors, the executive management of the company, employees, many representatives of the media and influencers from the social media, the celebration included several activities that included introducing the attendees about the company and its achievements during the past five years.

After five years, the company feels proud that it has become a major partner in the technological transformation, whether on a personal level or for business, in the Sultanate of Oman.

Dr Hamad bin Salem Al Rawahi, Chairman of Awasr Board of Directors commented on this occasion, saying, "The approach that the company has taken is to employ the latest technologies and the most agile operations enabled Awasr to provide a global commu-

nication experience with a high degree of simplicity and stability. This has greatly contributed to improving the quality of services provided to customers and enabling them to enjoy a new and wonderful experience at competitive prices that were not previously obtained before the entry into the market."

Abdul Moneim Al Futaisi, Chief Operating Officer, said on this occasion, "We were confident that our technical capabilities, distinctive products and services that we have presented, and our commitment to our customers with long-term trustworthy relationships gave us great opportunities to enjoy the throes of challenge and competition, and thanks to God we were able to prove that.

"Where we were able, thanks to a creative team of young people and the confidence of our esteemed customers, to record many achievements, including the award for the fastest fixed broadband operator in the Sultanate for the previous years in a row, and our appreciation for the confidence of our current customers or those who will join the Awasr family in the future, we have decided on this anniversary to reward our customers by automatically upgrading their current speed to 1000 Mbps, free of charge, until April 3 of this year, in a move that is the first in the MENA region."

Awassr is one of the first companies in the region that enabled customers to request services di-

rectly through the website without the need to visit any outlet since 2016 and it was the first to provide the fastest Fibrenet package for homes at a speed of 1000 Mbps, and to provide custom Fibrenet services to business customers at speeds Up to 10 gigabits per second. Awassr was also one of the first companies to enable customers to order their services through WhatsApp, and as an additional service for home entertainment, the company provided Jawwy TV, which won the confidence and satisfaction of many customers, and for more control from the Internet risks, the company provided services to enable parents to have more home control called Safenet.

Omanis makes up 92% of the

company's employees, who exhibit a spirit of creativity and the application of innovative ideas to keep pace with global progress in the field of communications. Awassr has devoted most of its attention to empowering Omani youth.

On this occasion, Badriya Al-Ismaili, Head of Human Resources and Administration, said about this achievement, "We in Awassr, are always proud of the competence of Omani youth, as they always prove that they are the best if they are given the necessary confidence and help them to apply their creativity and ideas. We were also able to help establish new Omani companies to be the right arm for us in providing different services in the market, and many of those

who work for them are recent graduates of university and college students."

In a comment by Eng. Khamis Al-Barahi, Head of Technology, "We always strive to introduce new services and products and to apply the best networks and the latest technologies available in the global markets that will enable our customers to make the most of the strength of the network. We have created strategic partnerships with several national and international companies that have enabled us with much confidence in providing a better experience for our customers."

Awassr has always provided a great example of providing customer service characterized by intelligence, attention and ingenuity, like Eng. Ismail Al Shaksy, Head of Operations, stated: "Our focus from the beginning was on providing seamless customer service, by employing the best competencies available in the telecommunications sector and harnessing the best technologies to monitor the network and follow up on customers around the clock, and we will always continue to develop our technologies for the convenience of our customers, whether individuals or business customers."

In a statement by Eng. Issam Al-Ismaili, Head of Commercial Affairs on this occasion, "In Awassr, we look at the past five years with an eye of satisfaction. We are proud of serving customers and are happy to provide beautiful moments in their lives. As for the future, we look at it with the passion to continue our role in serving the nation by providing products that will support all plans of the Sultanate's government for digital transformation and implementation of Oman 2040 vision and will contribute to attracting and serving investors. As for our clients, we assure them of our continued provision of services with better quality at the same time that we are searching for the latest services and products in the world to make their lives more beautiful, and easier."

AIRBAG SUPERDRY CABLE SYSTEM

Oman Cables completes installation of revolutionary technology empowered by Nama Group

MUSCAT: Oman Cables Industry has completed the installation of the AIRBAG SuperDry cable system made in Oman.

The project at Jalan Bani Bu Ali, located in the South Al Sharqiyah Governorate region extends along the coastal strip of the Arabian Sea. The cable has been installed in Al Ashkharah town where the complex and rare ecological conditions that exist are defined as highly rough and characterful.



AIRBAG is a protection cable system with a layer between the cores and external sheath that works as a shock absorber. The deformation generated by the impact is absorbed by the AIRBAG layer that works as a system to provide a very effective defence against impact.

AIRBAG SuperDry is the result of the unique partnership between Oman Cables & Nama Group to meet the challenges of the very specific project require-

ments. The extensive research & development process carried out in the recent months has been in close cooperation with Nama Group to create a cable technology addressing the precise requirement of installation in special environment conditions close to a coastal area with high salinity.



The long-standing relationship with the local manufacturer has brought Nama Group and its respected subsidiaries; Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC), Mazoon Electricity Company (MZEC), Muscat Distribution Company (MEDC), Majan Electricity Company (MJEC), Dhofar Electricity Com-

pany (DPC) and Tanweer, to be a great supporter for Oman Cables' exclusive technologies that enable the reliability of its energy network. The increasing longevity and safety of cable system assets have a wide impact from the economy to people, businesses and communities and hence result in consequential added value to the people of Oman

Oman Cables has also supplied ALESEA (IoT Solution for Cable Management) on a pilot project with Mazoon Electricity and Distribution Company (MZEC), a member of Nama Group, with Oman being the first GCC country to implement the solution presenting the group's direction towards digitalisation of its assets. ALESEA is able to provide full inventory management service while contributing to reducing the total cost of cable management, through better asset use and greater operating efficiency while lessening the impact on the environment through optimised logistics and keeping the cable waste and scrap to a minimum.

"As an Omani manufacturer, our strategy has been enhanced to meet Nama Group's vision on innovation. This includes not only cable solutions but equally transformative services that address existing challenges." Antonio Chiantore, Chief Commercial Officer, Oman Cables Industry SAOG.

Matching visions have also creat-



ed In-Country Value opportunities with a successful example on local training programs conducted at Numo training institute, a member of Nama Group, for Omani graduates. Oman Cables is pleased to be part of the ongoing achievements and has further upcoming plans of creating a Training Academy in cooperation with Nama Group specialising in cable jointing works.

The above success cases confirm the strength of Nama Group's strategy in line with Oman's 2040 vision and clear evidence of Nama as an innovative company supporting local manufacturers to grow their potential through the provision of infrastructure where it can exploit Omani core skills and assets to create value.



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‘Long live Oman-Pakistan ties’



HE Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan

On the auspicious occasion of National Day of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, I wish to express my best wishes and felicitations to every member of the quarter million Pakistani residents in the Sultanate of Oman.

Pakistan and Oman enjoy historical bonds of affinity and kinship. The relations are strongly pegged on common faith, culture and values. I am confident that these would continue to grow further in times ahead.

Year 2020 started with the sad demise of late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimour. I pray that Allah SWT grant the departed soul highest place in Jannah. Under the wise, sagacious and visionary leadership of late His Majesty, Oman had been completely transformed into a modern and highly developed country.

Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos played an extremely important

role in promoting brotherly and friendly ties between Pakistan and Oman. His visit to Pakistan in 2001, laid the solid foundation of this highly cooperative relationship. Pakistan deeply values his contribution for promotion of bilateral cooperation in various fields. His policies and programmes have deep impact on regional and international issues. Oman's neutral and balanced Foreign Policy was a vision of late Sultan, who benevolently ruled the Sultanate of Oman for 50 years.

On behalf of the Government and brotherly people of Pakistan as well as on my own personal behalf, I wish to extend felicitations to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, the Government and the brotherly people of Sultanate of Oman on Accession of His Majesty to the Throne in the aftermath of sad demise of late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin

Taimour who was a true friend and brother of Pakistan. I avail myself of this opportunity to express my best wishes for His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik's everlasting health and happiness and for the continued progress, stability and prosperity of brotherly country.

It may be noted that year 2020 witnessed a serious global health challenge i.e. an outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic that has played havoc with the world, resulting in a series of global lockdown, causing more than 2.5 million deaths, more than 115 million infections (worldwide), which has triggered an economic meltdown all over the world.

I would like to appreciate and acknowledge the efforts and decisions taken by the Government of Oman in curtailing the spread of Covid-19 Pandemic and the facilities extended to the victims of the pandemic both Omani nationals as well as expatriate community members.

Last year, our entire focus was on ensuring safety, security and welfare of our community and smooth repatriation of stranded Pakistan nationals. Mission, in coordination with Omani authorities and Pakistan International Airlines, has repatriated a total number of 15,000 stranded Pakistan nationals through 84 Special Flights from Oman to Pakistan. Pakistan Embassy also arranged distribution of food items among affected community members residing in locked down areas in Muscat and other parts of the Sultanate. I must offer my deep appreciation to the philanthropist and businessman who greatly supported us in our efforts to assist our community members during pandemic.

