

Oman least exposed to terrorism in world

Oman, Qatar, UAE and Kuwait continue to score zero and get the lowest rank in Global Terrorism Index

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman, along with the GCC states of Qatar, UAE and Kuwait, is least exposed to terrorism, reveals the 2022 Global Terrorism Index (GTI), developed by international think tank the Institute of Economics and Peace.

These four GCC states continue to score zero and get the lowest rank (93rd) in the GTI. Bahrain is ranked 65th, while Saudi Arabia 54th.

GTI stated that despite an increase in attacks, the impact of terrorism continues to decline. In 2021, deaths from terrorism fell by 1.2 per cent to 7,142, while attacks rose by 17 per cent, highlighting that terrorism is becoming less lethal.

Two thirds of countries recorded no attacks or deaths



from terrorism – the best result since 2007 – while 86 countries recorded an improvement on their GTI score.

In MENA, deaths from terrorism have fallen by 39 per cent in the last three years. The region recorded an overall improvement in the impact of terrorism in last year, with 16 countries improving and three recording no change. Algeria was the only country to record a deterioration due to an increase in terror-related deaths. This is the fourth

year in a row that the region has improved.

Fatalities in MENA accounted for 39 per cent of the global total deaths from terrorism between 2007 and 2021. However, since the defeat of IS, the region's share of the global total has dropped substantially, and in 2021, it accounted for only 16 per cent of total deaths, behind South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Despite 13 terrorist groups claiming responsibility for at-

tacks in the region in 2021, 57 per cent or 727 attacks remain unclaimed by any known group.

In MENA, the largest improvement in fatalities last year was in Syria, which recorded 488 terrorism deaths, 236 fewer deaths compared to 2020, a decline of 33 per cent. The principal driver of these improvements was the reduction in attacks perpetrated by IS, which fell by 34 per cent.

The Index highlights that terrorism remains a serious threat, with sub-Saharan Africa accounting for 48 per cent of total global deaths from terrorism. Four of the ten countries with the largest increases in deaths from terrorism were also in sub-Saharan Africa: Niger, Mali, the DRC and Burkina Faso.

Following military defeats in Syria and Iraq, IS shifted its attention to the Sahel, with deaths from terrorism rising ten times in the region since 2007. The Sahel has become the new epicentre of terrorism.

The annual GTI, now in its ninth year, uses a number of factors to calculate its score, including the number of incidences, fatalities, injuries and hostages, and combines it with conflict and socio-economic data to provide a holistic picture of terrorism.

SAYYID SHIHAB RECEIVES CHIEF OF UK NAVAL STAFF



H H Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik bin Taimour al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, received in his office at Al Murtafa'a Garrison Admiral Sir Benjamin John Key, Chief of Naval Staff of the United Kingdom, on Sunday. The two sides discussed aspects of existing military cooperation between the two countries and means of enhancing these and several matters of common interest (ONA)

RO500 fine for scrap collection activities in residential areas

Our Correspondent
Muscat

H E Sayyid Saud bin Hilal al Busaidi, Minister of State and Governor of Muscat, issued a decision (No 67/2022) on Sunday to regulate the collection of scrap from residential neighbourhoods in Muscat.

The decision stipulates that a licence is needed to engage in scrap collection and handling activities, which must be renewed before expiry.

A licence is mandatory to engage in activities of scrap dealer-



ship after meeting the commercial registration requirements including a lease contract for the commercial entity established to conduct the business.

A licence fee of RO305 is col-

lected by the governorate at the time of application, including an application fee of RO5. The licence renewal fee is RO300.

Additionally, the establishment must pass a technical audit to ensure environmental safeguards and conditions are met.

The penalty for operating a scrap dealership without a licence ranges from RO50 and RO500 which is doubled for a repeat violation. Scrap from which steel and copper is extracted can be collected and traded only in industrial zones.

Continued on Page 03

NEWS BRIEF

OMAN VISION 2040 FOLLOW-UP UNIT, PDO SIGN MOC

Muscat - Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-Up Unit and Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) signed a memorandum of cooperation (MoC) on Sunday to support and enhance national efforts to implement Oman Vision 2040.

The MoC also aims to develop the abilities and experiences of those in-charge of the implementation and follow up of programmes and initiatives.

The MoC was signed by H E Dr Khamis Saif Al Jabri, chairman of the Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-Up Unit, and Steve Phimister, managing director of PDO.



Saudi Arabia drops most of its COVID-19 restrictions

Riyadh - With Saudi Arabia dropping most of its COVID-19 restrictions, including an outdoor mask mandate, worshippers performed dawn prayers without social distancing at Mecca's Grand Mosque on Sunday for the first time since COVID-19 measures were re-introduced on December 30, 2021.

People in Saudi Arabia are no longer required to wear masks or practice social distancing outdoors, state-run Saudi Press Agency reported, citing a statement issued by the interior ministry.

Social distancing is also no longer required in any area, including the Grand Mosque in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, although wearing masks indoors is still a must.



New paid parking lots will remain free till further notice



Jadeja's all-round heroics help India crush Sri Lanka

Heritage market in Muttrah fort, electric carts for visitors to souq in the pipeline

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Municipal Affairs Committee in the wilayat of Muttrah held its second meeting of 2022 on Sunday. On the agenda was a discussion on several proposed projects, including tourist activities held in Muttrah fort, establishment of a market for heritage products in it, setting up a tourist bus stop and connecting the fort to Muttrah Souq via an internal road allowing visitors to explore the popular market.

The committee held its meeting under the chairmanship of Ahmed bin Hilal al Busaidi, wali of Muttrah and chairman of its



Municipal Affairs Committee.

The meeting also finalised a decision to appoint Qalat Muttrah Company, which currently manages Muttrah Fort, to oper-

ate the proposed heritage market.

The proposed internal road connecting the fort and Muttrah souq will be developed to allow

visitors on foot and as riding as electric carts to enjoy a leisurely time exploring the traditional market.

In December 2021, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism signed an agreement with Qalat Muttrah Company to manage Muttrah Fort and the Grand House.

Sitting atop a rocky, narrow hill facing the sea and overlooking Sultan Qaboos Tourism Port, Muttrah Souq and the corniche, the fort has three circular towers – the biggest and tallest of which is built in its highest point. Of the two smaller towers, one lodging cannon is located in the fort's western end.

Muscat, Salalah airports earn ACI Airport Health Accreditation

Our Correspondent
Muscat

For the second year in a row, Muscat International Airport and Salalah Airport have obtained the Airports Council International (ACI) Airport Health Accreditation, based on a programme designed to assist airports by assessing new health measures and procedures introduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This certification recognises Muscat International Airport as well as Salalah Airport's commitment to prioritising health and safety measures in accordance with industry best practices and international health and safety protocols, a statement issued by

The certification recognises the two airports' commitment to prioritising health and safety

Oman Airports said.

The Airport Health Accreditation programme was established to restore confidence in travellers about the safety of airport facilities and the effectiveness of the precautionary measures implemented to prevent any risk to their health.

This accreditation is a recognition of all the COVID-19 measures that Oman Airports has been implementing since the onset of the pandemic.



ROADS, RAILS AND MORE

How can public transport be improved in Muscat?

SEND US ON OUR
NEW
WHATSAPP NO
91953774

**NOW ON
WHATSAPP**

Share your comment in not more than 50 words along with your full name, profession and front facing photo before next Sunday, 10am, via WhatsApp

Reema Bhatia
Teacher

Public transport in Muscat has improved much in the last few years with the introduction of online taxi services. Public buses are also affordable and safe. The transport network can be further enhanced by starting rail routes in the city and connecting it to neighbouring cities.



Mohan Anandan
Bank employee

An integrated metro rail network system will definitely settle all transport woes in Oman. It will bring in more visitors to the country to enhance its tourism potential. Additionally, metered taxi services must be made compulsory allowing more operators in this sector.



Sara Patel
Airline staff

Railways and metros can play a major role in fast development of a nation and connecting it. These can also run across borders into other GCC countries, enabling fast trade and business opportunities.



Ruskeen S
Sales manager

Public transport is a necessity for a developing country like Oman. Allow more app-based taxi services with reasonable fare. Currently, most taxis and Mwasalat buses cover only main highways. That should change to cover neighbouring towns and villages.



