

5% rise in cargo throughput

Omani ports have witnessed a healthy increase in cargo throughput during the first half of 2022 – a reflection of a rapidly recovering economy following the disruption caused by the economic downturn and pandemic. During the first half of 2022, Omani ports achieved an increase in the volume of bulk, general and liquid cargo by five per cent to reach 42.76 million tonnes, compared to 40.61 million tonnes for H1 2021. **DETAILS ON P13**



P10

NEW AGE
ALCARAZ GRABS
FIRST GRAND
SLAM TITLE



P13

MADAYN AND
ETHISX SIGN
COOPERATION
PROGRAMME



P20

'ITALIAN EMOTIONS
IN OMAN' DOCUMENTS
BEAUTIFUL SCENES OF
THE COUNTRY



MUSCAT

CRUDE PRICE AT \$92.35 A BARREL

Oman oil price for November delivery on Monday reached \$92.35, comprising a rise by \$2.01 from the price of last Friday which stood at \$90.34. The average price of Oman oil for September delivery has stabilised at \$103.21 per barrel, thus \$9.72 per barrel lower than August delivery. World oil prices gained more than one per cent but remain pressured by the possibility of global demand weakening as growth slows.

PACT TO IMPROVE AIRPORT OPERATIONS

Oman Airports company has signed an agreement with To70 of the Netherlands to improve operations at Muscat International Airport and ensure smooth flow. The aim is to activate the A-CDM specialised project, which provides for the execution of cooperative decisions. The project seeks to consolidate ties between Oman Airports, airlines operating at Muscat International Airport, ground service teams at the airport and air surveillance staff. **DETAILS ON P3**



PROJECT AIMS TO ENHANCE ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Al Ansab-Al Jifnain road expansion set for 2023



MUSCAT: Muscat Municipality will embark on expansion of Al Ansab-Al Jifnain road (phase 2) in the first quarter of 2023. The project aims at boosting the efficiency of the road by constructing three lanes in each direction from Falaj Al Sham in the Wilayat of Bausher to Al Al Jifnain in the Wilayat of Al Seeb, as

well as converting existing roundabouts into tunnels and flyovers. The project, the implantation of which lasts for 36 months, aims at improving traffic efficiency at various timings, enhancing economic activities between the governorates of Muscat, Al Dakhiliyah and North Al Sharqiyah,

reducing distances and serving urban areas and residential schemes adjoining the road. The project involves boosting the efficiency of the three existing roundabouts stretching along Al Ansab road from Muscat Expressway to Falaj Al Sham area by constructing intersections under flyovers. **TURN TO P2**

1,000 more integrated housing units

SAMUEL KUTTY
[@samkutyyp](#)

Following the success of the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model Integrated Housing Development Projects at different locations, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning is all set to launch five new sites for development. According to the plans unveiled by the ministry, the new sites to be opened for real estate developers are in the governorates of Musandam, Dhofar, South al Sharqiyah, North al Sharqiyah, North al Batinah, and South al Batinah. The five new developments will be broadly modelled on the Hay al Naseem project — the first of a series of integrated housing schemes planned across the Sultanate of Oman under the Al Souruh, which is the National Initiative for Integrated Residential Neighbourhoods. Coming up on a 350,000 sq metre plot of government land, Hay al Naseem has a wide array of residential units surrounded by integrated facilities, while also incorporating commercial facilities, recreational services, public parks and community amenities. Confirmed by Masoud bin Saeed al Hashimi, Director General of Real Estate Development at the ministry, the first project... **TURN TO P2**

An ‘Olive Corridor’ in Al Jabal Al Akhdhar

KAUSHALENDRA SINGH
[@patkaushal](#)

Al Jabal Al Akhdhar is rich in many things. It has everything for tourists — from climate to vegetation and if anyone has interest in history and has good driving skills, he can drive down to ancient establishments of the mountainous establishment, which are as old as 500 years or even more. Amid all these natural settings, there is someone passionately associated with Al Jabal Al Akhdhar. Even if he wants to make some nice earnings from his commercial venture, he does it passionately to

preserve the local vegetation of olives. Nasser bin Mansour al Zakwani is developing an ‘Olive Corridor’ adjacent to his small yet attractive hospitality set up, which he claims to be the only one exclusively run by an Omani. “I am born and brought up in Al Jabal Al Akhdhar. I have seen all the developments here. From olden times, the local villagers grow many kinds of fruits and vegetables. They used to survive on them when access to the mountain was difficult, and people had to depend on local agriculture products,” said Nasser. **TURN TO P2**



THANKSGIVING FOR HER LIFE

The Crown of Scotland sits atop the coffin of Queen Elizabeth II inside St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh on Monday, during a service of Thanksgiving for her life. Mourners will get the first opportunity to pay respects before the coffin of Queen Elizabeth II, as it lies in an Edinburgh cathedral. — AFP **SEE ALSO P5**



OMAN FM 90.4

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Al Ansab-Al Jifnain road expansion



Muscat Municipality will embark on an expansion of Al Ansab-Al Jifnain road (phase 2) in the first quarter of 2023. The project aims at boosting the efficiency of the road by constructing three lanes in each direction from Falaj Al Sham in the Wilayat of Bausher to Al Al Jifnain in the Wilayat of Al Seeb as well as converting existing roundabouts into tunnels and flyovers.

FROM PAGE 1

As per the details of the project, Al Ansab roundabout will be replaced by a flyover with signal-controlled intersection underneath. In addition, the first Falaj Al Sham roundabout will be replaced by a flyover and a signal-controlled intersection. The second Falaj Al Sham roundabout will be replaced by a flyover with a tunnel underneath.

The project also involves construction of a new 15-km three-lane road from Falaj Al Sham in the Wilayat of Bausher to Nizwa road intersection in Al Jifnain in the Wilayat of Al Seeb. The road will have four signal-controlled intersections with flyovers and tunnels underneath. This involves constructing a three-lane flyover with a signal-controlled intersection below it in Al Awabi.

It also involves construction of an intersection underneath a flyover prior to the cement plant and the removal of the existing roundabout and another intersection at the entrance of Al Masfah industrial area. This is in addition to the construction of an intersection underneath a flyover in Al Jifnain as well as the rehabilitation of some service roads aligned to the main road and construction of drainage channels and road protections.

— ONA

An ‘Olive Corridor’ in Al Jabal Al Akhdhar



FROM PAGE 1

“When I started my hospitality business here and opened a hotel, I thought of doing landscaping with olive trees. Initially I did it internally, but after seeing the good results kept on expanding. Today it has taken the shape of a ‘Olive Corridor,’” he says. Still it needs expansion, he quips.

Nasser has plans to develop the Olive Corridor in a big way so that it becomes an attraction for the visitors of Al Jabal Al Akhdhar and add value to his hotel named Grand Nizwa. He has plans to add other attractions

also around it, which can fetch him some revenue to make his venture sustainable.

A group of European tourists appreciated Nasser’s Olive Corridor idea and called it unique, as olive is full of nutrition and its tree looks wide and lush green offering natural shade to the visitors.

Nicola, Manika Naasz, Michel, Moll John made a mixed group of tourists from Germany and France. In full appreciation to Nasser’s idea of Olive Corridor, they assured him to come back again and see it when it is fully developed.

Oman wins membership of Arab Regional Committee for Guides



ABU DHABI: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Directorate General of Scouts and Guides, won membership of the Arab Regional Committee for

Guides in the next trilateral cycle. This came during the conclusion of the Arab Regional Guides Conference, held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The roles of the Arab Regional Committee for Scouts and Guides include lending support for member organisations in a bid to groom skills of guides. — ONA

1,000 more integrated housing units

FROM PAGE 1

implemented within this initiative consists of 1,000 housing units, divided into 320 apartments, 120 villas and 475 twin-villas.

“The goal of the Al Sorouh initiative is to build subsidised housing units with a value commensurate with the income of the Omani citizen to reduce the effort and time to build an independent home”, he said in a recent interview.

Housing units in the Hay al Naseem project will be handed over to citizens in May 2023. Registration for those units is already open for people eligible to

receive residential land plots.

The National Initiative for Integrated Residential Neighbourhoods, one of the pillars of the existing housing policies in the Sultanate of Oman, is to provide an alternative of suitable housing for citizens who are eligible for granting residential land in partnership between the public and private sectors.

“In view of the rising number of applications, this type of project offers the option of ready housing as an alternative to residential land, at a cost suitable and in a high-level community and urban environment, with public services such as mosques, a health centre,

a commercial centre, parks, open sports fields and recreational services,” he said in the interview.

The initiative aims to achieve the objectives and requirements of the urban strategy and Oman Vision 2040, which aims to create sustainable cities and villages that meet the aspirations of their residents.

In addition, it also aims at enhancing the role of the private sector and involving it in building these integrated and sustainable urban communities, providing basic services and introducing an innovative model as alternatives to the current housing lands grant policy to keep pace.

Tender Notice

Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI), announces following E-Tender for 2022:

Tender Number	Tender Name	Deadline for Specifications Request	Deadline for tenders bids	Tender Price
23/2022	On Site AMC Service Renewal for Huawei Network Equipment In PASI HQ and Branches For One Year	27 September 2022	11 October 2022	25 RO

Interested companies registered with Tender Board may obtain Tender document from the E-Tendering website: <http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>. The Vendors must provide **Electronic Bank Guarantee** issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of (2%) of the Tender value valid for (120) days on website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> and addressed to Public Authority for Social Insurance.

CORRESPONDANCE:

1. Tender inquiry : All correspondence pertaining to the TENDER Inquiry must be online at E-Tendering system (<http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)
2. E-Tendering system inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the e-tendering system technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number: Tel : +968 24402200 , E-mail : etenderhd@ita.gov.om

PASI is not obliged to accept the lowest or any other tender that may be received

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Pact inked to improve operations at airport

MUSCAT: Oman Airports company has signed an agreement with To70 of the Netherlands to improve operations inside Muscat International Airport and ensure their smooth flow.

The aim is to activate the A-CDM specialised project, which provides for the execution of cooperative decisions.

The project seeks to consolidate ties between Oman Airports, airlines operating at Muscat International Airport,

ground service teams at the airport and air surveillance staff.

It also ensures the participation of all strategic partners of the airport through the exchange of information and operational data. The project will help improve the decision-making process and cut down flight delay time.

The agreement was signed by Shaikh Aiman bin Ahmed al Hosni, CEO of Oman Airports, and Ruud Ummels, CEO of To70.

Tumour tissue genetic analysis helps quick cancer treatment

AFRAH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, SEPT 12

For the first time in the Sultanate of Oman, the research laboratory of Sultan Qaboos Comprehensive Cancer Care & Research Centre has started conducting comprehensive genetic analysis of tumour tissue, which identifies the patient's genetic mutations that cause the growth of cancerous cells, and determines the most appropriate treatment for the case in a record time.

To achieve integration in treatment and provide optimal care for patients, the centre has a 'multidisciplinary team' model to provide healthcare, as the team studies the case from all aspects. It also does an analysis, according to case's specialisation.

Meanwhile, the Centre has treated more than 4,000 patients that contributed to shortening the duration of treatment and lowering the treatment cost.

Since placing the foundation stone in 2017 to the start of the experimental operation in 2021, the readiness of Sultan Qaboos Comprehensive Cancer Care & Research Centre included various medical, research and administrative fields.



The Sultan Qaboos Comprehensive Cancer Care & Research Centre received 4,000 patients for treatment during the first year of its operation. The number of visits to outpatient clinics reached 23,956, during which patients received advice and integrated medical care at the hands of national medical competencies and global expertise specialised in cancer treatment.

The operation of the

departments and units of Centre came gradually, with the aim of ensuring the safety of patients, activating the coordination of medical, laboratory, pharmacy and radiological electronic systems, in addition to merging them with the centre's administrative system.

From mid-July 2021 to the end of June 2022, the centre's efforts included 3,619 radiotherapy sessions, 4,757 chemotherapy doses were given, and 262

surgeries were performed. There are 300 beds and treatment chairs available to provide treatment that contributes to the comfort of patients. The centre provides a supportive environment equipped with the latest capabilities to conduct qualitative medical research that supports the health services provided to cancer patients in the Sultanate of Oman and the methods of treatment, diagnosis and prevention.

Workshop underscores importance of eagles to the environment

MUSCAT: The Environment Authority on Monday organised a workshop on protecting eagles in the Sultanate of Oman. The workshop seeks to conduct surveys and form teams from the departments concerned with the aim of protecting eagles and birds of prey.

The workshop is organised in cooperation with Oman Environment Society and Disney Conservation Fund to underscore the role of eagles in cleaning the environment and serving humanity.

A talk on the global importance of eagles was presented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the specialist group at the



Endangered Species Conservation Fund. The discussion also covered the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), as well as

current regional and international programmes on the tracking and monitoring the survival of eagles by satellite.

The workshop was held under

the auspices of Mahmoud bin Yahya al Thuhli, Administrative Development Adviser to the Environment Authority's Chairman. — ONA

Dr Yasmin is new chairperson of KO

MUSCAT: Knowledge Oman, the award-winning community knowledge sharing platform in the Sultanate of Oman, has named Dr Yasmin al Balushi (pictured) as its new Chairperson, while platform's founder Tariq bin Hilal al Barwani will step down as chairman to assume a new role as a "community adviser" effective from September 2022.

Under Tariq's leadership, Knowledge Oman has managed to create 74 projects since 2008 that attracted 700 volunteers, working closely with 35 local and international partners, that have impacted 45 institutions, and over 1.3 million people positively in Oman.

"There is no better person to lead Knowledge Oman's next wave of impact and especially in the area of bridging the gap between education, knowledge, professional life and the community than Dr Yasmin whom I had personally worked with when I served on the board of advisers at one of the leading private colleges in the country. Though I will leave my current role as Chairman I will remain as an advisor to the platform," said Al Barwani who founded Knowledge Oman in 2008.

Dr Yasmin was the first female dean appointed in the private higher education in the Sultanate of Oman. She was the dean of Muscat College, prior to that she was the Assistant dean for Academic Support and Students' Affairs in the College of Banking and Financial Studies, Oman. Dr Yasmin is currently the



Project Manager for "Eitmad". A National project to upskill and empower the Omanis to middle and top management roles in the private sector. She is also the Project Manager for the national project to upskill and empower the Omanis in the middle management in the public sector "Developing Leaders and future Foresight" under the Royal Academy of Management (RAM). Dr Yasmin has extensive experience in the field of education, language, training, research & management.

"Knowledge Oman's impact for the community over the past 14 years is exemplary, and Tariq's contribution in leading and sustaining the progress of the platform is noteworthy. I am honoured to be chosen to lead the next wave of impact that would bring profound value in knowledge-sharing to the public in general, and the youth in specific," expressed Dr Yasmin who will be working closely with the current running President Baqlees al Hassani.

UTAS-Nizwa receives 324 students

AMAL AL RIYAMI
NIZWA, SEPT 12

The University of Technology and Applied Sciences (Nizwa Technical College) received 324 students in the first batch of general education diploma students for the academic year 2022-2023.

Dr Hafedh bin Said al Rahbi, Dean of the University Branch, Assistant Dean, and Heads of Academic and Administrative Departments at the University, welcomed the students.

The first day included the dean's meeting with the new students, and introducing them to the foundation year programme. It had English language skills, academic levels, duration of study at the centre, support services, assessment system, final exams,



attendance and absence system, and the essential guidelines for discipline.

A detailed presentation was given at the ceremony on mathematics and computer

skills. The Centre for Educational Technologies also clearly explained the electronic services provided to students and the mechanism for activating and using electronic accounts.

The Centre for Educational Technologies is considered one of the leading centres supporting the teaching and learning processes at the university and a tributary of many technical and academic services for the departments and centres in the university.

The Student Advisory Council presented a definition of the activities, objectives, and committees of the Council and the work accomplished during the seventh session of the academic year 2021-2022. In addition to the conditions for membership of the Council in its new session and the registration method.

The second day of the induction week will include a test in English and computer skills and a lecture on compatibility in university life.



Emergency services crucial in saving lives



VINOD NAIR
@vinot_nair

Heart attacks are a primary cause of human deaths these days, and according to health experts, a rapid response during an emergency can save the lives of our dear and close ones.

Taking this into account, the Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority (CDAA) in the Sultanate of Oman recently launched the home ambulance service in governorates to provide advanced emergency medical care to citizens, residents, and visitors.

For now, home ambulance service is available in the governorates of Muscat, South Al Sharqiyah, North Al Sharqiyah, North Al Batinah, Al Wusta, Al Dhahirah, Al Dakhiliyah, Al Buraimi, and Musandam. The service is expected to be expanded to the rest of the governorates in the future.

These services are in addition to an ambulance on call provided by various hospitals in the country.

Efficient ambulance services are an important aspect of any modern and advanced society as the chances of a person getting sick suddenly are also high due to work and life pressures.

The capital Muscat accounted for 54 per cent of the ambulance services (6,083) in 2021, which saw an increase from 5, 145 in 2020 and 5,641 in 2019.

It may also be noted that of the total 11,352 ambulance services availed in 2021, 6,320 were for trauma-related cases (accidents), and 5,032 were for medical purposes.

A source in the Royal Oman Police told the Observer that they have been able to save lives, especially accident victims, due to professional services offered by

ambulance and the medical staff.

“With incidents such as heart strokes increasing daily, the role of ambulances and their operators have increased like never before.”

According to health experts, the primary role of all ambulance services is emergency pre-hospital medical care, although they generally provide both emergency response and patient transfer on behalf of the health sector.

The ambulance service is ideally placed to be part of the first line in offering health care and can significantly contribute to ‘treat and transfer’ or ‘treat and leave’ programmes.

Ambulance services can be more efficient if they are seen as a public service rather than profit-driven.

The Ministry of Health (MoH) has issued a few guidelines for ambulance services of private operators or even hospitals.