I would also like to highlight Pakistani leadership's vision of

transformed Pakistan/ Naya Pakistan, which is centred around economic security and demonstrating a shift from geo-politics to geo-economics so as to utilise its geo-economic location, which is at the crossroads of Middle East, South and Central Asia, for national and regional development. Pakistan will focus on the three pillars i.e. i) connectivity; ii) providing

On behalf of the Government and brotherly people of Pakistan as well as on my behalf, I wish to extend felicitations to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, the Government and the brotherly people of Sultanate of Oman on Accession of His Majesty to the Throne in the aftermath of sad demise of late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimour, who was a true friend and brother of Pakistan



Ambassador's Message
Pakistan Ambassador to Oman,
K. K. Ahsan Wagan



HE Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan

economic bases as development strategy; and iii) peace within our borders and beyond. With regard to connectivity China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a flagship programme under One-Road One-Belt initiative, which is geo-strategic connecting point between South/Central Asia, China and Middle East. The transformational nature of CPEC will be utilized as the epic centre of regional connectivity.

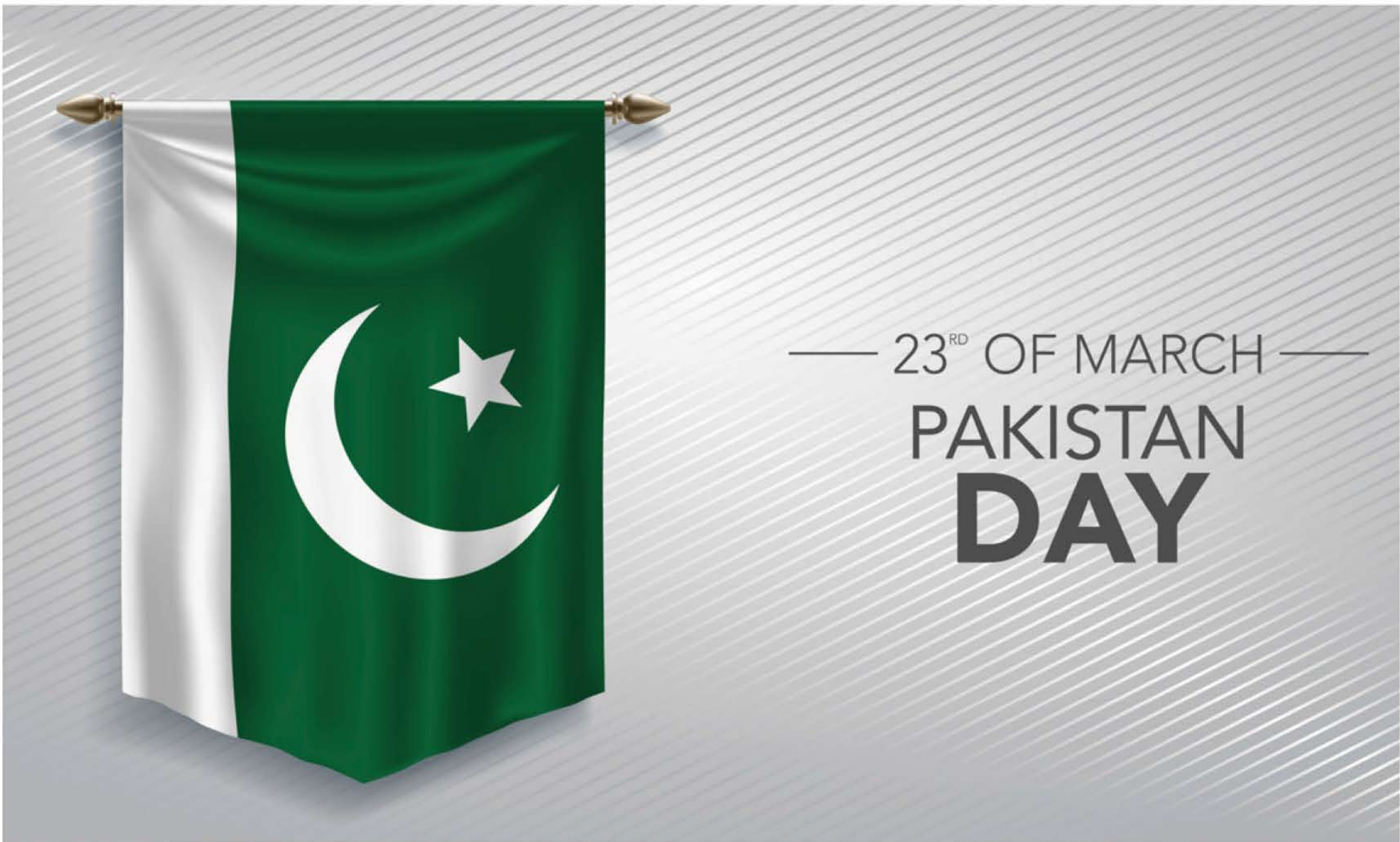
Keeping in view global challenges faced by the developing countries in particular and World at large, His Excellency Prime Minister Imran Khan has shared a Global Agenda, which aimed to address global challenges that includes i) Sustainable Development and Poverty Alleviation; ii) Global Initiative on Debt Relief for Developing Countries; iii) Tackling Climate Change; iv) Combating Illicit Financial Flows; and v)

Addressing the Menace of Hate Speech & Islamophobia.

Pakistan remain a strong supporter of multilateralism, with the UN playing a central role for promoting a rules-based international order in the areas of (a) peace and security; (b) human rights; and (c) sustainable development. Pakistan is among few countries in Asia which has ratified 27 core international conventions on human and labour rights as well as environmental protection.

I express gratitude to His Majesty Haitham Bin Tarik for his gracious love and hospitality for the 250,000 Pakistanis who benefit from the Blessed Renaissance. I thank Government of Oman for its cooperation and all Omanis for their infinite and unconditional love which demonstrates the true measure of our 5,000 years old bond.

— Pakistan Ambassador to Oman K. K. Ahsan Wagan



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China-Pakistan Economic Corridor — a game changer for Pakistan's economy

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), is one of the major components of the China's Belt and Road Initiative and 'game changer' for Pakistan's economy.

The enhancement of geographical linkages after improved road, rail and air transportation system with frequent and free people to people contact, understanding through academic, cultural and regional knowledge and culture, activity of higher volume of trade and businesses, producing and moving energy to have more optimal businesses and enhancement of co-operation by win-win model will result in well connected, integrated region of shared destiny, harmony and development.

Message from Prime Minister of Pakistan on CPEC:

CPEC is a great opportunity for Pakistan. CPEC connects us to China which is one of the biggest markets. Because of CPEC, we are developing Special Economic Zones (SEZs) which invite investment across the globe. China is a huge market and CPEC route will connect China and Pakistan located at strategic position of world.

Key cooperation areas

The CPEC in itself is a \$65 billion mega project and consists of projects of gigantic nature; a 3,000 km network of roads throughout Pakistan, special economic zones in different parts of the country in near vicinity of the roads, more than 10,000 MW of energy projects for the national grid and other projects in science and research. Apart from these, Pak-China collaboration projects in agriculture, education etc. are also a part of the corridor. The main aim of course is to enable Pakistan to host the corridor and become a partner in the shared economic activity which will eventually benefit the whole region.

I. Connectivity

i. Construction of an integrated transport system



Transport infrastructure is the basic and prerequisite condition for the construction of the CPEC. It is an important field that can be relied on to guide and drive the economic and social development of regions along the CPEC, besides promoting the inter connectivity and all-round cooperation between China and Pakistan for shared prosperity.

Through the joint planning and development of highways, railways, ports, aviation and other infrastructure, a convenient, efficient and integrated transport corridor that includes a variety of modes of transport will be formed, to achieve the transition from lagging behind to adaptation and then to moderate advancement in the transport infrastructure of the main nodes along the CPEC.

Following initiatives have been planned to achieve the aforementioned objectives:

- Construction and development of Kashgar-Islamabad, Peshawar-Islamabad-Karachi, Sukkur-Gwadar Port and Dera Ismail Khan-Quetta-Sohrab-Gwadar road infrastructure, to enhance road safety and service levels and expand traffic capacity.
- Capacity expansion of existing railway lines (specifically ML-1



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that is of strategic nature under CPEC), and construction of new projects, promoting the modernization of the railway and build an integrated transport corridor.