Vinod Raghavan
Media professional

Oman has some of the finest roads in the world and beautiful tourist sites that can also be explored by residents and expats using Mwasalat buses. But the services need to be expanded in some routes, like connecting Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre from Ruwi and Mabelah and merging routes No 2 and No 4 allowing more people to explore Old Muscat.



Jay Prakash
Private sector employee

All modes of public transport, especially buses, must have thermal imaging systems to record the temperature of commuters. Secondly, water stations should be set up at all stoppages in the public transport system. And thirdly, monthly passes should be introduced for students, women and office employees to encourage them to use bus services.



? **NEXT ON
YOUR SAY**

Following relaxation of most COVID-19 restrictions, are you still observing safety protocols?

The views stated here are those of the respondents and not endorsed by *Muscat Daily*. If you feel strongly about the issues discussed here, you can email your comments to muscattydaily@apexmedia.co.om Log on to our Facebook page or tweet us your comments on the issue



(Supplied photo)

be'ah decommissions Cell 1 of Barka Landfill

Muscat - be'ah announced that it has successfully completed the closing process of Cell 1 of Barka Landfill, South Batinah. This process is the second of its kind in the region and aims at controlling and extracting biogas emissions to prevent future pollution and minimise risks to the environment and human health.

The goal of closing the landfill cell is to reduce the amount of leachate produced from bio-processes, control the odour, and begin the safe disposal of biogas by burning or redirecting it to industrial use,' be'ah stated.

As standard practice, be'ah initiates final closing and decommissioning procedures of all landfills that reach their capacity in line with the best international environmental practices in the industry. Before closing, be'ah had stopped receiving municipal waste and discontinued operations in engineering Cell 1. Closing operations have been undertaken with the utmost care

to ensure the long-term protection of the surrounding environment by using insulating geosynthetic lining materials that prevent rainwater and oxygen from leaking into the cell, and these layers were also covered with a proper layer of soil and riprap for added protection.

In order to reduce the environmental impact of biogas emitted from landfills and their risks to human health, biogas emitted after closure as a result of the vital processes in the engineering cell are removed through an efficient extraction system. Chief among these gases is methane (CH₄), one of the main greenhouse gases and a key driver of global warming with a far superior potency compared to carbon dioxide (CO₂). Biogas is passed through a gas flaring unit designed to burn and dispose of gas emissions in accordance with the highest quality standards.

The extraction and collection

of biogas is crucial after closing any engineered landfill cell in order to prevent gas accumulation and pressure build-up inside the cell. Specially designed wells are built and used to extract and transfer the gas through a network of pipelines delivering it to a 2000m³/hour flaring unit (burning station). There, the energy recovery journey begins where, most commonly, biogas is used to generate electricity.

The design of the final cover of the closed cell is implemented in compliance with the requirements and design standards of the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Additionally, the site and the surrounding area will be subject to 30 years of continuous environmental monitoring, including groundwater and leachate monitoring.

Future uses of landfills may include transforming them into recreational parks, golf courses or other sports playgrounds.

Gen Nu'amani receives UK naval chief

Muscat - Adm Sir Benjamin Key, Chief of Naval Staff of the United Kingdom, arrived on a two-day visit to Oman on Sunday morning.

He was later received by H E Gen Sultan Mohammed al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office, at his office. The British guest expressed his appreciation for Oman's efforts in promoting cooperation to achieve the joint interests between the two countries.

The two sides reviewed the march of historic relations between Oman and the UK. They also discussed several matters of common interest.

Adm Key also visited Rear Adm Saif Nasser al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman, in his office at Al Murtafa'a Garrison.



Admiral Sir Benjamin Key, Chief of Naval Staff of the United Kingdom, arrived on a two-day visit to Oman on Sunday morning.

The two sides discussed several issues related to military cooperation between the two

countries and exchanged views of common interest. ONA

BACK TO SCHOOL AFTER LONG BREAK



Students of Imam Jaber bin Zaid School in Wattayah returned to classrooms on Sunday. Government schools reopened for all grades for face-to-face learning after a break of almost two years triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic (Syed Fasiuddin/Muscat Daily)

New paid parking lots will remain free till further notice

Muscat Municipality suspends opening of new paid parking areas in three locations

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The new paid parking lots in Ruwi, Al Khuwayr and Al Khoudh, which were suppose to start operations on Sunday have been suspended by Muscat Municipality until further notice.

A statement issued by Muscat Municipality said, 'Muscat Municipality has suspended the decision to start parking meters in some locations in Muscat which were to start on March 6.'

The areas include Al Khoudh



Market area behind the Ooredoo store, the area around Sultan Qaboos Mosque in Ruwi and Sultan Qaboos Street in southern Al Khuwayr and opposite commercial buildings.

Muscat Municipality added that these areas will have free parking until further notice.

Meanwhile, paid parking will be applicable in other areas daily from 8am to 1pm and from 4pm to 9pm, except Fridays, Saturdays and public holidays announced by the authorities.

Those who wish to reserve a parking slot can do so by sending an SMS to 90091 containing the car number, alphabetical code, and the time period required (in multiples of 30 minutes, to a maximum of 300 minutes). This can be extended following the same steps.

Users also have the option of reserving parking though the Baladiyeti app or via Muscat Municipality's website <http://www.mm.gov.om/> to obtain, renew a parking permit or inquire about/pay fines.



Omani delegation visits Lankan food processing plants

Colombo, Sri Lanka - An Omani business delegation, headed by Eng Ridha Juma al Saleh, chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), which is currently visiting Sri Lanka, reviewed the Sri Lankan experience in the field of tea and food production on Sunday.

The delegation toured two major factories in Colombo. It was briefed on the production stages, the technology and raw materials used in processing tea and other food items, as well as the standards of quality and the targeted export markets.

The Omani business delegation is accompanied by H E Omar Lebbe Ameer Ajwad, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Oman.

Ali bin Muslim al Badi, an Omani businessman, explained that the delegation's visit is aimed at maximising the benefits from the experience and expertise of these factories, technology used in packaging, mechanism used in marketing and promotion of their products, and the possibility of entering into commercial partnerships with the Sri Lankan trade industry.

ONA

EA uses drones to sow 250,000 wild seeds in Al Sarain Reserve

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In its ongoing campaign launched in January 2020 to plant 10mn wild trees in ten years, Environment Authority (EA) carried out a drive to sow 250,000 wild tree seeds using drones in the wilayat of Amerat, Muscat governorate, on Sunday.

"The authority's specialists used drones to disburse seeds of smar in the Al Sarain Reserve in Amerat in efforts to preserve biodiversity," an EA official said.

In August 2021, EA, in coop-



eration with Petroleum Development Oman, implemented a project to plant 1mn mangrove seeds in the wetland reserve in the wilayat of Mahout, Al Wusta governorate.

According to the EA official, the authority also planted 6,500 mangrove saplings in various coastal areas in 2020. Mangroves are considered very important in maintaining ecological balance and preserving beaches from erosion.

In Dhahirah, Environment Authority planted 7,600 wild trees in 2021.

MHT holds meeting for tourism representative offices of Oman

Our Correspondent
Muscat

As part of its efforts to promote Omani tourism and attract tourists, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MHT) opened an annual meeting of tourism repre-

sentative offices on Sunday.

The meeting includes the tourism representative offices of the ministry in targeted tourist markets (Gulf, Asian and European). The meeting will continue until Tuesday.

'The meeting aims to present the most important developments in the tourism sector in the sultanate, as well as tourism plans and projects, with the participation of Royal Oman Police and the most prominent partners of the tourism sector,' an MHT statement said.

Scrap collection in residential areas

Continued from Page 01

The decision bans dealers from collecting and buying scrap from residential areas. A fine of RO500 will be collected from dealers collecting scrap in residential areas and RO100 for non-Omanis in the profession.

The decision also specifies the type of scrap materials that are not allowed for collection without a written consent from whom it is acquired. To this end, Royal Oman Police has approved a list, describing items and quantities permissible as scrap.

The decision also states that a dealer licensed to work in scrap collection cannot assign his licence to anyone else and prohibits trading in stolen or unowned scrap.