All ambulance vehicles must have an individual maintenance log as well as a daily checklist of safety issues to be checked. These records must

be kept on-site for at least two years.

There must be a suitable area with recharge points, etc., for safe storage and daily maintenance checks of all vehicles.

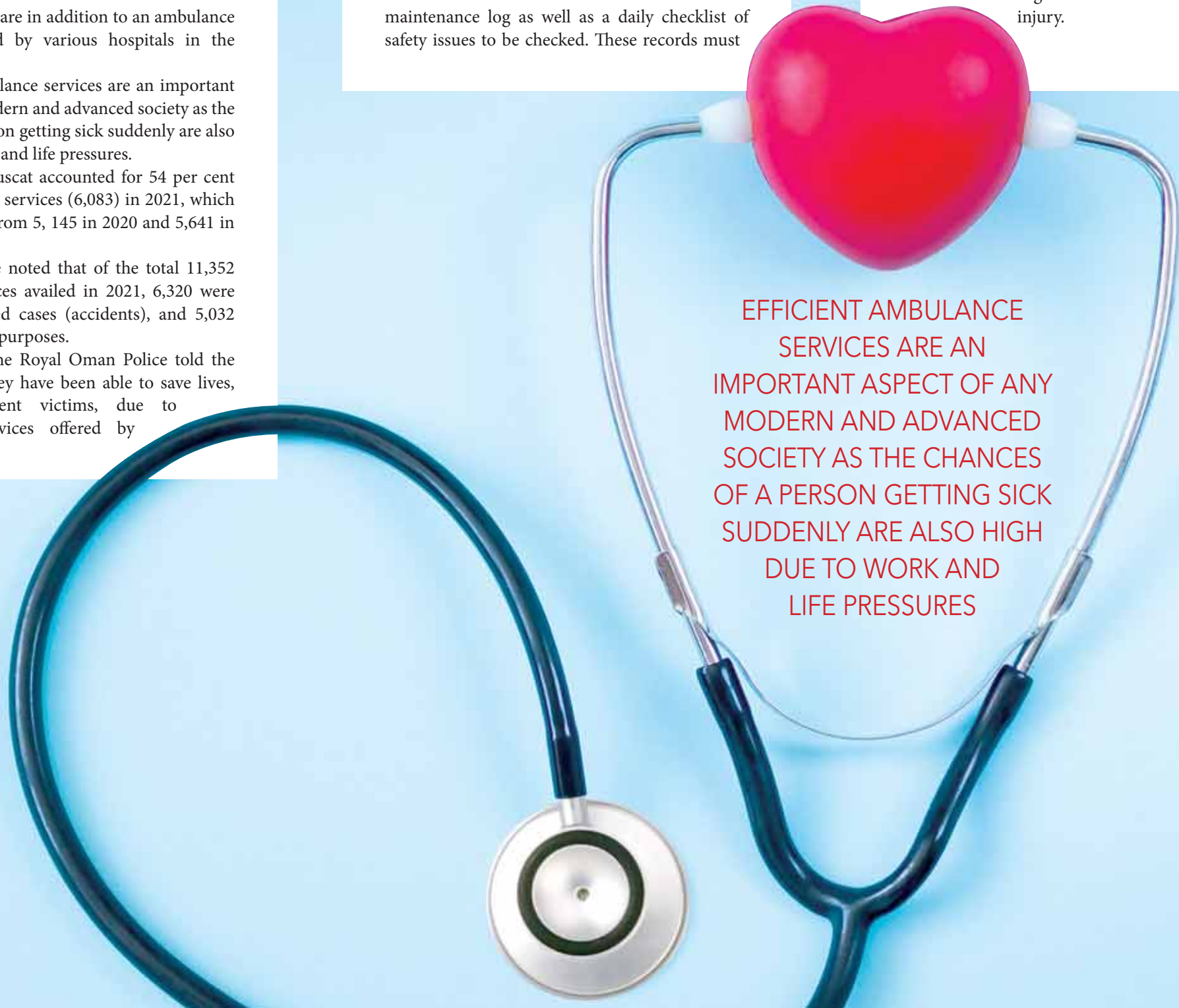
All drugs and medications must always be stored securely, either in the vehicle or at the base.

Each patient transported must have an individual record showing referral information, care provided during transport, issues or events during transfer, and clear documentation from the accepting authority relating to the “handing over” of the patient.

All vehicles must have a navigation system allowing them to find any necessary address within the geographic area they will serve, depending on the service they will provide.

Providers must carry adequate insurance coverage for staff and patients, covering not only professional indemnity for clinical errors but also coverage in the event of accident or injury.

EFFICIENT AMBULANCE SERVICES ARE AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF ANY MODERN AND ADVANCED SOCIETY AS THE CHANCES OF A PERSON GETTING SICK SUDDENLY ARE ALSO HIGH DUE TO WORK AND LIFE PRESSURES





Britons get first chance to view Queen’s coffin



Britain’s King Charles III, Britain’s Camilla, Queen Consort and Britain’s Princess Anne, Princess Royal watch as Duke of Hamilton, Alexander Douglas-Hamilton places the Crown of Scotland atop the coffin of Queen Elizabeth II inside St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh during a service of Thanksgiving for her life. – AFP

EDINBURGH: Mourners will on Monday get the first opportunity to pay respects before the coffin of Queen Elizabeth II, as it lies in an Edinburgh cathedral where King Charles III will preside over a vigil.

Thousands of people are expected to line up for the chance to see the flag-draped casket at St Giles’ Cathedral in the Scottish capital, a week before her funeral in London.

The new monarch will walk behind his mother’s coffin in a sombre afternoon procession leading from Holyroodhouse palace — where it arrived on Sunday after making a six-hour road journey from Balmoral Castle — to the cathedral.

In the morning, the new king is due to address British lawmakers in London for the first time since ascending the throne, as the pageantry continues ahead of the queen’s September 19 state

funeral. The lengthy mourning period comes with Britain trying to reconcile itself to the death of its longest-serving monarch, who has been part of the backdrop of national life almost since World War II.

“To see her pass, in front of us, I think actually gave a bit of closure,” said Lucy Hampshire, who came to Edinburgh with her boyfriend from the northern English city of York.

Crowds turned out in the Scottish capital on Sunday as the hearse carrying the queen drove through the city, with some cheering, some throwing flowers and a few shedding tears in an outpouring of respect.

People also lined the streets of towns and villages along the 290-kilometre route from her beloved Balmoral estate, where she died on Thursday aged 96 after seven decades on the throne.

— AFP

MAIDEN PARLIAMENT ADDRESS

King Charles promises to follow Queen Elizabeth’s example

LONDON: King Charles told parliament on Monday he was “resolved faithfully to follow” the example set by his mother Queen Elizabeth, addressing lawmakers and peers in what he described as “the living and breathing instrument of our democracy”.

At a ceremony in Westminster Hall, the oldest building on the parliamentary estate, Charles used his address to the upper and lower houses of parliament to pay tribute to his mother and to pledge to uphold the principle of constitutional government.

“While very young, Her late Majesty pledged herself to serve her country and her people and to maintain the precious principles of constitutional government which lie at the heart of our nation. This vow she kept with unsurpassed devotion,” he told the assembled lawmakers and peers.

“She set an example of selfless duty which, with God’s help and your counsels, I am resolved faithfully to follow.”

The queen, aged 96, died at her home in Scotland on Thursday, setting in train a period of national mourning during which tens of thousands of Britons are expected to pay tribute to her. Charles, quoting William Shakespeare’s description of Elizabeth I, said



Britain’s King Charles III and Britain’s Camilla, Queen Consort attend the presentation of Addresses by both Houses of Parliament in Westminster Hall, inside the Palace of Westminster, central London. – AFP

“she was ‘a pattern to all Princes living.”

The ceremony, where the speakers of the House of Lords and the House of Commons address the monarch either on their accession or at a jubilee, has taken place in the Palace of Westminster since Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee in 1897.

Queen Elizabeth came to Westminster Hall on her own Diamond Jubilee, and Monday’s ceremony took place in the light

King Charles says ‘Queen set an example of selfless duty which, with God’s help and your counsels, I am resolved faithfully to follow’

of a stained glass window installed on its north wall to mark that celebration in 2012. John McFall, Lord Speaker, told Charles the

queen had been “both a leader to, and servant of, her people.”

Britain’s system of constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy has operated since 1688, when parliament invited William of Orange to replace King James, establishing its primacy over the crown which monarchs since have had to respect.

Charles paid tribute to parliament as “the living and breathing instrument of our democracy”. — Reuters

London to face ‘unprecedented travel demand’ for farewell

LONDON: London will experience “unprecedented travel demand” in the coming days as people visit the capital to pay their respects to Queen Elizabeth II, transport bosses have warned.

Public transport users are being advised that the city will be “exceptionally busy” and they should expect Tube stations to temporarily close to avoid overcrowding.

Planning journeys in advance using the latest information “will be essential,” according to a joint statement by Network Rail, Transport for London (TfL) and industry body the Rail Delivery Group.

The organisations said: “As Her Majesty’s coffin travels to London to lie in state at the Palace of Westminster, it is expected that we will see unprecedented travel demand in the capital, especially from Wednesday September 14.

“Transport providers have well-developed plans with extra staff and services coming on-stream to help people get to where they need to be.”

London Underground passengers are urged to avoid Green Park station “if possible” due to “high numbers of customers passing through.”

It is the nearest station to Buckingham Palace, but other nearby options include Victoria, Piccadilly Circus and St James’ Park.

A special service will run on the Elizabeth line railway between London’s Paddington and Abbey



The Britain national flag flies half-mast at Buckingham Palace in London where preparations are under way for Britain’s Queen Elizabeth II’s funeral following her death on September 8. — AFP

Wood on Sunday to ease the pressure on other parts of the transport network.

That section of the line — which was opened by the queen in May — is usually closed on Sundays due to testing and software updates.

Network Rail chairman Peter Hendy said: “The transport industry is working hard to help people pay their respects in London and across the United Kingdom.

“Please make sure you check before you travel as we expect the road and transport networks to be busy.”

London’s transport commissioner Andy Byford said: “At such an important and difficult time for the country, we are doing everything we can to ensure Londoners and visitors can pay their respects to Her Majesty the Queen and welcome His Majesty

the King.

“We are working with our partners to keep our city moving smoothly and to ensure that everyone who needs to get around or is planning to attend the memorial events can do so safely.

“I would urge all customers to check before they travel, using the TfL website or TfL Go app, as while we’re planning to run a normal service, there may be short notice changes and diversions as a result of the large number of people travelling and necessary road closures.”

People planning to visit London for the queen’s funeral also face soaring hotel bills.

Hotel prices are up to four times higher on Sunday — the night before the funeral — compared with a week later, analysis by the PA news agency found.

Hundreds of thousands of

people are expected to line the streets of the capital during the funeral at Westminster Abbey.

Many visitors travelling long distances will need to spend the night before in a hotel as the service begins at 11 am.

But the cheapest room at Park Plaza County Hall — one of the closest hotels to Westminster Abbey — on Sunday night costs £1,299 (\$1,520) compared with £269 seven days later.

Crowne Plaza London Albert Embankment is charging £708 on the eve of the funeral. That is nearly three times more than on Sunday September 25, when the price is £244. Rooms at Novotel London Waterloo cost £490 on Sunday and £241 a week later.

Many hotels near Westminster Abbey owned by lower-priced chains such as Premier Inn and Travelodge are fully booked for Sunday night.

Premier Inn has no rooms left at several of its sites, including London County Hall, London Waterloo (Westminster Bridge) and London Victoria.

The nearest location with availability is London Leicester Square, 1.2 miles from Westminster Abbey.

Rooms cost £235 on Sunday, compared with £160 a week later. The closest available Travelodge hotel is London Central City Road, 3.9 kilometres away.

A one-night stay on Sunday is priced at £160, while someone visiting on September 25 will pay just £57. — dpa



World leaders will be bused to queen’s funeral

LONDON: Foreign leaders and their spouses attending Queen Elizabeth II’s state funeral have been told to fly commercial into Britain and take laid-on buses to reach the service, reports have said.

Around 500 foreign dignitaries are expected to attend Britain’s first state funeral in six decades as officials mount “a huge-scale operation” for the event on September 19, a source at the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office said.

“The logistics have been meticulously planned to try to make it as smooth as possible for those attending,” the source added.

News website Politico reported that attendees have been told not to use their own vehicles to reach the service at Westminster

Abbey or travel across London by helicopter.

Instead, they will be transported by escorted private buses to the abbey from a site in west London where they will have parked, it reported, citing an official protocol message sent to overseas embassies.

“Tight security and road restrictions” were cited by Politico as the reasons, but the purported stipulations have raised eyebrows, with one London-based foreign ambassador telling Politico: “Can you imagine Joe Biden on the bus?”

US presidents travel long-distance on Air Force One — typically one of two customised Boeing 747 planes — and then use their Marine One helicopter and an armoured limousine dubbed “The Beast” to get around. — AFP



Iran ‘ready to cooperate’ with IAEA

TEHRAN: Iran reaffirmed on Monday its “readiness” to cooperate with the UN nuclear watchdog, after the agency said in a report it “cannot assure” the peaceful nature of Tehran’s nuclear programme.

The finding last week by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) further complicated diplomatic efforts to revive a landmark 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and major powers, including the United States.

Iran is “ready to cooperate with the agency to clear up the false and unrealistic perceptions regarding its peaceful nuclear activities”, foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani said in a press conference.

Tehran declares its “readiness to continue constructive cooperation with the IAEA”, Kanani added, also pointing to the agency’s “obligations”.

In its report last Wednesday, the IAEA said it was “not in a position to provide assurance that Iran’s nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful”.

The IAEA has been pressing Iran for answers on the previous presence of traces of nuclear material at three undeclared sites. The issue led to a resolution criticising Iran being passed at the



Rafael Grossi, Director-General, IAEA, at the agency's headquarters in Vienna. — AFP

June meeting of the IAEA’s board of governors.

Tehran, which has consistently denied seeking nuclear weapons, responded to the resolution by disconnecting 27 cameras allowing the agency to monitor some of its nuclear activities.

The IAEA board met again in Vienna on Monday for its quarterly meeting.

“To our knowledge, no draft resolution has been submitted for this meeting,” Kanani said. Any further “unconstructive action” by the agency, Kanani said, “will again have unconstructive results”.

Tehran has demanded that the IAEA’s probe be concluded as part of any deal — one of the sticking points in the talks to restore the 2015 agreement that gave Iran much-needed relief from sanctions in return for curbs on its nuclear programme.

The United States unilaterally



Members of Iranian opposition, MKO and NCRI attend a protest outside the IAEA headquarters during the IAEA’s Board of Governors meeting in Vienna. — AFP

withdrew from the deal in 2018 under then-president Donald Trump, reimposing biting economic sanctions that prompted Iran to begin rolling back on its own commitments.

Last month, the European Union put forward a “final” draft of the agreement to lift sanctions

on Tehran once again and push Iran to fully comply with its obligations.

Meanwhile, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said that Iran has failed to agree to proposals from European countries on reviving a deal on restricting its nuclear programme, warning this

would put any accord out of reach “in the near future”.

His comments came as Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid visited Germany in his latest diplomatic effort to persuade Western powers to ditch the agreement with the Jewish state’s arch nemesis Tehran. — AFP

Turkey releases pop star from house arrest

ISTANBUL: A Turkish court on Monday lifted a decision to keep one of the country’s biggest pop stars under house arrest over a joke she made on stage about religious schools.

The case has pitted the star’s legion of younger, liberal fans against Turkish President Recep Tayyip’s core of conservative supporters.

Gulsen Bayraktar Colakoglu, a 46-year-old singer who only uses her first name, was jailed last month on charges of “inciting hatred” by her comments.

A court moved her from jail to house arrest four days later.

Erdogan, who has been in power since 2003, studied in an Imam Hatip school, which specialises in education.

In April, Gulsen quipped that her guitarist’s “perversion” was linked to his upbringing in such a school. — AFP

Singapore hoping special visa will draw global ‘rainmakers’

SINGAPORE: Singapore is hoping a special work visa will make it more competitive in attracting “the rainmakers of the world”, its manpower minister said on Monday, as it seeks to balance its need for talent with local unease about expatriate workers.

The regional financial hub announced new rules two weeks ago to draw expatriates earning at least \$30,000 (\$21,452) a month, offering them five-year visas that would automatically allow their spouses to work also.

Addressing parliament, Manpower Minister Tan See Leng said global talent would help Singapore develop sectors like sustainability, artificial intelligence or fintech, but it faced a challenge with other countries “playing an offensive game”.

“When we are talking about top talent, we must be mindful of how global they are, and how stiff the competition is for them,”



A woman wearing a protective face mask passes the skyline of Singapore’s business district amid the coronavirus disease outbreak in Singapore. — Reuters

Tan said. Britain, Australia and Germany have launched similar programmes, while closer to home, Malaysia and Thailand are also offering incentivised long-term visas for foreigners with specialist expertise who earn above a certain income threshold.

Singapore has seen discontent among the local workforce

about the number of foreigners employed in the country, with fears that too many well-paid jobs were being taken by expatriates.

The government has sought to allay those concerns, however, stressing foreign talent lured to Singapore would help to “create a diverse range of opportunities for Singaporeans”.

Global talent will help Singapore develop sectors like sustainability, artificial intelligence or fintech, but it faced a challenge with other countries ‘playing an offensive game’

Tan said Singapore would also develop its own talent and upgrade skills of its workforce, while giving Singaporeans global and regional exposure so they could take up leadership positions in global firms.

The head of Singapore’s central bank in May said the country’s financial sector was creating more jobs than local staff could fill and warned a “Singaporean only” approach would be fatal for the country as a global financial centre. — Reuters

ISLAMABAD

Court extends Imran’s bail on terrorism charges

A Pakistani court extended former Prime Minister Imran Khan’s pre-arrest bail for eight more days on terrorism charges relating to a speech in which he allegedly threatened police and judicial officers, his lawyer said.