- Construction and development of Gwadar city and port; build a consolidated transport system, continuously improve the infrastructure of the port, accelerate the construction of East Bay Expressway and the new in-

ternational airport and enhance the competitiveness of the Free Zone to promote the social progress and economic development of the region.

ii. Information network infrastructure

- Promote the construction of cross-border optical fibre cables between China and Pakistan and the construction of the backbone optical fibre networks in Pakistan.
- Upgrading of Pakistan's network facilities, including the national data centre and the second submarine cable landing station.
- Expedite Pakistan to adopt international Digital Terrestrial Multimedia Broadcasting (DTMB) standard.
- Promote the ICT-enabled development of Pakistan, including e-government, border electronic monitoring and safe city construction; promote the development of e-commerce in Pakistan.
- Enhance the development of the information industry in Pakistan; build IT industrial parks and IT industry clusters in Pakistan to improve Pakistan's information technology and service outsourcing.

II. Energy-related fields

China and Pakistan will strengthen cooperation in the fields of oil and gas, electricity and power grids, and focus on the construction of major projects of thermal power, hydropower, coal gasification and renewable power generation, and power transmission networks, in order to enhance its power transmission and supply reliability.

- Cooperation in the development of oil and gas resources, research on the integrated vision and demand of China and Pakistan oil and gas cooperation
- Optimise the sourcing and use of coal, and research on development and utilisation of Pakistan's own coal for power plant and developing technologies for surface coal gasification, expansion and augmentation of coal mining sector.
- Actively promote river planning and preparatory work of major projects to accelerate the hydropower development process.
- Develop wind and solar energy based on local conditions, and establish diversified energy supply channels.
- Strengthen the construction of high voltage-class power grids and power transmission and distribution networks to fulfil the electricity demand and ensure the reliability of electricity supply in Pakistan. To develop the industry for manufacturing of energy sector equipment required for generation, transmission and distribution including renewable energy technologies.

III. Trade and industrial parks

China and Pakistan will strengthen cooperation in trade and industrial areas, expand bilateral economic and trade relations, and enhance the level of bilateral trade liberalisation.

- Promote the quality, value addition, competitiveness and efficiency improvement of the textile and garment industry, expand the size of the textile industry, and increase the supply of high value-added products.
- Promote Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in all provinces and regions in Pakistan along with Kashgar Economic and Technological Development Zone and Caohu Industrial Park from Chinese side.
- Expand cooperation in industry, promote Pakistan's industries to assemble imported parts

and components to localise production of parts, and the development of energy efficient industry in Pakistan.

- Promote the industrial capacity cooperation in sectors such as: chemical & pharmaceutical, engineering goods, agro, iron & steel, light manufacturing & home appliances and construction materials, and use efficient, energy-saving and environmental friendly processes and equipment to meet the demands of Pakistan's local markets and at the same time to further expand it to the international market.

- Expand trade logistics and areas of business cooperation, improve business-to business (B2B) links and the investment environment, optimise the bilateral trade structure, and promote balanced trade development.

- Support the establishment of customs special supervision areas along the CPEC on the basis of China-Pakistan economic cooperation zones and industrial parks in order to provide investment platforms for companies and continue to extend transnational industrial chains.

IV. Agricultural development and poverty alleviation

China and Pakistan will give full play to their own comparative advantages to strengthen agricultural infrastructure construction within the CPEC coverage and play their own roles in agricultural personnel training, technical exchanges and cooperation. They are cooperating in key construction areas such as biological breeding, production, processing, storage and transportation, infrastructure construction, disease prevention and control, water resources utilisation, conservation and production, land development and remediation, ICT-enabled agriculture and marketing of agricultural products to promote the systematic, large-scale, standardised and intensified construction of the agricultural industry.

- Strengthen the upgrading of agricultural infrastructure in the regions along the CPEC.
- Promote the construction of water-saving modern agricultural zones, and increase the development and remediation of medium- and low-yielding land to achieve efficient use of resources.
- Strengthen cooperation in the fields such as crop farming, livestock breeding, forestry and food growing, and aquatic and fishery in the regions along the CPEC, with the highlight on technical exchange and cooperation in the fields of development of comprehensive agricultural production capacity, construction of farmland water conservancy facility and agricultural products circulation facility.
- Improve post-harvest handling, storage and transportation of agricultural products, and innovate in marketing and sales models.
- Improve water resources operation and management, strengthen development of pastoral areas and desert, and promote application of remote sensing technology.
- Strengthen production of agriculture inputs particularly pesticides, fertiliser, machinery and support services including agriculture education and research. Collaborate in forestry, horticulture, fisheries and livestock medicines and vaccines.

V. Tourism

China and Pakistan will further exploit the potential advantages of the tourism resources in the regions along the CPEC, especially the China-Pakistan border areas. They will actively research com-

prehensive development of coastal tourism within the CPEC coverage, with Gwadar and Karachi as the hubs, expand cross-border tourism and improve the quality of tourism services to effectively promote the socio-economic development of the two countries.

- Actively discuss the feasibility of constructing the "2+1+5" tourism spatial structure in Pakistan, which includes two centres, one axis and five zones: Karachi Port and Gwadar Port as the two centres, and the coastal tourism belt as the development axis, and five tourism zones of Jiwani & Gwadar tourism zone, Jhal Jhao, Ormara, Sonmini and Keti Bander.
- Improve the tourism public service system in cross border areas, with particular attention to the services of public information, convenient transportation, security protection and other services benefiting the public.
- Actively consider to building a tour route connecting coastal cities of Pakistan and themed on coastal leisure & vacationing, and the initial suggested route is: Keti Bander - Karachi - Sonmini - Ormara - Jhal Jhao - Gwadar - Jiwani.

VI. Cooperation in areas concerning people's livelihood and non-governmental exchanges

China and Pakistan will further strengthen cooperation between local governments, strengthen the communications among non-governmental organizations, develop extensive project cooperation centred on public opinions communication, people-to-people friendship and people's livelihood improvement, and enhance the comprehensive service capability of the cities along the CPEC. They should significantly improve people's livelihood to provide a good social environment for the CPEC building.

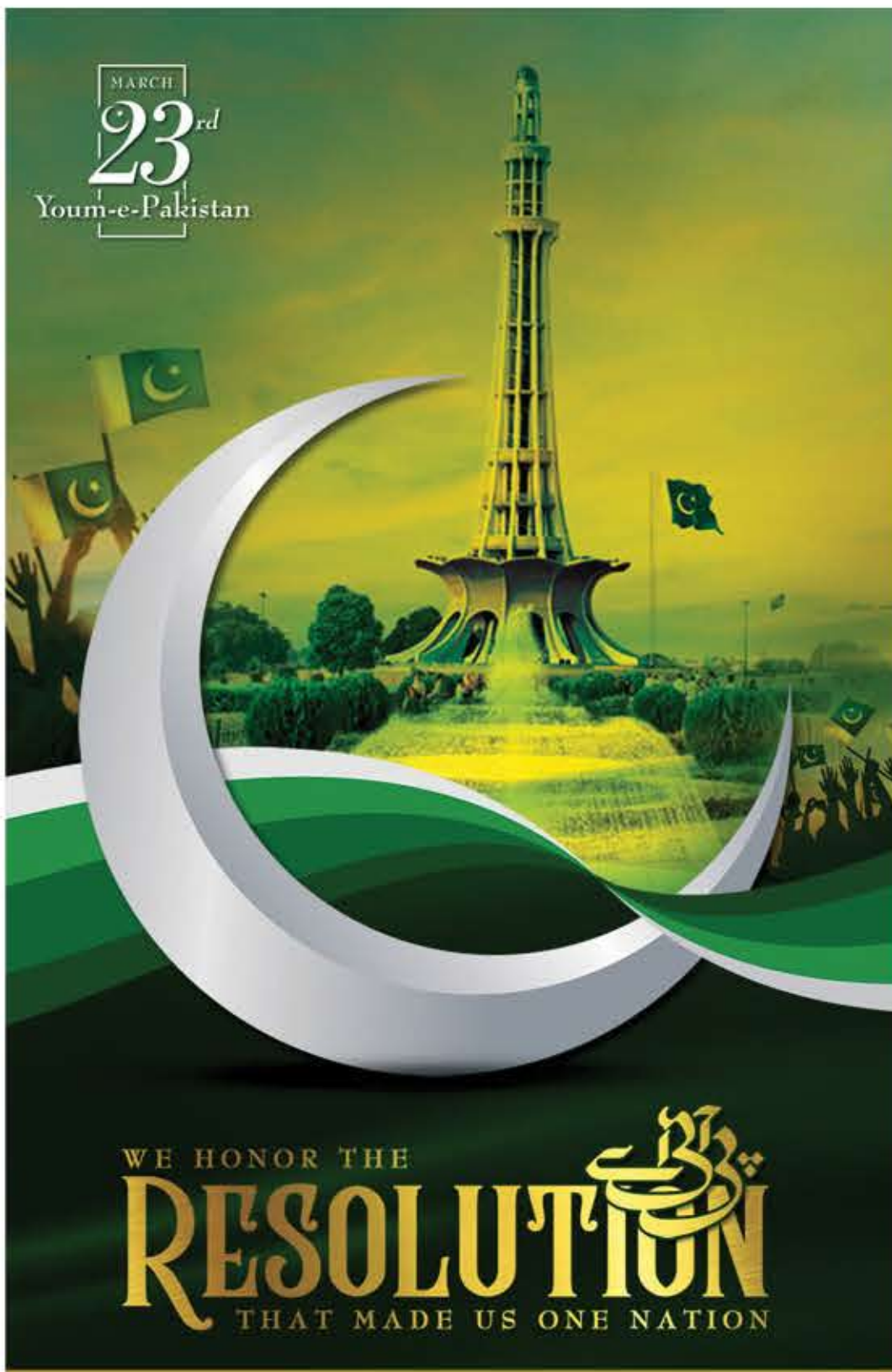
- Apply international and China's new urbanisation concepts to the municipal construction of the node cities along the CPEC, such as the construction of the public transport system and water supply and drainage systems; utilize China's strength in technology, equipment, and capital, and solve some prominent livelihood issues via pilot projects.