WEATHER WATCH

	Max	Min
Abu Dhabi	35	23
Doha	29	21
Kuwait City	27	16
Manama	29	20
Muscat	31	23
Riyadh	34	18

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr	5.09am
Sunrise	6.24am
Duhr	12.23pm
Asr	3.46pm
Maghrib	6.17pm
Isha	7.27pm

الشركة العمانية المتحدة للتأمين ش.م.ع.ع

Oman United Insurance Co. S.A.O.G

Invitation to attend the Annual Ordinary General Meeting

The Board of Directors of Oman United Insurance Company SAOG have the pleasure to convene the honorable shareholders to attend the Annual Ordinary General Meeting scheduled to be held at 5:00 pm on Thursday, 31st March 2022 at the company's headquarter in Al Khuwair, (**meeting's room - mezzanine Floor**) and through the electronic platform designated for holding the annual general meeting which can be logged in through the website of Muscat Clearing and Depository Company (www.mcd.gov.om). In the event that the quorum for the above-mentioned meeting is not sufficient, then the second meeting of the Annual General Meeting will be held at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, 5th of April, 2022 at the company's headquarter in Al Khuwair, (**meeting's room - mezzanine Floor**) and through the above-mentioned electronic platform, to discuss the following agenda:

- To consider and approve the Company's Report for the year ended 31/12/2021.
- To consider and approve the Corporate Governance Report for the year ended 31/12/2021.
- To consider and approve the Auditor's Report and the financial statements for year ended 31/12/2021.
- To review and approve the proposal to distribute cash dividends of 35 Bzs. (at AGM Date) per share to the shareholders for the year ended 31/12/2021.
- To ratify the sitting fees paid to the Board of Directors and to the Board's subcommittees during the year ended 31/12/2021, and to determine and approve the sitting fees for the next year 2022.
- To consider and approve the proposed Board remuneration amounting to R.O (150,000) Rial Omani One Hundred & Fifty Thousand for the year ended 31/12/2021.
- To notify the shareholders with the related party transactions took place during the year ended 31/12/2021.
- To consider and approve the related party transactions which will be executed during the year 2022 (As attached).
- To notify the AGM of the donations paid to support the social services activities-CSR during the year ended 31/12/2021
- To consider and approve the proposal of allocating RO (50,000) Rial Omani Fifty Thousand to support the social services activities- CSR for the year ending 31/12/2022.
- To appoint Statutory Auditor for the year ending 31 December 2022, and approve their fees.

"According to the Circular NO. (E/25/2020) issued by the Capital Market Authority in respect of regulations of holding annual general meetings using the modern online technology, we would like to draw your attention to the following: -

(A) Juristic person, exclusively, has the right to authorize a natural person to attend the general meeting and vote on his behalf through online electronic platform, provided that this natural person has an investor number registered with the MCD.

(B) Voting on any of the items on the agenda begins no more than three days prior to the date of the meeting until the voting process ends on the day of the meeting. In the event that the shareholder's balance is increased or decreased, the voting process will be canceled and he will have to vote again in the day of the general meeting.

Please attend the venue or online at least 30 minutes prior to the AGM. For further information, please contact Mr. Moosa Bin Yahya Al Amri on phone No. 24477372 – Email: moosa@omanutd.com.

CHAIRMAN

EXTERNAL AUDITORS

LEGAL ADVISOR

Note: The Company deposits the amounts owed to the investors and whose beneficiaries did not receive them after the lapse of six months from the due date with the Investors' Trust Fund, so each shareholder is requested to approach the Muscat Clearing and Deposit Company to inquire about any amount owed to him.

There are amounts due for dividends that have not yet been delivered to some shareholders in the Investors Trust Fund, and accordingly, the Capital Market Authority invites you to approach Muscat Clearing and Depository Company to obtain these dues.

MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No. (5/2022)

specialized Companies in the field of tender shown below and registered with **Tender Board**, may obtain tender documents from the website through the following link: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) against non-refundable fees until the end of deadline stipulated below.

Tender No.	No E- Tender	Description of Tender	Tender Fee	Last date to collect the tender	Tender return date	Grade
PRE/21/061	2021/MM/ QS-20	Maintenance Works For A'SeeB Central Market (Re Call)(E- Tender)	Rial 25	26/03/2022	14/04/2022	First
PRE/21/099	2021/MM/ QS-37	Supply & Fixing Containers For Café In Wilayat A'Seeb (Re Call)(E- Tender)	Rial 25	26/03/2022	14/04/2022	Specialized
PRE/22/002	2022/MM/ QS-6	Construction of Sidewalk, Channel and Protection Work at Bousher (E- Tender)	Rial 25	26/03/2022	14/04/2022	First
PRE/22/007	2022/MM/ QS-7	Supply & Fixing Containers For Café In Wilayat Qurayyat (E- Tender)	Rial 25	26/03/2022	14/04/2022	Specialiset
PRE/22/014	2022/MM/ QS-8	RFP for Application and DBA Support for Orack EBS CRM (E- Tender)	Rial 35	26/03/2022	14/04/2022	Specialiset

Tender Conditions :-

- Bidders shall submit their offers electronically accompanied with an electronic copy of abond issued by any local bank in Oman addressed to Muscat municipality. The bond shall be (1%) of the tender value valid for ninety (90) days starting from the date of bids submission. Any tenders which do not meet the required bond shall not be accepted.
- Tender Bonds shall be E-Bond and to be submitted through E-Tendering system, addressed to Muscat Municipality.
- For any inquiries regarding tenders, please visit e-tendering website: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) .
- For technical support of e-tendering system please send an email to (etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om) or call (+96824402200).
- For technical support of E-Bond through e-tendering system please send an email to (esnad@gstb.gov.om) or call (+96824402200 / 24402330).



Indian Schools Film Fest concludes amid fanfare

The third edition of Indian Schools Film Fest concluded at a glittering function organised by Indian School Al Maabela on February 26 at the school auditorium.

Dr Khalid al Zidjali, president of Cinemana Arab Film Festival and vice president of the General Arab Union of Artists graced the occasion as chief guest and Shweta Menon, renowned Indian film actress was present as a special guest, a press release said.

Dr Sivakumar Manickam, chairman, Board of Directors, Indian Schools in Oman, presided over the function while other present included Syed Salman, vice chairman and director in charge of Indian School Al Maabela, and Sirajudeen Nhelat, academic chair of the Indian School Board.

The function commenced with the lighting of the lamp and a prayer song sung by the school choir. Following a welcome by Sujith Kumar, president of School Management Committee, Glimpses of ISFF 2021 encompassing the journey of ISFF 2021 from its launch to the valedictory function, was screened through



a presentation.

Oblivion, directed by team Indian School Al Wadi Al Kabir, won the top honour of the Best Movie award whereas Addicted, directed by team Indian School Muscat, received the #OMG Award.

Indian School Al Maabela topped the list of individual awards by lifting the trophies for the Best Film Craft, Best Print Craft, Best Digital Design and the Green Globe Award.

Indian School Salalah won two awards for the Best Music Film and the Best Entertainment

Award. Indian School Sur also won two awards - Best Editing and Best Creative Technology.

Best Documentary Award was won by two schools - Madinat Al Sultan Qaboos Private School for the film Our Beautiful Oman and Asaad Bin Zararah School for the film Picturesque of Oman. Indian School Sohar lifted the Best Lecture Award, while the Creative Effectiveness Award was won by Indian School Rustaq and Indian School Ibri.

While congratulating the organising School and the participants of the Indian Schools Film

Festival, Dr Manickam said, "ISFF 2021 has been remarkably successful in harnessing the creative prowess of the young minds and you have opened the avenues of the Film Fest to faculties, parents and other schools in the sultanate. "The film industry belongs to those who have the grit and determination to persevere and because of this very reason, let me congratulate those students who have participated in some genre or the other."

Dr Zidjali also delivered an enlightening speech, encouraging students to achieve success.

MHD-ITICS partners with Motorola for smartphones

MHD-ITICS, the Infrastructure, Technology, Industrial and Consumer Solutions cluster of Mohsin Haider Darwish, has signed a distribution agreement with Motorola, a leading global producer of mobile devices and solutions.

Under the terms of the agreement, MHD-ITICS will now serve as official distribution partners for Motorola smartphones in the Sultanate of Oman, beginning with the launch of three new models - the Motorola Edge 20, Moto G51 5G, and Moto G60s, a press release said.

