



Sayyid
Theyazin to
inaugurate
conference on
environment



Green Branch Award
The event will include the launch of the “Green Branch Award” designed for contributors and supporters of environmental action. The prize, up for grabs by institutions and individuals, is aimed at encouraging outstanding contributions to environment sanitation and sustainability. **>A2**

OMAN BHA final phase

1 Minister of Heritage and Tourism meets team members who have been selected for BHA final phase. **>A2**

OMAN Aman set for launch

2 The first Omani satellite, Aman, is set for launch into low Earth orbit from Spaceport Cornwall, UK. **>A5**

MARKET

3 The Sezad organised an environmental forum 'Together to Reduce Carbon Footprint in Duqm'. **>B1**



OMAN TO MARK ANNIVERSARY OF HM'S ACCESSION DAY ON WEDNESDAY

His Majesty the Sultan has accorded great attention to the execution of national programmes for the realisation of targets of Oman Vision 2040

This was affirmed by His Majesty the Sultan when he delivered the Royal speech in 2022 in which he said, “We are confident that you all perceive the volume of challenges that we have been through, that we have tackled with tact and patience and then, with the Almighty’s divine support, proceeded with the implementation of our social and economic plans and programmes, inspired by Oman Vision 2040. As a result, our economic and fiscal performance has improved.”

Accordingly, Oman achieved a fiscal surplus of about OMR1.146 billion, compared to an approved deficit of about OMR1.550 billion, according to indicators of preliminary results of the State's General Budget 2022.

This included setting a cap on fuel prices, an increase in allocations for Oman Housing Bank's loans, augmenting the spending for subsidizing expenditures of the electricity sector, the waste sector and food commodities.

This contributed to diminishing the total volume of public debt from OMR20.8 billion by the end of 2021 to OMR17.7 billion in 2022.

The persistent implementation of procedures on controlling financial conditions led to upgrading the Sultanate of Oman's credit rating, while at the same time improving Oman's future outlook among international credit rating agencies during 2022.

His Majesty the Sultan has accorded great attention to the execution of national programmes for the realisation of national targets of Oman Vision 2040.

The aim is to find sustainable solutions for the financial and economic aspects and employment, which was represented in the National Programme for Financial Sustainability and the Development of the Financial Sector, the National Programme for Economic Diversification, the Government Digital Transformation Programme, the National Programme for Investment and Export Development, and the National Employment Programme (NEP).

>A4

Oman edge past Yemen in a 5-goal thriller

MUSCAT: Two-time champions Oman had to dig deep to thwart a gritty challenge from Yemen before recording a thrilling 3-2 win in a Group A match of the 25th Arabian Gulf Cup at the Basra International Stadium on Monday.

A late drama erupted with Oman leading the match 3-2 and Yemen earning a penalty in the injury time of the match. Oman goalkeeper Ibrahim Al Mukhaini turned out to be the hero of the match as he saved the spot kick to give his side a hard-fought win.

Earlier, playing in pouring rain, both the teams exhibited a pacy and positive performance as the match swung like a pendulum with four goals scored before the



interval. The goal-fest began in the third minute of the match as Yemen goalie Ali Fadi failed to collect a corner from Oman's Ali Al Kaabi resulting in a dream start for Branko Ivankovic's Red Warriors. However, Yemen did not take long to get the equaliser as Abdulwasam Abdullah was fouled inside the penalty box by an Omani defender for a spot kick to be awarded. Abdullah convert-

Oman and Yemen players, despite the wet pitch due to rains, didn't stop from demonstrating their attacking intent and it was against the run of play that Yemen took the lead in the 30th minute.

The goal was a result of a long ranger from Omar Al Dahi that beat a diving Omani custodian Ibrahim Al Mukhaini to send the Yemen bench into raptures.

Oman, ranked much higher than their rivals, fought back and equalised soon with Arshad Al Alawi's free-kick from the top of the box. Yemen goalkeeper Ali Fadi failed to collect the ball cleanly and the fumble led to the ball rolling past the goal-line. **>A2**





Dhuhr.....	12:19pm
Asr.....	3:22pm
Maghrib.....	5:42pm
Isha.....	6:57pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	5:31am

BILATERAL COOPERATION

Foreign Minister meets Emirati State Minister for Foreign Trade

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, received Dr. Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade in the UAE.

The two sides reviewed aspects of bilateral cooperation in business, investment and economic diversification fields. They also affirmed the keenness of both countries' leaderships to advance mutual relations in various spheres.

The meeting was attended by Dr. Saleh Said Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Industry and Investment Promotion, and several officials from both sides. -ONA



2ND EDITION

Design members of Bilarab bin Haitham Award received by Heritage Minister

MUSCAT: Salim Mohammed Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage and Tourism Monday received members of the ten teams qualified for the final phase of the 2nd edition of Bilarab bin Haitham Award (BHA) for Architectural Design.

Al Mahrouqi lauded the creative aspects in the qualified projects. He also underscored the importance of the Maritime History Museum project and its strategic position at the Wilayat of Sur, South Al Dakhiliyah Governorate.

The designs of the project, to be implemented by the Ministry, must consider diversity of facilities and services offered to various segments and age groups, the Minister said. -ONA



SECURITY AND STABILITY

Sheikh Khalifa holds talks with Sweden's Special Envoy for Yemen

MUSCAT: Sheikh Khalifa Ali Al Harthy, Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for Diplomatic Affairs received on Monday Peter Semneby, Sweden's Special Envoy for Yemen.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed the efforts exerted in supporting Yemeni parties to reach a political solution that achieves security and stability for Yemen and the region.

The meeting was attended by several officials from the Foreign Ministry. -ONA



WORKSHOPS

Exhibition on environment

< FROM A1 An exhibition on environment will be held on the sidelines of the conference. It will showcase the latest technologies, solutions and techniques in addressing common ecological challenges. It will also include specialised workshops focusing on green hydrogen energy and methane management.

The conference promotes the values of research, development

and innovation through the establishment of a "Youth Ecothon" within an initiative code-named "Manafei" (benefits), which paves the way for Omani students to participate in improvising solutions for environmental start-ups that generate developmental revenue against less risk to air pollution or climate change.

The conference will be held as part of events marking Oman Environment Day. -ONA

GULF CUP

< FROM A1 Oman now have four points

Red Warriors had a golden opportunity to seize the lead before the interval as a darting run from Jameel Yahmadi saw him fouled by Mudir Abdurdu inside the box. The spot kick was taken by Arshad Al Alawi but he slipped to send the ball soaring into the stands.

Oman were quick to restore the lead soon after the break as Issam al Subhi's diving header in the 47th minute gave them the crucial lead. Ivankovic's men

claimed their first win in the ongoing edition to boost their chances to advance to the knockout round. Oman now have four points, with one point from their opening match against hosts Iraq that ended in a goalless stalemate. Yemen's second successive loss makes their march into the next round difficult though they would have to wait for the result of the late evening match against Saudi Arabia and Iraq to know their fate.

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WEATHER

Rains expected in northern parts of Oman from today



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The latest weather maps and analysis of the National Multi-Hazards Early Warning Centre indicate that the skies of the northern Sultanate of Oman may be affected by a low pressure starting from Tuesday that will last until Thursday.

The Civil Aviation Authority said that rain clouds are expected over the governorates of Musandam, North Al Batinah and Al Buraimi, with chances of rain of varying intensity, gradually extending to include the governorates of South Al Batinah, Al Dakhiliyah, Muscat and South Al Sharqiyah.

It stated that sporadic rains of varying intensity, ranging from 10 to 60 mm are expected flood wadis on Tuesday and Wednesday. Active downward winds are likely in the range of 15 and 25 knots , and the sea waves will be moderate to rough on the coasts of Musandam Governorate and the coasts of the Sea of Oman, and with maximum height ranging from two to three metres.

The Civil Aviation Authority calls on citizens and residents to take precautions during rains due to overflow of wadis, low horizontal visibility, and to check the state of the sea before venturing out and follow the weather bulletins regularly.

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The Sultan Center congratulates His Majesty Sultan **HAITHAM BIN TARIK** and the people of Oman, on the anniversary of the Accession Day.

We salute His Majesty's achievements and stand by his leadership and vision that will propel our beloved nation towards progress and prosperity.

Development of governorates one of the priorities of 10th Five-Year Plan



<FROM A1 The Sultanate of Oman, through its 2023 Budget, has introduced projects with a developmental impact, for which about OMR200 million have been allocated, in addition to supporting the social protection system with about OMR384 million, according to Royal Decree No. (33/2021) to achieve integrated social protection directed to the neediest groups. This is in addition to boosting efficient investments, ensuring financial sustainability, and improving the work environment by rounding up retirement benefits.

The vision of His Majesty the Sultan to establish a modern approach of decentralised local administration in governorates of Oman brought about a Royal dimension manifested in "determining developmental, economic and social priorities, benefiting from the comparative advantage among them and streamlining service procedures for citizens".

The development of the gov-

ernorates is one of the major priorities of the 10th Five-Year Plan, which aims at achieving balanced economic and social development, considering the spatial dimension of development and the sectoral dimension of the different economic sectors.

Thanks to His Majesty the Sultan's attention, a sum of OMR20 million has been accorded for each governorate during the 10th Five Year Plan to provide support to the governorates' developmental projects. The sum will be expended through the Budget's Electronic System.

Total financial allocations set for these projects for the year 2023 amount to OMR1.2 billion, reviewed from time to time, depending on the financial and economic developments in the country.

In the field of competitiveness, Oman has made progress in several sub-indicators, such as the Innovation Index, as a result of the improvement of the scientific research and innovation system

in Oman and the initiatives pertaining to motivating and developing researchers.

Oman also achieved improvement in indicators related to information technology. As a result, the Sultanate of Oman ranked 15th globally and scaled up its ranking in the pillar of education to find its place among the top 10 countries in the world. This is in addition to its remarkable progress in other international indicators, such as food security, food quality and safety, food availability, sustainability, resilience, and others.

His Majesty the Sultan strengthened Oman's foreign policy by maximising mutual interests with various countries of the world, benefiting Oman and its esteemed people. Economic diplomacy played an important role in attracting investments in various fields, thanks to the stimulating legislative environment that Oman possesses, free economic zones, natural and environmental resources, supportive infrastructure and logistics and a

prominent geographical location.

Economic diplomacy also sought to enhance tourism in Oman and benefit from the year-long diverse environments, stunning beaches, attractions, heritage sites, museums, modern tourism and luxurious hotel facilities. Tourism in Oman also benefits from the experiences of various countries of the world in the fields of scholarly research, innovation, technology and renewable energy.

Statistics indicate the advantages of what has been achieved so far in the volume of foreign direct investments (FDI), which stood at about OMR18.14 billion until the third quarter of 2022, posting an increase of 10.4 percent compared to the corresponding period in 2021.

These efforts also contributed to upgrading the volume of trade exchange between Oman and the countries of the world to stand at OMR30,421.4 million until September 2022, a rise of 46.18 percent. -ONA





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HISTORIC MISSION

Oman’s first satellite set for space launch from UK

Times News Service

CORNWALL: The first Omani satellite, Aman, is ready and set for launch into low Earth orbit from Spaceport Cornwall, in the UK. The window for mission is opening at 22:16 PM (GMT), on Monday, coinciding with 2:16 AM Omani time (GMT+4), on Tuesday, with additional back-up dates in mid and late January. The satellite will be set off on its historic mission aboard the Launcher One rocket, a modified Virgin Boeing 747 jet. The Sultanate of Oman, represented by ETCO: An Oman-based emerging technology innovator; Virgin Orbit: a leading US-based satellite launch company; SatRev: Polish nanosatellite manufacturer and operator and TUATARA, spe-

cialists in advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI), data analytics and cognitive technology solutions, have been working together to launch the first Omani nanosatel-

lite. This project has been ongoing since October 2021, when the document on strategic cooperation, implementing the Middle East space programme, was initially

signed. Alongside other commercial satellites, Aman, was loaded onto the Boeing 747-400 aircraft carrier, and the Launcher One system, as a part of Virgin Orbit's

“Start Me Up” space mission. Seven separate satellite payloads from multiple countries are included: one from Oman, one from Poland and five from the UK.

TUATARA in collaboration with ETCO. Oman’s space programme does not stop here.