A court in Pakistan has extended the pre-arrest bail of former Prime Minister Imran Khan in a “terrorism” case till September 20.

Khan who heads the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, was charged with “terrorism”



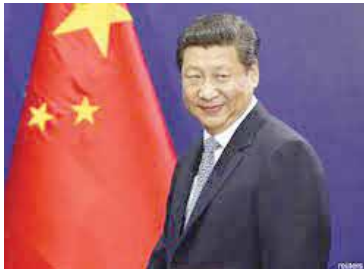
for remarks made at a public rally on August 20 against police officials and a female judge who had ordered the arrest of one of his top aides, Shahbaz Gill. — Reuters

BEIJING

Xi to visit Central Asia for regional meeting

Chinese President Xi Jinping will visit Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan on September 14-16, the Chinese foreign ministry said, in what would be his first official trip to a foreign nation since China all but shut its borders due to Covid-19.

The visit will coincide with a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Samarkand, and Xi will meet with Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, The trip underlines



China’s strategic ties with Central Asian states at a time when relations with many nations have come under strain due to China’s “no limits” partnership with Russia. — Reuters

SYDNEY

New Zealand ends most Covid restrictions

New Zealand scrapped mask wearing rules and vaccine mandates, bringing an end to some of the toughest Covid-19 pandemic rules in the world about two years after they were put in place.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said in a weekly news conference that it was time to safely turn the page on the country’s Covid-19 management and live without the extraordinary measures it previously used. “For the first time in two years



we can approach summer with certainty New Zealanders and business need, helping to drive greater economic activity critical to our economic recovery,” she added. — Reuters

Indonesia, Norway ink deal to reward rainforest protection

JAKARTA: Indonesia and Norway signed a deal on Monday to reward deforestation reduction months after the collapse of a similar \$1-billion agreement that was part of a UN-backed global initiative criticised for its ineffectiveness.

Protecting trees is key to meeting climate goals but environmentalists blame Indonesia — home to the world’s third-largest rainforest area — for a deforestation free-for-all by allowing companies to clear land for new plantations.

Jakarta claims it has made progress by reducing the rate of primary forest loss for five straight years and Oslo will now reward it with “results-based contributions” for cutting emissions, Norway’s ministry of climate and environment said in a statement.

“Today we are proud to embark on a new partnership to support the Indonesian government’s impressive results and ambitious plans,” said Norwegian Minister for Climate and Environment Espen Barth Eide in a statement.

But environmental activists say the deal will not change the situation in Indonesia with vast swathes of rainforest still being destroyed to make way for palm and timber plantations that threaten endangered species and push indigenous people off their lands.

“The agreement does not solve existing problems, including recognition of indigenous people,” Greenpeace Indonesia forest campaigner Iqbal Damanik said.

“The point made is ‘successfully reducing deforestation’, not zero deforestation. It means there is still deforestation in Indonesia going forward.”

The countries had signed a landmark deforestation deal in 2010 with Norway offering Indonesia \$1 billion to slash its emissions. — AFP



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In brief

■ BRUSSELS



BRUSSELS BOMBING ACCUSED DENOUNCES 'UNFAIR' TRIAL

French Salah Abdeslam, already jailed for his role in the 2015 Paris attacks, refused to take the stand on Monday on the first day of the trial for the 2016 suicide bombings in Brussels. He was one of the nine alleged members of the IS group cell that launched both the March 2016 suicide bombings in Belgium and the November 2015 attacks in Paris facing terrorism charges in the Belgian capital. "The way in which you are treating us is unfair," the 32-year-old told the presiding judge, leaving the dock a few minutes after the start of the first hearing in a trial due to last at least eight months. — AFP

■ LAGOS



5 KILLED IN ATTACK ON NIGERIAN SENATOR'S CONVOY

Gunmen have attacked a convoy of an opposition senator in southeast Nigeria, killing five people including two security escorts, police said, in the latest violence in a region where separatist tensions are rising. The gunmen ambushed the convoy of Senator Ifeanyi Ubah of the fringe opposition Young Progressives Party at Enugwu-Ukwu community in Anambra State on Sunday, opening fire on the vehicles. "Two police escorts, two civilian aides and a passerby were killed in the attack," Anambra State police spokesman Tochukwu Ikenga said. Two police escorts were wounded and they had been taken to the hospital for treatment. — AFP

■ TUNIS



SIX MORE MIGRANT BODIES FOUND OFF TUNISIA

Six more bodies have been recovered off the Tunisian coast, the interior ministry said, raising the death toll to 12 after a boat carrying migrants capsized last week. A total of 37 people, all Tunisian, had boarded the boat from near the coastal city of Sfax in a clandestine bid to reach the Italian coast, according to a security source. The makeshift vessel capsized on Tuesday night last week off Mahdia, a coastal town in east-central Tunisia. The latest six bodies, found on Sunday, came after six were retrieved on Thursday — although authorities had initially reported eight. — AFP

Ukraine racks up gains, Russia hits back

Moscow conceded having lost territory, which experts saw as a serious blow to its war ambitions

KRAMATORSK: Ukraine forces said on Monday their lightning counter-offensive took back more ground in the past 24 hours, as Russia replied with strikes on some of the recaptured ground.

The territorial shifts were one of Russia's biggest reversals since its forces were turned back from Kyiv in the earliest days of the nearly seven months of fighting, yet Moscow signalled it was no closer to agreeing a negotiated peace.

"Ukraine has turned the tide in its favour, but the current counter-offensive will not end the war," US think-tank Institute for the Study of War tweeted.

Moscow announced air, rocket and artillery attacks on reclaimed areas in the Kharkiv region on Monday, a day after Kyiv said Russian strikes on electricity infrastructure caused power failures.

The retaliatory fire came as Ukraine said forces had recaptured more than 20 additional settlements, claiming "Russian troops are hastily abandoning their positions and fleeing".

Kyiv had already announced the recapture of the strategic city of Izyum in the country's east, one of a series of victories claimed against Russia's army.

Ukraine said on Monday its forces recaptured 500 square kilometres in the southern Kherson region which were in addition to the huge gains in the east over the weekend.

Moscow conceded having lost territory, which experts saw as a serious blow to its war ambitions, but Kremlin spokesman Dmitry

Peskov saw no prospects for negotiations.

"The special military operation continues and will continue until the objectives that were originally set are achieved," he added, using Russia's terminology for the internationally condemned war.

Eastern parts of Ukraine were hit with widespread electricity blackouts on Sunday evening, which President Volodymyr Zelensky said deliberately hit civilian infrastructure. He blamed "Russian terrorists".

"A total blackout in the Kharkiv and Donetsk regions, a partial one in the Zaporizhzhia, Dnipropetrovsk and Sumy regions," Zelensky said in a statement on social media.

"No military facilities," he added. "The goal is to deprive people of light and heat."

Local Ukrainian authorities pointed to Russian strikes on their power infrastructure, but some districts reported later that power had been restored.

In Kharkiv region, a Russian strike on a power station killed one employee, Governor Oleg Synehubov said. He added that power had been partially brought back.

Ukraine's foreign ministry spokesman Oleg Nikolenko said the Russian attacks were an "act of desperation following Russia's



A picture shows the entertainment centre Misto (City) partially destroyed as a result of a missile strike in Kharkiv amid the Russian attack of Ukraine. — AFP

immense losses and retreat in eastern Ukraine". The Russian strikes hit 15 locations on Sunday, from Kramatorsk in the east to Mykolaiv in the south and Dnipro in between, Ukraine's military said.

The blackouts hit regions with an estimated combined population of nine million people — including territory controlled by Russia.

The Russian attacks also disrupted railway services. Ukraine's national train service announced delays throughout the east including the country's second-largest city, Kharkiv. Ukraine had already lost all power from the Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant. The country's nuclear energy agency said the final reactor at the plant, Europe's largest nuclear power station, had been shut off as a safety measure. — AFP

Medvedev threatens Ukraine with 'Judgement Day'

MOSCOW: Former Russian president Dmitry Medvedev said on Monday that Russia will only accept an unconditional surrender from Ukraine unless Kiev accepts the current conditions for negotiations.

"The current 'ultimatums' are child's play compared to what the demands will be in the future ...: the total surrender of the Kiev regime to Russia's conditions," he wrote on his Telegram account.

The threats are likely a reaction to the statements made by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in a CNN interview on Sunday. Zelensky

had said that he is currently not interested in negotiating with Russia, because he does not see a readiness for constructive talks in Moscow.

He referred to the Russian conditions for starting negotiations as cannibalistic, as they would see Ukraine being eaten up piece by piece.

Instead, Zelensky said, it is the goal of Ukraine to recapture the areas occupied by Russia.

Medvedev, who was once regarded as a potential force for a more liberal Russia, has been one of the most ardent supporters of the invasion of Ukraine. — dpa

Export body to push India-made products into world market

KAUSHALENDRA SINGH

@patkaushal

Several agencies are working together to achieve a broader goal of exploring the market for India-made products globally.

The Government of India wants to achieve this goal by giving boost to cooperative movement and thus reaching to the grassroots level for the exploration of products and work as a facilitator for their export.

This was revealed by media reports after the recently concluded two-day conference involving sector-wide participation from Centre, State and private sector institutions.

The conference witnessed participation of cooperation ministers from 21 states, Lt Governors, and senior officials from respective departments.

Newly proposed schemes of the Ministry of Cooperation drew maximum attention from the participants, as they stored the basis for the government's ambitious plan of reaching out to the world with Indian products.

The schemes included PACS (Primary Agricultural Credit Society) in every Panchayat to boost cooperative movement and credit institutions at the grassroots level.

It had an emphasis on the export of agro-based products,

promotion and marketing of organic products, and expansion of cooperatives to new areas.

To give a boost to the cooperatives for export, the Ministry of Cooperation is facilitating the registration of a National Level Cooperative Export House under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act 2002.

This is aimed at harnessing the export potential of nearly 300 million people associated with the Country's cooperative movement.

There is a move to computerise and introduce modern bye-laws for the PACS and arrange long-term financing for primary cooperative societies like milk cooperative societies and fish cooperative societies.

In his conference deliberations, Gyanesh Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation, stressed on equipping the PACS with "state of the art software along with up-to-date hardware." He exhorted states to work on a priority basis.

"A multi-state cooperative society is being registered for production, procurement, branding and marketing of organic products and quality seeds... the ministry has been taking action to ensure that cooperatives are treated at par with the other economic forms," he added.

Sweden's far right makes strong gains in cliffhanger election

STOCKHOLM: Sweden on Monday began a days-long wait for the final results of its too-close-to-call general election, with an unprecedented right-wing and far-right bloc in position to wrest power from Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson's Social Democrats.

The Scandinavian country has seen mounting political instability in recent years as the gradual rise of the far right has upset the traditional balance of power in parliament.

Sweden again found itself in a delicate parliamentary situation after Sunday's legislative election, with the right seen holding a razor-thin lead over Andersson's outgoing left bloc.

"The close result in parliament suggests Sweden is heading for yet another messy mandate", newspaper of reference Dagens Nyheter wrote on Monday.

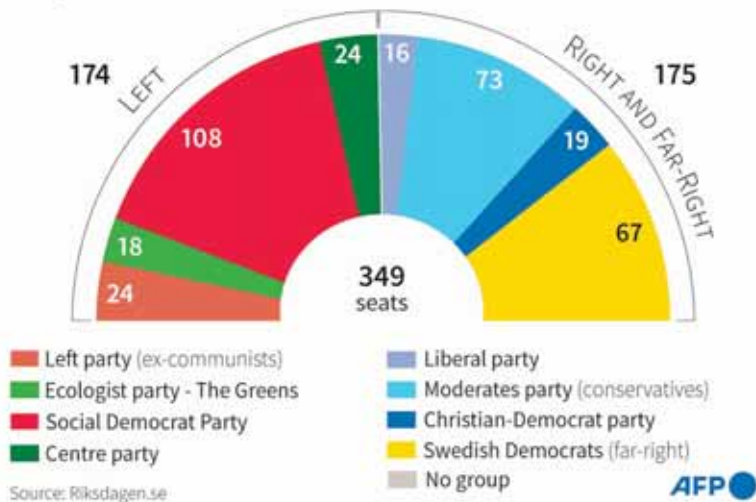
Election authorities said a final result would only be ready at the earliest on Wednesday, once the last ballots from abroad and from advance voting had been counted.

Editorialist Anders Lindberg of daily Aftonbladet said it appeared "impossible for the left to win because the votes from abroad are... usually in favour of the right".

With 95 per cent of votes counted on Monday, the right led by conservative Moderates leader Ulf Kristersson was credited with an absolute majority of 175 of 349 seats in parliament. Andersson's

Sweden's parliament

Seat projections based on partial results, nearly 95% of votes counted



left bloc trailed with 174. If confirmed, the Social Democrats would be out after eight years in power.

Kristersson, who vowed during the campaign to crack down on law and order amid soaring crime rates, said he was "ready to build a new and strong government".

The election's big winner was, however, the anti-immigration, nationalist Sweden Democrats party, led by Jimmie Akesson.

It was credited with 20.6 per cent of votes, making it the biggest party on the right and the second biggest in the country behind the Social Democrats.

"It's looking pretty damn good now", 43-year-old Akesson told cheering supporters late on Sunday. The right bloc — made

up of the Sweden Democrats, Moderates, Christian Democrats and Liberals — were seen winning 49.7 per cent.

The left, comprised of the Social Democrats, the Left, the Greens and the Centre parties, were meanwhile credited with 48.9 per cent.

Prime Minister Andersson, 55, has refused to throw in the towel just yet.

"We're not going to have a final result tonight," she told supporters late on Sunday as her party was seen posting a strong result of around 30 per cent of votes.

She called on Swedes to "have patience" and "let democracy run its course". The election marked a major shift in Swedish politics.

— AFP

How to create that perfect mélange in your life



Hyesha Barrett
@coach_hyesha

The writer is a master life coach

We are such dynamic entities with extremely complex wiring. Each of us live our lives according to the many variables that have occurred throughout our lives.

However, in order to obtain the fulfilling life we all aspire to experience, we can narrow it down to a few common denominators.

There are six fundamental needs that humans require in order to thrive, according to Tony Robbins, one of the heavy weight titans in the personal development industry.

Those needs are certainty, uncertainty or variety, significance, love or connection, growth and contribution.

Although we may have one need that dominates the overall flavour of our happiness, the six work hand in

hand and are essential in creating a wonderful quality of life.

As far as certainty goes this applies to our consistencies whereby we are reassured by the assuredness of things going according to plan.

It's the predictability and habit creation which form the routines that we as humans enjoy from an early age. However, only having that feeling of certainty can produce the negative effects that Groundhog Day also brings.

This is when variety spins a lovely dose of spontaneity into the mix. We desire unpredictability and an element of surprise. Not too much to produce an overwhelming feeling, yet just enough to tantalise the senses. Throughout our journey of life, we all have a strong desire

GIVING WITHOUT EXPECTATION OF RECIPROCATION, SELFLESS ACTS OF KINDNESS, HELPING OTHERS IN NEED AND CHARITABLE WORK ARE WONDERFUL WAYS TO BOOST THE LEVELS REQUIRED TO KNOW WE ARE CONTRIBUTING ENOUGH

to do something significant and be someone significant. However, this is highly subjective and with so many differing variances, we can only gauge that level of significance according to the standards we have given to ourselves. As long as we are able to reach the quota that fills our own personal cup of

significance, we will experience the joy of its rewards. At the raw core of our human existence, love and connection are essential elements for most things.

The choices and decisions we make are mostly enwrapped around love; it's often the reason we go against our principles. As long as there is love and connection with those in your circle, the possibilities are limitless. In the grand scheme of things, growth is an essential component to progression. It reassures our restless mind that we are doing something large enough that justifies the bouts of procrastination.

Contribution is also key to us feeling contented and fulfilled. Giving without expectation of

reciprocation, selfless acts of kindness, helping others in need and charitable work are wonderful ways to boost the levels required to know we are contributing enough.

These differing and crucial components will come together like a beautifully composed piece of music or a kaleidoscope of colours creating the perfect masterpiece to satisfy all senses. Understanding yourself, the patterns and reasons for doing something will always put you in the empowered seat. Holding these six core requirements in your grasp will grant you control over your emotions and hence decisions.

Undoubtedly, this will give you the ability to regulate your thoughts and feelings with a much more manageable approach to life.

Queen’s death reveals hidden French royalist streak

ADAM PLOWRIGHT

After laying flowers outside the British Embassy in Paris for Queen Elizabeth II, Victoria Cazals stopped to ponder why the death of the 96-year-old monarch had touched her, and France, so deeply.

“I never knew my own grandparents and it feels like I’ve lost my grandmother,” the 48-year-old from southern Toulouse said as she choked back tears.

In the absence of a French royal family, she said she followed all the major events in the life of the Windsors, “the babies, the marriages, and what the Queen did.”

France famously guillotined its king and queen following its 1789 revolution and turned the page definitively on its monarchy in 1848.

The original rebellion against the crown is today the founding story of the modern state, proudly hailed as the first victory in the march for universal human rights over tyranny.

But the generous tributes from politicians, the wall-to-wall media coverage and personal displays of affection have revealed a deep Gallic attachment to Elizabeth II.

“To you, she was your Queen. To us, she was The Queen,” President Emmanuel Macron said in one of several warm messages of condolence last week, adding that “we all feel an emptiness”.

News presenters on state television have been wearing black ties as a mark of respect and French flags have been ordered to fly at half mast on public buildings on the day of her funeral.

Others outside the embassy in Paris spoke of their admiration for Elizabeth’s personal qualities — chiefly her devotion and longevity — but also hinted at deeper, more political reasons.

“She represented a form of stability, a unifying figure,” said Veronique, a 63-year-old retired legal worker, after laying flowers. “We maybe miss having this point of stability.”