Commenting on the partnership, Gokul Praveen, deputy director of MHD-ITICS said, "Motorola has a distinguished heritage as a global leader in the smartphone space, and their products deliver segment defining experiences in terms of looks, user interface, features, and prices. We are proud to be associated with Motorola, bringing their unbeatable line-up of smartphones to our customers in Oman. We strongly believe that the MHD-ITICS core strengths of the widest distribution network in Oman and unparalleled customer service, combined with the great products from Motorola, will allow customers in Oman to have a better choice when buying a smartphone."

Since 1928, Motorola has been fusing innovative technology with human insights to create experiences that simplify, connect, and enrich people's lives. They have grown to be a global technology leader in driv-



ing intelligent transformation through smart devices and infrastructure that create the best user experience.

Through their extensive portfolio of converged mobile devices, including smartphones, tablets, wireless accessories and more, Motorola strives to provide people with access to the intuitive mobile products needed to make everyday life easier, more uplifting, and more enjoyable for all.

"Our partnership with MHD-ITICS is part of our local business growth strategy within the Middle East region. Oman is one of our key markets and we see great growth opportunities here due to the exponential growth in Oman's telecoms market.

We are fully committed to growing our presence in Oman and MHD-ITICS will allow us to bring our latest and greatest innovations to the hands of Omani consumers delivering on our

Lenovo Group goal of providing Smarter Technology for All," said Sharay Shams, general manager, Motorola Middle East.

The first of the three smartphones being launched in Oman is the Motorola Edge 20. Despite being one of the thinnest 5G smartphones on the market at just 6.99mm, the smartphone delivers outstanding imaging, performance, and features.

The Motorola Edge 20 delivers a new 108MP main camera together with one of the company's largest camera sensors ever at 1/1.5" optical format.

Also on offer is an ultrawide-angle lens, which allows users to capture 4X more into their frame, while the built-in Macro Vision lets users get 5X closer to their subject for extreme close-ups, as close as 3cm away. Finally, there is the 30X Super Zoom telephoto lens for capturing details from incredible distances.

Ooredoo winners bag El Clasico trip

Four football fans are on their way to watch La Liga's El Clasico live, thanks to Ooredoo's third football-themed raffle draw.

The lucky winners have swept up an all-expenses paid trip for themselves and a buddy in the latest exciting series to be up close and personal in the sea-

son's major matches around Europe.

All Home Internet, Hala prepaid, and Shahry postpaid customers can be in to win a once-in-a-lifetime trip, which includes match tickets, air travel and accommodation for them and a friend, simply by upgrad-

ing, subscribing to plans or recharging.

Home Internet customers have to activate a new connection or upgrade their existing plan to enter the draw. Hala customers simply need to activate a new SIM or recharge. More recharges enhances winning bids.

The National Detergent Co. S.A.O.G.

P.O.Box 3104, Ruwi, Postal Code 112, Sultanate of oman

INVITATION TO ATTEND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Board of Directors of The National Detergent Co. SAOG takes pleasure in inviting the shareholders to attend the Company's 42nd Annual General Meeting to be held on Wednesday, 23/March/2022 at 5:00 PM at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Qurum - Mandaloun Hall and through virtual electronic platform and in case the quorum of the meeting is not complete, a second Annual General Meeting will be held on 31/March/2022 at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Qurum - Mandaloun Hall and through virtual electronic platform to discuss the following agenda:

- To consider and approve the Directors' Report for the year ended 31 December 2021;
- To consider and approve the Corporate Governance Report for the year ended 31 December 2021;
- To consider Auditors' Report, approve and adopt the Company's financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2021;
- To consider and approve the proposal to distribute bonus shares to the shareholders on the date of the AGM @ 17.56%, 17.56 shares for every 100 shares and this will result an increase in the number of the Company's share capital from 1,701,250 shares to 2,000,000 shares.
- To approve the Directors' sitting fees paid for the year ended 31 December 2021, and to determine the sitting fee for the next year;
- To disclose and approve the contracts and transactions entered into by the Company with related parties during the financial year ended 31 December 2021 (in line with the list sent to the shareholders along with the notice);
- To approve contribution as part of the social responsibilities for the financial year ended 31/12/2021;
- To consider and approve a proposal to donate an amount of RO. 10,000/- (Rial Omani Ten Thousand only) towards social responsibilities for the financial year ending 31/12/2022;
- To elect new Board members in accordance with the rules and conditions prescribed for the joint stock companies. The candidates who wish to nominate himself for the directorship, as per articles of association of the company, should have not less than 20,000 shares in the company at the time of annual general meeting. Those wishing to stand as a candidate for election must complete the prescribed form and hand over to the company latest by Thursday, 17th March 2022. No application will be accepted after this date.
- To appoint Statutory Auditors for the financial year ending 31 December 2022 and fix their remuneration;

Under the statute of the company, shareholders have the right of appointing, in writing, a proxy to attend the meeting and vote on his/her behalf, wherever necessary.

In case of enquiry, please contact Mr. Nasser Al Rawahi, Tel: 24493824-92869333

Chairman of the Board of Directors

Auditors

Legal Advisor



Volkswagen Oman announces incredible offers on some models

Volkswagen Oman, represented by Premium Motors, has announced an exclusive offer on the brand's popular models Tiguan, T-Roc, Passat, Touareg, Golf GTI and Teramont.

As part of the promotion, Volkswagen Oman is offering customers special prices, an attractive equated monthly instalment (EMI), three years or 45,000km service package (whichever comes first), 3 years unlimited warranty mileage, three years roadside assistance, free registration for first year, and hassle-free trade in for any vehicle. The offer, which has already begun, is valid till March 31. The

offers are not in conjunction with any other deals or discounts that have been offered and VAT is excluded, a press release said.

Christian Nehme, general manager of Premium Motors Oman, said, "We are delighted to share amazing offers on our popular models with our customers. Volkswagen models stand out for their latest technology, outstanding design, connectivity, safety features and excellent German quality. This is a good time to bring the Volkswagen family to yours."

The starting price for Tiguan 1.4 SE Life is RO10,999 and an equated monthly instalment

(EMI) of RO148 is available on the model for seven years with a 20% down payment. Known for its iconic style, the Tiguan is Europe's best-selling SUV and comes with rugged charm amplified by its chiselled lines, spacious interior space and easy handling.

The special rate for T-Roc 1.4 Trend is RO8,450 and customers can avail an EMI of RO114. Strong, striking and sporty, the T-Roc projects character and confidence. With bold design crafted into every feature and packed with advanced technology, the T-Roc is engineered for those born confident.

The New Passat Trendline is available for RO9,999 at an EMI rate of RO134. With a wide range of safety and comfort features, the whole family will feel at home in the much loved sedan - from the city to the suburbs and everywhere in between. The model has stepped up the style factor and upgraded the technology to make it even more attractive.

The starting price for Touareg Trendline 2.0 is RO16,500 and comes at an EMI of RO221. The Touareg is equipped with the connectivity of a new era and a fusion of assistance, comfort, lighting and infotainment.

Badr Al Samaa launches 20 years celebrations

Badr Al Samaa Group of Hospitals organised a launch event of its 20 years celebrations.

The glorious journey of 20 years, from a humble initiation in 2002, helped Badr Al Samaa become the largest private healthcare group with 13 centres currently and many more to come, a press release said.

It is the only group of Oman in the private healthcare having all its hospitals accredited by international accreditation bodies like JCI (USA) and ACHSI (Australia). A special 20 years celebration logo was unveiled on the occasion as the audience was taken on a 20-year journey of Badr Al Samaa with a special movie made for the occasion.

The event also marked the ACHSI accreditation certificate presentation to the corporate and four recently accredited hospitals of Badr Al Samaa - Barka,



Nizwa, Sohar and Salalah.

H E Dr Ahmed al Saedi, Minister of Health, was the chief guest of the event while Dr Shashi Tharoor, member of the Indian parliament, was the guest of honour. The event was also at-

tended by His Excellency Sri Amit Narang, Ambassador of India to Oman, H E Abdullah Bin Saud Alanazi, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Oman, Dr Muhanne Bin Nasir al Muslahi, director general-DGPHE, execu-

tive directors, senior management, and others.