Aman satellite
The launch of the Aman satellite into low Earth orbit, is a first step in Oman’s space journey. In 2021, the document signed by all participating companies agreed that more satellites would be sent to space in the future, including a first mission into deep space, providing Oman with data and solutions that will enhance the development of the local space market, build data monetization solutions, and fast track the country’s economic growth. Omani satellite Aman launch into space can be monitored live at <https://aman.etcocom/>

HOLIDAY HORROR

Muscat-based residents recount mugging incident in Georgia

Times News Service

MUSCAT- The time of holidays and festive season is just coming to an end. While many travellers arrived to enjoy the beauty of the Sultanate of Oman, quite a few of Omani citizens and residents travelled outside the country. One of the popular destinations for Omani citizens and GCC residents in recent times has been Georgia due to its beauty, visa-on-arrival option and attractive air travel offers. While the majority of travellers have returned with fond memories, a few of them had a different tale to share as they experienced their worst holidays in Georgia with a Muscat-based family mugged and harassed by local gangs. The family’s decision to travel to the Caucasian country in a group was to have a nice holiday after a long hiatus due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The family and friends, who requested their names to be withheld, narrated the forgettable incident and warned travellers to be cautious and careful. Shaken to the core, the family said that the most surprising part was getting robbed by a street gang of youngsters. Narrating the incident, the victim’s wife, who works for an IT company, said: “We were travelling

to Georgia for the first time though we had friends in the group who had visited before. It was in Tbilisi that the incident happened and it was just a day before we were returning after enjoying Georgia’s snow-capped mountains, ancient fortresses, Old Town, caves, cathedrals, beaches and good food and resorts. The scary incident occurred in one of the busiest areas

of the capital. “We (my husband and my child) went out to do shopping and were moving in a large crowd from Freedom Square to Liberty Square Metro Station. A huge mall is near to the metro and just as we were entering the mall amid the loud and festive atmosphere, we were surrounded by a group of 15-20 youngsters, mostly young girls. They pushed me and my son and held my husband. While few caught his legs, others had his hand spread out while a couple of them tried to check his pockets. And soon, they all ran away and my husband realised that he had been pickpocketed. The wallet had credit cards, most importantly Oman resident cards and a couple of hundreds of dollars in cash.” She added: We returned to the hotel and managed to block our credit cards as we had already started getting messages that it was being swiped. We contacted our local tour guide and hotel staff.

The idea to approach the police and file a complaint was turned down as we were made to understand that one cannot leave Georgia if a case is filed till the investigation is over. “We then decided to go back to the same marketplace where we had met the group with the men folk of our group joining us. We managed to spot a couple of those who were present at the time of the incident. We managed to engage in a conversation with the help of a nearby Samaritan who volunteered to act as an interpreter. After constant denials, we offered one of the boys’ cash against the return of the wallet and our resident cards. Following the assurance that we would not call the police and give them cash against the return of wallet and cards, one of the boys finally brought us the wallet and the resident cards. The few hundreds of dollars were missing and we gave them a few more to end our ordeal.”

One of the victim’s friends, a banker in Oman, said: During all these negotiations, we found that a family from the UAE also had lost their money in a similar modus operandi and learnt that few others have also been affected in the same vicinity. We checked with our guide and the hotel staff and they seemed to admit that such pickpocketing incidents were common, of late, in Tbilisi.” Recollecting the incident, the victim’s wife said: “We are still in utter disbelief and thank God that we managed to get our resident cards. The group of boys and girls could be between ages of 10 to 15 years. We were later told that they were commonly referred to as gypsies. The hotel staff said that such incidents of robbery have seen a surge and they usually target Asian and Gulf tourists.” “It’s important to create awareness among travelers in Oman as a lot of people visit Georgia,” the victim said.



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Advertisement No. 3 / 2023

Muscat Municipality invites interested companies to the following tender:

Tender No	Tender Description	Document Fee	Last date for inquires submission	Last date for obtaining Tender Docs.	Last date for Submission
47/2022/MM/PA-14 Recall-1	Supply of Garbage Bags	25/-OMR	19/01/2023	26/01/2023	29/01/2023

- Specialized Companies with a valid registration certificate from Tender Board can obtain tender documents from the website through the following link: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>. Starting from the date of this announcement until the end of deadline mentioned above.
- Bidders shall submit their offers electronically through link mentioned above.
- Tender Bonds shall be E-Bond which is equivalent to (1%) of the total value of the tender to be submitted through E-Tendering system, addressed to Muscat Municipality and valid for (90) days starting from the deadline for submission.
- Offers not accompanied by a tender bond will be rejected.
- Clarifications and support:
 - For any inquiries regarding tenders, please contact us through e-tendering website: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)
 - For technical support of e-tendering system, please send an email to (etenderid@mtc.gov.om) or call (+96824402200).
 - For technical support of E-Bond through e-tendering system please send an email to (esnad@gstb.gov.om) or call (+96824402200/24402330).

Website: www.mm.gov.om

Biden in Mexico for talks on migrants and trade

Other major issues like climate change and manufacturing will be discussed during the visit

MEXICO CITY: The President of the United States Joe Biden arrived in Mexico City ahead of a regional summit on Monday. Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will also be part of the event, Voice Of America (VOA) reported.

Major issues like illegal migration, climate change, trade and manufacturing will be discussed during the visit. The VOA report quoted White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre saying that Biden expects to “promote a common vision for North America with his visit, the first to Mexico since becoming president, Biden expects to “promote a common vision for North America.” The



VOA report further states that Biden will be making major announcements about expanding cooperation for the trafficking of arms, drugs, steps to control illegal migration and environmental challenges.

Before Mexico City, Biden visited El Paso city in Texas to review the influx of illegal migrants that cross the border with Mexico. During his four-hour visit to El Paso Biden met with Customs and Border Protection officers and watched as they demonstrated

make the immigration process “orderly, fair, safe, and humane.”.

Illegal migration

Biden also stated that his administration is using tools that limit illegal migration all while expanding legal paths for Immigration and increase security.

“The approach we’re taking is based on a model we know works. But to truly fix our broken immigration system, Congress needs to act”, according to the report.

The visit to El Poso and then Mexico City comes after the announcement by Biden on January 5 at White House about a border control program under which 30,000 Cubans, Nicaraguans, Haitians and Venezuelans would be allowed into the US per month and allowed to work legally for up to two years if they apply from their home countries, pass a background check and prove they have a financial supporter in the US, according to the report.

Although the same mentions that if an individual tries to enter the US illegally then they will be deported back to Mexico under the pandemic-era immigration policy.

To keep a check on waves of migrants trying to enter the US illegally. -ANI

IN NIGERIA

Gunmen abduct over 30 in train station attack

ABUJA: Authorities in Nigeria's southern Edo state on Sunday announced that unknown armed gunmen had kidnapped at least 32 people in an attack at a local train station on Saturday afternoon.

The Edo governor's office said the attack occurred in Igueben (population ca. 70,000) at around 4:00 p.m. (1600 CET), when men armed with AK-47 assault rifles attacked a group of people waiting for a train to the oil town of Warri in Delta state.

Several people were also reported to have been injured when gunmen opened fire during the attack. Igueben is located roughly 100 kilometres (62 miles) northeast of Benin City.

State Information Minister Chris Osa Nehikhare said 32 people had been abducted in the



assault but noted that one had already escaped.

“At the moment, security personnel — made up of the military and the police as well as men of the vigilante network and hunters — are intensifying search and rescue operations in a reasonable radius to rescue the kidnap victims.”

“We are confident,” he said,

“that the other victims will be rescued in the coming hours.”

The Federal Transportation Ministry called the attack “utterly barbaric.”

Who is committing acts of violence in Nigeria?

The most populous country in Africa, Nigeria has borrowed bil-

lions from China in an effort to modernise its rail infrastructure. Yet, wracked by violence from all corners, that rail infrastructure has been repeatedly targeted by militants and armed bandits.

So far, no group has claimed responsibility for Saturday's attack.

In March 2022, the radical group Boko Haram shot eight people and kidnapped several more in an attack on a train station outside the capital Abuja. Train service was interrupted for more than eight months as a result.

Like many of its neighbours, Nigeria has failed to gain control over insurgent forces operating within and across its borders. Nigeria's government has pledged to improve security at train stations, yet analysts say they just don't have the manpower. - DW

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UPCOMING UPGRADES



Twitter to undergo ‘much larger’ user interface overhaul

LOS ANGELES: Twitter CEO Elon Musk recently made a major revelation about the microblogging site's user interface (UI).

Taking to the platform, the multi-billionaire announced the features which will appear in the ‘first part’ of a ‘much larger UI overhaul’.

“Easy swipe right/left to move between recommended vs followed tweets rolls out later this week,” he wrote.

“Bookmark button (de facto silent like) on Tweet details rolls out a week later,” he added.

The Tesla CEO further revealed that ‘Long form tweets’ will be a part of Twitter from ‘early Feb’.

Netizens lauded Musk for the changes he introduced, showing excitement for the upcoming upgrades on the microblogging platform.

“Can’t wait for long form tweets!! Loving the new changes and updates so far,” a user wrote.

“Boss moves. Thank You!!!” another user wrote.

Meanwhile, yet another user wrote, “Those are good upgrades”.

The upgrades came after Musk tweeted the announcement of a change in the User Interface of the platform's ‘Bookmarks’ feature in December 2022.

Musk had hinted that the upcoming changes would make it “Easy to create folders to bookmark tweets into various categories”. The Tesla CEO replied to a user asking for a ‘bookmark organizer’ positively, hinting at it being part of the new feature.

Before that, the SpaceX owner earlier announced “Significant backend server architecture changes” on the platform.

The update followed an outage of the microblogging platform in the wee hours of December 29.

According to a report by Al Jazeera, the web version of the platform suffered a major outage. It was difficult for many users who were greeted with an error message when they tried signing in.

More than 8,700 users reported problems with the site as of 7:30 am EST (12:30 pm GMT), Al Jazeera reported citing Downdetector, which tracks website outages. -ANI

SULTANATE OF OMAN

TENDERS NOTICE

The Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources Announces the following Tenders: -

Tender no.	Description	Tender documents price (R.O)	Class	Last date for collection of documents	Last date for Submission of documents
275/2022/MAFWR/HQ-29-Recall-3	Maintenance Works Of Wadi Sahalnawt Recharge Dam in Wilayat Salalah, Dhofar Governorate	25/-	THIRD	Thursday 12/1/2023	Thursday 26/1/2023
521/2022/MAFWR/HQ-58-Recall-1	Rental of 45) vehicles for the Directorate General for Fisheries Development	25/-	SPECIALIZED	Thursday 12/1/2023	Thursday 26/1/2023
4/2022/MAFWR/HQ-1	Supply of High pressure Spraying Machines with their accessories	25/-	SPECIALIZED	Monday 23/1/2023	Monday 13/2/2023
6/2022/MAFWR/HQ-2	Supply of Veterinary Vaccines for Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources for the year 2023	25/-	SPECIALIZED	Monday 23/1/2023	Monday 13/2/2023
8/2022/MAFWR/HQ-3	Rent (45) Four Wheels Cars To Be Distributed To The Governorates In Order To control red palm weevil	25/-	SPECIALIZED	Monday 23/1/2023	Monday 13/2/2023
9/2022/MAFWR/HQ-4	For Supply 745 computers for ministry of agricultural, fisheries wealth and water resources	25/-	SPECIALIZED	Monday 23/1/2023	Monday 13/2/2023
14/2022/MAFWR/HQ-5	Complementary works of construction fish action hall at the fishery harbour, AL-Seeb	100/-	EXCELLENT	Sunday 15/1/2023	Monday 6/2/2023
15/2022/MAFWR/HQ-6	Drilling Bore Well Supply & Installation Of PumpsAnd Pipeline For Supporting Al-Rajma Fala's In Wilayat Al-Awabi At South Al-Batinah Governorate	25/-	FOURTH	Wednesday 25/1/2023	Wednesday 15/2/2023

- Interested Companies registered with The General Secretariat of the Tender Board (in the above mentioned Grade) may obtain Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document.
- The value of the document will be paid & submitted on line on given website.
- The Tenderer should attach Bank Guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman (as required in the tender), and addressed to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources, And the bidders can contact the Esnad technical support team at the number listed below to find out how to request electronic guarantees from local banks.
- All correspondence pertaining to the tender inquiry must be online at e-tendering System.
- All correspondence pertaining to the e-tendering System technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number: +968 24402200 or etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om.
- Note: Bid Submission will be online only. Scan Copy of Tender Bond needs to be attached in system.