- Expand the scale of training programmes in China for Pakistani central government officials, parties and local government officials from regions along the CPEC; select outstanding Pakistani students from regions along the CPEC and send them to Chinese universities such as university in Xinjiang to receive higher education and make cultural exchanges;
- Strengthen social and economic development cooperation within the CPEC coverage; make efforts to carry out vocational training in Pakistan.

VII. Financial cooperation

The two countries will explore the establishment of multi-level cooperation mechanisms and strengthen policy coordination. They will also strengthen their own financial reform and opening up, innovate in their own financial products and financial services, and control financial risks to create a good financial environment for the CPEC building. Following are the areas of focus:

- Strengthen cooperation in financial regulation.
- The two countries will promote monetary cooperation between the central banks, implement existing bilateral currency swap arrangements, research to expand the amount of currency swap and explore to enrich the use scope of bilateral currency swap; assign the foreign currency to domestic banks through credit-based bids to support the financing for projects along the CPEC; promote the settlement in domestic currencies (RMB and Rupees) to reduce the demand for third-party currency; strengthen the cooperation between the central banks and financial regulatory agencies of the two countries. The two sides will actively to use bilateral currencies for the settlement of bilateral trade and investment under the relevant arrangements. The two countries encourage clearing and settlement of the financial institutions from both sides through Cross-Border Inter-Bank Payment System (CIPS), promote the free flow of capital in an orderly manner, and enhance the facilitation in cross-border transfer of legitimate funds.



Pakistan International Airlines is proudly celebrating 23rd March, the Pakistan Resolution Day with national feel and zeal.





ATTRACTIVE INITIATIVES FOR INVESTMENT IN PAKISTAN

During last decades, initiatives for investment have been the strongest driver of global growth, giving a significant boost to economies in developed and developing countries. Around the world, countries are adopting liberalised policies to attract FDI. Most of the new investment policy measures continue to be geared towards self-reliance, investment liberalisation and promotion

Pakistan's first Investment Policy was given in 1997 which opened services, social, infrastructure and agriculture sectors for foreign and local investors. Prior to this, foreign investment was restricted to the manufacturing sector only. The 1997 Policy laid the foundation for gains in FDI inflows experienced over the subsequent decade. The Policy was reviewed and revised in 2013 with an objective to further improve the investment climate in the country.

Investment Policy 2020 (IP 2020) is an evolutionary enhancement of the earlier policies and consolidates fresh initiatives promulgated by the line ministries, introducing strategic measure for its implementation.

IP 2020 takes into account, global investment trends, regional trends and experiences, and the present day economic challenges. The policy focuses more on ease of

doing business, using Special Economic Zones (SEZs) as a tool for structural transformation, elimination of redundant regulations and improving the existing ones, improvement of soft and hard infrastructure and enhancing the competitiveness of firms so as to achieve economic sovereignty.

Goal of IP 2020
The Goal of IP 2020 is to address and adjust economic priorities in the face of changing global and regional economic scenarios, so as to address the economic imbalances and to achieve the targets given in the 12th five-year plan and other goals such as sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industry innovation and infrastructure development, as committed by Pakistan under Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 agenda of Sustainable Development of the United Nations with special focus on bridging the



gender opportunity gap.

After the completion of Early Harvest phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) under the global Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), wherein majority of infrastructure projects have been completed and Gwadar Port is operational, there is a huge potential for foreign investors to set up and expand their businesses in Pakistan. IP 2020 aims to transform the business environment in the country by providing efficient, convenient, transparent and integrated services to investors for promoting investment in labour intensive, import substituting, and export led industries to achieve sustained current account surpluses for requisite investments in education and health of the people of Pakistan.

The policy will be instrumental to achieve progressive increase in net FDI inflows and to enhance the Investment to GDP ratio from existing level of 15.4% of GDP to 20% of GDP in the next four years.

Guiding Principles
i. Improving Ease of Doing Business (EODB) In Pakistan through Better Business Regulatory Initiative (BBRI)

Several steps have been taken to facilitate setting up and operating new businesses such as online incorporation and provision of information vital to starting a business. In the World Bank's "Doing Business Report of 2020", Pakistan has made substantial progress and improved its ranking by 28 notches. BOI is spearheading Better Business Regulatory Initiative (BBRI),

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a business process review of every interface between an enterprise and all tiers of government so as to streamline and automate all necessary regulations and remove the unnecessary ones through a single government portal. Steps are also being taken to improve access to credit through various legislative and administrative initiatives.

ii. Reducing the cost of doing business by using SEZs as a tool for structural transformation of Pakistan

The phenomenal economic development in regional countries like China, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam serve as guiding principles for setting up SEZs throughout the country to achieve global competitiveness. By contrast, in developing countries including Pakistan, new businesses have to often bear a major portion of infrastructure development costs. The government is allocating significant financial resources to provide the requisite infrastructure facilities in SEZs.

The Act is being reviewed to remove all legal loopholes to ensure

that Industrial Land remains a factor of production rather than becoming a store of value for effective industrial development of Pakistan.

Introduction of industrial clusters through the SEZ Act will reduce the cost of business and facilitate the establishment of forward and backward linkages with efficient supply chain availability. Lucrative tax incentives have been guaranteed to both developers and the enterprises of SEZs. Adequate business infrastructure coupled with One Window facilitation services will make doing business easy and more profitable.

iii. Linkages of trade, industrial and monetary policies for greater convergence

Due to non-availability of linkages between the tax, trade, fiscal and investment policies, most of the targets under the respective policies could not be met.

All the economic policies are being integrated to develop synergies and achieve the targets. Linkages of macro and micro economic policies will bring all stakeholders including line ministries, local and provincial governments, regulators and other relevant departments in unison for greater convergence on an important national public policy agenda of enhancing transparency, predictability and consistency.

iv. Reducing inequalities; through incentivising investments in the locationally disadvantaged and backward areas

To address regional disparities in backward areas, investments are being encouraged through the provision of infrastructure on a priority basis and the granting of fiscal incentives to attract investors.

Investment Regime
A fundamental issue for foreign investors is their freedom to enter a market and conduct business without burdensome restrictions. Historically, since 1997, Pakistan has established and maintained an open investment regime, which serves as a strong advantage compared to regional competitors. In order to increase competitiveness as an investment destination, IP 2020 continues to expand the opening and liberalization process to all sectors and generalizes the policies across all sectors to provide clarity to investors.

• Pakistan has an open-admission policy for investment in majority of sectors that does not require pre-screening and approval for entrants. However, foreign investors must fulfil the conditions of corporate registration under the Companies Act.

• All sectors and activities are open for investment unless specifically restricted for reasons of national security and public safety such as construction of Casinos, Manufacturing of Consumable Alcohol, Arms and Ammunition, Atomic Energy, High Explosives, Currency and Mint.

Specific Sectoral Requirements

• Permission for opening of branches of foreign banks will be granted by the State Bank of Pakistan.

• Banking, Finance, and insurance sectors are being regulated by the SECP and State Bank of Pakistan.

• For Acquisitions or Merges within Pakistan, the applicants are required to apply to the Competition Commission of Pakistan shall follow the procedures under the Companies Act 2017.

• Requirements for approvals of branch, representative, or liaison offices of foreign companies shall continue to be permitted by BOI.