Philippe Marliere, a French political scientist at University College London, suggested that many French people had a royalist streak and a form of nostalgia for their blue-blooded forebears.

“Beneath the Republican veneer, there’s a sort of monarchical atavism, even though France got rid of its monarchy a long time ago,” he said.

The modern state has retained its love of pomp and pageantry from its royalist days.

And the current constitution, with its all-powerful president, sought to create “an elected monarch” with the impossible task of unifying the country, Marliere said.

“There’s a contradiction in wanting a unifying figure but with a president that has enormous everyday political powers, who is a daily actor in French’s people’s lives,” he said. — AFP

‘Very dire’: Devastated by floods, Pakistan faces looming food crisis



Christina Goldbaum

The writer is a correspondent for Afghanistan bureau



Zia ur-Rehman

The writer is a Pakistani journalist and author

Violent swells have swept away roads, homes, schools and hospitals across much of Pakistan. Millions of people have been driven from their homes, struggling through waist-deep, fetid water to reach islands of safety. Nearly all of the country’s crops along with thousands of livestock and stores of wheat and fertiliser have been damaged — prompting warnings of a looming food crisis.

Since a deluge of monsoon rains lashed Pakistan last week, piling more water on top of more than two months of record flooding that has killed hundreds of people and displaced tens of millions, the Pakistani government and international relief organisations have scrambled to save people and vital infrastructure in what officials have called a climate disaster of epic proportions.

Floodwater now covers around one-third of the country, including its agricultural belt, with more rain predicted in the coming weeks. The damage from the flood will likely be “far greater” than initial estimates of around \$10 billion, according to the country’s planning minister, Ahsan Iqbal.

The flooding has crippled a country that was already reeling from an economic crisis and double digit-inflation that has sent the price of basic goods soaring. Now the flooding threatens to set Pakistan back years or even decades, officials warned, and to fan the flames of political tensions that have engulfed the country since prime minister Imran Khan was ousted this past spring.

The damage to the country’s agricultural sector could also be felt across the globe, experts warn. Pakistan is one of the world’s top producers and exporters of cotton and rice — crops that have been devastated by the flood. As much as half of the country’s cotton crop has been destroyed, officials said, a blow to global cotton production in a year when cotton prices have soared as other major producers from the United States to China have been hit with extreme weather.

The floodwaters also threaten to derail Pakistan’s wheat planting season this fall, raising the possibility of continued food shortfalls and price



An internally displaced flood-affected family travels on a vehicle with their belongings in Meharcity after heavy monsoon rains in Dadu district, Sindh province. — AFP

THE SCALE OF THE DEVASTATION IN PAKISTAN STANDS OUT EVEN IN A YEAR PUNCTUATED BY EXTREME WEATHER, INCLUDING HEAT WAVES ACROSS EUROPE AND THE US, INTENSE RAIN THAT HAS DRENCHED PARTS OF ASIA AND THE WORST DROUGHT TO HIT EAST AFRICA IN DECADES

spikes through next year. It is an alarming prospect in a country that depends on its wheat production to feed itself at a time when global wheat supplies are precarious.

“We’re in a very dire situation,” said Rathi Palakrishnan, deputy country director of the World Food Program in Pakistan. “There’s no buffer stocks of wheat. There’s no seeds because farmers have lost them.

“If the flood levels don’t recede before the planting season in October,

we’re in big trouble,” she added. Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif’s government, along with the United Nations, has appealed for \$160 million in emergency funding to reach 5.2 million of the country’s most vulnerable people.

The scale of the devastation in Pakistan stands out even in a year punctuated by extreme weather, including heat waves across Europe and the United States, intense rain that has drenched parts of Asia and the worst drought to hit East Africa in decades.

Since the start of the monsoon season in Pakistan this summer, more than 1,300 people have died in floods — nearly half of whom were children — and more than 6,000 have been injured, according to the United Nations. Around 33 million people have been displaced. Floodwater now covers around 100,000 square miles — an area larger than the size of Britain — with more floods expected in the coming weeks.

Sindh province, which produces around one-third of the country’s food supply, has been among the hardest hit by the rains. The province received nearly six times its 30-year average rainfall this monsoon season, which has damaged around 50% of its crops, according to the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization.

— New York Times

Going back to school memories



Lakshmi Kothaneth @lakshmioman

The writer is a senior journalist and a radio anchor

The thoughts that cross a young mind are plenty. School days are precious because this is the time we are shaping our impressions — some from our environment and others what we are impressed with.

We look for role models and there are moments when you think your parents know everything and

they would have solutions for everything. A heart break awaits us when we see our parents vulnerable — the two people, the two pillars that are made of strongest materials.

That’s the moment one wants to grow up so fast to protect their parents and crave for super powers to deal with the ones who want to hurt them.

Even then there are fears one faces even at that stage. The worries in most cases revolve around the school itself such as being want to have the approval of the school teachers, be accepted by their peer group and find their own way to be themselves.

If you are quick to grasp and respond in the classroom with the correct answers of course you are going to win teacher’s heart. But what about

IF YOU ARE QUICK TO GRASP AND RESPOND IN THE CLASSROOM WITH THE CORRECT ANSWERS OF COURSE YOU ARE GOING TO WIN TEACHER’S HEART

that silent student who is painfully shy to open the mouth to express oneself or even respond in the class room lest the answer is wrong?

But these students will bloom too and could be one of the brightest flowers one day. The streaks of brilliance can be seen

in every child and then how can we let them slip through our palms to fall into negative company. Why should we judge them? Sometimes it is the love and affection that give them a reason to strive harder and anyone could cast that spark of inspiration. It comes in like the raindrops on the parched desert sand. Nature teaches that in the arid areas too the seeds lay dormant only to sprout and add splash of green within the slightest of rain. Nature teaches us patience but there is also destruction and it happens when children are ignored.

Each child has the right to be encouraged and loved. What they require is patience while they struggle and try to adapt to the elders’ expectations. Leave the youngsters to choose the way they want to handle these tend years.

As a matter of fact this is the best years to learn and retain the information until the ripe age.

MEMORY LOSS

We create memories everyday but many in the world wide population might be impacted by memory loss.

September is the World Month of Alzheimer’s. According to www.alz.org there are 55 million people worldwide are suffering from Alzheimer’s or another type of dementia. But specifically People suffering from Alzheimer’s is 35.6 million globally according to Alzheimer’s Disease International (ADI).

So when we are busy memorising and learning new information in a daily manner least do we think there could be a time when the familiar faces of family members or friends. Experts say the best way would be to exercise our brains. This is where Dr Hamed al Sinawi, senior psychiatrist, says some of the best ways to keep our brain intact is to be positive in thinking to encourage ourselves is to be active and eat right. The theme this year is ‘Know Dementia, Know Alzheimer’s’.

It is this dedicated months and days that make us read more about different causes. For instance only now, after reading about colours and Alzheimer’s, it was realised that energetic and bright colours such as orange, red and purple might be over stimulating for Alzheimer’s patients. Selecthomecare.com suggests to choose pale yellow, blue and brown colours instead.

So the month of September is to shine the purple light to demystify the disease. That’s why Alzheimer’s Disease International has this global campaign and the awareness has come a long way.

In the Sultanate of Oman, the Oman Alzheimer’s Association is conducting events in various places to let families know about the disease and learn to pick early signs to delay the outcome. Oman Observer’s Podcast (@omanpodcast) will be looking at various aspects of Alzheimer’s and life.



FLYING HIGH

Tourists sit on the beach as a kite flies in Dieppe, western France, on Monday, during the 21st Dieppe International Kite Festival. The 21st Dieppe International Kite Festival takes place from September 10 to 18. — AFP

Queen’s death ignites debate over Africa’s colonial past

From Kenya and Nigeria to South Africa and Uganda, Queen Elizabeth’s death met with an outpouring of official condolences, mourning and memories of her frequent visits to Africa during her seven decades on the throne.

But the British monarch’s passing also revived a sensitive debate over Africa’s colonial past.

Her death came at a time when European countries are under pressure to reckon with their colonial histories, atoning for past crimes and returning stolen African artefacts held for years in museums from London and Paris.

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari and Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta were among those expressing condolences for the loss of an “icon.”

But many Africans reflected more on the tragedies from colonial times, including events that occurred in the first decade of her rule.

Kenya gained independence from Britain in 1963, after an eight-year-long rebellion that left at least 10,000 people dead.

Britain agreed in 2013 to compensate over 5,000 Kenyans who had suffered abuse during the Mau Mau revolt, in a deal worth nearly £20 million (\$23 million).

“The Queen leaves a mixed legacy of the brutal suppression of Kenyans in their own country and mutually beneficial relations,” *The Daily Nation*, Kenya’s biggest newspaper, wrote in a weekend editorial.

Elizabeth was visiting Kenya in 1952 when her father died and she became queen.

“What followed was a bloody chapter in Kenya’s history, with atrocities committed against a people whose only sin was to demand independence.”

“While the ties with Britain have been useful, it is difficult to forget those atrocities.”

As part of recent restorations for the past, Nigeria and neighbouring Benin have seen the return from Britain and France of the first of thousands of artefacts plundered during colonial times.

Nigeria’s so-called Benin Bronzes — 16th to 18th century metal plaques and sculptures — were looted from the palace of the ancient Benin Kingdom and ended up in museums across the US and Europe.

Nigeria’s Buhari said the country’s history “will never be complete without a chapter on Queen Elizabeth II”.

While some praised her role leading up to Nigeria’s independence, others pointed out she was head of state when Britain supported Nigerian army during the country’s civil war.

More than one million people died

between 1967-1970, mostly from starvation and disease, during the conflict after ethnic Igbo officers declared independence in the southeast.

“If anyone expects me to express anything but disdain for the monarch who supervised a government sponsored genocide... you can keep wishing upon a star,” Nigerian-born US-based professor

MANY AFRICANS REFLECTED MORE ON THE TRAGEDIES FROM COLONIAL TIMES, INCLUDING EVENTS THAT OCCURRED IN THE FIRST DECADE OF QUEEN’S RULE. KENYA GAINED INDEPENDENCE FROM BRITAIN IN 1963, AFTER AN EIGHT-YEAR-LONG REBELLION THAT LEFT AT LEAST 10,000 PEOPLE DEAD

Uju Anya said, in a Twitter reference to the Biafra war that triggered fierce debate on social media.

Similar mixed reactions were expressed in South Africa, where President Cyril Ramaphosa called her an “extraordinary” figure.

But the opposition Economic Freedom Fighters or EFF movement was more dismissive, recalling decades of apartheid, in which Britain, the former coloniser, was often passive.

“We do not mourn the death of Elizabeth, because to us her death is a reminder of a very tragic period in this

country and Africa’s history,” EFF said in a statement.

In Uganda, some went back further, recalling the Bunyoro Kingdom’s ruler Omukama Kabalega, who resisted British rule in the late 1890s.

He was deposed and exiled to the Seychelles and the kingdom was then absorbed into the British empire.

“As much as the queen was able to maintain cohesion of the former British colonies, she had not addressed adequately the injustices meted out on some of the states including Uganda,” said former intelligence director and now political analyst, Charles Rwomushana.

Last month, the Uganda Tourism Association called for a committee to lead the return of Ugandan artefacts from British and other foreign museums, including some 300 from Bunyoro, according to the parliament.

Charles Onyango-Obbo, writer and Uganda government critic, said on Twitter many long-ruling African leaders used Queen Elizabeth’s 70-year reign to justify their own decades in power.

“Now that she has passed, they are scrambling to learn how to make their case convincingly in the past tense.”

Mukoma Wa Ngugi, the son of Kenya’s world renowned writer Ngugi wa Thiong’o and who is himself a novelist as well as an associate professor of English at Cornell University, also questioned the Queen’s legacy in Africa.

“If the queen had apologised for slavery, colonialism and neocolonialism and urged the crown to offer reparations for the millions of lives taken in her/ their names, then perhaps I would do the human thing and feel bad,” he wrote on Tweeter.

“As a Kenyan, I feel nothing. This theatre is absurd.” — AFP



A worker at The Athenaeum Hotel paints a portrait of Britain’s Queen Elizabeth II in London on Monday. — AFP

sport

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New age Alcaraz grabs first Grand Slam title

SPANIARD BECOMES YOUNGEST WORLD NUMBER ONE



Sultanate of Oman
MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH

TENDERS ANNOUNCEMENT

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH, Muscat, hereby give notice of tenders for the following projects

Tender No.	Project Category	Location	Fees R.O	Grade In Tender Board Registration
Re-tender 14/2020	Services	RENOVATION OF GRASSED FOOTBALL PITCH WITH NEW AUTOMATIC IRRIGATION FOR ITTIFAQ SPORTS CLUB – IBRA Br.	25/-	First & Third
20/2022	Construction and Maintenance	MAINTINANCE WORKS AT SAHAM SPORT CLUB	25/-	Third

Companies, which are registered with the Tender Board and engaged in same category with experience in and same Grade as noted above, can obtain the Tender Documents at the Tender Board E-tendering digital portal link (<http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) until 17/09/2022.

The last date of tender submission on above E-tendering site at 09:00am 03/10/2022.

A Tender Bond equivalent to 1% of the tender sum issued from a registered bank, in the prescribed form, in Sultanate of Oman and valid for 90 days should enclosed with the tender.

Any tender without the bond will be reject and the tender committee is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender received.

INTERNAL TENDER COMMITTEE OF MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH

Any participants have doubt in adopting e-tendering can contact over the phone 24402200 or through email etenderhd@ita.gov.om

NEW YORK: Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz claimed his maiden Grand Slam title at the US Open on Sunday, becoming the youngest man to ascend to the world number one ranking and cementing his status as the poster boy of tennis' new wave.

The 19-year-old dragged his weary body to a 6-4, 2-6, 7-6 (7/1), 6-3 victory over Norway's Casper Ruud in the final.

Alcaraz, the first teenager to claim the top ranking, is the youngest Grand Slam men's champion since his idol Rafael Nadal at the 2005 French Open.

On a day of landmarks, he is also the youngest champion in New York since Pete Sampras in 1990.

"Right now I'm enjoying the moment. I'm enjoying having the trophy in my hands. But, of course, I'm hungry for more," said Alcaraz.

"I want to be in the top for many, many weeks and hopefully many years. I'm going to work hard again after this week, this amazing two

weeks. I'm going to fight for more of this."

Despite being at the vanguard of tennis's modern era, his performance on Sunday also contained elements of a bygone age -- he won 15 points off 21 serve-and-volley attempts.

It was a gruelling tournament for Alcaraz.

On Sunday, he claimed the record for most time spent on court at a single Grand Slam, passing the 23 hours and 21 minutes it took Kevin Anderson to finish runner-up at Wimbledon in 2018.

Most of his 23 hours and 40 minutes were taken up by the more than 13 hours it took him to play three successive five-setters to reach the final.

He saved a match point in his five-hour 15-minute quarter-final win over Jannik Sinner.

Nadal was quick to congratulate the player widely seen as his successor.

"Congratulations @carlosalcaraz for your first

Grand Slam and for number 1, which is the culmination of your great season. I am sure there will be many more," tweeted the 22-time Slam title winner.

The US Open is Alcaraz's fifth trophy of 2022 following Masters triumphs in Miami and Madrid as well as Rio and Barcelona.

It was in Madrid that he announced himself as a serious threat to the sport's heavyweights when he became the first man to defeat Nadal and Novak Djokovic at the same claycourt event.

Still in his teens, his career earnings are already close to \$10 million. "Carlos was born to play these tournaments," said his coach Juan Carlos Ferrero, a former number one and French Open champion.

Defeat for Ruud, who was also vying for the world number one ranking, was his second in a Slam final this year after he was routed by Nadal in the French Open.

"It's incredibly impressive what he has achieved already as a teenager," said Ruud, who will rise to number two in the world on Monday.

"He's one of these few rare talents that comes up every now and then in sports."

With the roof closed, the Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd observed a moving moment's silence on the 21st anniversary of the September 11 attacks before the final got off to a tentative start.

RUUD SPORTSMANSHIP

Both men saved break points in their opening service games before Alcaraz gained the only break of the first set for a key 3-1 lead.

Ruud dropped the set but triumphed in terms of sportsmanship when he called a double bounce on himself in the eighth game, conceding the point to the Spaniard.

"At the moment Carlos is the best player in the world," insisted Ruud. — AFP

Sri Lankans prove point in Asia Cup

DUBAI: Bhanuka Rajapaksa on Sunday said Sri Lanka's cricket has proved a point to the world with their sixth Asia Cup title after his unbeaten 71 set up a commanding 23-run win over Pakistan.

Fast bowler Pramod Madushan (4-34) and Wanindu Hasaranga (3-27) shared seven wickets between them to bowl out Pakistan for 147 while chasing 171 in Dubai.

Earlier the left-handed Rajapaksa put on a key 58-run stand for the sixth wicket with Hasaranga, who hit 36, to help Sri Lanka to 170-6 after being in trouble at 58-5.

Sri Lanka, who had to abandon plans to host the competition due to political unrest, bounced back from an embarrassing opening defeat by Afghanistan to win the tournament, a curtain-raiser for next month's T20 World Cup in Australia.

"We always wanted to show the whole world (what we can do)," said man of the match Rajapaksa.

"Some decades back we had some sort of aggression in our side and we wanted to create those moments again. As a unit we are doing fantastically well at the moment and we look forward to the World Cup."

Rajapaksa said: "As a nation it's a great win with all the crisis happening back home, these are tough times for Sri Lankans. We hope we brought some smiles on their faces."

The Asia Cup success for



Sri Lanka players celebrate with the trophy at the end of the Asia Cup final against Pakistan in Dubai. — AFP

the cricket-crazy nation comes after miserable months of severe economic crisis followed by blackouts, fuel shortages and protests.

Sri Lanka, however, will have to play the qualifiers in Australia before getting a chance to meet the heavyweights in the main draw starting October 22 but skipper Dasun Shanaka said the momentum will help them sail through.