TENDERS COMMITTEE

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources

VANDALISED BUILDINGS



Brazil begins investigation after pro-Bolsonaro riots

BRASILIA: Authorities in Brazil launched an investigation on Monday after thousands of supporters of former President Jair Bolsonaro stormed the country's highest seats of power.

The protesters — who were demanding that newly-elected President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva be ousted — left a trail of destruction in scenes that echoed the 2021 US Capitol invasion by fans of former President Donald Trump.

What are investigators doing?

Brazil's Institutional Relations Minister Alexandre Padilha said the vandalised buildings would be inspected for evidence including fingerprints and images to find the culprits. He said the rioters apparently intended to spark similar actions nationwide.

Justice Minister Flavio Dino

equated the acts to terrorism and the stoking of a coup. He said authorities had started tracking those who paid for buses that transported protesters to the capital. “They will not succeed in destroying Brazilian democracy,” Dino said. “We need to say that fully, with all firmness and conviction.”

“We will not accept the path of criminality to carry out political fights in Brazil. A criminal is treated like a criminal.” The federal district's civil police said on Monday that 300 people had been arrested so far.

Repercussions for senior officials

The Brazilian president had earlier read a freshly signed decree for the federal government to assume control of security in the federal district.

Lula said that “fascist fanatics,” as well as those who financed their activities, should be punished, and accused Bolsonaro of stoking up their uprising.

Brasilia Governor Ibaneis Rocha fired the security chief of the capital, Anderson Torres, who was previously Bolsonaro's justice minister. Meanwhile, Supreme Court magistrate Alexandre de Moraes ordered that Torres himself should relinquish his post for 90 days.

The office of Brazil's attorney general said it had asked the Supreme Court to issue arrest warrants for Torres “and all other public officials responsible for acts and omissions” that had led to the unrest.

There has been international condemnation of the violent protests that centered on Brasilia's Three Powers Square. -DW

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Indian diaspora are our ambassadors: PM Modi

The world is interested in India's speed and scale and they are interested in India's future, Narendra Modi said at the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention

INDORE: At the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention at Indore on Monday, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that the Indian diaspora are the brand ambassadors of India.

"I call all Indian diaspora as brand ambassadors of India. You all are 'Rashtradoots'. Your role as India's brand ambassador is diverse. You are a brand ambassador of Make in India, Yoga, Handicraft industry, and at the same time of India's millets," PM Modi said. He further said that the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is visible through the overseas Indians.

"Today, we see crores of overseas Indians on the global map... the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumb-



bakam is visible," PM said.

"India is being looked at with hope and curiosity. India's voice is being heard on the global stage. India is also the host of this year's G20. We do not want to make it only a diplomatic event, but an event of people's participation, the prime minister said.

PM further heaped praises on the youth of the country terming them as the "skilled capital" for the country.

"India not only has the capability of becoming a knowledge centre but also a skilled capital. Our

youth has skills, values, honesty and determination toward work. Our skilled capital can become the world's growth engine," PM said.

Talking about India's presidency of G20, he said that the government want to make the summit not only a diplomatic event but an event of people's participation.

He also said that the world is interested in India's speed and scale.

"The world is interested in India's speed and scale. They are interested in India's future. When it comes to a cashless economy, the world is surprised to see that 40

per cent of the world's Real-Time Digital transactions take place in India," PM Modi said.

Talking about the significance of the convention, PM Modi said, "This Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is special in so many ways, the nation has entered 'Amrit Kaal'. Our Pravasi Bharatiyas have a significant place in India's journey in the 'Amrit Kaal' and India's global order will be decided by you people."

Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the three-day 17th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention in Madhya Pradesh's In-

dore city, which began on Sunday.

President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali is the chief guest and the Republic of Suriname President Chandrikapersad Santokhi is the special guest of honour.

The three-day conference is being held under the theme "Diaspora: Reliable partners for India's progress in Amrit Kaal".

The conference will conclude on Tuesday and President Droupadi Murmu will preside over the valedictory session and present the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman. -ANI

ONLY MINOR DELAYS

Grounded cargo vessel in Suez Canal refloated

EL QANTARA: A cargo vessel ran aground in Egypt's Suez Canal on Monday, according to canal services firm Leth Agencies, but has now been refloated.

The company said Suez Canal Authority (SCA) tug boats rescued the Marshall Islands-flagged ship, which had been stuck near the city of El Qantara in the governorate of Ismailia.

It said that only minor delays were to be expected with other traffic. Officials had no details on what caused the 225-metre-long (738-foot-long) vessel to run aground. The Joint Coordination Centre (JCC) listed the Glory as carrying over 65,000 metric tonnes (71,650 US tonnes) of corn from Ukraine bound for China.

The Istanbul-based JCC, which comprises representatives of Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Turkey and the UN, was set up in July 2022 to oversee the Black Sea Grain Initiative.

The initiative is based on a deal struck between the parties in Russia's war on Ukraine to ensure the export of grain, other foodstuffs and fertilizers from Ukraine.

The accident recalls the grounding of the Panama-flagged container ship Ever Given in March 2021.

In that case, traffic in the crucial waterway was held up for six days. The blockage held up \$9 billion (€8.4 billion) a day in global trade and added to the strain on supply chains that were already suffering under the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. -DW

Announcement



This is to inform the general public that Mr. Ajay Kumar Kishorchandra Chauhan, holding Indian Passport No. N8872600 and Omani civil ID 82064668 who was working with Al Maya International LLC, has been terminated from his services with Al Maya International LLC with effect from the 25th of December 2022. Henceforth, Al Maya International LLC doesn't bear any responsibility for anyone dealing with him.

Announcement



This is to inform the general public that Mr. Navubha Dansangji Mokha holding Indian Passport No. M6624558 and Omani civil ID 71940683 who was working with Al Maya International LLC, has been terminated from his services with Al Maya International LLC with effect from the 25th of December 2022. Henceforth, Al Maya International LLC doesn't bear any responsibility for anyone dealing with him.

Announcement



This is to inform the general public that Mr. Jaharul Kader Babu holding Bangladeshi Passport No. EK0968100 and Omani civil ID 72782638 who was working with Al Maya International LLC, has been terminated from his services with Al Maya International LLC with effect from the 25th of December 2022. Henceforth, Al Maya International LLC doesn't bear any responsibility for anyone dealing with him.



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Sultanate of Oman

Ministry of Health

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Health invites specialized companies to participate in the following Tenders: -

Tender Ref	Description	Last date for Collection of tender Document	Closing Time/ Day/ Date	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
2023/131	Sewage suction for health institutions (Sinaw Hospital, Bidiyah, Dima and Al Taeiyn and Ibra Health Center) in North Sharqiya governorate	Before 10 am Thursday 24/January /2023	Before 10 am on Sunday 19/February /2023	Specialized Companies registered with Tender Board	R.O 25 Per set

- All Specialized and interested Companies registered with Tender Board on the above mentioned Grade may obtain Tender documents from the E. Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document.
- Tenders should be submitted on line on the given website signed and sealed. The Tenderer should enclose scan copy of Bank Guarantee or a certified Cheque issued by a Local bank for not less than One percent (1%) for the Tender value validity for (90) days from the Tender Submission date, addressed to The Chairman of the Tender Committee before one day of date submission.
- The Original Bank Guarantee should be submitted to the office of Director of Purchase and Tenders one day before the submission date for all Tenders.
- Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any tender.

(<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)

Any Clarification, you may contact via

Telephone: 24402200

Email id: etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om

Towards continued Renaissance

We are honoured to extend our
heartfelt congratulations to His
Majesty Sultan

Haitham bin Tarik

- may the Almighty protect and
preserve him -
and to the Omani people on
the anniversary of His Majesty's
accession to the throne.



OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by March 2023 reaching \$77.23, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by \$1.94 from the price of Friday, which was \$75.29. - **OMA**

MARKET BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,847.66 points, up by 0.3 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.83 per cent at 503.67 points. Sharqiyah Desalination, up 8.66 per cent, was the top gainer while Construction Materials, down 8.11 per cent, was the top loser.

Construction work of Space Launch Complex to start in Duqm this year

The symposium was aimed at introducing the space sector policy and executive programme



MUSCAT: The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology yesterday organised Oman Space Sector Symposium, themed "Future Approaches and Investment Opportunities". The symposium reviewed the executive programme for the space sector, the reality and future of the space sector plans and investment opportunities in this field. The symposium was opened by Dr. Mohammed Nasser Al Za'abi, Secretary General at the Ministry of Defence. The symposium was aimed at introducing the space sector

policy and executive programme drafted by the Ministry in cooperation with partners in the sector. It sought to achieve the objectives of the Digital Economy Programme and Oman Vision 2040, raise awareness among relevant authorities about its technologies and identify current and future

opportunities for cooperation and partnerships in this sector. Eng. Said Hamoud Al Ma'awali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, said in a statement that the symposium focused on investment opportunities available in the field of space.

He added that the National Centre for Space, Advanced Technology and Artificial Intelligence conducted a study about research in the field of space investment opportunities. Speaking to reporters, the minister said that the outcome of the study shows that 90 percent of op-

portunities that the ministry seeks to create during the next 20 years will be in downstream structures of the space sector, with some opportunities in upstream investments. So far, more than 15 investment opportunities have been identified in the space sector, with 10 opportunities to be offered this year, said the minister. He added that steps are under way to launch of Oman Communications Satellite and that recent estimates indicate that the launch will take place in 2025. Dr. Ali Amer Al Shaidhani, Communications and Information Technology Undersecretary, pointed out that the ministry espoused a methodology of harmonization and partnership when drafting the policy and executive programme for the space sector. He explained that the policy brought about promising investment opportunities for Oman in the field of Space services and applications. These investments will benefit from several realistic potentials, including Oman's strategic location, infrastructure laid down by the government over the past decades and growing demand for various space services. In the same context an agree-

ment was signed by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and Oman LNG Company. The agreement provides for the establishment of a gallery for space science and technology at the Children's Museum with the purpose of simulating virtual reality of a spacecraft. The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology also signed a similar usufruct contract with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning and the National Space Services Company. The usufruct provides for the construction of a space rocket platform to benefit amateurs and researchers (low-scale) and to develop a scholarly climate for scientists, researchers and specialists. The platform also paves the way to study space missile launch, encourage specialised tourism and attract amateurs to space activities. Haitham Ahmed Al Mahrazi, Project Manager of the Space Launch Complex in Duqm, said that the project will begin towards the end of 2023 in the Wilayat of Duqm on an area of more than 250,000 sqm. -**OMA**

OMANI ENVIRONMENT DAY

Environmental forum at Sezad calls for reducing carbon emissions

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Coinciding with the Sultanate of Oman's celebrations of the Omani Environment Day, the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) organised the Second Environmental Forum "Together to Reduce Carbon Footprint in Duqm". A number of lecturers and specialists from government and private bodies, concerned with climate change affairs and reducing carbon emissions, took part in the forum. The forum was presided over by Sheikh Bader bin Nasser Al Farsi, the Wali of Duqm, with the presence of representatives of the municipal council, many officials in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, specialists from the Environment Authority, Sultan Qaboos University, Duqm Refinery Company (OQ8) and representatives of companies operating in Sezad. The second edition of the Forum aimed to identify the potential environmental challenges resulting from the various construction and industrial activities and projects in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. Also, it touched on discussing appropriate solutions to environmental issues that require strengthening cooperation



between the various concerned parties operating in the zone in aspects related to environmental and climatic affairs. The forum urged joining efforts to develop plans to reduce carbon emissions in pursuit of zero neutrality in Duqm. During the forum, the importance of reducing carbon emissions, efficient use of natural resources and social inclusion was highlighted in the sessions. In addition, the forum shed light on the significance of inventorying greenhouse gases and developing solutions to reduce carbon emissions to reach zero emissions in Duqm. On the other hand, innovations and updates in the field of preserving the environment, protecting environmental and biological

diversity, and the main challenges facing climate change and sustainable development were discussed. On this occasion, Eng. Ahmed bin Ali Akaak, Acting CEO of Sezad said, "As the Royal Directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik marked the year 2050 for achieving zero carbon neutrality in the Sultanate of Oman, Sezad supports the establishment of an effective, balanced and adaptable system to protect Oman's natural resources and sustain them to support the national economy. This is a significant and encouraging step towards reaching carbon neutrality, which will help achieve a balance between sustainable development and mitigating the effects of climate change. This will

also assist in developing a knowledge economy, diversifying energy resources and using sustainable clean technology." "The Special Economic Zone at Duqm provided investment opportunities for clean energy projects. This has been witnessed in the high interest of international companies in the zone designated for clean energy projects, covering an area of 250 sqkm. In addition to that, other projects in this regard will be announced in the future," he commented. It is worth noting that organising the forum "Together to Reduce Carbon Footprint in Duqm" reflects Sezad's plans to lay the foundations for a carbon-free future. It, further, backs the continuous efforts of the zone, represented by the Environmental Sustainability Department, towards protecting the environment, preserving sustainable natural resources and supporting the world's endeavours to reduce emissions. The forum was held with the participation of other partners including Sultan Qaboos University, OQ Company, Jindal Shadede Company, Worly Company and other corporates specialised in providing environmental services and consultancy and other sectors.