Real Estate Developers:
In Pakistan, there is a shortfall of over 10 million houses. Government intends to promote access to low cost affordable housing to the people of Pakistan and jump start the housing sectors. Naya Pakistan Housing Authority (NPHA) has been created for the purpose of planning, developing, construction and management of large scale housing projects. NPHA aims to facilitate all local and foreign builders/investors involved in the construction industry by acting as a 'One Stop Shop' to remove impediments, strategise and to execute a wide ranging plan to attain the set objectives. Measures are being taken to promote and facilitate housing finance.

The Government plans to construct 5 million houses through all the three modes; private sector, public sector and on public-private partnership basis. A number of incentives are also offered to attract private sector investment in the sector.





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IT sector — one of the fastest growing sectors of Pakistan

Information Technology (IT) sector is one of the sections in Pakistan which has achieved significant growth over the previous decades.

According to the estimates of the Board of Investment, Pakistan, the IT sector is one of the fastest growing sectors of Pakistan contributing about 1% to the GDP of Pakistan at about \$3.5 billion. During 2018-19, Pakistan's IT exports were \$3.5 billion approximately. It doubled in the past four years and experts expect it to grow a further 100% in the next two to four years to \$7 billion.

According to the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), there are more than 3000 active IT/ITeS companies, which possess expertise in custom software development, enterprise resource planning (ERP), financial solutions, mobile content, document management, enterprise computing, and business process outsourcing (PBO).

Main features of IT sector

- Over the last six years, Pakistan IT and ITeS Export Remittances have increased by 19% on an average basis.
- Enterprise software has grown by 17% marketing tech 15% financial services 13% consumer goods 9% retail/e-commerce 8%, professional service 8%, internet of the things/hardware 7%, health care 4%, media 4%, and non-profit 3%.
- Ranked number four for freelance development in the world.
- More than 300,000 English speaking IT professionals with expertise in current and emerging IT.
- Pakistan has more than 15 IT parks with IT-enabled infrastructure on fibre-optic cables and internet access in over 2,000 cities/towns across Pakistan.
- Pakistan has about 64% of its 230 million population in the 15 to 29 age group. This represents an abundance of human and knowledge capital.
- More than 20,000 IT graduates and engineers are being pro-



duced each year coupled with a rising startup culture.

- In accordance with Pakistan Vision 2025 and the Digital Policy of Pakistan 2018, the ICT industry size is targeted to reach \$20 billion by 2025.
- Key goals of the digital policy include promoting the use of technology in education, health, agriculture and other key socio economic sectors, enhancing the current market size of E-Commerce, promoting E-Governance, Ensuring equal access of ICTs to women and girls, promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, incubators/startups in IT sector and increasing software exports and IT remittances.

Incentives for investment in IT sector

- In order to attract foreign investment in IT sector, following incentives are announced by the present Government;
- Zero income tax on IT & ITeS exports until June 2025.
- Zero income tax for PSEB registered IT start-ups (3 years)
- 100% foreign ownership of IT & ITeS companies.

- 100% repatriation of profits to foreign IT & ITeS investors.
- Tax holiday for venture capital funds until 2024.
- Up to 70% on annual operational expenses by investing in the IT & ITeS sector in Pakistan. On average, the annual cost for a software engineer in Pakistan is one-fifth of the cost in the USA and Europe.
- Accelerated depreciation of 30% on computer equipment.
- Provision of low rent space in Software Technology Parks (STPs), with fiber-optic connectivity.

Global recognition of Pakistan IT sector

- Pakistan is ranked as the 4th fastest growing freelance markets in the world – Payoneer's Global Gig Economy Index.
- Pakistan has won GSMA Awards, Spectrum for Mobile Broadband (2015) and Government Leadership Award (2017). Minister of state for IT, Anusha Rehman won the Gender Quality and mainstreaming (GEM-TECH) Award in December, 2015, from the United Nations' International

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

- In 2010, Folio 3 was judged as one of the Harvard Business School's All-World Fast Growth 500 companies.
- The presence of international IT companies such as Bentley, Ciklum, IBM, Mentor Graphics, S&P Global, Symantec, Teradata, and VMware is a vote of confidence in potential in the Pakistan IT sector and its recognition in global IT markets.

Government initiatives to improve IT

i. Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB)

PSEB is a pivotal organisation of the Government of Pakistan with a mandate to ensure sustainable development of the IT Industry, boost cooperation with international IT entities and create an attractive environment for investment in the Pakistan IT sector. As enumerated in the Digital Pakistan Policy, PSEB would allocated land on a long-term lease to IT/ITeS companies.

ii. IT parks

Pursuant to PSEB's mandate to facilitate IT Industry growth, PSEB established 1ST STP in 1999 in Islamabad and so far, twelve (12) STPs have been established to provide IT-enabled office space (equipped with quality ICT infrastructure and arrangements of backup power) to help the IT industry of the country to meet its immediate goals of increased FDI, technology transfer, increased exports, technology diffusion, increased employment, and human resource development. At the time, over 800,000 sq. ft. IT-enabled office space has been provided in 12 designated Software Technology Parks where around 80 public and private IT/ITeS companies are engaged in software development and export services.

Many top tiers IT companies are working in STPs instead of taking

space in traditional buildings due to the availability of the latest ICT infrastructure and allied facilities along with a conducive IT work environment.

iii. Digital Pakistan Policy

The Digital Pakistan Policy contained several incentives for the IT and ITeS companies, including extension of income tax holiday, 5% cash reward on export remittances, 5% sales tax on services (domestic), provision of bank loans to IT/ITeS industry and Tech SEZs (special economic zones) to create a digital ecosystem with infrastructure and institutional frameworks for the rapid delivery of innovative digital services, application and contents.

Investment opportunity

According to a US-based organisation, export.gov, computer software is the best prospective area in the IT/ITeS sector for investment in Pakistan. The most promising sub-sectors for U.S. companies within the computer software sector for FY-2020 are:

- E-Commerce
- Company acquisitions and mergers
- IT parks
- Incubators
- Venture funds
- Software companies
- Call centres
- Gaming and animation studios
- Data centres
- Training centres
- Consulting centres

According to Pakistan's Ministry of Finance, during FY 2017-18, the local economy achieved a considerable growth rate of 5.8 percent. The local software market offers substantial business opportunities for U.S. companies who offer products for the corporate sector including financial management and business forecasting, online IT training portals, e-commerce, e-payment, embedded tools, and other web-based applications.

Let us pledge to promote Quaid's ideology of Faith, Unity and Discipline through our commitment to Pakistan and golden principles of Islam.
Heartiest greetings to the Pakistani Community on the occasion of Pakistan Day.



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Tourism activities are considered one of the major sources of economic growth. It can be regarded as a mechanism of generating employment as well as income in both formal and informal sectors.

General outlook of Pakistan's tourism sector

UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres on his visit to Pakistan to attend International Conference on 40 years of Afghan Refugees stated that "Pakistan's successful journey from fighting terrorism to tourism is remarkable, and it is welcoming that the state has re-established its write over the regions affected by terrorism".

From the mighty stretches of the Karakoram in the North to the vast alluvial delta of the Indus River in the South, Pakistan remains a land of high adventure and nature. Trekking, mountaineering, white water rafting, wild boar hunting, mountain and desert jeep safaris, camel and yak safaris, trout fishing and bird watching, are a few activities, which entice the adventure and nature lovers to Pakistan.

Pakistan is endowed with a rich and varied flora and fauna. High Himalayas, Karakoram and the Hindukush ranged with their alpine meadows and permanent snow line, coniferous forests down the sub-mountain scrub, the vast Indus plain merging into the great desert, the coast line and wetlands, all offer a remarkably rich variety of vegetation and associated wild-

life including avifauna, both endemic and migratory.

Ten of 18 mammalian orders are represented in Pakistan with species ranging from the world's smallest surviving mammals, the Mediterranean Pigny Mammal, to the largest mammal ever known: the blue whale.

Pakistan is home to 108 peaks above 7,000 metres and probably as many peaks above 6,000 m. There is no count of the peaks above 5,000 and 4,000 m. five of the 14 highest independent peaks in the world (the eight-thousanders) are in Pakistan (four of which lie in the surroundings of Concordia; the confluence of Baltoro Glacier and Godwin Austen Glacier).

As security in the country has improved, local and international tourism has flourished; in two years, it has increased by more than 300%. The Pakistani government has launched online visa services for 175 countries and 50 countries were offered visa on arrival, making a visit to Pakistan easier. The country received an influx of travel vloggers, who showed the beauty and culture of the country, especially the northern areas to the world.

Global recognition of Pakistan as one of the best tourism destinations

- Pakistan's with its slogan; "It's beautiful, it's Pakistan" has managed to generate interest from travellers from across the globe.
- Conde Nast (CN) Traveller has

declared Pakistan as the best holiday destination for the year 2020. 'Pakistan has more peaks taller than 22,965ft than China and Nepal combined...' the magazine wrote.