Abdul Latheef, managing director of Badr Al Samaa, attributed the credit of the success of Badr Al Samaa Group of Hospitals to the dedicated and selfless

workforce, continuous support from the Ministry of Health, various ministries and all concerned stakeholders, above all the continuous trust of their patients in their healthcare services.

He said Badr Al Samaa stan-

dardised its clinical and non-clinical operations with international accreditations since the beginning. The 20 years celebrations will witness many Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, introduction of advanced

clinical programmes and awareness and training programmes for the general public on basic health issues, like Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CSR), etc, he said.

Dr P A Mohammed, managing director, added that the theme of this 20 years celebration is based on trust and care. The trusts which, people have shown in Badr Al Samaa for two decades and the quality of care with which Badr Al Samaa has complemented that trust. He informed that Badr Al Samaa has aggressive future expansion plans including setting up a premium hospital in the near future.

Dr Shashi Tharoor appreciated the management and staff of Badr Al Samaa for their remarkable achievement which, he said, is a testimony to providing valuable humanitarian services in Oman.

National Finance and Sharakah hold workshops

As part of its social responsibility and continued efforts to develop the skills of Omani youth, National Finance - Oman's leading Finance Company - conducted the first workshop of 'Calculate it Right' programme in collaboration with the Fund for Development of Youth Projects - 'Sharakah'.

The workshop took place in National Finance's main office in Muscat and it comes under the company's independent wing for sustainable initiatives - 'Imtidad', a press release said.

The initiative targets existing and potential entrepreneurs, and aims to equip business owners with the necessary skills set in financial management and resource planning. The workshop shed light on the basics of determining the required capital for projects, the mechanism for calculating sales projections, the availability of the required resources, factors affecting sales, calculating operating expenses, and others related fields.

Tariq al Farsi, CEO, National Finance, said, "Joining hands with Sharakah to develop the skills of local talents reflects the vision of the company's inde-



pendent wing for sustainable initiatives - 'Imtidad'. Through Imtidad, we aspire to form strategic partnerships with stakeholders to benefit the community as a whole. Moreover, Imtidad seeks to deliver effective and sustainable initiatives that resonate with our endeavours towards contributing to the development of local communities as well as developing the skills of its people."

"Through these workshops, we aim to uplift the capabilities of the upcoming generation of entrepreneurs, help them realise their potential and support in executing their projects.

The workshops provide a

plethora of advantages for the participants such as experiencing the atmosphere of entrepreneurship first-hand through effective training, and challenges that stimulate reality. During this year, we will conduct another four workshops across the sultanate" Faris Mohammed al Harthi, senior project specialist at Sharakah, added.

National Finance is collaborating with Sharakah for the third consecutive year to support a series of educational programmes on financial planning that aims to develop youth and SMEs in Oman. Over 500 participants benefited from the initiative.



Jazz trio to perform tonight

Composing art and communicating life through music, the Italian jazz maestro, Paolo Fresu, accompanied by pianist Dino Rubino and bassist Marco Bardoscia, will tune an enchanting story about Jazz in Muscat tonight (March 7).

With the presence of high level dignitaries, Omani and Italian community, influencers and young talented local musicians, the Embassy of Italy has organised a memorable evening at the Diplomatic Club which comes as part of the Paolo Fresu Trio regional tour for the year 2022, a

press release said. This jazz concert is among the first live cultural events that the embassy is promoting after the reopening of activities this year, aiming to bring Italy closer to Oman and increase cultural cohesion between our two countries through music. Throughout the year, the embassy will continue to propose many enriching activities that cover the fields of archaeology, language, art, design, cuisine and music.

Paolo Fresu and group will play a new trio entitled - Tempo di Chet meaning 'Chet's Time', a refined

tribute to great jazz musician Chet Baker, featuring a dialogue with a great emotional and intellectual impact between Fresu's warm trumpet sound and vivid and creative mind, the powerful and engaging lines of Bardoscia's double bass and Rubino's elegant and vibrant pianism.

The trio was designed in this form by Fresu for the theatrical adventure 'Tempo di Chet - La versione di Chet Baker' produced by Teatro Stabile di Bolzano and directed by Leo Muscato. All the music of this trio is original and composed by themselves.