DISCUSS TRADE STRATEGIES



Commerce Minister receives UAE Minister of Foreign Trade

MUSCAT: Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion received Dr Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The two sides discussed a range of topics of concern to the two countries. They also reviewed means of promoting co-operation in the trade sector. The two sides also exchanged expertise in organising commercial work, limiting difficul-

ties and increasing the trade exchange between the Sultanate of Oman and the UAE. The two sides also reviewed features of trade strategies in the two countries and data on commercial exchange. The volume of trade exchange between the two countries hit about OMR4.19 billion by the end of September 2022. The total Omani non-oil exports to the UAE stood at OMR917.6 million whereas the volume of imports stood at about OMR3.272 billion. -**OMA**

DEVELOPING TRADE



OCCI receives UAE trade delegation

MUSCAT: Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) received a business delegation from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) led by Dr Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade. The meeting explored means of developing trade and economic relations, as well as enhancing the trade exchange between the two countries. Businessmen and businesswomen were briefed on investment opportunities in the two countries. The meeting also touched on mechanisms of diversifying and enhancing joint interests be-

tween the two sides. Emphasis was laid on the investment sector in commensurate with markets in both countries. The meeting also highlighted mechanisms for exploiting joint investment opportunities. It also urged businessmen to set up joint ventures between the two sides. The Omani imports from UAE hit more than OMR2.957 billion by the end of August 2022 whereas the Omani exports to the UAE hit more than OMR890.9 million. The meeting was attended by Faisal Abdullah Al Rowas, Chairman of the OCCI Board of Directors and Omani businessmen. -**OMA**

IATA REPORT

Middle Eastern carriers see 14.7% drop in cargo

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Middle Eastern carriers experienced a 14.7 per cent year-on-year decrease in cargo volumes in November 2022, according to a new report. "This was a marginal improvement to the previous month (-15.0 per cent)," the International Air Transport Association (IATA) said in its latest released data for November 2022 global air cargo markets "Cargo volumes to/from Europe impacted the region's performance, registering a 16.3 per cent year-on-year decline in November while capacity increased 2.1 per cent compared to November 2021," the IATA report said. Global air cargo markets are showing that demand softened as economic headwinds persist and global demand, measured in cargo tonne-kilometres (CTKs), fell 13.7 per cent compared to November 2021 (-14.2 per cent for international operations). Capacity (measured in available cargo tonne-kilometres, ACTK)



was 1.9 per cent below November 2021. This was the second year-on-year contraction following the first last month (in October) since April 2022. International cargo capacity decreased by 0.1 per cent compared to November 2021. Compared to pre-COVID-19 levels (November 2019), there was a smaller contraction in overall demand (-10.1 per cent), while capacity was down 8.8 per cent. The report further said that several factors in the operating environment needed to be noted. Global new export orders, a leading indicator of cargo demand, were stable in October. For major

economies, new export orders are shrinking except in Germany, the US, and South Korea, where they grew, the report said. Global goods trade expanded by 3.3 per cent in October. Given the softening in air cargo demand, this suggests that maritime cargo was the primary beneficiary. The US dollar has appreciated sharply, adding cost pressure as many costs are denominated in US dollars. This includes jet fuel, which is already at elevated levels. The Consumer Price Index for G7 countries decreased from 7.8 per cent in October to 7.4 per cent in November, the largest month-on-month decline in 2022. Inflation in producer (input) prices reduced to 12.7 per cent in November, its lowest level so far in 2022. "Air cargo performance softened in November, the traditional peak season. Resilience in the face of economic uncertainties is demonstrated with demand being relatively stable on a month-to-month basis. But market signals are mixed," said Willie Walsh, IATA's

Director General. "November presented several indicators with upside potential: oil prices stabilised, inflation slowed and there was a slight expansion in goods traded globally. But shrinking export orders globally and China's rising COVID cases are cause for careful monitoring," he added. **Regional performance** Asia-Pacific airlines saw their air cargo volumes decrease by 18.6 per cent in November 2022 compared to the same month in 2021. This was the worst performance of all regions and a decline in performance compared to October (-14.7 per cent). Airlines in the region continue to be impacted by lower levels of trade and manufacturing activity and disruptions in supply chains due to China's rising COVID cases. Available capacity in the region decreased by 4.5 per cent compared to 2021. North American carriers posted a 6.6 per cent decrease in cargo volumes in November 2022 compared to the same month in 2021.

MARKET

MSX index ends higher



Sharqiyah Desalination, up 8.66 per cent, was the top gainer while Construction Materials, down 8.11 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,847.66 points, up by 0.3 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.83 per cent at 503.67 points. Sharqiyah Desalination, up 8.66 per cent, was the top gainer while Construction Materials, down 8.11 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Al Anwar Investment were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded while Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 259 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR1.4 million, with more than 9.26 million shares changing hands. Out of 37 traded securities, 9 advanced, 12 declined, and 16 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for OMR388,000 while domestic investors were net buyers for OMR324,000, followed by foreign investors for OMR64,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,827.27 points, up 0.2 per cent. Prices of Oman Arab Bank, Sohar International Bank, Ominvest, and National Bank Oman, were up by 3.85 per cent, 2.83 per cent, 0.96 per cent and 0.35 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Anwar Investment, Global Financial Investments, United Finance, Al Sharqia Investment, and Al Madina Takaful were down by 0.67 per cent, 1.79 per cent, 1.52 per cent, 1.25 per cent and 1.09 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,352.82 points, down 0.2 per cent. Prices of Oman Cement were up by 0.67 per cent. Prices of Construction Materials, National Aluminium, Raysut Cement, and Al Anwar Ceramics were down by 8.11 per cent, 1.28 per cent, 1.24 per cent and 0.48 per cent respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.72 per cent before closing at 1,617.44 points. Prices of Sharqiyah Desalination, National Gas, and Oman National Engineering were up by 8.66 per cent, 2.80 per cent and 0.86 per cent respectively. Prices of Shell Oman Marketing, and Phoenix Power were down by 6.79 per cent and 2.27 per cent respectively. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,873.22	4,832.39	4,847.66	4,833.26	14.40	0.30
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,839.85	7,805.02	7,827.27	7,811.32	15.95	0.20
Industry Index	6,949.06	6,352.82	6,352.82	6,365.47	-12.66	-0.20
Services Index	1,629.20	1,610.55	1,617.44	1,629.20	-11.76	-0.72
MSX Shariah Index	641.21	503.16	503.67	507.89	-4.22	-0.83
MSX TR INDEX	6,150.90	6,099.35	6,118.63	6,100.46	18.17	0.30
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,203.52	8,167.08	8,190.37	8,173.67	16.70	0.20
SERVICES TR IDX	1,721.93	1,702.21	1,709.49	1,721.93	-12.43	-0.72
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	7,234.83	6,614.07	6,614.07	6,627.25	-13.18	-0.20

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
9,266,158	1,403,979	259	23,719,128,016	9	12	16	37

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, JANUARY 9

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (BD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BD	LAST OFFER	PRE VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000003398	SOHAR INT. BANK	104,318	11,362	4	0.107	0.109	0.107	0.109	0.106	0.003	2.830	0.109	0.099	0.110	0.100	500,316,790
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	22,766	9,562	2	0.420	0.420	0.420	0.420	0.416	0.004	0.962	0.420	0.418	0.420	0.100	280,713,479
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT. ENG.	616,032	72,879	47	0.117	0.120	0.117	0.118	0.117	0.001	0.855	0.118	0.118	0.119	0.100	16,520,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	8,000	2,416	1	0.302	0.302	0.302	0.302	0.300	0.002	0.667	0.302	0.000	0.320	0.100	99,923,558
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	435,382	125,732	13	0.285	0.289	0.285	0.288	0.287	0.001	0.348	0.288	0.288	0.289	0.100	468,272,551
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST. FIN.	600	78	1	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.000	0.130	0.125	0.133	0.100	30,810,000
OM0000002200	AHLJ BANK	28,779	4,865	4	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.000	0.000	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.100	311,945,195
OM00000002796	BANK MUSCAT	1,114,729	311,556	37	0.279	0.280	0.278	0.279	0.279	0.000	0.000	0.279	0.277	0.279	0.100	694,284,780
OM0000003000	AL MAHA PETROLEUM	800	720	1	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.000	0.000	0.900	0.888	0.900	0.100	62,100,000
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	900	371	1	0.412	0.412	0.412	0.412	0.414	-0.002	-0.483	0.412	0.380	0.410	0.100	90,640,000
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INV.	1,416	113	3	0.080	0.080	0.079	0.079	0.080	-0.001	-1.250	0.079	0.076	0.088	0.100	711,000
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV. H.	5,578	307	3	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.056	-0.001	-1.786	0.055	0.056	0.057	0.100	11,000,000
Total		12	2,339,300	539,700	117											
Parallel Market																
OM0000004669	SHARQIYAH DESALIN.	2,500	345	1	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.127	0.011	8.661	0.138	0.135	0.138	0.100	13,496,698
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	5,100	689	2	0.143	0.143	0.135	0.135	0.130	0.005	3.846	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.100	225,370,350
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	25,948	2,804	8	0.108	0.110	0.108	0.110	0.107	0.003	2.804	0.110	0.107	0.110	0.100	9,350,000
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	96,964	15,333	5	0.160	0.160	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.000	0.000	0.158	0.158	0.160	0.100	316,049,421
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	1,182	122	1	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.000	0.000	0.103	0.101	0.111	0.100	18,754,075
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	157,500	7,145	6	0.046	0.046	0.045	0.046	0.046	0.000	0.000	0.046	0.045	0.047	0.100	9,183,238
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	23,000	2,280	2	0.099	0.100	0.099	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.099	0.100	0.100	223,695,303
OM0000004735	SEMBORP SALALAH	52,712	3,318	3	0.062	0.064	0.062	0.064	0.064	0.000	0.000	0.064	0.062	0.064	0.100	61,092,605
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	450	22	1	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.000	0.048	0.100	12,000,000
OM0000004825	ALBATAINAH POWER	210,000	6,090	8	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.000	0.000	0.029	0.028	0.030	0.100	19,571,735
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	4,000	119	2	0.029	0.030	0.029	0.030	0.030	0.000	0.000	0.030	0.029	0.030	0.100	21,432,190
OM0000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	1,766	547	2	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.000	0.000	0.310	0.310	0.000	0.100	21,820,900
OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	20,000	2,742	3	0.138	0.138	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.000	0.000	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.100	10,346,514
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REEF	1,379,300	160,874	15	0.117	0.117	0.116	0.117	0.118	-0.001	-0.847	0.117	0.116	0.119	0.100	49,698,115
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	3,483	317	2	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.082	-0.001	-1.087	0.081	0.080	0.082	0.100	15,823,000
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	151,965	24,451	15	0.181	0.181	0.180	0.180	0.182	-0.002	-1.235	0.180	0.157	0.180	0.100	32,160,000
OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD.	800	42	1	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.078	-0.001	-1.282	0.077	0.075	0.077	0.100	2,585,002
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	1,024,440	67,560	27	0.067	0.067	0.065	0.065	0.066	-0.001	-1.515	0.065	0.065	0.066	0.100	22,694,287
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	24,658	1,060	5	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.044	-0.001	-2.273	0.043	0.042	0.043	0.100	62,891,863
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	3,226,933	291,003	15	0.090	0.090	0.087	0.087	0.090	-0.003	-3.333	0.087	0.086	0.089	0.100	17,400,000
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MRK	20	16	1	0.824	0.824	0.824	0.824	0.884	-0.060	-6.787	0.824	0.824	0.900	0.100	78,280,000
OM0000001368	CONSTRUCTION M.	14,705	1,000	1	0.068	0.068	0.068	0.068	0.074	-0.006	-8.108	0.068	0.000	0.068	0.100	4,230,000
Total		22	6,437,426	587,900	126											

SAUDI PORTS AUTHORITY

New trade corridor service to connect Jeddah Islamic Port to India and West Mediterranean

RIYADH: The Saudi Ports Authority (Mawani) revealed that liner operator MSC (Mediterranean Shipping Company) will start a new shipping service which includes Jeddah Islamic Port from mid-December.