- Forbes Listed Pakistan as one of the coolest places to visit - 2019
- World Economic Forum's Travel & Tourism
- Competitiveness Report placed Pakistan in the top 25 percent of global destinations for its World Heritage sites
- Telegraph stated that Pakistan's potential for growth in tourism is almost limitless - 2019
- The Broke stated that Pakistan is an adventure playground - 2019
- British Backpacker Society ranked Pakistan as the world's top travel destination - 2018
- Lonely Planet termed Pakistan as being "tourism's 'next big thing' for more years than we care to remember" - 2019

Statistics

The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) puts the total contribution of tourism to Pakistan's economy at \$19.4 billion last year or 6.9% of gross domestic product and in a decade.

The WTTC expects that to rise to \$36.1 billion. As per the WTTC data for the year 2019 - the direct contributions of Travel & Tourism to GDP was USD \$ 7.91 billion, which comes around 2.87% of GDP. Further, it is expected to grow by 5.8 percent per annum from 2018 to 2028.

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Government initiatives to improve tourism

The announcement of the visa-on-arrival policy revives hope for the tourism industry. The government's announcement of a visa-on-arrival policy for 50 countries and giving e-visa to citizens of 175 countries will greatly boost tourism industry in Pakistan.

The government is making continuous efforts to promote tourism in Pakistan and it is expected that by the year 2025 tourism will contribute PKR 1 Trillion to Pakistan's economy. The government has planned to invite foreign investment into the country for establishing tourism zones in potential

Northern Areas of Swat, Galiat, Hazara region, Gilgit Baltistan and other tourism zones. Government is also offering tax holiday for foreign investments in the tourism sector in a bid to attract Foreign Direct Investment.

Promotion of religious tourism

- Government is actively promoting 'religious tourism,' as it is one of the most significant revenue-generating businesses in the world. e.g. Kartarpur project. The government will also actively participate in the birthday celebrations of Baba Nanak.
- In the past, only 3,000 visas were issued to Sikh pilgrims. The initiative has also drawn the attention of the Sikh community around the world. A recent survey data revealed that a whopping 83 percent of the eight million diaspora Sikhs living outside India had shown interest in visiting Pakistan.
- Also, 79 percent of the 20 million Indian Sikhs expressed an interest in visiting Pakistan.
- In KP, which is dotted with sacred Buddhist sites the government is working with the World Bank to develop a Buddhist trail to attract Buddhists, and in particular, monks from across the globe.

Investment opportunity

Visitor exports are a key component of the direct contribution of Travel & Tourism. In 2016, Pakistan hosted 965,498 tourists, in 2017, 1.75

million tourists visited Pakistan and in 2018, the number reached to 1.9 million. By 2027, international tourist arrivals are expected to grow to 2.17 million, generating revenue of PKR 204.0bn approximately.

Foreign investment in tourism sector

Present government is continuously working on its mandate to bring foreign investment in Pakistan and to uplift the tourism sector in the country. Because of its efforts, a lucrative investment of around \$100 million is expected from US business tycoons in Pakistan's tourism sector.

UK based International Hospitality Investment Group (IHIG) is also heavily investing in the Pakistan tourism sector through acquiring hotels and resorts in various cities of Pakistan, especially the northern areas and equipping these hotels with modern amenities, along with various other initiatives. Overall, IHIG aims to invest around \$118 million in the Pakistan tourism industry.

Turkey also aims to contribute to the Pakistan tourism sector by helping the government increasing the skilled workforce in the tourism sector. Turkey aims to build a state of the art Centre of Excellence for Hospitality at the National Skills University in Islamabad under the skills development institution of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency.

LONG LIVE PAKISTAN

23 March

We are a nation with our own distinctive culture and civilization, language & literature, art & architecture, names & nomenclature, sense of values & protection, legal laws and moral code, aptitudes & ambitions, in short, we have our own distinctive outlook on life & of life. By all canons of international law, **WE ARE A NATION...**

Greetings to the Government and People of Pakistan on the occasion of their National Day

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Textile and Garment sector — shaping the path for economic development



Textile and garment sector is by far the largest manufacturing industry of Pakistan and is considered as the backbone of the country's export. This sector plays an important role in shaping the path for economic improvement in Pakistan. This sector not only earns significant foreign exchange for the country, but it also contributes heavily to the country's GDP as well as employs around 40% of the country's labour force. According to the Ministry of Commerce, Pakistan, the textile exports from the country during July-Dec 2019 – 20 were recorded at \$7.44 billion with an increase of 7.79% as compared with the same period of previous year.

Main features of the textile sector:

- Pakistan is the 8th largest exporter of textile products in Asia
- The contribution of this industry to the total GDP is 8.5%
- Pakistan is the world's fourth largest producer and third largest consumer of cotton.
- The Textile and Clothing Industry has been the main driver of the economy for the last 50 years in terms of foreign currency earnings and job creation.
- International brands being produced in Pakistan.
- As of June 2020, Pakistan Textile and Garments Industry are compared of 517 textile units out of which there are 40 composite

units and 477 spinning units.

- There are 28,500 shuttle-less looms and 375,000 conventional looms approximately.

Governmental initiatives to improve textile sector

i. Textile policy 2019-2024

Task Force on Textile prepared a comprehensive textile policy with an aim to increase the country's textile exports to \$26 billion by 2024. The Textiles Policy 2019-2024 would lay down a prospective plan for the next five years, through bringing support measures and development initiatives of the Government aimed at promotion and uplifting of the textile sector, which is biggest in-

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dustrial sector of the country. The policy also aims to reduce costs of doing business in Pakistan, improve Pakistan's ranking on the ease of doing business, as well as bringing measures for making the textiles sector complaint with the domestic and international labour and environment rules and conventions.

II. Prime Minister's Exports Enhancement Package

Under the Prime Minister's Exports Enhancement Package, the government has paid approximately PKR 62.5 billion to the local textile industry for development and growth and to help boost the exports of textile and garments. The Exports Enhancement Package was aimed at bridging the gap between exports and imports by encouraging the export-oriented industry and incentivising the industrial sector for introducing innovative, modern and cost-cutting technologies, particularly in the textile industry as well as creating job opportunities for the people of Pakistan.

Investment opportunity

- Since years, Pakistan's largest export industry is the textile industry.
- The ready-made garments industry has emerged as one of the important small-scale industries in Pakistan. These readymade garments and products have large demand both at home and abroad.

Breakup of Textile and Garments Sector Exports 2019-20

- Hosiery (12%)
- Readymade garments (11%)
- Bed Wear (10%)
- Cotton Fabrics (9%)
- Cotton Yarn (5%)
- Towels (3%)
- Canvas & Tents (1%)

Pakistan would be the only second country in all of South and Southeast Asia to have duty free access to the European Union. Competitors in the Textile and Clothing sector do not have duty free access nor any preferential access. Pakistan leveraged a 10-14% duty advantage.

- The utilisation of better technology and techniques can help

to improve production and so there is an opportunity to invest in better techniques to convert Pakistan's competitive advantage in both the domestic and international markets.

- Attainment of the Generalised System of preferences + (GSP+) in 2014 has had a significantly positive impact on Pakistan's garments exports to the EU. Garment exports to the EU grew much faster than to the rest of the world in the first two years of GSP+ (i.e. on average 11% p.a. to EU compared with 1.5% p.a. to the rest of the world in 2014 and 2015).
- Pakistan's organisation All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) has recently announced that one thousand manufacturing units worth \$7 billion would be installed in Pakistan.

Foreign investment in textile sector

i. CPEC's long term plan & textile sector

The CPEC project has been the most important and the biggest foreign investment made by China in Pakistan. The project was launched in 2013 with an aim

to heavily invest in various potential sectors in Pakistan. One of the plans included in "The Long Term Plan (LTP) 16 under CPEC includes improving industrial co-operation in textiles by developing by developing efficiencies in the textile and apparel value chain and expanding the size of the industry.

ii. Shahghai challenge textile company plan to invest \$500 million A Chinese company, Shanghai Challenge Textile, plans to invest up to \$500 million on the development of a private Special Economic Zone (SEZ) spread on an area of 400 acres near Kasur for establishing an exclusive apparel park for garments and allied industries. The investors expect the project to complete and start production for the export markets in the next two years. The entire garment production from the apparel park will be meant for export markets and is estimated to bring in foreign exchange revenue of \$300m to \$500m a year. Shanghai Challenge Apparel already has a facility in Lahore and had a few years back bought almost 25 per cent share holding in the Faisalabad based Masood Textile Mills.

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Livestock: Major contributor to agricultural sector

Livestock is considered a central component in the agricultural sector of Pakistan. It contributes approximately 60.54 per cent of value addition in agriculture and nearly 11.22 per cent to the agricultural Gross Domestic Product (AGDP) as well as provides employment to more than 8 million families. It is an extremely labour-intensive sector, includes a large part of the rural workforce and employs nearly 30 million people. The livestock sector also yields an enormous range of by-products especially leather, which also contributes substantially for foreign exchange earned by Pakistan.