شركة الباطنة للتنمية والاستثمار القابضة ش.م.ع.ع Al Batinah Development & Investment Holding Co. SAOG				
Board of Directors Report				
Dear Shareholders, On my behalf and on behalf of the members of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to welcome you to the Annual General Meeting of the company. I present to you the board's report and audited financial statements of the parent company and the group for the year ended December 31, 2021. General Performance for the Parent Company and the Group: The year 2021 was a year full of challenges caused by the Corona pandemic and its impact which cast a shadow over all markets and the global economy as a whole as a result of it quicken spread and the emergence of a number of variants. However, with the success and spread of vaccine distribution and the desire of a large number of individuals to vaccinate, the world has begun to witness openness, on easing of precautionary measures, and adaptation to the new reality. The year 2021 was also a good year for the financial stock exchanges of the Gulf countries, including the Muscat Stock Exchange, where they achieved good returns and a good rise in indices, due to the rise in oil prices, the positive view of the Omani economy on the part of international credit institutions, and the economic reforms program recently implemented by the government. At the company level, the company's performance improved during 2021, as the parent company achieved a net comprehensive profit amounting to OMR 172,718 compared to net comprehensive losses amounting to OMR (657,164) for the year 2020 and the group achieved net comprehensive profit after tax amounting to OMR 214,133 compared to net losses after tax amount to OMR (309,343) for year 2020. The accumulated losses for the parent company amounting to OMR 1,047,630 compared to OMR 1,049,130 for the year 2020 and the company is currently working on developing and diversifying its investments in the local and regional market as well as looking for viable investment opportunities and alternatives to address the accumulated losses. The financial statements for the consolidated and parent Company: The summary of the financial statements for the consolidated and parent Company for the year ended 31 December 2021 compared with year 2020 as following:				
Details	Group 2021 OMR	Parent Company 2021 OMR	Group 2020 OMR	Parent Company 2020 OMR
Income	207,540	191,407	77,949	136,712
General expenses, Staff cost and Finance cost	(215,517)	(329,818)	(132,182)	(128,951)
Amortizations of intangible assets and expenses of subsidiary company	0	(196,800)	0	0
Unrealized gain from revaluation of property investment	11,069	318,000	0	0
Impairment losses from investment in subsidiary	0	0	0	(448,527)
Unrealized fair value Profit/(loss) on financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	41,860	(180,704)	55,900	(165,544)
Net (loss) before income tax	44,952	(197,913)	1,667	(606,310)
Income tax	(4,252)	(63,658)	0	0
Net (Loss) after tax	40,700	(261,571)	1,667	(606,310)
Other Comprehensive income	173,433	(47,772)	171,051	(50,854)
Total Comprehensive Income	214,133	(309,343)	172,718	(657,164)
Total Assets	2,691,901	2,233,939	2,233,939	2,493,322
Shareholders' Equity	2,472,963	2,299,583	2,054,829	1,882,111
Basic loss per share	0.0001	(0.0008)	0.0001	(0.0020)
Net assets per share	0.062	0.075	0.068	0.063
Transactions with related parties In the normal context of the company's operations, it has been some transactions with related parties during the year 2021 show the details of these transactions in the audited financial statements for the year 2021. Social Responsibility: Based on the company's responsibility towards supporting local community services, a number of initiatives that meet the needs of the community have been participated in. During the year, training was carried out in exchange for a reward for a number of job seekers in the parent company and its subsidiary companies in the field of accounting, administration, public relations and Dental assistant for periods of no less than 3 Months, some tenants affected by the pandemic have been exempt from rent for a period of two months. Organisation: The Company will continue to pursue a policy of appointing Omani qualified employees and trained through appropriate training courses in the Company. Corporate Governance: The Board of Directors is committed to the application of the Charter of Corporate Governance issued by the Capital Market Authority and implementation of joint stock companies, taking into account all the provisions and regulations of public shareholding companies and instructions issued by the Capital Market Authority and committed to the utmost standards of transparency in the disclosure of the shareholders, the facility within the company's annual report of the external auditor for the organization and management of the company for the year 2021, as well as self-management discussions and analyses. Internal Control: The Company is committed to applying appropriate to the nature and scale of operations in the company's internal controls, and the company's system of internal and external audit by certified audit office evaluates the internal control systems by raising the periodic reports results of these assessments directly to the Audit Committee, which meets on a regular basis, in addition to the policies The company and its procedures under constant development to further improve the professional performance of the Executive management. Future outlook: We are optimistic and look forward to year 2022 to be a better year, for the economies of countries to recovering from the pandemic, and for the rise in oil prices to compensating for losses, enhancing the financial liquidity of the countries in the region, and pump more government spending on major projects that move the economy and create job opportunities, and global and regional developments will remain to affect the company's investment strategy. The company maintains a cautious approach in managing its investments. We always strive to maintain continuity and search for good investment opportunities in various sectors to achieve diversification in its portfolio and improve performance and growth. At the company level, negotiations are currently underway to complete an investment project in the field of veterinary and agricultural medicines in partnership with one of the other companies specialized in this industry, which is Al-Farabi Company for Veterinary and Agricultural Medicines in Syria, which is expected to conclude soon.				
Thanks, and gratitude: On behalf of the Board of Directors and the employees of the company, we would like to extend our sincere best wishes to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik and we will continue to effectively participate in the growth of the Sultanate's economy and to dedicated our efforts to the building of a strong nation under his leadership. I would like to thank the management team for their sincere efforts and effective management. I would also like to convey my sincere thanks to the shareholders of the Company for the trust in the Company and its Board and to the Capital Market Authority, the Muscat Stock Exchange, and all the banks and institutions that the company deals with for their continued support.				
Best regards, Salah Bin Hilal Al-Mawally Chairman				
Consolidated And Separate Statement Of Financial Position As At 31 December 2021				
	Group 2021 OMR	Parent Company 2021 OMR	Group 2020 OMR	Parent Company 2020 OMR
ASSETS				
Non-current assets				
Property and equipment	48,345	2,234	56,870	2,532
Intangible assets	407	282	1,028	565
Investment properties	1,487,000	-	1,430,000	-
Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income	450,950	450,950	359,683	278,999
Investment in subsidiaries	-	1,173,792	-	1,606,564
Non-current portion of amount due from related parties	-	28,223	-	28,223
Deferred tax assets	24,234	-	23,784	-
Total non-current assets	2,010,936	1,655,481	1,871,365	1,916,883
Current assets				
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	638,341	519,514	652,516	509,425
Inventories	91	-	179	-
Trade and other receivables	31,192	3,278	65,753	12,619
Amount due from related parties	-	54,940	-	53,093
Amount due from member	850	-	848	-
Cash and bank balances	10,491	726	29,652	1,302
Total assets	2,691,901	2,233,939	2,620,313	2,493,322
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES				
Shareholders' equity				
Share capital	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Legal reserve	337,464	200,645	332,558	200,478
Special reserve	24,541	24,541	24,541	24,541
Investment fair value reserve	(122,727)	(122,727)	(286,922)	(293,778)
Accumulated losses	(766,315)	(1,047,630)	(812,284)	(1,049,130)
Equity attributable to shareholders of the parent Company	2,472,963	2,054,829	2,257,893	1,882,111
Non-controlling interest	(19,247)	-	(18,310)	-
Total shareholders' equity	2,453,716	2,054,829	2,239,583	1,882,111
Non-current liabilities				
Employees' end of service benefits	25,918	24,502	23,620	21,904
Deferred tax liability	86,860	-	84,750	-
Total liabilities	112,778	24,502	108,370	21,904
Current liabilities				
Trade and other payables	32,320	19,220	45,451	16,172
Amount due to related parties	-	43,685	29,700	377,819
Bank overdraft	91,703	91,703	195,316	195,316
Income tax payable	1,384	-	1,893	-
Total liabilities	125,407	154,608	272,360	589,307
Total equity and liabilities	2,691,901	2,233,939	2,620,313	2,493,322
Net assets per share	0.082	0.068	0.075	0.063
Consolidated And Separate Statement Of Comprehensive Income For The Year Ended 31 December 2021				
	Group 2021 OMR	Parent Company 2021 OMR	Group 2020 OMR	Parent Company 2020 OMR
Revenue	63,177	-	66,164	-
Investment income	111,995	56,117	39,287	77,614
Change in fair value of investment properties	11,069	-	318,000	-
Other income	32,368	21,832	85,956	59,098
Salaries and other staff related costs	(218,609)	(79,949)	(509,407)	(136,712)
Administrative expenses	(84,074)	(50,634)	(155,654)	(63,651)
Impairment on investment in subsidiary	(112,581)	(71,912)	(132,878)	(52,917)
Unrealised gain/(loss) on investment at FVTPL	-	-	-	(448,527)
Depreciation	41,855	55,900	(180,702)	(165,544)
Profit/(loss) on sale of property and equipment	(8,686)	(198)	(11,478)	(160)
Amortisation	5	5	(15,584)	-
Licence fee written off	(6,211)	(283)	619	(282)
Finance costs	(9,555)	(9,160)	(196,800)	-
Impairment of goodwill	-	-	-	-
Profit/(loss) before income tax	44,952	1,667	(197,913)	(606,310)
Income tax	(4,252)	-	(63,658)	-
Profit/(loss) for the year	40,700	1,667	(261,571)	(606,310)
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-	-
Unrealised fair value changes on financial assets at FVOCI	173,433	171,051	(35,306)	(38,388)
Realised loss on sale of financial assets at FVOCI	-	-	(12,466)	(12,466)
Total other comprehensive income/(loss) for the year	173,433	171,051	(47,772)	(50,854)
Total comprehensive profit/(loss) for the year	214,133	172,718	(309,343)	(657,164)
Net profit/(loss) for the year attributable to:				
Parent Company	41,637	1,667	(254,863)	(606,310)
Non-controlling interest	(937)	-	(6,708)	-
Total comprehensive profit/(loss) for the year attributable to:	40,700	1,667	(261,571)	(606,310)
Parent Company	215,070	172,718	(302,635)	(657,164)
Non-controlling interest	(937)	-	(6,708)	-
Basic earning/(loss) per share attributable to parent Company	0.001	0.0001	(0.008)	(0.020)
On request by any shareholder, the complete accounts either in English or Arabic will be sent by mail within 7 days of receipt of such request to P.O.Box 68 pc 117 al wadi al kabir, Muscat, sultanate of Oman tel. 24856658, fax 24856698.				

CRICKET ROUND-UP

Jadeja's all-round heroics help India crush Sri Lanka in 1st Test



India's Ravindra Jadeja (2R) celebrates with teammates after the dismissal of Sri Lanka's Dhananjaya de Silva during third day of the first Test against Sri Lanka (AFP)

Mohali, India - All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja starred with bat and bowl to lead India to a crushing innings-and-222-run victory over Sri Lanka inside three days of the first Test on Sunday.

In Virat Kohli's 100th Test and Rohit Sharma's first as captain, Jadeja hit an unbeaten 175 in India's 574-8 declared and then claimed a match tally of nine wickets with his left-arm spin in Mohali.

"This is my lucky ground. Whenever I come here, I always get positive vibes," Jadeja, 33, said afterwards. "I haven't done anything differently with my batting, just backing my instincts. I try to settle down and after that I play my shots. I try to keep it simple."

Jadeja, named player of the match, returned figures of 5-41 to help bowl out Sri Lanka for 174 in their first innings after the tourists resumed the day on 108-4.

Enforcing the follow-on, the hosts then dismissed Sri Lanka for 178 in the final session to lead the two-match series 1-0.

Niroshan Dickwella stood un-

It was a good start. Credit to our bowlers who bowled in tandem and applied pressure. We knew it is a fast outfield and runs would be easier to come if you dig in.

ROHIT SHARMA

beaten on 51 when Ravichandran Ashwin got the final wicket of number 11 Lahiru Kumara, who was struggling with his hamstring injury, triggering wild celebrations.

Ashwin, who now has 436 scalps in 85 Tests, took four wickets in Sri Lanka's second innings and surpassed pace bowler Kapil Dev's tally of 434 scalps.

He is now India's second highest wicket-taker behind spin legend Anil Kumble, who finished his career with 619 Test scalps.