Pakistan skipper Babar Azam won the toss, choosing to field first with nine of the previous 12 matches won by the teams chasing.

BUCKED THE TREND

But Sri Lanka bucked the trend as the island nation overcame an

inspired opening spell of bowling by Pakistan quicks Naseem Shah and Haris Rauf.

"I want to congratulate Sri Lanka. Outstanding cricket. The way we dominated them early,

their partnership after that was outstanding," said Azam.

Rajapaksa and Hasaranga rebuilt the innings and regularly found the boundary to up the scoring rate.

Rauf dismissed Hasaranga, who hit five fours and one six in his 21-ball knock, caught behind for his 50th T20 wicket to break the dangerous stand.

Rajapaksa kept up the attack and survived a dropped catch by Shadab Khan in the deep, soon reaching his third T20 half-century.

Rajapaksa, who finished the innings with a four and six off Naseem in his 45-ball blitz, and Chamika Karunaratne put on 54 runs to further boost the total.

"Of course it is a wonderful moment and one of the best innings I played in a short period of time," Rajapaksa, who made his T20 debut in 2019, said.

"Hoping I could play some match-winning knocks in the future as well for the Sri Lanka side."

Left-arm quick Dilshan Madushanka bowled a shaky opening over, starting with a no-ball and four wides.

Playing just his second T20, Madushan had Azam caught at short fine-leg for five and then bowled Fakhar Zaman for a first-ball duck the following delivery.

Karunaratne got Rauf out on the final ball to trigger Sri Lankan celebrations. — AFP

SCOREBOARD	
Sri Lanka	
P Nissanka c Azam b Rauf	8
K Mendis b Naseem	0
D de Silva c and b Iftikhar	28
D Gunathilaka b Rauf	1
B Rajapaksa not out	71
D Shanaka b Shadab	2
W Hasaranga c Rizwan b Rauf	36
C Karunaratne not out	14
Extras (b1, lb7, w2)	10
Total (6 wickets, 20 overs)	170
Fall of wickets: 1-2, 2-23, 3-36, 4-53, 5-58, 6-116	
Bowling: Naseem 4-0-40-1, Hasnain 4-0-41-0, Rauf 4-0-29-3, Shadab 4-0-28-1, Iftikhar 3-0-21-1, Nawaz 1-0-3-0	
Pakistan (target 171)	
M Rizwan c Gunathilaka b Hasaranga	55
B Azam c Madushanka b Madushan	5
F Zaman b Madushan	0
I Ahmed c sub b Madushan	32
M Nawaz c Madushan b Karunaratne	6
K Shah c Theekshana b Hasaranga	2
A Ali b Hasaranga	0
S Khan c Gunathilaka b Theekshana	8
H Rauf b Karunaratne	13
N Shah c Karunaratne b Madushan	4
M Hasnain not out	8
Extras (nb2, w12)	14
Total (all out, 20 overs)	147
Fall of wickets: 1-22, 2-22, 3-93, 4-102, 5-110, 6-111, 7-112, 8-120, 9-125	
Bowling: Madushanka 3-0-24-0, Theekshana 4-0-25-1, Madushan 4-0-34-4, Hasaranga 4-0-27-3, Karunaratne 4-0-33-2, De Silva 1-0-4-0	

Be hungry for success, says former Indian Test cricketer

Kulkarni's mantra for Oman U19 boys ahead of the ICC U19 Men's CWC Division 2 -Asia Qualifier

MUSCAT: Young Oman cricketers are training hard these days as they gear up for the ICC U19 Men's CWC Division 2 —Asia Qualifier. The boys will be looking to impress at home and advance to the final round of the Asian Qualifier.

Wishing them the very best for the forthcoming tournament, former Indian Test cricketer Nilesh Kulkarni had some valuable lessons for them during his recent visit to Oman.

In a chat with *Oman Cricket's media consultant, Ashok Purohit*, Kulkarni said, "It is a crucial tournament for the youngsters. The very important thing for the teenagers is to enjoy the game.

"They should be hungry for success and never be contended. In one match a cricketer may get a century or pick five wickets. But that shouldn't make him contended. He should try to do better in the next. That approach will give them success.

"For these youngsters, it is important for them to learn. They should have the ability to learn from the failures. Failure is part and parcel of a cricketer. What defines and determines a top-class cricketer is how to bounce back from failures."

Kulkarni met Oman Cricket (OC) chairman Pankaj Khimji and also visited the Oman Cricket Academy. "The facilities at the Oman Cricket Academy ground



Oman U19 national team that will take part in the upcoming ICC Men's U19 CWC Division 2-Asia Qualifiers.



Oman U19 boys during a warm-up game ahead of the ICC Men's U19 Cricket World Cup Division 2 - Asia Qualifiers at the Oman Cricket Academy ground.

are world-class. The infrastructure development and ground is excellent. The vision of Oman Cricket that Pankaj Khimji shared with me makes me believe that Oman is on a good wicket. It has certainly all the ingredients to be the best among Associate Nations," said the former Indian cricketer.

25th year of a rare feat

For a cricketer to pick up a wicket of the very first ball of his Test career is a dream. Only 20 cricketers have achieved the distinction till date and among them is Kulkarni, the only Indian to be in the list.

A slow left-arm bowler and a left-handed batter, the tall cricketer, who stands at 6 ft 5 inches, marked the silver jubilee of his achievement only last month. Kulkarni recorded the feat on

August 3, 1997 against Sri Lanka when he had Marvan Atapattu caught behind by Nayan Mongia at R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo.

"Yes, I do remember more now, thanks to the media evolution. Back then, not many noticed and moreover it was a Test to forget overall as Sri Lanka went to score more than 900 runs. For the first 10 years, I did not even have a video clip of the wicket.

"Then a friend shared it and I have been reliving the feat since the past five years. It feels good and I am proud to be the only Indian among the 20 in the world to have done it," said Kulkarni.

Sports management courses in Oman?

Having retired from cricket in 2007 after a long innings with Mumbai, Kulkarni said that the



Nilesh Kulkarni (centre) receives Oman national team jersey from Oman Cricket chairman Pankaj Khimji (left) and a national team cap from Oman Cricket's chief development officer Duleep Mendis.

failure to bag a contract in the inaugural year of Indian Premier League in 2008 forced him to think out of box.

"I think the trigger was IPL launch when I felt that there was scope to do something else than coaching or commentary. IPL saw the growth of sports sector and I decided to set up International Institute of Sports Management (IISM) in 2010.

IISM has been in the forefront of producing professionals over the past decade or more and according to Kulkarni a 'total of 2,000 students have graduated from IISM' so far.

Kulkarni said that 'there has been interest shown by few organisations in Oman' and he is keen to explore the possibility of cooperation to bring in sports

management and sports science courses in the Sultanate of Oman.

"The Gulf nations have invested a lot in sports events, be it UAE hosting IPL and Formula One or Qatar going to host 2022 Fifa World Cup. Saudi Arabia and Bahrain have also invested a lot in holding major sports events. Amid this backdrop, Oman has the potential to grow. They would need their own people to develop the sports sector. So I believe that we can bring in our expertise to offer them sports management courses," said Kulkarni.

India have match-winners for T20 World Cup

Having played his major first class cricket with Mumbai under Sachin Tendulkar, Kulkarni said, "Sachin is an institution. It is always enlightening to hear from him as a

OC Junior and Women's League to start from Oct 17

MUSCAT: Oman Cricket announces the commencement of the Women and Junior U19, U16 and U13 Season 2022-23 from October 17.

Interested schools and clubs can register via our website www.omancricket.org>Registrations. Online registration with payment confirmation deadline for the teams is September 14.

Players registration deadline for schools for U19, U16, U13 and Women are open and will close on September 18.

For players registration for academies, the registration will open from September 19 and will close on September 22.

Captain/manager meeting for all will be held on September 29 at 5 pm. Schedules for all categories will be circulated after the manager/coach meeting.

School teams are requested to register 18 players accordingly and in case any player is not registered by school, after the deadline of September 18, academies are free to register that player.

Oman Cricket is looking forward to getting more teams enrolled and engaged in the sport and provide a platform for the young talent.



MAYOUF CLAIMS STAGE 2 OF TOUR OF SALALAH

ANUROOP ATHIPARAMBATH
MUSCAT, SEPT 12

Khaled Mayouf of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) continued his impressive run in Tour of Salalah to win the second stage with a timing of 2 hours 2 minutes and 59 seconds on Monday. Mayouf finished second in the opening stage on Sunday.

UAE cyclists dominated the proceedings for the second day as the 101 km-stage was run between Al Baleed Archaeological Park and Hajeeef.

Stage 1 winner Saif al Kaabi of UAE topped the general individual time classification to get the yellow jersey after finishing second in the Stage 2 (02:02:59).

Mayouf topped the points classification and took the green jersey, while his teammates Jaber al Mansoori took the silver jersey and Abdulla al Hammadi took the white jersey after leading the KOM and under-23 sections



respectively.

Abdulla claimed third in the race (02:02:59) while Jaber finished fourth (02:02:59).

Oman-based rider Bradley Perkins (02:04:56) of Great Britain came fifth for Cycle KOM – NRO team.

Oman Club's Faisal al Maamari finished sixth (02:04:56) and Said al Rahbi of Oman Royal Army ended seventh (02:06:47).

UAE DOMINATE
In Stage 2 team results, UAE kept their top spot (06:08:57)

the Oman Cycling Association and supported by Dhofar Municipality, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and Ministry of Heritage and Tourism.

On each stage, the first three riders will be awarded a prize money of RO 150, 120 and 100 respectively.

After the stages, the general individual time classification topper will get RO 600, while the second-placed rider will get RO 500 and the third-placed racer gets RO 400.

In the under-23 category, the top three riders will get a purse of RO 300, 200 and 100 respectively.

In general individual point classification and best climber classification, the top rider takes home RO 300.

In the team general classification, the toppers get RO 1,000, runners-up get RO 800 and the third-placed team gets RO 600.

followed by Oman-based Cycle KOM – NRO (06:25:37) and Thailand national team (06:37:37).

In team general classification after Stage 2, UAE were ahead with an overall timing of 14:46:31 followed by Cycle KOM – NRO (15:17:02) and Salalah Club (15:33:16).

Stage 3 will see cyclists battle it out from Mirbat Castle to Tawi Ateer at Wadi Darbat in a 123-km race on Tuesday.

The four-stage cycling race, which offers a total prize money of RO 7,730, is organised by

Verstappen wins Italian GP to close in on F1 title

MONZA, ITALY: Max Verstappen won the Formula One Italian Grand Prix on Sunday to leave himself in touching distance of his second straight Formula One title.

Championship leader Verstappen claimed his first win at Monza and his fifth GP in a row after fighting from seventh on the grid to finish Charles Leclerc on another difficult day for Ferrari.

The race ended with jeers from the crowd and Ferrari frustration

as the drivers had to finish the final six laps with the safety car after Daniel Ricciardo lost his engine and ended up at the side of the track.

However Red Bull's Verstappen is 116 points ahead of Leclerc in the drivers' standings and can retain his crown in Singapore next month after winning his 11th race of the season, one he largely controlled despite being hit with a grid penalty on Friday.

"It was unfortunate, everyone



wants to finish under a green flag, but unfortunately we were short of laps," Verstappen said. "But I had

new softs so I wasn't too worried."

The massed ranks of red in the stands loudly voiced their disapproval when the cars came over the line as they were denied the chance to see their man Leclerc try to overtake dominant Verstappen, who was also booed on the podium by Italian supporters. "The end was frustrating, I wish could have had a bit of racing at the end, unfortunately we were second because of what happened before," said Leclerc. — AFP

Oman chess counts down for Asian Amateur Chess Championship

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, SEPT 12

As many as 176 chess players representing 21 countries from different parts of the world confirmed their attendance in the long-awaited 2021-22 Asian Amateur Chess Championship in Muscat.

The Asian event, which is under organisation of Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth represented by Oman Chess Committee (OCC), will run from September 29 to October 6 at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher.

The deadline of registration ended officially on Monday and 122 players will take part in the men's championship while 45 players will compete in the women's category.

The organisers at the OCC are underway in their final stages of technical and logistics arrangements ahead of the start of the championship.

Sultanate of Oman had won the rights of hosting this Asian event after tough bidding competition among different Asian nations. The Asian Chess Federation (ACF) had reviewed carefully all the bids and ensured its completeness on the facilities, administrative affairs, organising sides, and other relevant parts of hosting any top class tourney.

Developed infrastructure and availability of the desired facilities put Oman's bid in priority to host and organise this event. The OCC had managed to successfully organise different regional tournaments during the past few years. Hosting the Asian tournament will assist popularity

of the game in the Sultanate of Oman.

The Asian Amateur Chess Championship will feature presence of many brightest minds in Asia including the top-ranking and continental players such as: Asaan Koshof from Kyrgistan, Mahmood Masarani from Lebanon, Suhail Junaid from Pakistan, Rawadha al Sarkal from UAE, Iman Sawan from Palestine and Salma al Khulaifi from Qatar.

Muscat city will feature competitions of many top players from different nationalities including: Bahrain, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Palestine, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and the hosts Sultanate of Oman.

Mahdi Abdulrahim (UAE) will lead the technical committee of the Asian event while Iran's Mehrdad will chair umpiring team. The event will witness attendance of Omani referees including: Muallam al Wadhai, Khalid al Hadidi, Hamdan al Hinai, Ruqaya al Balushi besides presence of other new umpires like Khadija al Qasmi, Aliyaa al Siyabi and Ahmed al Kharousi.

The national chess players had registered different accomplishments recently as Rawan al Balushi was crowned as WCM in the junior category which is one of the official titles awarded by the International Chess Federation. Besides that many domestic chess players had produced an impressive show in the last 44th Chess Olympiad 2022 which concluded last month in India.



England win third Test by 9 wickets and series 2-1



ANDY JALIL
LONDON, SEPT 12

It took just 5.3 overs for England to knock off the remaining 33 runs on the fifth morning to wrap up the third and final Test with a nine-wicket victory over South Africa. The win gives England the series at 2-1 and with it the Basil D'Oliveira trophy. England had won the first Test by an innings and lost the second by an innings.

England captain, Ben Stokes said: "It's been a great series for us as a team, no real individual stand-out performances, but different people at different times have broken the game open at different times. The conditions we've found on day one, the toss is one you want to win, but you have to execute your plans, and

counteract the team that does win it."

With bad light causing play to stop the previous evening with England on 97 without loss and having been set a target of 130 to win, players had to return to the ground the next morning when England took just 26 minutes to hit the required runs.

There had been some criticism of the umpires for not allowing the game to continue to a finish on the fourth evening but they stuck to the rules for the light although a common sense approach, with the two captains agreement would have been a sensible option.

England lost the wicket of Alex Lees in the third over of the morning after he had added seven runs to his overnight 32

with Kagiso Rabada trapping his lbw. The umpire turned down the appeal but the DRS overruled the decision.

Meanwhile Zak Crawley had gone on to 60 from 57 overnight and went on to add two fours to the ten he hit on the fourth day. He hit a thrashing square drive off Rabada which took him to 65 after his new partner Ollie Pope had pulled Marco Jansen for four.

They were quick in taking singles and finally Crawley, who has not been in fine form until this innings, drove Jansen beautifully to cover for the winning boundary to end the Test with an unbeaten 69 from 57 balls faced.

Ollie Robinson was voted the player of the match and captain Ben Stokes was the England

player of the series while Rabada was for South Africa. Jonny Bairstow, absent in this match through injury, was player of the summer for his performance in the two series.

South Africa captain, Dean Elgar said: "It's not been great for me in Test matches, but a lot of fond memories (from playing for Surrey) at The Oval. A good first innings helped us at Lord's, first-innings runs are so big in the UK, and we've failed in that department."

He added: "Tough decision [re selection], it didn't work this game, but lots of eye-opening experiences for those guys. I've got to give our bowlers credit, they ran in and did all that was asked of them, but it all boils down to our batting."

business

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Healthy growth in cargo throughput during H1 2022

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, SEPT 12

Omani ports have witnessed a healthy increase in cargo throughput during the first half of 2022 – a reflection of a rapidly recovering economy following the disruption caused by the economic downturn and pandemic.

During the first half of 2022, Omani ports achieved an increase in the volume of bulk, general and liquid cargo by five per cent to reach 42.76 million tonnes, compared to 40.61 million tonnes for H1 2021, according to the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology.

The Directorate General of Ports noted that containerised cargo volumes inched up 2 per cent to reach 2.58 million TEUs,



compared to 2.53 million TEUs in the same period last year. The reason for the increase is due to a rise in containers handled at the Port of Salalah. Ship movements dipped 0.02

per cent to 4.7K vessels. Ro-RO traffic slumped 34 per cent to 36.17K vehicles largely on account of the after-effects if the global economic recession aggravated by the pandemic and the rise in freight prices globally.

In the same context, Omani ports received during the first half of 2022 around 38.5 thousand cruise passengers, a remarkable increase of 100 per cent over the previous period. Livestock handled by the ports totalled 1.96 million head, which was 5 per cent higher than the corresponding period of 2021.

During the first half of 2021, Omani ports handled nearly 2.5 million containers (TEUs) from January to June 2021 as well as 28.8 million tonnes of general cargo, recording a rise of 18 per

cent over its performance in the first six months in 2020.

Liquid commodities handling grew by 12 per cent to 9.9 million, compared to the corresponding period of 2020. Such steady rise in volumes of liquid and general cargo was in accordance with the growth of economic and business activities in the Sultanate of Oman.

Imported livestock witnessed a notice spike of 65 per cent during the first six months of 2021 (1.9 million head). The import of vehicles and equipment dropped by 8 per cent (55,500 vehicles and equipment imported or re-exported) due to the decline in global economy and its impact on local and regional markets. More than 4,400 vessels visited the country's ports from January to June 2021.