Main features of livestock sector

- Share of livestock in Pakistan's GDP stands at 11.69 per cent and contributes 3.1 per cent to total exports.
 - The livestock sector of Pakistan grew by 2.58 per cent in 2019-2020.
 - The estimated livestock population of Pakistan is 201.9 million approximately.
 - Annual milk production in Pakistan stands at 61.6 million tonnes.
 - The current investment in the poultry industry is more than PKR 700 billion.
 - Annual production of poultry in Pakistan stands at around 1,163 million broilers.
 - Poultry meat contributes 35 per cent (1,657 thousand tonnes) of the total meat production (4,708 thousand tonnes) in the country.
 - The fisheries sector contributes around 1 per cent to the GDP of Pakistan.
 - The fisheries sector provides employment to around 1 million people directly and indirectly.
 - Pakistan earned \$473.04 million from seafood exports in 2019-2020
- Following are the main livestock subsectors contributing for the economic development of Pakistan;

i. Milk

Milk is one of the favourite food in Pakistan and is consumed as fresh, boiled, powdered and in processed form like yoghurt, ghee, lassi, butter, cheese, ice cream, sweets and in other confectioneries. Pakistan ranks fourth in the world in terms of milk production every year. The dairy sector of Pakistan contributes about 11 per cent in Pakistan's gross national income. According to FAO, Pakistan is ranked eighth in the total cattle population. Pakistan is in surplus for production of milk. Major milk-producing animals are buffaloes contributing about 73 per cent of a total milk production followed by cows at 24 per cent and 4 per cent by goat and sheep, respectively. As per the Pakistan Economic Survey 2019-20, the total estimated milk production in the country was 61.6 million tonnes, which is 3.07 per cent higher as compared to 2018-2019.

ii. Poultry

The poultry sector is one of the most vibrant subsectors of the livestock sector. The current investment in poultry industry is more than PKR 700 billion. This industry is progressing at an impressive growth rate of 8 to 10 per cent per annum over the last few years. Pakistan has become the 11th largest poultry producer in the world with the production of 1,163 million broilers annually. This sector provides employment (direct/indirect) to over 1.5 million people.

Poultry today has been a balancing force to keep a check on the

prices of mutton and beef. Poultry meat production showed a growth rate of 9.1 per cent whereas egg production showed a growth rate of 5.87 per cent (20.13 billion) during 2019-2020 as compared to the previous year. The transformation of poultry production in a controlled shed system is making a tremendous difference in quantity and quality of poultry production. There are now over 6,500-controlled environment poultry sheds in the country, which indicates that our poultry sector is moving in the direction of modernisation and using advanced technology.

iii. Meat

The meat industry in Pakistan is vibrant and has enormous growth and investment potential, as it is not only a large contributor to the local consumption of meat, it also contributes a handsome share to the foreign exchange earned by the country. One important area in meat exports that Pakistan has not properly tapped yet is the exports of halal meat. Out of the total global halal food market worth \$1 trillion roughly, halal meat and beef have the biggest share i.e. 44.2 per cent, which comes around \$440.2 billion roughly, out of which Pakistan's share is around \$198 million, which is very low. In 2019-2020, total estimated meat production (excluding the poultry meat production) in Pakistan was 4.70 million tonnes. Pakistan meat industry has seen rigorous developments during the last decade due to government's various policies and initiatives to boost livestock production and processing facilities to meet increasing local and global demand.

iv. Fishing

The Fisheries Development Commissioner (FDC) under the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Livestock (MEFAL) of the Government of Pakistan manages the fishing industry in Pakistan. Fishery, as well as fishing industry as a sub-sector of agriculture, plays a significant role in the national economy and towards the food security of the country as it reduces the existing pressure on demand for mutton, beef, and poultry. This sector not only provides employment to a number of people living in coastal areas but also earns a considerable foreign exchange for Pakistan through the export of fishes and other marine edible foods. Major markets for export of fish and fish products include Canada, USA, Denmark, Japan, Holland, Norway, Iceland, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and upper and lower Gulf states. During 2019-20, 133,226 metric tonnes of fish & fish products was exported.

Governmental initiatives to improve livestock sector

Livestock Wing under the Ministry of National Food Security & Research, with its redefined role under the 18th constitutional Amendment, continued to regulate the sector and took several measures to improve the overall livestock sector of Pakistan. Government initiatives in each of the four constituents of livestock have been separately discussed below.

i. Milk

In order to promote the corporate dairy sector, import of calf milk replacer & cattle feed premixes has been allowed at concessional tariffs. Livestock Wing allowed the import of 824.9 thousand doses of superior quality semen and 8,811 high yielding exotic dairy cattle of Holstein-Friesian & Jersey

Livestock is considered a central component in the agricultural sector of Pakistan. It contributes approximately 60.54 per cent of value addition in agriculture and nearly 11.22 per cent to the agricultural Gross Domestic Product (AGDP) as well as provides employment to more than 8 million families. It is an extremely labour-intensive sector, includes a large part of the rural workforce and employs nearly 30 million people.

breeds. The policy of these permissions is the genetic improvement of indigenous dairy animals in terms of per unit productivity. The imported dairy cows added approximately 61 million tonnes of milk per annum in the commercial milk chain/system.

ii. Poultry

Livestock Wing has encouraged the poultry farmers to import micronutrients and high-quality feed for the poultry. It has also played an important role in reducing the duties on the import of high-quality poultry feed. Sales Tax on the import of seven types of poultry machinery is reduced to 7 per cent. These include poultry incubators, brooders, grain storage silos for poultry and poultry sheds.

National Food Security & Research launched the backyard poultry initiative to promote poultry farming in the public. The project is designed to provide five million pre-vaccinated 'high laying chickens' across the country, including the federal capital, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan. This project will not only help in improving the overall poultry farming but will also help in the provision of animal protein to the malnourished population as well as reducing the poverty in the country.

iii. Meat export

Livestock Wing also provided the necessary facilitation for the export of meat and meat products. Government continued its efforts for market access with the relevant concerned authorities in China, South Africa, Jordan, and Indonesia using diplomatic channels for export of various meat and meat products. The government has also engaged the National Veterinary Laboratory for carrying out surveillance and diagnosis of highly contagious diseases in animals. This is an important step to make the outlook of Pakistan Meat industry more vibrant in international meat markets.

iv. Fishing

Marine Fisheries Department (MFD) is conducting a training programme for fishermen about the use of Turtle Excluder Device (TED). The use of TED is mandatorily required for the export of shrimp to the USA. The use of TEDs will help the fishermen to comply with the USA fishing regulations and will enable Pakistan to increase the export of shrimps to the USA. During 2018-2019, the Cabinet has approved the new deep-sea fishing licensing policy.

Applications for licenses were invited through print media. This will also enable the government to increase the fishing yield of the country.

Investment opportunities

Pakistan is geographically located close to the Middle East and South-East Asia. Both of these regions are deficient in livestock products and depend upon imports from other countries. On the other side, Pakistan is rich in livestock resources and is surplus in some of the livestock constituents such as milk. Therefore, this presents a huge opportunity for domestics as well as foreign investors to the export of its livestock products to these Middle East and Southeast Asian countries and earn handsome profits. Investment opportunities in each of the four constituents as discussed above have been individually discussed below.

i. Milk

As discussed above, Pakistan is one of the countries with surplus milk production, however, the dairy sector of Pakistan is one of the least commercial enterprises here due to the lack of proper planning in the collection, transportation, and distribution chains.

As per the Livestock and Dairy Development Board, Pakistan ranks at 5th in total milk production, however, only 3 per cent of milk is processed. Millions of liters of milk are wasted on a daily basis due to the absence of value addition method and processing facilities.

The absence of value addition method and processing facilities, therefore, presents an investment potential for domestic and foreign investors to invest in Pakistan and earn huge profits.

ii. Other processed dairy products

Pakistan is surplus in the production of milk, only 3 per cent of milk is processed in Pakistan, which is very less as compared with other countries that are self-sufficient in the production of milk. The reason behind that is the lack of proper value chains. Further, there are a number of dairy products such as cheese, high fat, low-fat milk, and creams, which are imported in Pakistan and there production in Pakistan is near to none. For instance, Pakistan imports around \$3.34 million worth of cheese and nearly the same amount of processed milk and cream on an annual basis. The consumption pattern of these fast food items is also increasing with immense growth in the upper-lower and middle-class population. Therefore, there seems to be a good investment potential in these processed dairy products as well.