The India – West Mediterranean service will open a new trade corridor between the key markets of the Indian Subcontinent and the Western Mediterranean, which is a critical step towards boosting Saudi Arabia's liner connectivity and fulfilling the goals of the National Transport and Logistics Strategy (NTLS) to consolidate the Kingdom's competitive position on the global logistics map.

With its first sailing planned for December 19 from Khalifa Port on board container vessel MSC Shanghai, the service will also call at the ports of Jebel Ali, Mundra, Nhava Sheva, Djibouti, Gioia Tauro, Genoa, Barcelona, Valencia, Salerno, Marsaxlokk, King Abdul-

The India – West Med service will open a new trade corridor between the key markets of the Indian Subcontinent and the Western Mediterranean which is a critical step towards boosting Saudi Arabia's liner connectivity and fulfilling the goals of the National Transport and Logistics Strategy

lah, and Jeddah Islamic Port.

Trade opportunities

The latest route will unearth a new world of trade opportunities and promote manufacturing industries across the region through direct connectivity. With lesser transshipments and faster transit times, the service can link Mundra to Genoa within 19 days and Nhava Sheva to Barcelona within 16 days.

To meet rising demand and bring its world-class offerings to the Saudi maritime sector, MSC recently added the Kingdom's busiest port to its Himalaya Express network, connecting it to ten major hubs across Asia, the Middle East and Europe. -SPA

REPORT

Private equity investments in Indian realty stood at \$3.4bn in 2022

NEW DELHI: Investments into the Indian real estate sector by private equity firms stood at \$3.4 billion at the end of 2022, data from property consulting firm Savills India showed. The quantum of investment last year - 2022 - was at par with the investment registered in 2021.

Savills India's data suggested that commercial office assets remained the frontrunner during 2022, garnering about half of the total investments. Residential and retail sectors also witnessed robust growth, though riding on the end-users' demand.

Despite persisting geopolitical challenges amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, high global inflation, Indian real estate assets provided favourable avenues for both global and domestic institutional investors. -ANI

NATURAL GAS PRICES

Europe's gas prices face uncertain future

BERLIN: Natural gas prices in Europe fell at the end of 2022, with the benchmark European contract, the Dutch Title Transfer Facility (TTF), priced at €76 (\$80) per megawatt-hour (MWh), close to pre-Ukraine war levels of €75 in December 2021.

Just a short time before that in August, EU prices jumped to an all-time high of €350/MWh due to shortages caused by Russia curtailing supplies. As natural gas prices in Europe rose, European buyers sought alternatives, importing liquified natural gas (LNG) from the US and elsewhere to meet mandated reserves ahead of the winter.

Is it over yet?

Experts say the worst is over for now, with gas prices coming down from historic peaks. "However, that doesn't mean the energy crisis is over," Toby Copson, global head of trading at Trident LNG, told DW.

And next winter may well be harder, with little Russian supply to fill up storage. Russia provided 60 billion cubic meters of gas to Europe in 2022, about half of what was contracted.

"How hard it will be will depend on the weather, Chinese demand and LNG availability," Adi Imirovic, a senior research fellow at the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, told DW.

A number of factors are at play keeping Europe in a better position than they were last year: milder temperatures than usual,



reduced heating demand, a high storage rate and more supply available due to a mostly absent China from the spot market.

Yet this could change dramatically if the weather changes and storage starts to be depleted. "On top of that you have the added concern of the Chinese emerging out of the COVID surge and returning to being a demanding player — all of which would leave Europe competing for what's available with one of the largest buyers in the market," Copson said.

The weather is crucial

The weather will play a crucial role. "For now, it looks good, but the International Energy Agency took into account another cold snap at the end of March in its winter outlook. So we're not out of the woods yet," Bram Claeys, a senior advisor at the Regulatory Assistance Project, a non-partisan organization focused on the green transition, told DW.

"However, the forecast is for Europe to exit the winter with less than 15% in storage (versus the historic 30-35%) and this will result in prices remaining above historic levels as demand is higher to refill storage," Ashley Kelty, director of oil and gas at Panmure Gordon, a corporate investment banking company, told DW.

Gas price predictions

Experts believe prices will remain elevated for at least a couple of years until demand comes down and there is more supply from the US.

"I don't think gas prices will revert to historic levels for the foreseeable future. This is down to LNG being more costly, the lack of supply from offshore gas in Europe and the absence of Russian

supplies," Kelty said.

The wind has been helpful lately and in Belgium, the Tihange 1 nuclear reactor is back online. But this, too, can quickly change. "The underlying structural reasons for the high prices remain in force. The war in Ukraine is far from over; the gas supply from Russia has been and remains decimated, and the French nuclear park is still largely in the doldrums," Claeys said.

"The price has come down from its late-2022 highs, but characterizing €77/MWh as a price level that indicates things are good is a mischaracterization. But I guess it is all relative," said Ken Medlock, coauthor of a recent report on the EU gas sector.

Storage relatively healthy

As of early December 2022, Europe's gas storage levels were about 92% full, a high level for the time of year and near 10-year highs due to milder weather conditions heading into the winter.

Most EU countries' gas storage levels are well above their 5-year averages, but key questions depend on how European reserves will be refilled after winter, assuming that Russian supplies do not resume.

Goldman Sachs expects storage facilities to remain at least 20% full by the end of March 2023, while energy research consultancy Wood Mackenzie says an unusually cold winter in the Northern Hemisphere could reduce European gas inventories to 4% of total capacity by March. -DW

SUPERIOR QUALITY DESERVES PREMIUM

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- Purity in every drop

His Majesty's Cup Award in 2012 & 2013 for Best Five Factories

His Majesty's Shield for Best Factories in 2010 & 2011

Oman's Most Trusted Brand 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021

NSF IBWA WQA Omani Oman Quality

I LOVE IT, I'LL NEVER USE IT

A NEW RESEARCH SAYS THAT PRODUCT ATTACHMENT CAN UNINTENTIONALLY ENCOURAGE LESS SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOUR. TO PREVENT DAMAGE OR LOSS, PEOPLE MAY LIMIT USE OF THEIR MOST PRIZED POSSESSIONS.

Custom sneakers, vintage dishware, and a limited-edition automobile are all examples of products that owners may perceive as unique and precious, inspiring intense feelings of attachment.

From a sustainability standpoint, designers have long believed that attachment was a good thing: If people keep products they care about longer, they'll consume less and send less waste to landfills.

New Cornell University research provides a more nuanced understanding, showing that product attachment can also unintentionally encourage less sustainable behaviour. To prevent damage or loss, people may limit use of their most prized possessions — preserving shoes in a box, dishes as decorations or a car in storage — and buy additional, less meaningful goods for practical daily purposes.

“The goal has been to get people to hold on to products longer, which was seen as inherently more sustainable,” said Michael Kowalski, a doctoral researcher in the field of human-centered design with a background as an industrial product designer. “But that’s not always the case if people aren’t actually using these things.”

Kowalski is the lead author of “I Love It, I’ll Never Use It: Exploring Factors of Product Attachment and Their Effects on Sustainable Product Usage Behaviors,” published Dec. 31, 2022, in the International Journal of Design. Co-author Jay Yoon, assistant professor in the Department of Human Centered Design in the College of Human Ecology, and director of the Meta Design and Technology Lab, is the adviser to the research.

The research seeks to inform designers about the multiple factors driving product attachment and which could be tapped to encourage a product’s active use for as long as possible — consistent with sustainability goals — and avoid continued redundant consumption.

That’s important because Americans, on average, now throw out seven times more durable goods (meant to last at least three years) than they did in 1960, according to the research. Meanwhile, the average new U.S. home, the main location where these increasing numbers of products are used, stored or thrown away, has grown by 1,000 square feet over the past 40 years.

“Perceived irreplaceability as a factor of attachment has been designers’ gold standard, but it turns out addressing it does not guarantee a product’s impact is going to be sustainable, if people are so attached to it that they don’t dare to use it, instead storing it away,” Yoon said. “We need to give more attention to other factors in this relationship.”

Kowalski began to explore those factors after designing and building a wooden dining table for a family member. As referenced in the research article’s title, her seemingly paradoxical response upon receiving the completed piece was, “I love it, I’ll never use it.”

Seeking to better understand that outcome, Kowalski interviewed individuals of varying demographics in their homes about the products they felt attached to and why, and which of those items they actually used or didn’t use. The more than 100 objects discussed included a dresser admired for its craftsmanship, bowls that had belonged to grandparents, and a stuffed animal invested with childhood memories.

Two cars illustrated how attachment could inspire either active or passive product use. One owner adored a car — nicknamed Stella — that was reliable and capable in extreme weather, providing the joy of adventure-filled driving experiences. Another similarly loved a special-edition convertible that they stored in a garage and drove rarely, using other cars for daily transportation.

Kowalski and Yoon identified seven key factors influencing product attachment, including aesthetic qualities, durability, performance and the memories and emotions invoked. Through an online survey of more than 220 participants, they further analyzed how those factors differently affect attachment and long-term usage.

Perceptions of irreplaceability, they determined, did the most to foster product attachment, yet also led to less sustainable behaviors. Products that were durable, resistant to obsolescence and pleasing got more use, while those associated with meaningful memories and sentimental emotions got less.

The researchers said the findings highlight opportunities for designers to prioritise products that people both want to keep and engage with — because they are well made, enjoyable and age gracefully. On the other hand, products valued as unique and irreplaceable may inadvertently promote less sustainable consumption. That means designs emphasising limited releases, personalisation and beautiful-but-scarce materials should be considered with caution.

“Creating a sense that something is one-of-a-kind increases attachment but decreases actual use of a product,” Kowalski said. “Designers need to be mindful of consumers’ psychological and emotional experience in addition to their practical needs to promote sustainable consumption in the long run.”

The research was supported by the National Science Foundation and the Department of Human Centered Design. -ANI



SPORTS

Oman rout Thailand for 2nd win in a row

Oman were off to a flying start as Hussam Bait found the target through a penalty stroke

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Hosts Oman continued their impressive form as they trounced Thailand 7-1 for their second successive win in the Men's Junior AHF Cup Muscat 2023 at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex on Sunday night. The victory in Pool A meant Oman, who were last edition's runner-up, lead the table followed by Thailand. The hosts were off to a flying start as Hussam Bait found the target through a pen-



alty stroke. Oman pumped in four more goals by the end of the first half with Ilyas al Noufali, Talal Bait and Hussam Bait among the scorers. Thailand got a consolation goal in the 37th minute when PhongsakonKhamkoed beat the Omani goalkeeper.

Oman captain Osama Barazahan then increased the tally with a goal in the 46th minute and Hassan al Balushi rounded off a comfortable win with a goal in the last minute of the match. Thailand next face Chinese Taipei while Oman will meet In-

donesia. In another Pool A match, Chinese Taipei were held to a 2-2 draw by Indonesia. Both the teams earned a point each to open their account, having suffered defeats in their respective opening matches against Oman and Thailand.

Bumrah ruled out of ODIs against Sri Lanka

MUMBAI: Team India pacer Jasprit Bumrah has been ruled out of the upcoming three-match ODI series against Sri Lanka starting on Tuesday, the Board of Control for Cricket (BCCI) announced on Monday.

"Bumrah, who was set to join the team in Guwahati ahead of the ODI series, will need some more time to build bowling resilience. This decision has been taken as a precautionary measure," BCCI said in a statement. The board has not named any replacement for Jasprit Bumrah.

India will play their opening game of the three-match ODI against Sri Lanka on Tuesday in Guwahati. The ODIs will be held in Guwahati, Kolkata and Trivandrum on January 10, 12 and 15 respectively.