Ashwin rattled the top-order with two wickets on either side of the lunch break as he sent back Lahiru Thirimanne for nought and Pathum Nissanka caught behind for six.

Pace bowler Mohammed

Shami was rewarded for his consistency as he got skipper Dimuth Karunaratne caught behind for 27.

Angelo Mathews (28) and Dhananjaya de Silva (30) then put on 49 runs in their attempt to resist the team's quick fall before Jadeja broke the stand.

Earlier in Sri Lanka's first innings Pathum Nissanka top-scored with an unbeaten 61 and with his overnight partner Asalanka to put up some resistance in the first hour of play.

Nissanka hung on but wickets kept tumbling and Jadeja took two wickets in one over twice to send the opposition packing.

'Good start' to captaincy

With the bat, Jadeja recorded a

Test best in his second century of his career and put on marathon partnerships, including a 130-run seventh-wicket stand with Ashwin, to deflate the opposition.

Indian wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant took the attack to the Sri Lanka bowlers on day one with his quickfire 96.

Kohli made 45 in his landmark game and put on a key stand of 90 with Hanuma Vihari who made 58.

"It was a good start (to my captaincy career)," said Rohit, who replaced Kohli as captain across all formats earlier this year, saying it showed "good signs" for Indian cricket in the future.

"Credit to our bowlers who bowled in tandem and applied pressure. We knew it is a fast outfield and runs would be easier to come if you dig in. We were just waiting for an odd one to bounce differently and their batters to make mistakes," he said.

"Sometimes we were too defensive, sometimes were too attacking. Sometimes we just

SCOREBOARD			
India 1 st Innings 574/8d			
Sri Lanka 1 st Innings 174			
SRI LANKA 2 nd INNINGS			
L Thirimanne	c Sharma b Ashwin	0	
D Karunaratne	Pant b M Shami	27	
P Nissanka	c Pant b Ashwin	6	
A Mathews	lbw b Jadeja	28	
D de Silva	c Iyer b Jadeja	30	
C Asalanka	c Kohli b Ashwin	20	
N Dickwella	not out	51	
S Lakmal	c Yadav b Jadeja	0	
L Embuldeniya	c Pant b Jadeja	2	
V Fernando	lbw b M Shami	0	
L Kumara	c M Shami b Ashwin	4	
Extras:	(b 4, lb 5, nb 1)	10	
TOTAL:	(60 Ov, RR: 2.96)	178	
Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-19, 3-45, 4-94, 5-121, 6-121, 7-121, 8-153, 9-170, 10-178			
Bowling: R Ashwin 21-5-47-4, M Shami 8-1-48-2, R Jadeja 16-5-46-4, J Yadav 11-3-21-0, J Bumrah 4-1-7-0			

needed to take singles and rotate the strike and get to the other side. That's how we can play big innings," Karunaratne said.

"I think we did really well in the first two sessions of the game but once the ball got older we couldn't do well. Those are the areas we need to work on," he said.

The second match -- a day-night affair -- begins March 12 in Bangalore.

AFP

Ashwin overtakes Kapil Dev's 434 Test wickets

Mohali, India - India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin on Sunday surpassed pace bowling great Kapil Dev's 434 wickets in the second Test against Sri Lanka.

Ashwin sent back Charith Asalanka for 20 with his off spin on day three in Mohali to become India's second-highest wicket-taker behind spin legend Anil Kumble, who finished his career with 619 Test scalps.

Ashwin, 35, also left behind Sri Lankan spinner Rangana Herath (433) to move inside the world's top 10 wicket-takers led by Muttiah Muralitharan (800) and late Australia great Shane Warne (708).

"It's a big thing in his cricketing career to achieve that feat," skipper Rohit Sharma said after India's victory by

an innings and 222 runs inside three days.

"I have been watching Ashwin for a long time now, and every time I watch him, he seems to get better and better."

Rohit called the off spinner, who finished the match with six wickets and improved his career tally to 426 scalps in 85 Tests, an "all-time great".

Dev, who led India to their first-ever World Cup triumph in 1983, ended his career after 131 Tests in 1994 above New Zealand pace ace Richard Hadlee (431) and held the wickets record till 2000.

Ashwin made his Test debut in 2011 and has been the team's leading spinner in home conditions.

AFP



India's Ravichandran Ashwin delivers a ball during the second day of the first Test cricket match against Sri Lanka (AFP)

Khawaja misses hundred for Australia as Pakistan Test hit by rain



Australia's Usman Khawaja plays a shot during the third day of the first Test cricket match (AFP)

Rawalpindi, Pakistan - Australian opener Usman Khawaja said he was disappointed to have missed what would have been a "memorable hundred" in the country of his birth as his side made a strong response to Pakistan Sunday on the third day of the first Test in Rawalpindi.

Bad light stopped play and then rain poured down with Australia on 271-2, trailing Pakistan by 205 runs with eight wickets remaining after the home side declared Saturday at 476-4.

Marnus Labuschagne was on

SCOREBOARD			
Pakistan 1 st Innings 476/4d			
AUSTRALIA 1 st INNINGS			
U Khawaja	c Imam-ul-Haq b N Ali	97	
David Warner	b Sajid Khan	68	
M Labuschagne	not out	69	
Steven Smith	not out	24	
Extras:	(lb 6, nb 7)	13	
TOTAL:	(73 Ov, RR: 3.71)	271/2	
Fall of wickets: 1-156, 2-203			
Bowling: Sajid Khan 27-4-94-1, N Shah 13-2-54-0, S S Afridi 15-2-48-0, N Ali 15-4-49-1, I Ahmed 3-0-20-0			

69 and Steve Smith 24, but with rain forecast for the last two days a result is unlikely.

It could still have been a memorable day for Khawaja had he completed his 11th Test century in Pakistan, where he was born in 1986 before his parents emigrated to Australia.

"It was a bit disappointing," said Khawaja, who was caught on 97. "You come to the change room and feel worse than getting a 20 in some respects."

The left hander was caught at forward short leg by Imam-ul-Haq as he gloved a reverse sweep off left-arm spinner Nauran Ali.

Umpire Aleem Dar ruled him not out, but Pakistan were given the wicket on review.

"My family would have been watching back home... my wife too, who is pregnant with our second child," said Khawaja.

"But if you put that in perspective, then I was not in the Aus-

tralian team two months ago so I am very grateful and happy that I have contributed to the team's total in the end."

Spin duo defied

Khawaja's 219-minute knock included 15 boundaries, and he put on 156 for the opening wicket with David Warner, who made an attractive 68.

Warner fell in the eighth over after lunch when he missed a square drive and was bowled by off-spinner Sajid Khan.

The pair scored at more than four an over in the morning session, a contrast to the Pakistan first innings which lasted two days and 162 overs.

Pakistan's seam bowling duo and their three slow bowlers found the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium pitch as unresponsive as the tourists did on the first two days when only four wickets fell, with little spin and no reverse swing.

But Pakistan only had themselves to blame for not making a crucial breakthrough as Khawaja was dropped twice in a clumsy fielding display by the hosts.

Sajid said Warner's wicket was a big one.

"He always bats well against Pakistan so I set him up and got him," he said.

"We weren't bothered when they batted so fast, and stuck to our plans."

Still, Labuschagne - the current number-one batter in Test rankings - continued where Khawaja and Warner had left off, stroking nine exquisite boundaries. He and Smith have added 68 for third wicket.

Australia are on their first tour to Pakistan since 1998, having previously refused to tour the country over security fears.

The second Test in Karachi from March 12-16, and the third in Lahore from March 21-25.

AFP

American Kim scores first Asia Tour win at inaugural golf series in Thailand

Hua Hin, Thailand - American Sihwan Kim finally claimed his maiden Asian Tour title with a nine-under-par 63 in the fourth round of the inaugural International Series Thailand on Sunday.

Kim, who broke the course record Thursday to seize the first-round lead with a 10-under-par 62, will take home \$270,000 and also move to the top of the Asian Tour's Order of Merit.

The final round was a battle between Kim and Thailand's Phachara Khongwatmai at Hua Hin's Black Mountain course, with the 33-year-old clinching the win by two strokes after a decade on the tour.

"To get that monkey off your back is more of a relief, and happiness, I guess. I know I had it in me," said Kim, who finished second at last week's Royal's Cup tournament, also in Thailand.

