

YEAR-LONG ORDEAL

# Standed workers to return home



**IMPACT**

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**MUSCAT:** Twenty-four Bangladeshi and 11 Indian expatriate workers can finally heave a sigh of relief after one year of struggle.

The workers, who have been leading a pathetic life sans food and proper shelter in the outskirts of Qurum, after their company allegedly denied them their salaries, shelter and renewal of labour cards, will finally fly back home.

The Indian labourers will leave on Sunday night and Bangladeshi labourers will leave on Monday morning. *Times of Oman* first highlighted the pathetic life of the labourers who were depending on food distributed at mosques during the holy Ramadan month to stave off hunger. The

report published on August 6 helped the Indian Embassy and Bangladeshi embassy to settle the issue. "The news report on our pathetic condition brought the attention of the officials to resolve our issue," a worker told *Times of Oman*.

The joint efforts of the Bangladeshi and Indian embassies to settle the issues of these workers have helped to an extent, but uncertainties were bogging them again.

"The second news report on August 28, detailing the plight of these workers again helped us to take up the issue with the authorities concerned to find a solution," a senior official from the Bangladeshi embassy told *Times of Oman*.

"For the last one year, they were staying in a makeshift cabins. Now, they can go home and see their dear and near ones. Some, never were able to go home for the last five years," Gireesh Kumar, the Indian embassy lawyer said.

DARSAIT INCIDENT

# Current in tap water: MEDC initiates probe

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Muscat Electricity Distribution Company (MEDC) has started its probe into the incidents of low voltage electricity current passing through the potable water system, affecting some residential areas in Darsait, on September 4.

A special team from Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) departments is helping the engineers of the Muscat zone in conducting a technical probe into the incident.

The water-conducted electricity, which is a rare incident, is being investigated in detail and MEDC has already taken necessary action to prevent such incidents in the future.

HSE manager Dr. Ghudayyer Al Weheibi said that a low tension 415 V cable was damaged near a leaking water pipe which caused the electric current to transmit through the water pipe. The cable was damaged by an excavator which is being used by a construction company. The affected 4cx185 mm cable was damaged by a contracting company from Assahil substation in Darsait.

The HSE manager further said that the incident report would be made available to the public once it is completed. After receiving complaints from the residents in Darsait on September 4, MEDC emergency crew rushed to the scene and identified the cause immediately. They also immediately shut down the affected line and assigned the load to another line.

MEDC wants to ensure the public that the supply of safe electricity is its unwavering commitment. MEDC maintains round the clock emergency services and the public should inform the company of any suspected leakage of electricity by calling on toll free number 80070008.

On the same note, MEDC urges civil contractors engaged in the excavation works to approach MEDC prior to performing any works. MEDC will provide drawings and charts of cables buried in the ground that could help these contractors in avoiding any damage.

MEDC has recently increased the fines for contractors who damage underground cables.

## COLOURS OF ONAM

Onam was celebrated by expatriate staff at Badr Al Sama with great fervour and gaiety. Onam, which is a harvest festival, marks the end of monsoons and the onset of autumn. The festivities would continue for the next 10 days. — **OK Mohammed Ali/TIMES OF OMAN**



# Breast cancer meet to stress early screening

According to official statistics, 1,111 people were diagnosed with breast cancer from 1997 to 2009, of which 1,056 were females and 55 males. **To highlight the importance of breast screening, an international conference is being organised on September 21**

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**MUSCAT:** Early detection tests for breast cancer saves many lives each year, and many more lives could be saved if more women took advantage of these tests, according to Dr Hiral Jerajani Kamath, a renowned radiologist in the Capital.

"The goal of screening exams for early breast cancer detection is to find cancers before they start to cause symptoms. Early detection improves the chances of breast cancer being diagnosed at an early stage and treated successfully," she explained.