Earlier, the All-India Senior Selection Committee included star pacer Jasprit Bumrah in India's ODI squad for the upcoming three-match ODI series against Sri Lanka. "The All-India Senior Selection Committee has included pacer Jasprit Bumrah in India's ODI squad for the upcoming 3-match ODI series against



Sri Lanka," the BCCI had said in a January 3 media release.

Bumrah has not featured in competitive cricket since September due to back issues.

While Bumrah has remained absent from the national squad, other senior members of the Indian team, including skipper Rohit Sharma, vice-captain KL Rahul, Virat Kohli, and Shreyas Iyer, have joined the squad in Guwahati.

India's updated squad for Sri Lanka ODIs: Rohit Sharma (Captain), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul (wk), Ishan Kishan (wk), Hardik Pandya (VC), Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Mohd. Shami, Mohd. Siraj, Umran Malik and Arshdeep Singh.

-ANI

FOOTBALL

Dembele's goal takes Barca three points clear in La Liga

MADRID: FC Barcelona reopened a three-point lead over Real Madrid at the top of La Liga with a 1-0 win away to Atletico Madrid on Sunday night.

Ousmane Dembele's goal midway through the first half after good work by Pedri and Gavi was enough to give Barca the win.

The league leaders struggled at times to create clear chances without the suspended Robert Lewandowski, but produced a much-improved defensive display to frustrate an Atletico side in which Joao Felix failed to make a difference.

Tempers frayed in the closing moments and both Barca's Ferran Torres and Atletico defender Stefan Savic were sent off for fighting moments before Ronald Araujo cleared off the line to deny Antoine Griezmann.

Real Sociedad enjoyed a comfortable 2-0 win away to Almeria thanks to second-half goals from David Silva and Alexander Sorloth to strengthen their position in third.

The San Sebastian outfit have won their last three La Liga matches and Sunday's win lifted them to within six points of second-placed Real Madrid, who lost to Villarreal 2-1 on Saturday.

Real Betis won 2-1 away to Rayo Vallecano with Luiz Henrique



scoring the winning goal.

Before the Brazilian's 40th-minute winner, Betis had taken the lead when Rayo keeper Stole Dimitrievski punched the ball into the head of his teammate Ivan Bal-liu for it to rebound into the net.

Sergio Camello leveled for Rayo in the 20th minute after an error from Rui Silva, but Henrique's goal proved decisive.

Marcos Acuna's first-half header and another header from Rafa Mir 10 minutes from time gave Sevilla a vital 2-1 win at home to Getafe.

Borja Mayoral pulled a goal back for the visitors in the closing min-

utes, but it wasn't enough to save a point and Sevilla climb out of the bottom three.

On Saturday, Argentina's World Cup-winning coach Lionel Scaloni returned to Spain to watch Mallorca beat Real Valladolid 1-0.

Espanyol are still struggling in the relegation zone after being denied a win by a late goal from Girona midfielder Yangel Herrera in a 2-2 tie.

Friday night saw Iago Aspas give Celta Vigo a 1-0 win away to bottom side Elche, while Ruben Alcaraz's ninth-minute strike saw Cadiz shock Valencia 1-0 to lift them closer to safety. -Xinhua

FA CUP



Man City thrash Chelsea, Stevenage shock Villa

LONDON: Manchester City beat Chelsea for the second time in less than a week to ensure their place in the fourth round of the FA Cup on Sunday evening.

The result was never in doubt after three goals in 15 minutes in the first half left Chelsea groggy and Pep Guardiola's team flying.

Riyad Mahrez, who had scored the only goal in the two sides' midweek match, netted the first goal with a thumping free kick.

Julian Alvarez scored from the penalty spot after a handball by Kai Havertz seven minutes later, and Phil Foden added a third from close range after good work from Kyle Walker.

Mahrez scored his second of

the match late in the second half to increase the pressure on Chelsea coach Graham Potter.

Aston Villa were stunned by two late goals from fourth-tier side Stevenage Borough.

Morgan Sanson put Aston Villa ahead in the 33rd minute, and although Villa were far from brilliant, they looked to have done enough until Leander Dendonker was sent off in the 85th minute after conceding a penalty.

Jamie Reid scored from the spot and Dean Campbell shocked Unai Emery's side four minutes later when he scored a left-footed shot following a corner to give Stevenage an unlikely win.

Sonny Perkins grabbed an injury-time equalizer for Leeds

United as Jesse Marsch's side came back from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 away to Championship outfit Cardiff City.

Things looked to be going perfectly for Cardiff when Jaden Philogene-Bidace and Sheyi Ojo put them ahead with goals after 24 and 31 minutes.

The home team were hurting Leeds on the break, but the Premier League side pulled a goal back through Rodrigo Moreno with 25 minutes left to play.

Cardiff were reduced to 10 men when Joel Bagan was sent off with 10 minutes left, and Perkins sealed a replay when he followed in to score from close range after Junior Firpo's shot was blocked.

-Xinhua

A DIVISION LEAGUE

Strenserv brush past Douglas OHI by 2 wickets

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Strenserv brushed past Douglas OHI by 2 wickets in the A Division League Season 2022-23 powered by Khimji Ramdas LLC.

Douglas OHI won the toss and elected to bat first.

Douglas got off to a steady start although Strenserv's pacers held their discipline well.

With Douglas losing just 1 wicket in the powerplay, they looked to go big on Strenserv but Jaleel K and Devansh Loya executed their plans well to pick wickets at regular intervals packing half of Douglas' batsmen on just 69 in 20 overs.

Shamsuddeen and Barakath Ahmed's 40-run partnership to resurrect their innings couldn't last long resulting in Douglas OHI packed for 152 runs.

Jaleel K and Devansh Loya picked 3 wickets each while Vijees Velunni picked 2 wickets.

In response, Strenserv lost 2 of their top order batsmen within the 1st 4 overs getting Douglas OHI back in the hunt.

Supriyo S and Devansh Loya's 43 run partnership stabled the ship for Strenserv which was



From left, Jaleel K, Devansh Loya, Ali Muhammed of Strenserv.

then ably cashed in on by Ali Muhammed scoring a half century to take Strenserv through the line in the contest.

Strenserv registered their 2nd win of the league in 6 matches.

Brief Scores : Douglas

OHI152/10 in 41.1 overs (Shamsuddeen S 41(43) 1x4,5x6 ; Jaleel K 19/3 , Devansh Loya 38(3) lost to Strenserv 154/8 in 36.5 overs (Ali Muhammed 57(61) 9x4 ; Shahid Khan 35(2) by two wickets.

MELBOURNE

'Players with COVID to be allowed to compete at Australian Open'

MELBOURNE : Players at this month's Australian Open will not be required to take COVID-19 tests and will be allowed to compete even if they have the virus, according to tournament director Craig Tiley on Monday.

The health policy, which Tiley said reflected what was going on in the larger community, is a significant departure from the strict protocols that have surrounded the tournament for the past two years.

The 2021 tournament was held in a bio-secure bubble, with spectators barred from entering for several days due to a virus outbreak in the community, while last year, nine-time champion Novak Djokovic was deported due to his anti-vaccine stance.

"We just wanted to follow what's currently in the community," Skysports quoted Tiley saying at Melbourne Park ahead of the tournament, which runs from January 16-29.

"We have gone a step further by making a recommendation around staying away when you're ill, and that our medical staff will continue to monitor that, with the players individually as well," he further added.

"We've made it clear to our players, as well as our staff, if anyone

Djokovic to face Kyrgios in friendly

MELBOURNE: Nine-time Australian Open and 21-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic and Nick Kyrgios will meet in an exciting practice match ahead of the Australian Open 2023, the organisers of the tournament announced on Monday.

21-time Grand Slam champion and biggest local hope will face off for the first time since their epic Wimbledon final at Rod Laver Arena.

Fresh from his win at the Adelaide International, Djokovic will fine-tune his preparation for a record 10th Australian Open crown against Kyrgios in the finale of the Australian Open's Perfect Practice series, taking place at Rod Laver Arena from Monday 9 to Friday 13 January.

Perfect Practice will be played under match conditions, with umpires, ballkids and electronic line calling.-ANI

is feeling unwell, stay home. It's a normalised environment for us and, not dissimilar to cricket, there will potentially be players that will compete with Covid," Tiley added. Talking about cricket, despite testing positive for Covid, cricketer Matt Renshaw continued to play for Australia in a five-day Test match against South Africa in Sydney last week.

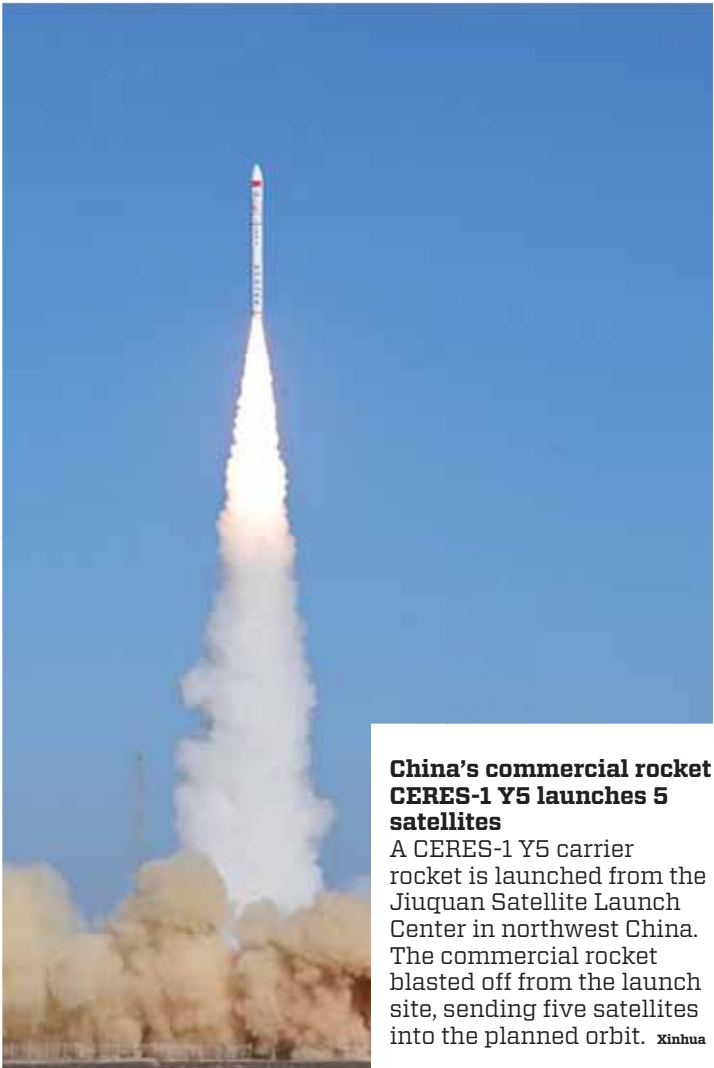
The batter was separated from his teammates for the first three

days of the match, but after several negative tests, he returned to the home dressing room.

At the height of the pandemic, Melbourne experienced some of the world's longest and most stringent lockdowns, but recommendations have long since replaced mandates as the city's cornerstone of public health policy.