Poultry

The poultry sector in Pakistan has also tremendous growth and investment in the poultry sectors. Like other livestock constituents, the consumption of poultry items is also very high in Pakistan as well as foreign countries as it is a rich source of proteins and other nutrients. To meet its poultry consumption, foreign countries import poultry products in huge quantities. Pakistan is among the countries, which have investment-friendly policies for domestic investors as well as foreign investors. Further, the investment return in the poultry sector in Pakistan is also very attractive. Therefore, there lies a potential for domestic and foreign investors, which they can realise through investment in this lucrative sector.

iii. Halal meat

Pakistan is one of the countries that are rich in terms of livestock animal population. Almost all Gulf States import live animals every year from foreign countries including Pakistan. Similarly, these countries also have less meat production capacity; therefore, they are dependent on imported halal meat. Therefore, there lies a huge investment potential that domestic as well as foreign investors can tap into by setting up meat processing units in Pakistan and exporting the halal meat to these countries.

iv. Fishing

Pakistan has a total coastline of 1,120 km covering Makran (Baluchistan) as well as the coast of Karachi (Sindh) and a total fishing area of approximately 300,270 sq. km. These areas are highly rich in marine life with a vast variety of species.

However, still, the fisheries output is not at par as compared to other countries that are rich in fishing resources. This is because, fisheries sector still depends upon conventional techniques. Investors can, therefore, realise the potential to maximum extent through bringing modern machinery, equipment, and techniques for catching marine animals and then exporting to the USA, Gulf, and European countries.

Fish farming of different kinds of fishes is also practiced in the Punjab, Northwest Frontier and Sindh provinces but on a limited scale and this is receiving increased attention, as it appears to have good profit potential for small and medium-sized investors.

Therefore, investors can also consider fish farming for investment.

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Agriculture: Backbone of Pakistan's Economy

The agricultural sector is the backbone of the Pakistan economy as it directly supports three-quarters of the country's population, employs half the labour force and contributes a large share of foreign exchange earnings. The agriculture mix of Pakistan is heavily based on important crops, which include wheat, rice, sugarcane, maize, and cotton. According to the Pakistan Economic Survey, 2019-2020, the agriculture sector contributes 19.3% to the country's GDP, employs 38.5% of the labour force, provides livelihood to 62% of the population, and constitutes 65% of Pakistan's export earnings approximately.

There are two principal seasons for the production of these crops in Pakistan, which are Kharif and Rabi. Cotton, rice, and sugarcane are produced during the kharif season, which lasts from May to November, whereas wheat, cereals, pulses, linseed, mustard are produced during the Rabi season, which extends from November to April.

Despite being a major producer of sugarcane, rice, wheat, maize, cotton, etc. Pakistan's agricultural output for these crops lags in terms of yield when compared with other countries where agriculture is a major economic activity.

This reflects a tremendous opportunity for both local and foreign investors to invest in bringing modern agricultural techniques through the introduction of agricultural equipment and machines. This will not only lead to increasing in overall yield at the country level through efficient utilisation of agricultural land but at the same investment in the agriculture sector will result in a higher return for both local and foreign investors.

Governmental initiatives to improve agriculture sector

I. National Agricultural Emergency Programme

The present government has launched a PKR 309.7 billion National Agricultural Emergency Programme, as part of which it is extending generous subsidies on the import of crop-specific ma-



chinery. As many as 16 projects in the agriculture sector would be launched under this project to boost yields of major crops. The said programme is expected to drastically increase the agricultural spending over the next five years, by 360%.

II. Initiatives related to fertiliser

During the 2018-19 fiscal year, the government introduced subsidies on fertilisers ranging from a uniform 2% tax rate for fertilisers, opened two operationalised fertiliser plants, provided per bag subsidies in the import and manufacture of fertilisers and other incentives.

III. Investment for improving irrigation system

During 2017-2018, the government also launched various projects for improving the irrigation system in Pakistan. In order to reduce water losses from the current irrigation system, PKR 2,000 million were allotted for the lining of small and minor canals in Punjab as well as Sindh.

A further PKR 1,200 million were allotted for the improvement of current canals and PKR 17,137 billion for the construction of small/medium delay action dams.

IV. National oilseeds enhancement programme

In August 2019, the federal government launched a national oilseed enhancement program with a total cost of PKR 5115 million by promoting its cultivation

The present government has launched a PKR 309.7 billion National Agricultural Emergency Programme, as part of which it is extending generous subsidies on the import of crop-specific machinery. As many as 16 projects in the agriculture sector would be launched under this project to boost yields of major crops

in Punjab. The programme will be implemented in all 36 districts of Punjab.

The objective of this national oilseed enhancement programme is to make oilseed crops comparable with cash crops, address low yields by enhancing oilseed production both vertically and horizontally, promote mechanisation for oilseed crops to minimise post-harvest losses and get yields.

Main features

Pakistan is one of the largest producers in the world of some of the crops as are;

- 4th largest producer of cotton



with nearly 2.95 million hectares of land;

- 5th largest producer of sugarcane with nearly 0.76 million hectares of land;
- 8th largest producer of wheat with nearly 9 million hectares of land;
- 11th largest producer of rice with nearly 2.31 million hectares of land;
- 22nd largest producer of maize with nearly 1.016 million hectares of land;
- 8th ranking in farm output with nearly 23 million hectares of land;
- Pakistan has one of the largest irrigation systems in the world
- The other crops account for 11.36% of the value-added in overall agriculture and contribute around 2.25% to the GDP.

Investment opportunities in agriculture sector

Of the totals, 16.5 million hectares of cultivable land in Punjab, a vast 1.7 million hectares are still available for corporate farming. Likewise, as much as 30% of horticultural produce that goes to waste every year can be converted into economic gain by investing agribusiness value chain industries. Following areas can be considered for investment in agriculture sector:

I. Oilseeds, other plant seeds, and production of edible oils

There is a lack of availability of high-quality seeds in Pakistan.

Millions of tonnes of oilseeds, other plant seeds and edible oil such as soya bean and palm oil are imported on an annual basis. For instance, the import of oilseeds was 1.67 million metric tonnes in 2014-15, which jumped to 2.748 million tons in 2019-20, showing a surge of 64.55%. Therefore, there is an immense opportunity to produce high-quality seeds as well as edible oils locally.

The government is also offering incentives to the domestic as well as foreign investors interested to invest this sector. Through investing in this sector, the investors would not only play a part in meeting the domestic edible oil needs, but they would also be able to earn huge profits through the export of edible oils to Middle Eastern as well as European and North American countries.

The government would also benefit at the same time as local production of seeds as well as edible oils would not only save its huge amount of foreign exchange, it would also be able to reduce its dependence on imported edible oils.

II. Local flower production

Pakistan is being increasingly viewed as a growing market for floral products, particularly cut flowers and tulips, and offers huge opportunities to businesses to flourish rapidly. The government has also started various initiatives to improve the floriculture in Pakistan.

However, still, there is a long way to go to reach the level other countries have reached in this sector. For instance, as per an article published in dailytime.pk Pakistan's exports remained under PKR 180 million in the successive last two years each. Therefore, it is clear that there is an immense opportunity in investing floriculture in Pakistan.

III. Modern farm equipment

Conventional methods of farming and irrigation are still being widely used, and the use of solar panels for electricity for water pumps is not properly introduced in Pakistan until now. Further, the utilisation of tractors, farm

implements and equipment, and irrigation equipment is also very low in Pakistan as compared with other Asian economies. Similarly, foreign investors can also do the same by investing in Pakistan through the export of Agricultural Machinery to Pakistan. They can also set up agricultural machinery plants in Pakistan, engaging the local labour, which is cheap and then exporting to the Central Asian as well as other agricultural countries.

Therefore, the current situation presents a huge potential for foreign and local investors to invest in the projects for edible oilseeds and other plant seeds, edible oils, local flower production and bringing in the modern agriculture equipment and techniques in Pakistan.

Foreign investment in agriculture sector

In early October 2019, the Chinese government announced investments in the establishment of manufacturing units of agriculture-related industries along with heavy investments in other industries as well. Further, many Chinese entrepreneurs have started making efforts to set up agriculture farms and factories in Pakistan.

In early 2019, Cargill, a renowned and one of the leading food and agriculture producers announced its plan to invest in agricultural trading, oilseeds crushing, edible oils, and animal feed and dairy industries in Pakistan. Cargill plans to invest more than \$200 million in the next three to five years. The company's investment strategy in Pakistan includes expansion across its agricultural trading and supply chain, edible oils, dairy, meat, and animal feed business while ensuring safety and food traceability.

In October 2019, a Dutch Agriculture Mission also visited Pakistan and showed interest in investing in the agriculture sector along with other sectors as well. A follow-up visit of the Dutch Agriculture Mission to Pakistan is expected to be held this year in November.



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