To stress the importance of breast screening, Dr Hiral Jerajani Kamath of Aafiyaa Imaging and Diagnostic Centre LLC, along with Oman Association of Radiographers, is organising an international conference on 'Update in Breast Imaging' at the Institute of Health Sciences, Wattaya, on September 21. The conference will focus on the importance of radiological diagnosis of breast cancer and its role in the treatment plan.

International and national experts will speak on various subjects related to the topic on the day.

While Yuthar Al Rawahi, chairperson of National Association of Cancer Awareness, will speak on 'Why Breast Cancer Screening?', Dr S K Ramani, professor of radiology



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Early detection of breast cancer improves the chances of breast cancer being diagnosed at an early stage and treated successfully. When breast cancer is detected very early, the results of treatment are very positive. If there is a lump you can remove it and you don't have to remove the whole breast. It is treatable with radiotherapy and chemotherapy. Life expectancy and the quality of life the woman leads will be good despite having cancer.

Dr Hiral Jerajani Kamath  
Radiologist

and breast imaging at Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai, India will speak on 'Benign and Malignant Lesions on Mammography'. Dr Ramani will also speak on BIRADS, breast MRI and PET and breast microcalcifications.

Dr Sukhpal Sawhney, senior consultant radiologist at SQUH, will speak on 'Breast USG and Elastography'; Dr Taha Al Lawati, senior consultant surgeon oncology at Royal Hospital, will deliver a lecture on the 'Treatment of Breast Cancer in Oman'; and Bob Martin of Hologistic company will focus on the advances in mammography and will speak on 'Digital Mammography and Tomosynthesis'.

According to the Ministry of Health statistics, 1,111 people were diagnosed with breast cancer from 1997 to 2009, of which 1,056 were females and 55 males.

With breast cancer now becoming the most common form of cancer, Dr Hiral explains that it would be wise for women to go for screening as they age.

Breast self-exam, clinical self exam and ultra sound are the most common types of breast cancer screening.

"Mammography is still the gold standard in early detection of breast cancer," says Dr Hiral, who

recommends that every woman must have a mammography done on reaching 40.

"What mammography does is it picks up cancers that are very small even before it forms a lump. It is sometimes felt upto two years earlier than they are detected by the lump, the doctor will not feel the lump but a mammography will detect some sort of calcification," explains Dr Hiral.

**One in seven women**

"According to medical journals, one in seven women are likely to get breast cancer. As women age, the chances of getting breast cancer increase, so it is better not to take chances," she adds.

In Oman, mammography is offered at Royal Hospital, SQU, Khoula, Aafiyaa Imaging and Diagnostic Centre and the Mobile Mammography Unit. (The Mobile Mammography Unit (MMU) of NACA launched in early 2010 has been offering free of charge mammography. The MMU is dedicated to offering digital mammograms across the Sultanate and has been travelling the roads of Oman to offer mammogram services to the residents, nationals and expatriates in the Sultanate.

Since the MMU's journey began, it has been at health centre at Barka, Muscat, Sifa, Yiti, Muttrah, Ruwi, Wadi Kabir Musanna, Saham, Sohar, Fanja, Salalah, Samail, Nizwa, Salalah, Izki, Sur, Ibra, Ibra, Bahla, and Mawaleeh among other places.

"When breast cancer is detected very early, the results of treatment are very positive. If there is a lump you can remove it and you don't have to remove the whole breast. It is treatable with radiotherapy and chemotherapy. Life expectancy and the quality of life the woman leads will be good despite having cancer. But it has to be picked up very early," explains Dr Hiral.

Studies clearly show that early detection of breast cancer through mammography greatly improves treatment options, chances for successful treatment and survival. Early-stage breast cancer typically produces no symptoms when the tumour is small and most treatable, so it is important that women follow recommended guidelines for finding breast cancer before the symptoms develop.

On an average, mammography will detect about 80-90 per cent of breast cancers in women without the symptoms.

For details of the conference, contact hiral@aafiyaaimg.com

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