Melbourne will host the Australian Open which will begin on January 16. -ANI

IN-PICTURES



China's commercial rocket CERES-1 Y5 launches 5 satellites
A CERES-1 Y5 carrier rocket is launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China. The commercial rocket blasted off from the launch site, sending five satellites into the planned orbit. Xinhua



Normal travel between mainland, Hong Kong resumes with border reopening
This aerial picture shows a shuttle bus from Hong Kong entering Zhuhai through the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge in south China. Normal travel between mainland and Hong Kong resumed as various control points linking Shenzhen and Hong Kong reopened on Sunday morning. Xinhua



Ancient Chinese Landscape Painting Exhibition held in Vientiane
A visitor watches traditional clothes at the Ancient Chinese Landscape Painting Exhibition themed "Picturesque Rivers and Mountains" held in Lao capital Vientiane. Xinhua



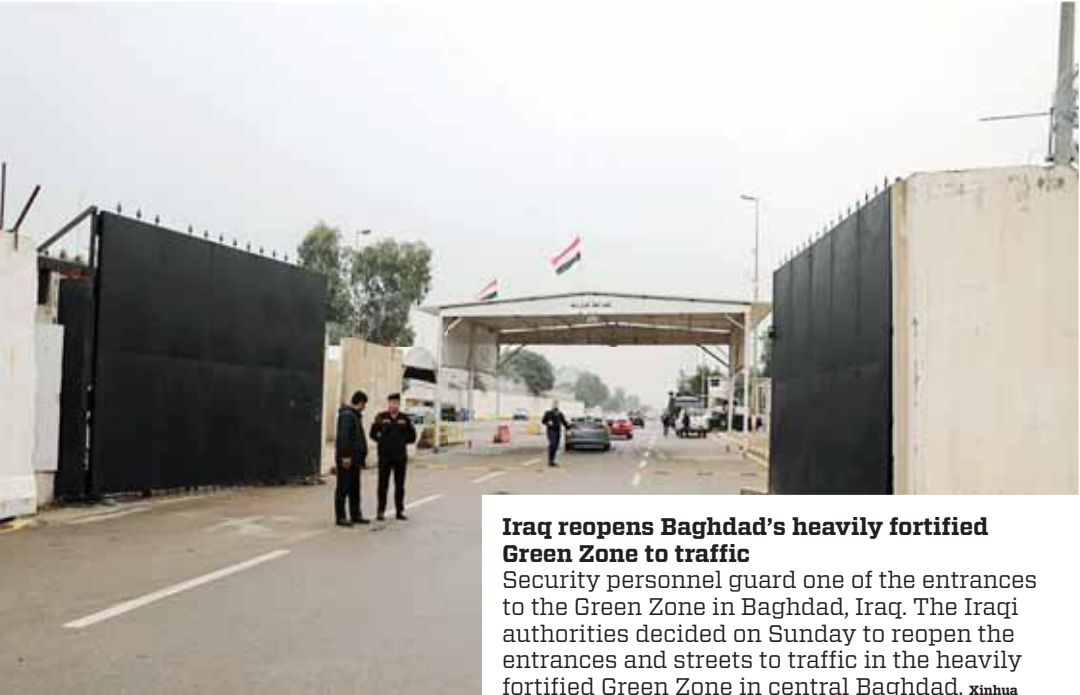
Afghan rescue team recovers 3 miners after 61 hours
An injured miner receives treatment at a hospital in Badakhshan province, Afghanistan. Xinhua



Mass wedding ceremony held in Karachi, Pakistani
Brides and grooms are seen during a mass wedding ceremony in southern Pakistani port city of Karachi. Xinhua



Anshuman Jha, Milind Soman, and Ridhi Dogra at the promotion of their upcoming movie
Bollywood actors Anshuman Jha, Milind Soman, and Ridhi Dogra pose for a photo during the promotion of their upcoming movie 'Lakadbagha', at Le Méridien, in New Delhi. ANI Photo



Iraq reopens Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone to traffic
Security personnel guard one of the entrances to the Green Zone in Baghdad, Iraq. The Iraqi authorities decided on Sunday to reopen the entrances and streets to traffic in the heavily fortified Green Zone in central Baghdad. Xinhua

ROUND-UP

Certified Pre-Owned vehicles from Mercedes-Benz at exclusive prices

As a pioneer for increased safety, Mercedes-Benz Oman utilises specialised measures and safety systems in each vehicle segment

MUSCAT: Mercedes-Benz Oman announces its latest line-up for Certified Pre-Owned vehicles at exclusive prices valid until March 31, 2023.

As a pioneer for increased safety, Mercedes-Benz Oman utilises specialised measures and safety systems in each vehicle segment. All certified pre-owned vehicles undergo a 150-point inspection, which includes engine checks, fluid checks, and on-road driving evaluations.

Commenting on the latest offers, Shaun Michael, Chief Executive Officer at Mercedes-Benz Oman, said: "A Certified Pre-Owned vehicle is a perfect way for customers to get into the Mercedes-Benz of their dreams - offering luxury through peace of mind. With safety being an integral part of Mercedes-Benz's DNA, our Certified Pre-Owned vehicles undergo a thorough inspection to ensure the car provides the quality and value customers are paying for."

The limited-time offer includes a selection of vehicles, with prices ranging from OMR 17,845 to

OMR 55,645, including VAT. The range includes the A 200 in Polar White with leather in 2-tone Classic Red/Black, the C 200 in Spectral Blue Metallic with leather in 2-tone Power Red/Black, the S 450 4MATIC in Designo Diamond White with leather in Macchiato Beige/Magma Grey, the GLB 250 4MATIC in Mountain Grey with leather in 2-tone Classic Red/Black, and the GLC 200 4MATIC in Obsidian Black with leather in Cranberry Red/Black.

Customers can choose from various service packages and financing options and pick up their vehicle from the nearest Mercedes-Benz showroom. They also receive a one-year warranty with unlimited mileage that can be extended for two years, 24-hr roadside assistance (for select vehicles) and a history of all services performed.



THRILLING DRIVING DYNAMICS

Toyota Hilux's 'go anywhere capability' makes it Oman's popular pick-up

MUSCAT: Toyota Hilux has been one of Toyota's finest workhorses that has long offered customers a perfect balance of work and play.

The Hilux with its robust build quality, thrilling driving dynamics and go anywhere capability has made the Hilux one of the most popular pick-ups for customers.

In Oman customers can choose from two versions of the Hilux. The rugged Hilux with J-Deck and the sporty 4.0 Litre V6 Hilux Adventure with the A Deck. The 4.0 Litre V6 Toyota Hilux Adventure is a truly exciting mean machine that's been developed by Toyota for exciting and thrilling journeys.

The Hilux Adventure is equipped with a mighty 4.0 Litre V6 engine packing a mighty punch with 235 HP & 38.3 Kg-m Torque. It has an Auto Disconnect Differential to keep the tempo going. Equal importance has been provided to the technical superiority and safety features of the Hilux 4x4. The noteworthy features include a 2.7 Litre Petrol Engine that is available in 5-speed Manual Transmission and 6 Speed Automatic Transmission,



outputting 164 HP.

The Hilux is not only a tough vehicle but also an advanced pick-up with stylish design. This is achieved by the horizontal Bars that make up the Grille and Sleek Headlamps that wrap around the front of the Fenders. The Hilux sports a thick, chunky Front Bumper sculpted like an SUV, Front Fog lamps, Alloy Wheels, apart from Side Stripes that adorn the vehicle.

The Toyota Hilux rises above expectations, to deliver some of the finest on-road and off-road experiences ever.

The Hilux really is two vehicles in one: a work truck through the week and a family vehicle on weekends, thanks to added comforts and safety features. Indeed the Hilux models are stunning in design and features. Their performance & safety parameters are amongst the best and the strong frame and suspension impart toughness for any demanding task.

The Hilux's interior continues the concept of "Tough and Emotional", and reflects the same attention to detail as the exterior with SUV vehicle styling, accents

and ornamentations. The key features that keep you comfortable are the Auto Air conditioner with rear vents, Multi-Information Display (MID), 8" Navigation and many more.

The Hilux comes equipped with a number of active and passive safety features like Anti-Lock Braking System (ABS), Electronic Brake-Force Distribution (EBD) and Brake Assist (BA), Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Hill Assist Control (HAC), Trailer Sway Control and SRS Airbags for the Driver and Front Passenger.

THE ZUBAIR CORPORATION SUBSIDIARY



OCS Infotech celebrates last year's achievements

MUSCAT: Oman Computer Services (OCS Infotech), a subsidiary of The Zubair Corporation and a leading IT services company, hosted an event to celebrate its achievements from last year.

The event was held at Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah in the presence of Niels Bormans, CEO of the Zubair Group and several members of the executive management from the Zubair Corporation.

About this celebration, Hilal bin Omar Al-Siyabi, Chief Corporate Services Officer at The Zubair Corporation, said, "To begin with, congratulations to OCS Infotech for its results and achievements last year. The most prominent among them was the launch of SalisPay, an innovative payment gateway specialising in multi-channel payment processing and acquiring, in partnership with India-based CredoPay."

"Moreover, the company also achieved good results in terms of human and financial resources. The company's achievements would not have been possible without the outstanding support of Zubair Corporation's Board of Directors and the hard work of its employees. We wish them continued success in the coming year."

During this ceremony, OCS General Manager, Anu Cherian, showed his appreciation of the company's achievements over the past year, saying: "Looking at our overall results, 2022 can be considered an exceptional year for OCS Infotech. Such success and positive results can undoubtedly be attributed to the team's commitment, effort, and diligence. We aim to achieve more in the coming year and look forward to even more success."

Besides entertainment, the



company's annual ceremony featured many competitions and events aimed at promoting institutional culture and values, as well as a competitive spirit among employees. This is part of its plan to improve the working environment, develop positive relationships between employees and contribute to developing their skills. Each of them also received certificates and awards at the end of the ceremony.

OCS Infotech is considered one of the first established Omani technology companies. They have over four decades of experience developing technical solutions for data storage, virtual network simulations, cybersecurity, and data centre and infrastructure management services.

In addition, it provides disaster recovery solutions for data infrastructure, maintenance services, after-sales technical support services, future technologies, and more. The company also provides customers with integrated digital transformation consultation services in addition to launching the SalisPay platform.

This multi-channel platform offers connected banking solutions that provide customers with a safe, robust, reliable and scalable solution in a partnership model to suit the needs of entrepreneurs and their businesses.

INDIAN SOCIAL CLUB

ISC Book Fest 2023 to begin on January 12

MUSCAT: Indian Social Club (ISC) Oman under the aegis of the Embassy of India is holding the 3rd edition of Book Fest 2023 in celebration of 75 years of Independence of India (Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav) from January 12 to 15 for the benefit of book lovers in Oman.

The Book Fest 2023 is scheduled to be inaugurated on January 12 by Amit Narang, Ambassador of India in the presence of prominent Omani authors and other distinguished guests from Oman. The inauguration will be held at 11 am & the fair will continue for the next three days. The timing for the general public will be from 10am to 10pm at the multi-purpose hall, Indian Social Club Oman, Darsait.

The Book Fest 2023 will be in association with Al Bhaj Books, who are the leading book distributor in Oman for more than 30 years. More than 50,000 books will be on display in English and Arabic apart from other 12 different languages.

Dr P Mohammed Ali, (Founder, former Vice Chairman & Managing Director of Galfar), Chairman of the Board of Directors of Na-



tional University will be one of the official dignitaries attending this year's event.

Dr Sivkumar Manickam, Chairman of the Board of Schools in Oman, will be attending the inaugural function on January 12.

At this year's Book Fest 2023, the following four renowned Omani Authors have confirmed to attend this event:

- 1) Dr Said Al Saqlawi (Chairperson of Oman Writer's Society & a known poet from Oman)
- 2) Dr Ali Mehdi (Member of

Oman Environment Association & Founder of "Penned Thoughts")

- 3) Nasra Al Adawi (Award-winning writer from Oman)
- 4) Jassim Issa Obeid Al Qartoubi (Renowned Omani Poet)

Babu Rajendran, General Secretary, Indian Social Club Oman said, "We are very proud to present the 3rd edition of Book Fest. This year we lined up various events for students and the public, like book launches and panel discussions."

P.M. Shouckath Ali, Managing Director of Al Bhaj books said: it is

a privilege to be a part of the Book Fest conducted by the Indian Social Club Oman, under the aegis of the Embassy of India in Sultanate of Oman.

We have included the latest books for all ages, which will be, fiction, non-fiction, children's activity and story books, academic, study Guides, grammar books etc.

We are also in coordination with Oman Book Lovers Group, which will be hosting Book recommendations, panel discussions and book launches of authors based in Oman.

Since the exhibition is educative, the Board of Directors of Indian Schools have been approached in disseminating the details of the Book Fest 2023 amongst the school children, and exposure to this would be entertaining and educative for them and their parents.

The general public at large has also been invited to attend the same. As an added attraction, different competitions viz, colouring contests, poetry recitation, short story writing and book review, have been put together for the children.