Oman preps second UN SDG report

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, SEPT 12

The Ministry of Economy organised a first workshop to prepare the second report on the 2030 UN sustainable development goals (SDGs) for the Sultanate of Oman, which aims to review what has been done during the past period in light of the new formations in the joint work teams, monitor progress and exchange visions on future directions.

The workshop brought together representatives of various official bodies, civil society institutions, the private sector, as well as academic institutions and some relevant international organisations.

The themes came with the definition of the basic concepts about the goals of sustainable development 2023 and discussions about the proposed initiatives and future directions to localise the sustainable development agenda in the short and medium term.

Dr Said al Saqri, Minister of Economy, explained that the workshop comes within the framework of strengthening cooperation and integration between the Ministry of Economy and partners from the public and private sectors to monitor progress in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Dr Nasser al Maawali, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Economy, indicates that there has been a lot of progress made



in achieving sustainable development goals and objectives since the Sultanate Oman submitted its first voluntary report in 2019.

“The Sultanate of Oman is keen to translate its international commitment to achieving these goals by 2030 by integrating them into various national policies, initiatives and programmers,” he added.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goal, are a call for action to respond to the global challenges that face our world; challenges such as poverty, inequality, protecting the planet and ensuring everyone enjoys peace and prosperity.

These goals are distinct in the fact that they are interconnected- often the key to achieve one goal will involve tackling issues associated with another, and inclusive- that they include everyone without distinction and unite us together to make a positive change in our world and achieve sustainability.

Oman was among the world nations at the UN Summit in September 2015 to recognise and adopt the Sustainable Development Goals, becoming one of the member states that agreed upon devoting all efforts to attain these goals.

Madayn, EthisX sign cooperation programme

MUSCAT: The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) and EthisX, the first-of-its-kind cross-border Ethical Private Capital Marketplace, has signed a cooperation programme to provide financial services and solutions to the companies and projects based at Madayn's industrial cities.

The cooperation programme was signed by Hamad bin Hamoud al Qasabi, Acting CEO of Madayn, and Mohamed Shehzad bin Mohamed Islam, CEO of Ethis Investment Platform.

The cooperation programme aims at providing financing options for the SMEs based at Madayn's



industrial cities, attracting and localising national and foreign companies in the industrial cities, in addition to organising interactive seminars and workshops with the SMEs and investors.

This agreement reflects Madayn's commitment to support the investment climate in its various industrial cities and its constant efforts to support Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to ensure their sustainability and success, as well as embodies its responsibility towards investors, industrialists and entrepreneurs in the Sultanate of Oman.

Omani bourse begins steps to secure Emerging Market tag from FTSE, MSCI

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, SEPT 12

Oman's restructured and rebranded bourse, Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX), has commenced efforts to secure a much-coveted elevation into the ranks of 'Emerging Market' stock exchanges.

Haitham bin Salem al Salmi (pictured), CEO of Muscat Stock Exchange, who is also Chairman of Muscat Clearing & Depository, said the 'upgrade' is a key component of a five-year strategy mapped out by the Omani bourse as part of its goal to go partially private in five years via a listing on the MSX.

“We are focusing on the reclassification of the market, where we enter the global indices, like FTSE, MSCI, and others,” Al Salmi said. “That will require us to have minimum liquidity, minimum market cap and a lot of technical requirements that will push us forward one grade from the Frontier Market grade where we are now.”

Speaking at the MSX Investors Roadshow held in Muscat last year,



he noted that MSX is pitching for an 'Emerging Market' label' – a 'promotion' that will place the Omani bourse – now wholly owned by Omani Investment Authority (OIA) — on the radar of global investment communities.

Based on a strategy map chalked out by the MSX, the Sultanate of Oman's sole stock exchange continues to tick the boxes in its efforts to secure an 'Emerging Market' classification, starting with the FTSE index, according to the official.

PER THE STRATEGY MAP, MSX ENVISIONS A PLACE ON THE WATCH-LIST OF THE TARGETED GLOBAL INDICES, FTSE AND MSCI, FOR AT LEAST A YEAR BEFORE AN UPGRADE IS ANTICIPATED

“I'm delighted to mention that all of the technical requirements for the promotion have been completed – 100 per cent. Thus out of a total of 22 requirements, we need to satisfy nine. We have already satisfied 12 requirements of the FTSE target at this stage. What we need is now is to focus on liquidity and market cap.”

MSX's strategy map for securing an Emerging Market label places significant emphasis on improving liquidity.

“I believe that liquidity is the most critical issue in our market. And to enhance liquidity, we have the support of our stakeholders, our shareholders and OIA in particular, as well as our regulators. We aim to

bring in more instruments in the market, initiate more activity in the market through news, through disclosures, and through better performing companies.”

Per the strategy map, MSX envisions a place on the watch-list of the targeted global indices, FTSE and MSCI, for at least a year before an upgrade is anticipated, said the official.

“So the plan here is to be on the watch-list by 2023; we have to stay there for one year on the watch list. Then we will be upgraded,” he noted, while stressing in this regard the need for regular meetings, particularly with brokers, to help advance this objective.

The CEO also reaffirmed the bourse's commitment to transforming into a commercially driven and sustainable entity that would serve as an engine of growth for the national economy, as well as generate value for its shareholders.

The upshot of this effort, he said, is to ensure a successful listing of MSX on the Omani stock market within five years.

Bank Nizwa signs financing pact to develop Al Nakheel Project

MUSCAT: As a progressive, forward-looking, and dynamic Islamic bank, Bank Nizwa has remained committed to contributing to the nation's vision of achieving a diversified economy.

In line with the same, Bank Nizwa has undertaken innumerable initiatives to support different sectors in the Sultanate of Oman. In its most recent endeavour, the bank signed an agreement with Palm Beach LLC for Al Nakheel Project that will be developed by Alargan Towell Investment Company.

Al Nakheel is an Integrated Tourism Complex (ITC) under the auspices of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism. With a total value of RO 250 million, the mixed-use community real estate development is idyllically located on the seafront between Al Seeb and Barka, in close proximity to the Daymaniyat Islands Nature Reserve.

Slated to be constructed on a land area of 500,000 sqm, it will have a total built-up area of 369,000, envisaged to be developed in three phases. Bank Nizwa financing will be extended to for the development of Phase 1A the Project, development of which will commence in 2022.

Khaled al Kayed, CEO of Bank Nizwa said, "The real estate sector is a critical component of the national economy, and the upcoming Al Nakheel Project, which is set to be an iconic destination, will certainly attract significant investments. We are indeed delighted to join hands with a reputable company as Palm Beach LLC and be a part



of this prestigious development. While this project will significantly boost the real estate sector in the country, it also reaffirms our commitment to support national initiatives that offer sustainable, long-term benefits while strengthening Oman's position as a lucrative investment destination."

He further said, "Targeting the middle-income strata of the local and expatriate population, Al Nakheel Project has various offerings for the residential, tourism, and retail market. Positioned as an attractive and affordable tourism destination, it also closely

resonates with the bank's values of promoting inclusivity while also ensuring that an exciting lifestyle experience is more accessible to all."

The development is centred on a Crystal Lagoon of 51,000 sqm, which will be the first in Oman and will act as a major anchor for the development, thus differentiating Al Nakheel from other ITC developments. Once completed, the project is expected to include three hotels, villas, apartments, serviced apartments, mixed-use souks, an aqua park, a mall, and a school, all of which are carefully spread over different phases.

ahlibank continues 10% salary transfer reward for customers

MUSCAT: Committed to providing exclusive offers and benefits to meet its customers' expectations, ahlbank continues its special salary transfer reward for customers, where they receive an immediate one-time cash reward of 10 per cent of their monthly salary, with a maximum cash reward amount capped at RO 500.

Under the current offer, which runs until the end of September 2022, the Bank offers its Omani and expatriate, new salary transfer customers the opportunity to enjoy a lucrative benefit. Customers who transfer their monthly salary to the Bank with an amount of RO 1,000 and above are eligible for this reward offer.

Muneer al Balushi, AGM – Head of Retail Distribution, said, "Through this offer we seek to strengthen and establish our relationship with our existing and new customers. The promotion reflects ahlbank's leadership in being innovative when it comes to enhancing customer experience, and providing solutions that meet various customer requirements



through tangible benefits. These could be in the form of cash rewards, cashback, lifestyle promotions, and more."

"This is not just a one-time benefit, but a strategic step encouraging customers to adopt practices which will bring them added value in the long-term," Al Balushi further stated.

As the number of new entrants to the labour market increases, ahlbank looks to provide the best services that enhance its preferred status. This scheme is an effective step that reflects the Bank's contribution to supporting the financial stability efforts of beneficiaries, thereby enhancing the economic and social level for individuals and society at large.

Toyota's summer thrills campaign ending soon

MUSCAT: Customers planning to own a Toyota can make the most the summer thrills campaign that will end soon. As part of the campaign, customers can benefit with service from 1 year/10,000 km up to 4 years / 40,000 km (whichever is earlier) and insurance 1 year or cash gift in lieu of insurance RO 125 to RO 450. The campaign is valid until September 15, 2022.

(Prospective buyers may be advised that the benefits vary between model variants, model year and manufacturing year. Terms & Conditions apply. Visit the showroom for exact details.)

Toyota has a wide range of vehicles in Oman that offers wider choices for customers. The range includes SUVs, sedans, hatchbacks, hybrids and pick-ups.

The SUV range includes the C-HR. The C-HR,



represents a leap forward in design, manufacturing and engineering for Toyota. The C-HR offers impressive fuel economy with 23.9 Km/L as per GSO Conformity Certificate and carries a Hybrid battery warranty of 8 years/160,000 km.

Specifications of vehicle imported from Toyota Motor Corporation are as per the GSO Conformity Certificate applicable to the model/grade.

Parameters such as vehicle weight, dimensions & fuel economy could vary from the

GSO Conformity Certificate due to fitment of dealer installed accessories. Pictures and colours shown may differ from actual specifications.

For the latest press releases, test drive requests and more, please visit www.toyotaoman.com, www.youtube.com/toyotaoman, www.facebook.com/toyotaoman, and instagram.com/toyotaomanofficial/. For any further details & to ascertain availability of stocks, please visit your nearest Toyota Showroom.

Khimji Ramdas honours 34 employees for dedicated service



MUSCAT: Promoting a people-centred approach has been the hallmark of the Khimji Ramdas (KR) Group. In a function held at its corporate office, 34 of its employees were recognised for their 20 years of service to the organisation. Of these, 16 are Omani employees from various business functions.

The tradition of recognising its employees started in 2010. KR directors and senior management team attended the function.

A healthy organisation is a reflection of its employee well-being, said Anil Khimji, Director, Khimji Ramdas Group. "We will continue to uphold the tradition recognising our employees, who are the greatest asset to

any organisation. Our goal is to significantly enhance the quality of life for our employees and their families.

We appreciate their dedication to the company goals, as we strive to establish a secure workplace, that engages them in their personal and professional development. Empowered employees create real change, and we strongly believe in our culture of empowering our staff at all levels, for their overall development. We are committed to being an equitable and inclusive organisation."

The Khimji Ramdas employee recognition initiative is part of the group's strategy to be an extended family wherein everyone carries

common values and works in an environment that constitutes an inclusive framework. The annual long service awards ceremony is part of the company's initiatives that recognises its employee's efforts and encourage them to scale new heights.

Khimji Ramdas Group has taken efforts to encourage its employees at all levels to give their best.

The employees are led by an able and highly experienced management, who in line with the goals of Oman Vision 2040, under the visionary guidance of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, emphasise on the importance of strengthening sustainable human development.

Oxy Oman awards outstanding general diploma graduates

MUSCAT: In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Oxy Oman representatives recently held an award ceremony to celebrate the achievements of the top 100 outstanding graduates from across the Sultanate of Oman who excelled in their 12th grade general diploma results.

The awards event was held at the Sheraton Hotel under the auspices of Dr Laila bint Ahmed al Najjar, Minister of Social Development, and the attendance of Dr Madeeha bint Ahmed al Shaibaniyah, Minister of Education. Steven

Lauver, President and General Manager at Oxy Oman, attended along with other senior executives representing the company.

The event recognised exceptional student academic performances on the general diploma for education in the academic year 2021/2022.

Oxy Oman awarded each of the graduates with Apple MacBook Air laptops. The event included musical and dance performances by school students, as well as a speech by one of the honoured graduates. The event hall also



hosted poster sessions by school students, who presented notable student projects in the sciences, art and literature fields.

This initiative continues Oxy Oman's collaboration with the Ministry of Education over the past years, as the company has sponsored yearly ceremonies to honour high achieving school students in Oxy Oman's concession areas. In 2019, Oxy Oman expanded the range of the honouring programme to cover all of the Sultanate of Oman, by awarding the top 100 outstanding

high school diploma graduates.

"We are excited to continue our nation-wide celebration for graduating students, as it highlights Oxy Oman's long-term focus on education as a central pillar for investment and development in Oman," said Lauver.

"We wish the graduates the best of luck with their higher education and career endeavours, and hope that Oxy Oman's recognition and award will inspire the graduates to innovate and excel as young Omani leaders."

Two-day Future Tech Event opens at OCEC



MUSCAT: The keenly-awaited Future Tech Event was inaugurated by HH Sayyid Fahar bin Fatik bin Fahar al Said at the Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre on September 12, 2022. The two-day event is taking place from 9 am to 4 pm.

Future Tech is held under the auspices of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology and is supported by the Central Bank of Oman, Oman Vision 2040 and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority. The Strategic Partners are Oman Banks Association, Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Oman Information Technology Society and Oman Society for Petroleum Services (OPAL).

Future Tech is the Sultanate of Oman's foremost B2B and B2G bespoke Technology Event. It is a definitive meeting place facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue with power packed networking opportunities among C-Level executives, leading industry experts, decision makers, policy makers and government officials from across the value chain to foster collaboration, discuss current challenges, business opportunities, develop market strategies, share knowledge and

identify solutions.

The Summit will feature an expansive line-up of stellar speakers, case studies, panel discussions, unique presentations providing access to a wealth of industry leading knowledge, sharing best practices and experiences, spotlighting trends, information exchange, insights and outlooks with actionable takeaways.

The Event will have over 50 speakers speaking at two Tracks of the Conference: 12-13 September — Track 1 on Tech (Cyber, AI, Cloud, Digital Transformation and more) 13 September — Track 2 on Banking & Fintech).

The Event will also feature a comprehensive B2B Expo with 70+ Exhibitors from over 10 countries showcasing an array of avant-garde solutions, latest technologies, unique launches, cost-effective products, services and solutions.

The Exhibitors span from over 10 countries such as United Arab Emirates, Kingdom of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, India, Pakistan, Lebanon, Turkey, Malaysia, Poland, Estonia, and the Jordan pavilion for the first time in Oman.

EthisX's crowdfunding campaign features Oman's tailor chain

JOMAR MENDOZA

@JmObserver

EthisX, part of Ethis Group, has launched its first peer-2-peer (P2P) crowdfunding campaign in the Sultanate of Oman for Al-Naamani, one of the oldest tailor chains in the country. The campaign, which hopes to raise RO 100,000, will run for one year and is expected to fund the expansion of Al-Naamani's business through the purchase and direct import of filament and spun fabric from Indonesia, Korea and Japan.

Mazin bin Humaid bin Khalfan al Mahrrouqi, CEO of Mazin Humaid Al Mahrrouqi Trading LLC, who fully acquired the Al-Naamani tailor business in 2021, said: "EthisX has a flexible financing scheme that fits our business requirements. The team is incredibly sharp and analytical, and their due diligence and risk analysis process was thorough, particularly on the specificity required for each campaign. It is truly an honour to be the first campaign launched on the EthisX platform, and as a local company, I hope our campaign will resonate well with fellow Omani investors."

Investors can join with just RO 250, and gain a competitive RO I (return on investment) of 10 per cent. "We have high hopes for this campaign, and we see it as an avenue for Omanis who would like to contribute back to the MSME ecosystem in the Sultanate of Oman," Al Mahrrouqi added.



(Image for illustration only)

Al-Naamani recorded an annual revenue of more than RO 300,000 in 2021 despite the challenges brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The first-of-its-kind cross-border Ethical Private Capital Marketplace, EthisX offers direct shariah-compliant investments into SME companies and special purpose vehicle (SPV) projects from Oman around the globe.

EthisX crowdfunding platform, launched in Oman on June 23, 2022, allows companies to raise funds through equity crowdfunding (ECF) and peer-2-peer financing that includes sukuk and micro-sukuk. Approved by the Capital Market Authority (CMA), EthisX is managed by Ethis Investment Platform LLC based out of Muscat and in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Riza Ismail, Chief Operating Officer of EthisX said, "For EthisX, we are fully focused on bringing in new sources of capital into Oman by tapping on local Omani investors but more importantly our global base of investors from more than 80 countries," "Through EthisX, we are well-positioned to support Omani businesses attract sizable FDI to enable the country to move on a new path of development based on investments, production and exports that will help the country in dealing with its two greatest challenges: economic diversification and job creation, in the post-pandemic era," she said.

On the other hand, Dr Yousuf bin Hamed al Balushi, Chief Economist of the Oman Vision 2040, said, "The need for new sources of capital aligns with

ETHISX CROWDFUNDING PLATFORM, LAUNCHED IN OMAN ON JUNE 23, 2022, ALLOWS COMPANIES TO RAISE FUNDS THROUGH EQUITY CROWDFUNDING (ECF) AND PEER-2-PEER FINANCING THAT INCLUDES SUKUK AND MICRO-SUKUK. APPROVED BY THE CAPITAL MARKET AUTHORITY (CMA), ETHISX IS MANAGED BY ETHIS INVESTMENT PLATFORM LLC BASED OUT OF MUSCAT AND IN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA.

Oman vision 2040 and this calls for a change in key elements and factors that determine the future growth of businesses in Oman, including capital, and this can be obtained from foreign direct investments and local private sources.