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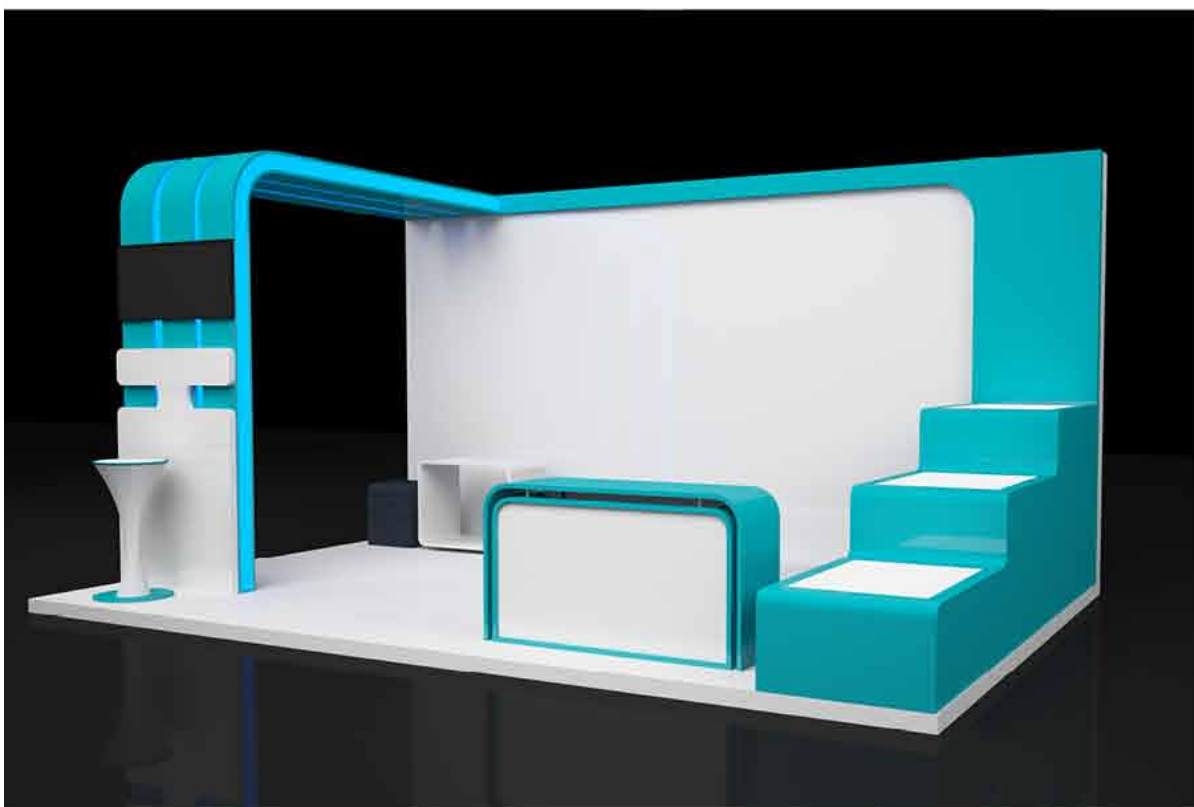
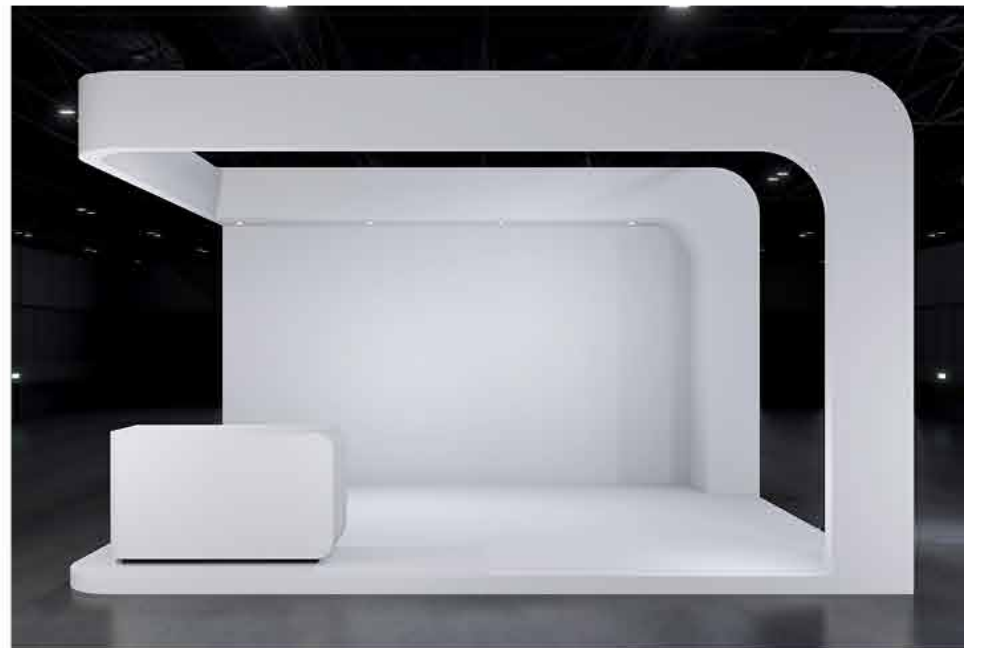
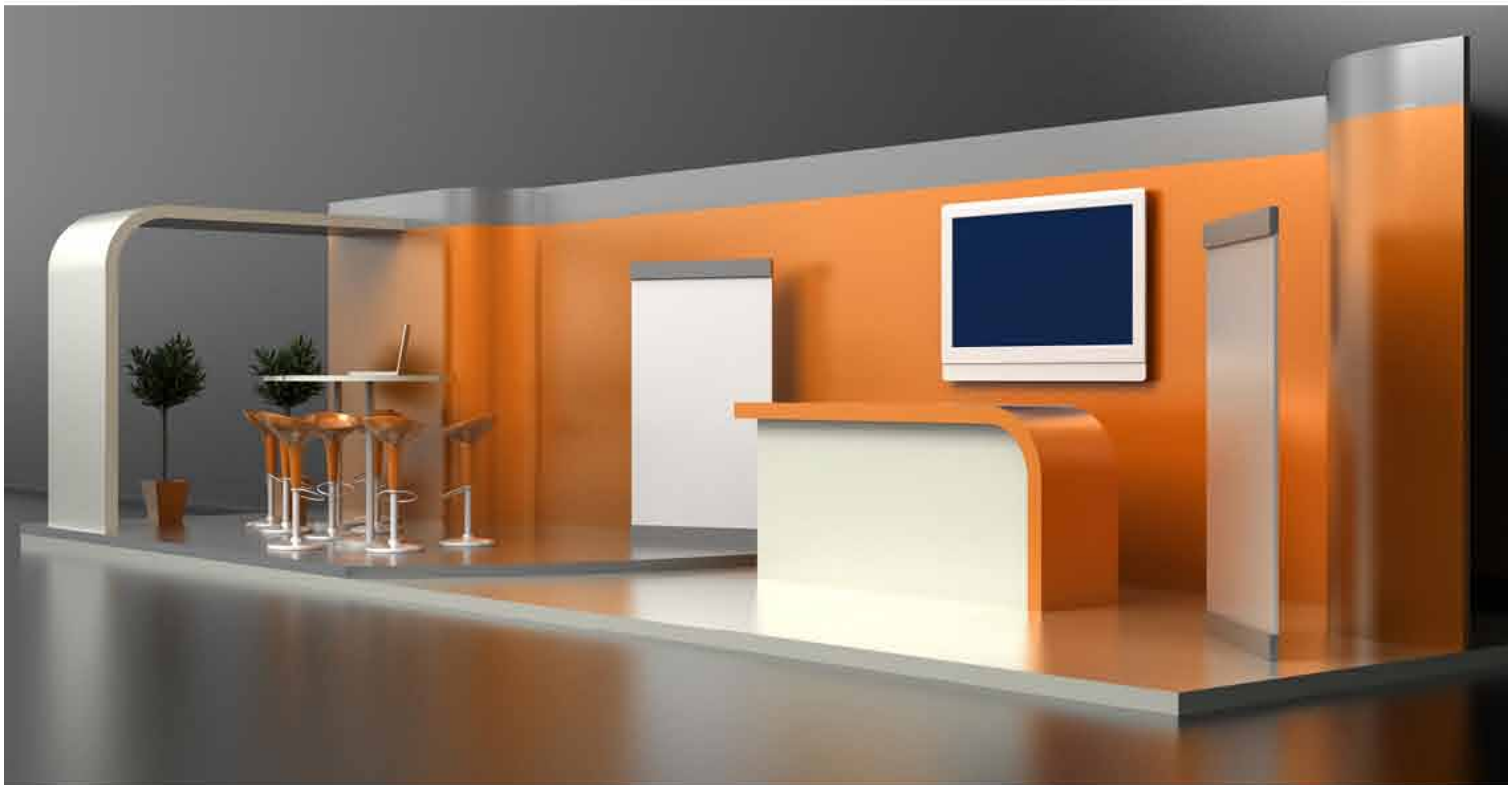
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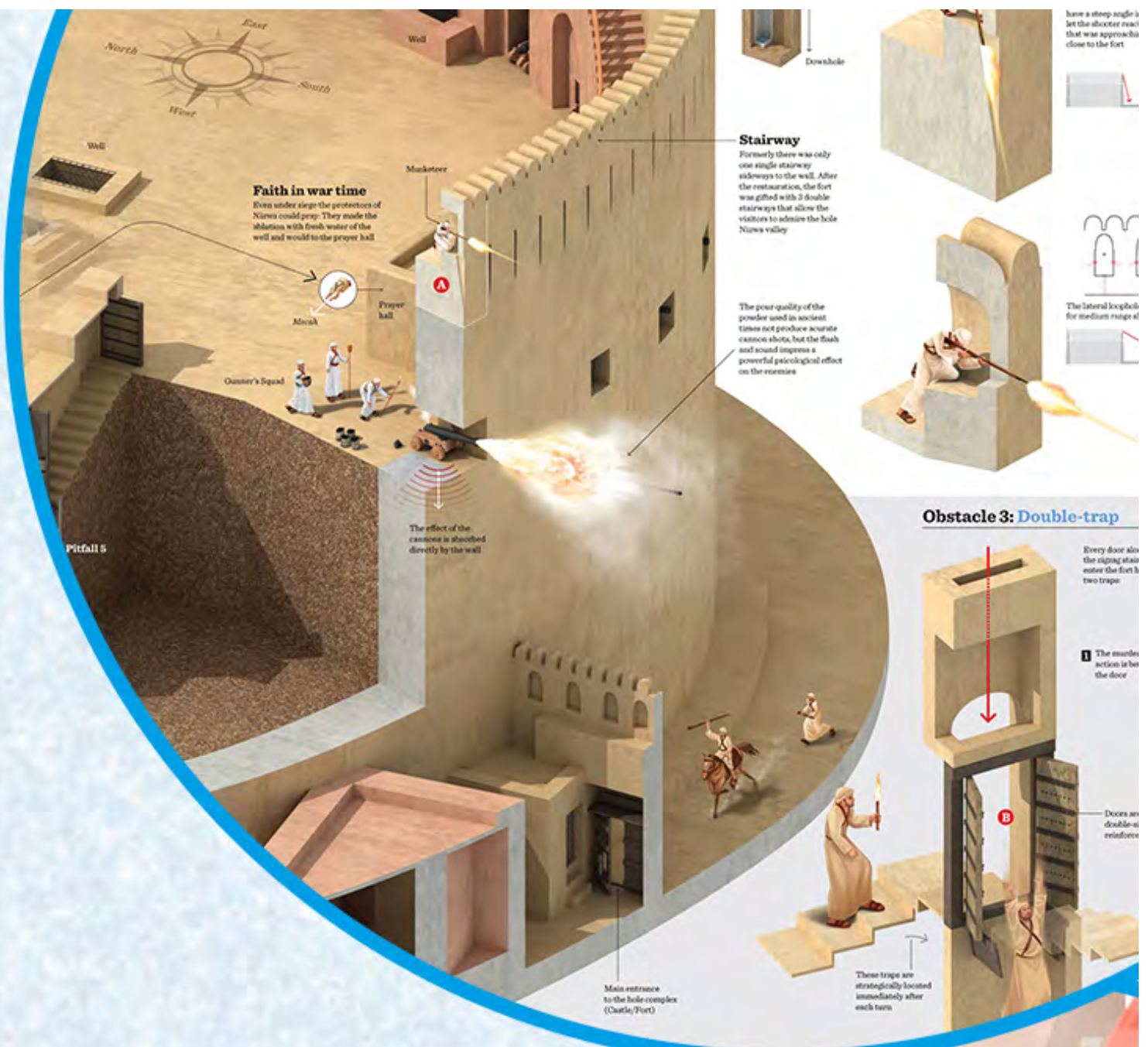
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