Established in 1979, Al-Naamani is one of the oldest tailor chains in the Sultanate of Oman. It provides made-to-measure tailoring and ready-to-wear for the formal and casual Omani menswear, the dishdasha similar to a thobe, and which is obligatory to be worn in all official places, and culturally, also worn daily. Al-Naamani has a total of 30 branches spread across the Sultanate of Oman, covering major cities. They also sell their ready-made dishdashas to some prominent hypermarkets in the Sultanate of Oman.

GOVERNANCE FOR A HEALTHY ECONOMY



DANI RODRIK

The author, Professor of International Political Economy at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, is President of the International Economic Association and the author of "Straight Talk on Trade: Ideas for a Sane World Economy" (Princeton University Press, 2017).

ADDRESSING THE WORLD'S BIGGEST CHALLENGES WILL REQUIRE A COMPLETELY NEW POLICYMAKING PARADIGM, ONE THAT LOOKS PAST ALL THE OLD ARGUMENTS ABOUT THE SUPPOSED INHERENT LIMITS OF GOVERNMENT AND THE DICHOTOMY BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS.

Our world is undergoing an economic transition that will require effective government actions on many fronts to manage climate change, ensure better public health, and rebuild our middle classes through good jobs and innovations. But are our governments up to the tasks?

There is near-universal scepticism about governments' ability to achieve positive changes. Such doubts are well-placed. Polarisation and authoritarian populism – which are mutually reinforcing – have overrun the public sphere in many countries and undermined societies' capacity to mount collective actions, both domestic and multilateral, against common problems.

Moreover, a long-standing concern about government is that it has neither sufficient information nor the capabilities necessary to achieve positive structural changes in the economy. Give governments too much power, the argument goes and they will direct resources toward the wrong places and become captive tools of special interests. This argument lies at the heart of neoliberalism, and it will have to be overcome for any successful paradigm – like productivism – to succeed.

A more accurate account of government capabilities recognises that they are neither inherited nor static. Rather, once

appropriate priorities have been set, capabilities develop over time through experience, learning, and trust-building with private entities. For public officials, the relevant question is not "Do we have the capacity?," but "Have we established the right priorities and the correct mode of governance?"

Sceptics might say that this sounds good in theory but remains unachievable in practice. Just look around, and you can find failures of public governance almost everywhere – locally, nationally, and globally. But, in fact, as Columbia Law School's Charles Sabel and David Victor of the University of California, San Diego, show in a new book, effective governance models do exist and have already made a big difference.

The practice is there; it is the theory that is lacking. Sabel and Victor focus on climate change, which is the greatest policy challenge of our time. It is also an area where governance is doubly difficult: Regulations must not only be effective at the national level; they also must be negotiated globally among states different interests and circumstances.

Sabel and Victor build their argument on the example of the 1987 Montreal Protocol, which has succeeded in curbing ozone-depleting substances (ODS) to the point where the ozone layer is on course to full recovery. From the outset, ozone depletion and climate change looked like

similar challenges, because both involve significant scientific and technological uncertainties and differences among the positions of advanced and developing economies. That is why the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – the first global climate agreement – took the Montreal Protocol as its model.

The Montreal Protocol and UNFCCC both started out as very "thin" regimes, relying on broad commitments to cut emissions – of ODS and greenhouse gases, respectively – by a certain date, but with little operational content. But the two regimes evolved very differently. While the Montreal Protocol made steady progress by bringing firms and governments together to tackle concrete technological problems, climate-change agreements have frequently ended up stalled in global negotiations.

Sabel and Victor call attention to a key difference between the two regimes: the Montreal Protocol created sectoral committees in which ODS-emitting firms joined national regulators and scientists in seeking technological alternatives.

These groups started small, but they expanded and multiplied as knowledge was accumulated, capabilities were acquired, and trust was built among parties. This approach worked because the actual problem solving was devolved to local actors – namely,

the firms with the requisite technological know-how. When innovation stalled, targets were reset. The result was a virtuous loop of on-the-ground innovation and top-level goal setting.

Under the climate regime by contrast, firms have been kept at arm's length from regulators, owing to fears that they would capture the process. But this has entrenched conflicts of interest and hampered innovation. The Montreal Protocol is not the only successful case of what Sabel and Victor call, "experimental governance."

Additional examples can be found across a wide range of national and sub-national programmes, from the US Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy (ARPA-E) to Ireland's agricultural-pollution regime. In each case, ground-level experimentation is coupled with higher-level goal settings. The successful practices that emerge from such collaborations are then routinised through dissemination and standard setting.

Nor are the success stories limited to environmental policy. ARPA-E, after all, is modelled after the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), the US agency that is responsible for some of the landmark innovations of our time, including the Internet and GPS. At the local level, the most successful initiatives to revitalise communities and create jobs

take the form of private-public collaborations that bring together training programmes, businesses, non-profit groups, and public officials to create new pathways to economic opportunity. Effective national industrial policies take a similar collaborative, cross-sectoral approach.

As Sabel and Victor explain, the general strategy in all these domains is to start out with ambitious, somewhat ill-defined goals.

Programme leaders must acknowledge the deep uncertainty and hence the likelihood of mistakes and false starts. There must be incentives for the parties with the most detailed and accurate information – typically firms – to look for solutions, which means that public agencies must establish some combination of sticks (threats of regulations) and carrots (incentives and public inputs).

Since success depends on frequent reassessments and revisions, setting milestones and monitoring progress is crucial. When solutions do emerge, they can be generalised in the form of standards or regulations. Innovation lies at the centre of this process, because higher living standards (including a cleaner environment and better jobs) are possible only through enhanced productivity. This kind of policymaking differs significantly from the prevailing approaches.

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- Candidate should have experience in Road, Sewage, Pipeline, Telecom Networking, Electrical works in the Sultanate of Oman.
- Should have worked with MOTC, Municipalities, Madayan and other related Govt. Bodies.
- Should be able to liaise with the Govt. Authorities.
- Should be willing to lead team of qualified engineers.
- Should be a qualified Civil Engineer with qualifications in Mechanical Engineering will be an added advantage.
- Should have 25 years of work experience.

2. PROJECT ENGINEER - 1 No.

- Candidate should have experience in Construction of Roads and other civil works in the Sultanate of Oman.
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'Italian Emotions in Oman' documents beautiful scenes of the country

The exhibition "Italian Emotions in Oman" by Italian artist Pietro Palummieri is currently on display at Bait Al Zubair in Muscat and will continue until Thursday, September 29, 2022... **P20**

Spanish author Javier Marias dies aged 70



SPANISH WRITER JAVIER Marias, whose work has been translated into more than 40 languages in nearly 60 countries, died on Sunday in Madrid at the age of 70 after suffering from pneumonia, his publisher said.

"With enormous sadness, in our name and on behalf of the family, we regret to announce that our great author and friend Javier Marias passed away this afternoon in Madrid," Alfaguara said in a statement.

The statement said he had been suffering "for several weeks from pneumonia which worsened in recent hours".

The *El Mundo* daily said the pneumonia was "caused by Covid-19" and that the author had been hospitalised for months.

Born in Madrid on September 20, 1951, the Madrid-based author, considered one of the great authors of contemporary Spanish literature, published his 16th novel *Tomas Nevinson* last year.

His best-known works include "All Souls" (1989), "A Heart so White" (1993), which brought him critical acclaim, and "Tomorrow in the Battle Think on Me".

A member of the Royal Spanish Academy of Language since 2008, Javier Marias spoke fluent French and English.

A passionate film-maker and Real Madrid fan, he was also, despite republican principles, the ruler of the fictional kingdom of Redonda — an uninhabited islet in the Lesser Antilles.

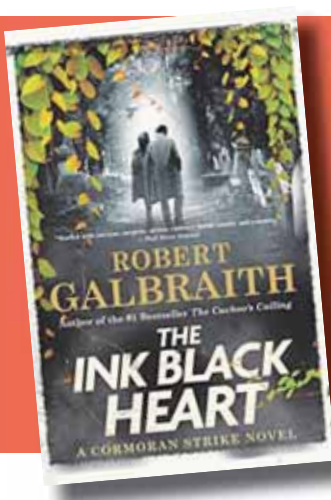
According to *El Pais* daily, he underwent an operation on his back shortly before the coronavirus pandemic. — **AFP**

READ

THE INK BLACK HEART

BY ROBERT GALBRAITH

The sixth book in the Cormoran Strike series. When a cartoonist is murdered, Cormoran and Robin go after a mysterious online figure known as Anomie.



FASHION TREND

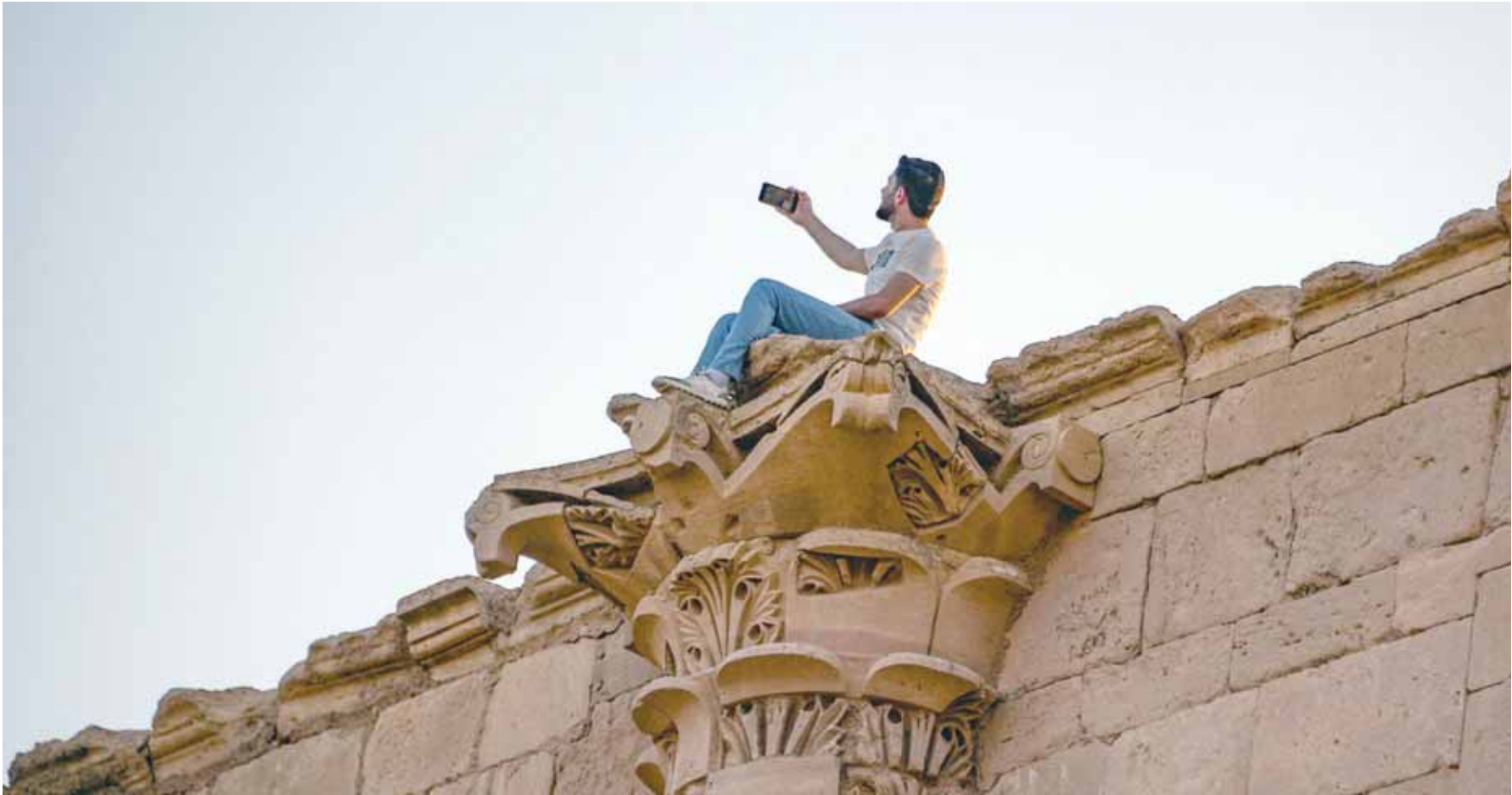
Models walk the runway for Tommy Hilfiger during New York Fashion Week in New York City. — **AFP**



CHANGING WORLD

Coral reefs in Matemwe, Zanzibar. Failing to achieve the Paris agreement goal of limiting global warming to 1.5C could trigger multiple dangerous "tipping points" where changes to climate systems become self-sustaining, according to a major new study published in *Science*. — **AFP**





Iraq ancient ruins open up to tourism after militant atrocities

STROLLING ALONG the ancient ruins of Hatra in Iraq's north, dozens of visitors admired the site, where local initiatives seek to turn over a new leaf after a brief but brutal jihadist rule.

Designated an endangered world heritage site by UNESCO, Hatra dates back to the 2nd and 3rd centuries BC.

It is a two-hour drive from Mosul, the former "capital" proclaimed by the IS group, which was recaptured in 2017 by Iraqi forces and an international coalition that backed them.

A tour of the site on Saturday, the first of its kind organised by a private museum in Mosul, aimed to boost tourism in the area.

Some 40 visitors, most of them Iraqis, were allowed to walk around the more than 2,000-year-old archaeological site in the golden hour of twilight.

The tourists took selfies in front of impressive colonnades and inspected the reliefs vandalised by IS jihadists.

"It has great history" allowing a peek into an ancient civilisation, said Luna Batota, a 33-year-old on tour with her Belgian husband.

"A lot of history but at the same time a lot of unfortunate events took place here with IS," she told AFP.

Batota works for a pharmaceutical company in Belgium, where she has lived since the age of nine.

Twenty-four years later, this is the first time she returns to her homeland.

Visiting Hatra stirred up "mixed feelings" for her, she said. "You see bullet holes, you see many empty bullets."

An important religious and trading centre under the Parthian empire, Hatra had imposing fortifications and magnificent temples, blending Greek and Roman architectural styles with oriental decorative elements.

In 2015, IS released a video showing its militants destroying a series of reliefs, firing at them and hacking away at a statue with a pickaxe.

In February, the authorities unveiled three restorations at the site: a Roman-style sculpture of a life-size figure and reliefs on the

side of the great temple.

'NOT ONLY WAR'

Five years after the defeat of IS, Mosul and its surroundings have regained a sense of normalcy, even as rehabilitation efforts suffer setbacks and many areas still bear the scars of the fight against the jihadists.

The tour of Hatra was organised by the Mosul Heritage House, a private museum inaugurated in June.

But even before it, the site drew

After its rise to power in 2014 and the conquest of swathes of Iraq and Syria, IS faced counteroffensives in both countries. Iraqi forces finally claimed victory in late 2017.

As Iraq gradually opens up to foreign tourism, dozens of visitors — particularly from the West — are now exploring the country, with some even venturing into Mosul.

The Hatra group are pioneers, visiting at a time when the US, British and other governments are warning their citizens against

to 15 years in jail over pottery shards he picked at an archaeological site, before a court in July overturned the sentence and he flew back home.

Religious tourism to the Shiite holy cities of Karbala and Najaf has been thriving, mostly from Iran. However, challenges remain and tourist infrastructure is still basic in Iraq, a country rich in oil but ravaged by decades of fighting.

"Mosul isn't only war, IS, terrorism," said Beriar Bahaa al-Din, a doctoral student in anthropology



individual visitors, according to one of the organisers, Fares Abdel Sattar, a 60-year-old engineer.

This new initiative seeks to "showcase the heritage and identity" of Mosul and its broader Nineveh province, he said.

travel to Iraq, citing the risks of terrorism, kidnapping, armed conflict and civil unrest.

The tourism sector also suffered a setback with the case of British pensioner James Fitton, who was detained and condemned

at the University of Exeter in Britain, on the Hatra visit.

"Mosul is a civilisation, heritage, culture," he added.

"This impressive site should be full of tourists from across the globe." — **AFP**

A LOOK INTO THE ACADEME



Dr Zainab al Ajmi
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Youth Skills and Its Implication in Their Educational Excellence

EDUCATION IS an indispensable tool for the upbringing of youth in society, as well as the acquisition of learning skills at an early age is a youth pathway to thriving.

Moreover, research results indicate that pupils who attend school with specific early skills are more fortunate than their peers in terms of academic achievement in the future.

Simultaneously, young people's early skills are gaining momentum and popularity in the field of public education, where education specialists and policymakers are studying various methods and techniques to bridge the gap in academic achievement in all countries of the world.

Growing studies and research assert future learning paths are often shaped during the early years of a person's life, as young children learn substantial skills that serve as the foundation for their academic development, and primary experiences.

Moreover, the American Institute for Research (2021), stated that students may display academic and non-academic behaviours that predict their educational future as early as their school years. Such reports show that teachers can monitor several early skills in children to predict success or failure in their subsequent academic lives and then ultimately success. Even more so, considering that these early skills implicate adapting to changing situations, according to the Center on the Developing Youth (2022) there are five core skills that youth must have, as follows: Planning, being able to make concrete plans, carrying them out, and set and meet the goal. Focus, concentrating on what's most important at any given time. Self-Control, controlling how to respond to emotions and stressful situations.

Awareness, noticing people and situations around them, and how they all fit into the picture. Flexibility, ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Therefore, it's essential to inculcate these skills through the adoption of a comprehensive programme that is national in scope.

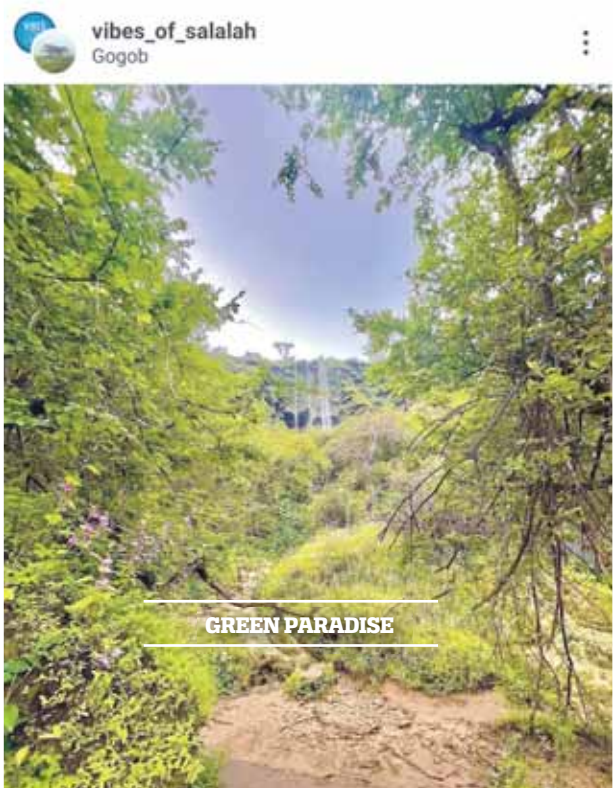
Formulating a learning plan for youth skills is the first step to enhancing the skills that aim to improve the understanding of what works for youth, the American Institute for Research (2021) has suggested three priorities for evidence building as follows: First and foremost, needed to partner with youth to learn with and from them about how to best support them on a path to opportunity and thriving. Second, understand better how to cost-effectively scale up and provide more programme options and services for opportunity youth, for instance: "Oman Entrepreneur System", and "Youth Development Programs" in Oman-Finally, needed to expand the evidence base to study real-world settings and programmes, and apply more innovative research methods to use this information for rapid improvement. Some of these plans were implemented at the "Youth Centre" established by HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports, and Youth in 2021, to empower youth to effectively contribute to the comprehensive development within the context of Oman Vision 2040.

To sum up, the Optimal development of young people's initial skills is a milestone in their future. Enables them to lead a healthy, and productive life, as youth and later as adults, because they gain the competence to earn a living, engage in civic activities, and excel in their jobs.



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AROUND THE WORLD

DISCOVERY

Donkey domestication happened 7,000 years ago in Africa: DNA study



DESPITE TRANSFORMING history as beasts of burden essential for transporting goods and people, the humble donkey has long been woefully understudied.

But scientists on Thursday took a big step towards clarifying the species' origins with a comprehensive genomic analysis of 238 ancient and modern donkeys, finding they were likely domesticated in a single event in eastern Africa some 7,000 years ago.

The paper, published in the journal *Science*, was the result of an international collaboration led by Evelyn Todd at the Centre for Anthropobiology and Genomics of Toulouse, France.

"Donkeys subsequently spread into Eurasia from ~2500 BCE, and Central and Eastern Asian subpopulations differentiated ~2000 to 1000 BCE," the team wrote.

Eventually, lineages from Europe and the Near East backbred into western African donkey populations.

Horses, their equid cousins, are believed on the other hand to have been domesticated twice -- the first time around 6,000 years ago in the western Eurasian steppes.

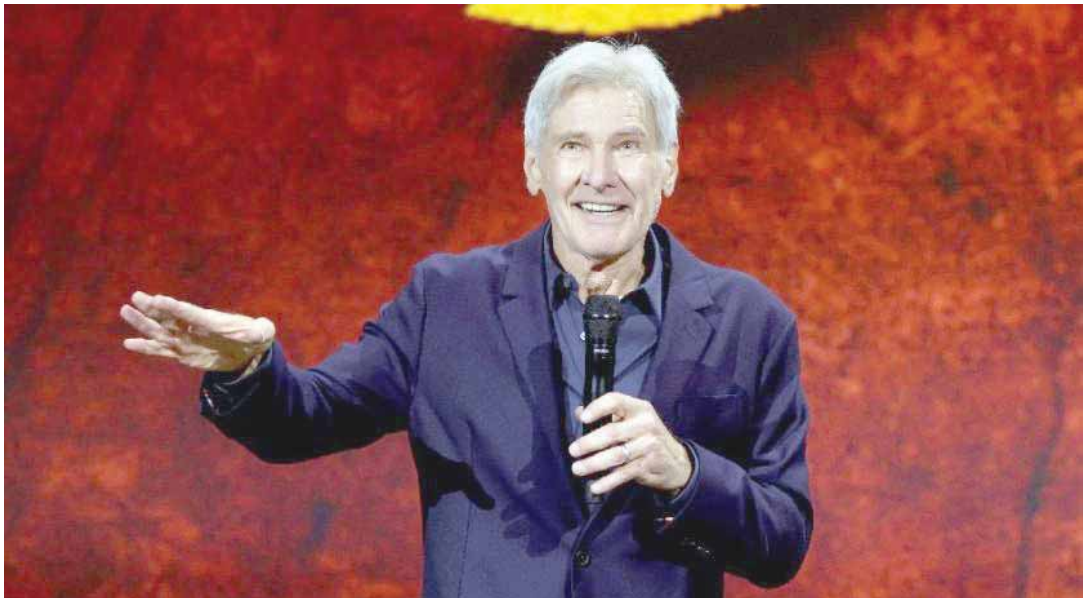
The donkey DNA study included three jennies (females) and six jacks (males) from an ancient Roman site in France who were closely interbred.

The authors suggest that Romans bred improved donkey bloodlines to produce mules that were essential to sustaining the military and economic might of the empire.

Donkeys were vital to the development of ancient societies and remain important in middle and lower income countries, but lost their status and utility in modern industrial societies, perhaps explaining why they were neglected by science. — AFP

ENTERTAINMENT

Standing ovation as Harrison Ford presents new 'Indiana Jones' at Disney expo



AN EMOTIONAL Harrison Ford on Thursday unveiled a new trailer for the highly anticipated fifth "Indiana Jones" film on the second day of Disney's biennial D23 Expo, choking up as he described the movie as "fantastic."

Thousands of fans from around the world flocked to the entertainment giant's biggest party held in Anaheim, California, to see their favourite characters brought to life and watch the first images of long-awaited movies and series.

The second day of the expo began with a preview of what Disney, Lucasfilm, Marvel and 20th Century Studios have in store for the coming months.

Eighty-year-old Ford received a standing ovation from some 6,000 attendees as he presented a teaser for the new "Indiana Jones" film, which also stars Phoebe Waller-Bridge.

"I'm very proud to say that this one is fantastic," said Ford, choking back tears.

"And this is one of the reasons," he added, pointing at Waller-Bridge.

"Keeping up with this guy is exhausting," replied the British actress.

'VERY EXCITING'

Lucasfilm unveiled a teaser trailer for its popular space western series "The Mandalorian," with actors Pedro Pascal, Giancarlo Esposito and Katee Sackhoff received warmly by the audience.

Another highlight was a trailer for the upcoming "Star Wars" series "Andor," a "Rogue One" spinoff based

on adventures of rebel spy character Cassian Andor, played by Diego Luna.

Mexico's Luna, also an executive producer on the project, addressed the audience in Spanish, to applause.

Other teasers featured Jude Law in "Skeleton Crew," Christian Slater in "Willow" and Jon Favreau in "Ahsoka."

There were also previews of "Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania," premiering in 2023, with an all-star cast that includes Paul Rudd, Michelle Pfeiffer, Michael Douglas and Bill Murray, as well as of the Halloween special "Werewolf by Night," starring Gael Garcia Bernal.

Marvel Studios pulled the curtain back on the second season of the series "Loki," starring Tom Hiddleston, who flew in from Britain, where the episodes are being filmed, to attend the expo.

Fans also got a snapshot of "The Marvels," starring Brie Larson, as well as a teaser for "Thunderbolts," featuring Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Florence Pugh.

Finally, with the help of 3D glasses, attendees got to immerse themselves in the world of "Avatar: The Way of Water," the long-awaited sequel to James Cameron's "Avatar."

"I wasn't expecting this," said Peter Farrow, who travelled to Anaheim from San Francisco.

"I got here at five in the morning today and even with high expectations I didn't expect this, it's very exciting."

'WE ALL ACCEPT EACH OTHER'

The festivities began on Friday at the vast Anaheim Convention Center.

Celebrating its centennial, Disney said it will include "100 Years of Wonder" in its logo and introduced fans to Disney100: The Exhibition, which tells the story of the company founded in October 1923 by Walt Disney and his brother Roy Disney.

A prominent part of the exhibition: the Mickey Mouse One, an aircraft that belonged to Walt Disney himself.

Thousands of fans of "the happiest place on Earth" lined up early to get a taste of all on offer.

Princesses and Peter Pan, witches, storm troopers and an array of fantastical creatures filled the halls as the Expo -- normally held every two years but cancelled last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic -- returned.

"Feels like I've got to get emotional, because I've been so looking forward to come back," said actor Allen Waiserman, who arrived on opening day disguised as Cinderella's wicked step-mother.

Waiserman said he had worked for months on his outfit, and the transformation on Friday took five hours.

"It's not just about the Disney brand anymore. It's about all the fans that we've met, who become like family for us -- who accept you for whoever you are," he said.

"All of my friends here accept me for being dressed in drag," he added.

"We're just so happy to be back together." D23 runs through Sunday. — AFP

A WINDOW INTO CONTEMPORARY OMANI LITERATURE



Dr Khalid Mohammed al Balushi
khalidalbalushi@hotmail.com

Patrolling the Summit of the Valley

THE FOLLOWING is my English translation of excerpts from "A Soldier from Oman: Memory's Nectar" by (ret.) Inspector-General Said bin Rashid Al Kalbani:

We were given three vans, but were not allowed to sit in them. The drivers were given orders not to operate the engines or even the lights, so that we wouldn't come to be noticed. Accordingly, we pushed the vans with as much strength as we could muster from the runway to the town of Salalah. The aim was to arrest a number of men wanted by the authorities. We were divided into groups and were ordered to go to different sites. At dawn we were fired at, but being ready, we dealt with the situation with all determination and courage. We arrested 35 people, and handed them over to the authorities.

After drinking tea in the morning in the same place, we returned to our location in the station, where we had lunch. In the evening we went towards Wadi Adonab, the exit to Resut Port. The vans left us at the end of the valley to patrol the mountain the following day. We then returned to the headquarters in Jarbeeb, top of Awqad, the gateway to Wadi Resham. The vans were supposed to return in the evening to the same point where they left us, bringing us our lunch.

In the morning of the following day, we went out to patrol the summit of the valley. We arrived 6 at the spot where Said bin Najeeh, a well-known Dhofari revolutionary, may Allah have mercy upon him, got injured. (He then surrendered to

the government, and was later employed in the Political Section, military intelligence, as a guide to the armed forces). We also saw the water gathering at the foot of the mount in the north. Divided into two groups, some of us got down to fill the water containers, while the others went on guard.

I remember a number of women nearby giving water to their cattle. Corp. Doshambah took the initiative and asked them if he could buy one of their cattle. The women, however, gracefully offered a sheep to him free of charge. We said to him that the sheep was unpalatable, and perhaps, diseased. He, nonetheless, carried it till we reached the site. Because the van supposed to bring us food didn't come, Doshambah slaughtered the sheep and barbecued it. Some of us were forced to eat it despite what they had said earlier about it.

With the sunset we received a telegraph stating that the van to bring us food had been hit in a mine explosion in the middle of Wadi Adonab. It had broken down, and the food in it had gone bad; consequently, we had to spend our night in the site.

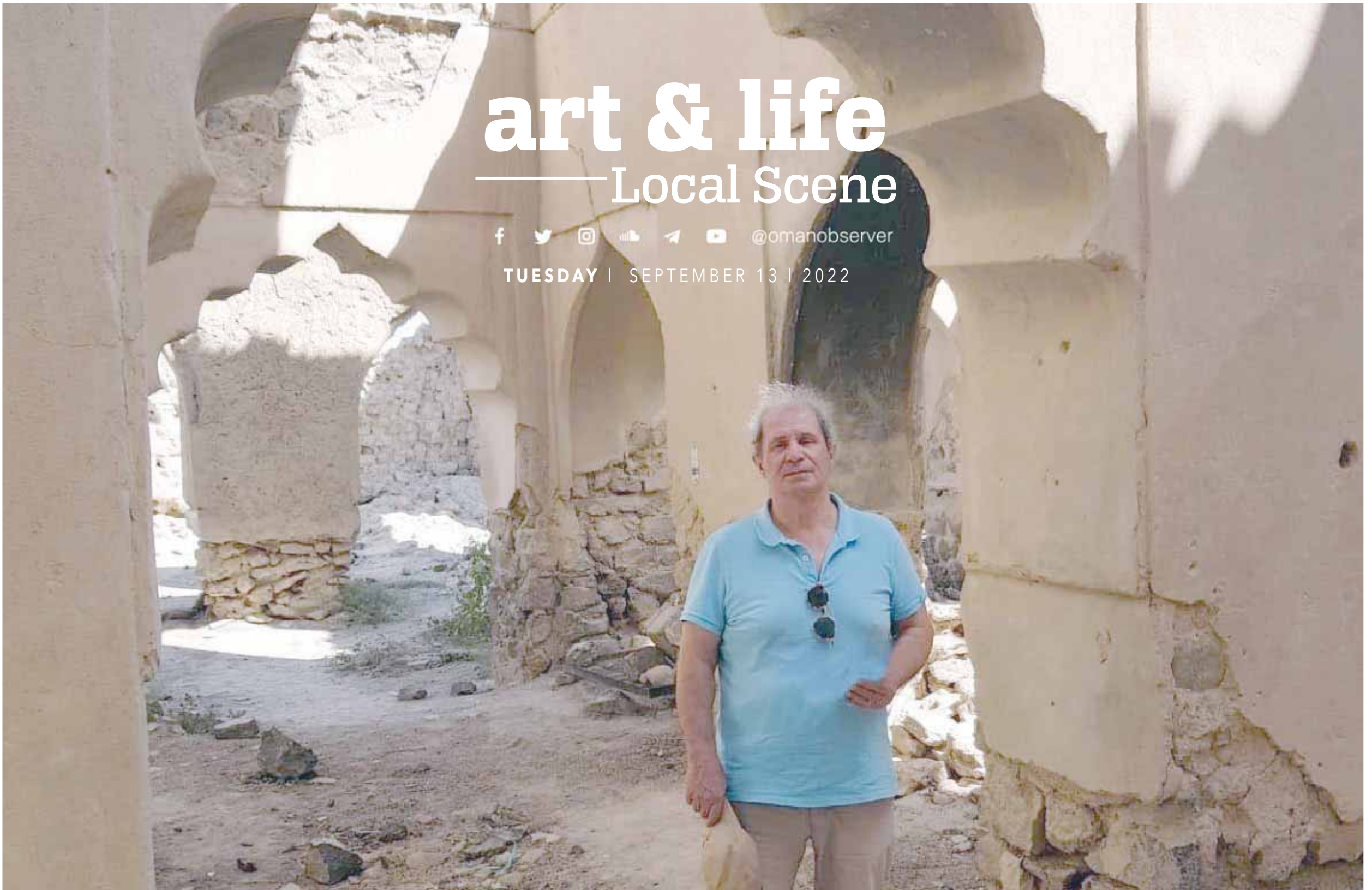
In the morning, all those who had eaten the mutton began to complain of stomach pain; some even vomited. The arrival of food in a vehicle later made us forget all that, however. We had our brunch and then went back on the same van to the camp in Jarbeeb, where we spent ten days, carrying out patrols, keeping the guard, climbing the mountain in daylight and carrying out ambushes at night.

art & life

Local Scene

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TUESDAY | SEPTEMBER 13 | 2022



'Italian Emotions in Oman' documents beautiful scenes of the country

By Staff Writer

Italian artist Pietro Palummieri, artistically known as Palù, is a sculptor and painter of Apulian origin in Italy. He lives in Maruggio, in the province of Taranto, where he captures his primary inspiration from the local territory to create his art pieces. When he came to visit Oman and checked out many of its old villages, Pietro was inspired to embark on a journey to understand the country and the villages better.

His gallivanting all over Oman has resulted in dozens of artworks which he is now on display at Bait Al Zubair in partnership with the Embassy of Italy in Oman.

Titled "Italian Emotions in Oman," Pietro said that he has a deep sense of respect for the villages in Oman as they reminded him a lot of his own city of Puglia located in the Southern Part of Italy.

"I have visited many wilayats and villages in Oman, especially those

in the interior region, and was very moved by the buildings and historic buildings in them," he shared.

"I come from the city of Puglia in South of Italy which is the touristic city holding a lot of historic and heritage buildings, I felt the sentiment of being as if in Italy whilst visiting many local Omani cities such as Izki, Al Hamra and Manah, along with the Wilayat of Ibra and many more," he added.

Pietro documented his visits to different Oman locations by artistically recreating them all of which can be seen throughout the exhibition. Pietro said that the exhibition will hold over 50 art pieces and they not only showcase the beauty of the cities and villages of the Sultanate of Oman but preserve them for the future generation to see.

The paintings range from natural landscapes and historic buildings to other natural scenes such as plants, trees, beaches, and the sea along with numerous sculptures and figurines that the artist created during

his stay in Oman.

As an artist, even when he was in Italy, Pietro has always been inspired by the shapes within nature. The spiritual world crisscross in Palù's work gives life to an artistic and sensory voyage in the search of a private ambience.

An extremely prolific artist, he uses graphical and pictorial techniques very diverse from one another. Some of these are water-based colours, oil, and red lead pencil tips. For his sculptures, he utilises a special type of concrete using terracotta as a starting point.

He has participated in art exhibitions worldwide and has visited Oman recently which opened the door for him to enjoy and explore the beauty of Oman.

The exhibition "Italian Emotions in Oman" will continue until Thursday, September 29, 2022, at Bait Al Zubair in Muscat, and visitors can see the exhibition during opening hours from Saturday to Thursday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