"When you get off to a hot start and when the leaders see your name going up the leader board, it kind of puts pressure on the leaders," he said, adding "it definitely helped to be in the second from last group."

Kim raced out of the gate on Sunday to card 29 on the front-nine, racking up an impressive seven straight birdies from hole two.

"It just felt like I was going to make everything today. I was swinging it really freely," he said.



This handout from the Asian Tour taken and released on March 6 shows Sihwan Kim of the US posing with the winner's trophy after the final round of the International Series Thailand golf tournament in Hua Hin

But he was dogged by Saturday's leader Phachara, who managed four birdies to end on 68, and ensured the final round wasn't an easy ride.

In a particularly tense moment, the American managed to nail a birdie from the bunker on 15 to regain his lead over Phachara -- only to see his breathing space narrowed after

dropping a shot on 16.

Despite his loss, Phachara - the favourite going into the event - paid tribute to Kim.

"Today, I was aiming to shoot four or five under to win, but Sihwan played very well, he was eight under after only 10 holes, which really affected my game," he said.

"I am still proud of my per-

formance, and I'm satisfied. I kept fighting until the very end," he added.

Thailand's Itthipat Buananayarat ended a solid performance over the past four days with a 67, while South Koreans Bi-o Kim (68) and Joohyung Kim (69), and Japan's Ryosuke Kinoshita (68) all made the Order of Merit.

AFP



South Korea's Ko Jin-young

South Korea's Ko storms to Singapore victory

Singapore, Singapore - South Korea's Ko Jin-young stormed to a two-shot victory by closing with a final round six-under-par 66 to win the HSBC Women's World Championship at the Sentosa Golf Club on Sunday.

Playing in her first event of the 2022 LPGA season, Ko showed why she is the world number one as she outplayed her closest rivals by firing five birdies in her last six holes to clinch her sixth LPGA title with her winning total of 17-under-par 271.

Australia's Minjee Lee staged a strong comeback by posting the day's lowest score of 63, to end her Singapore campaign tied for second place alongside overnight leader Chun In-gee of South Korea. "It feels amazing right now. I just tried to focus on doing my best today. It's always hard to be playing in the last group but I thrive on playing under pressure," said Ko.

"I was on Facetime with my mom and dad. They were very emotional with my victory."

AFP



Kenyan Eliud Kipchoge crosses the finish line to win the men's category in the Tokyo Marathon 2021 in Tokyo on March 6, 2022

Kipchoge wins Tokyo marathon in 4th-fastest time in history

Tokyo, Japan - Kenya's double Olympic champion Eliud Kipchoge said he would aim for "one thing at a time" after narrowly failing to beat his own world record in a dominating performance at the Tokyo marathon on Sunday.

Kipchoge won the race in 2hr 2min 40sec, the fourth-fastest time in history, to give him victories in four of the world's six major marathons. But Kipchoge was unable to beat the 2:01:39 he clocked at the 2018 Berlin marathon, hindered by a wrong turn around the 10km mark that cost him valuable seconds.

The 37-year-old has now run three of the four fastest

marathons in history and has ambitions to win a record-breaking third consecutive Olympic gold at Paris 2024.

"I think I am happy to run a course record here in Tokyo," said Kipchoge, who joined a select club of athletes last year when he defended his 2016 Rio Olympics gold at Tokyo Games.

"I always say that I aim one thing at a time," Kipchoge said.

"I am going back to Kenya to talk with the coaches, talk with the management, my team about the opportunities and the goals that we are going to set together because we are working as a team."

AFP



الشركة العمانية المتحدة للتأمين ش.م.ع.ع Oman United Insurance Co. S.A.O.G

COMPANY'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021

DEAR SHAREHOLDERS,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Oman United Insurance Company SAOG, I have the pleasure to present to you the Annual Report, including the audited Financial Statements of the company, and Auditor's Report, along with the Management Discussions & Analysis Report and the Corporate Governance Report for the year ended 31st December 2021.

I am also pleased to highlight to you the following about the global reinsurance market, in addition to the company's financial and operational performance indicators:

GLOBAL REINSURANCE MARKET,

The Sultanate has had to deal with change of climatic conditions and repeated exposure to natural catastrophes. The losses incurred by insurers / re-insurers from 'Cyclone Shaheen' in October 2021 is estimated to be over R.O 62 million through registering of more than 9800 claims distributed over a number of wilayats affected by the tropical cyclone. In view of the above, the reinsurance market

is already seeing hardening of terms for reinsurance contracts with numerous restrictions including sub-limited storm, tempest and inundation cover. Facultative reinsurers have tightened terms and the 1st January renewal season has seen reduction of capacities and cover for Oman. We expect cautious selection of risks, and push by reinsurers for increased retentions by the local insurers.

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF THE COMPANY:

We have put in place all our efforts to derive the full benefits of new opportunities in an extremely competitive insurance market and we shall continue to strive to maintain our leadership role in the industry. As a result of the conservative underwriting policy adopted by the company that depends on risk selection and taking into account the severe pricing competition, the company achieved a gross written premium income amounted to R.O 30.46 million compared to R.O 30.91 million in the previous year i.e. a decline of 1.5%. The said decline of the premium income is substantially attributable to the overall prevailing economic conditions accompanied with the severe pricing competition and the limited number of new projects that need insurance cover. As a result of our focus on the quality of business rather than the volume of business, and the selective underwriting policy adopted by the management thereof, the gross underwriting profit of all lines of business amounted to R.O 6.23 million for the year under review compared to R.O 7.91 million in the previous year, depicting a decline of 21%. To this effect, the underwriting profit margin stood at 20.46% compared to 25.59% in 2020.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF THE COMPANY:

Due to the ramifications of outbreak of Coronavirus Pandemic (Covid-19) that led to pressures and an overall negative impact on the economies of all countries coinciding with the lower oil prices. Notwithstanding the above, the company was able to achieve a net investment income (after deducting the unrealized investment losses) of R.O 3.8 million as against R.O 2.4 million in the pre-

vious year depicting a growth of 32%.

While remaining true to our traditional company's values, in respect of maximizing the profits and the company's assets protection and taking into account the stock market volatility, we have reduced our exposure in the equity markets and expanded our investment in the fixed-income instruments significantly.

To this effect, our investments in term deposits and Bonds reached to R.O 59.25 million representing 90.28% of overall investment portfolio.

Total Assets and Shareholders' Equity
The total assets of the company amounted to R.O 108.78 million Compared to R.O 107.31 million in the previous year, registering growth of 1.64%. The total shareholders' equity amounted to R.O 30.83 million compared to R.O 30.46 million in the previous year with a growth rate of 1.20%, despite the regular annual cash dividends distributions over the previous years.

Net Profit:

Despite all above-mentioned challenges in operational and financial activities, the company achieved net profit after tax of R.O 3.96 million as against R.O 4.25 million Last year registering a decline of (7%). The earning per share stood at 40 Baizes as against 43 Baizes for the year 2020. The Retained Earnings amounted to R.O 6.36 million as against R.O 5.90 registering a growth of 7.8%. The net asset value per share amounted to 308 Baizes in 2021, as against 305 Baizes in 2020 registering a growth of 1%.

DIVIDENDS:

Dear Shareholders: Your company remains committed to delivering added value to your investments. This could be noticed in the Board's keenness to recommend distribution of good profits to shareholders annually. The Board of Directors are delighted to propose a distribution of cash dividends to the Shareholders of 35 Baizes per share for the financial year ended 31 December 2021.

The dividend distribution policy has always been maintaining a fine balance between distributing annual profits and retaining a part of it whilst taking into consideration the future growth of the company's business and the possible economic and financial stock markets volatility that might directly affect the company's results.

It is worth mentioning that the contingency reserve has reached the minimum limit required by insurance law at R.O 10 million which is equal to the paid up equity capital and the legal reserve also has already reached to the minimum limit required by commercial company's law of one-third of the share capital. Therefore, no additional provision for these two reserves for this year.

RISK MANAGEMENT:

According to the Audit Committee's recommendations, the Board approves the risk management strategy after reviewing it annually. Risk management has been the critical responsibility of the Board and the Board of directors have been doing their best to achieve compliance on this matter. Therefore, the company has a distinct and consistent control environment across the

company and there is an efficient risk management framework put in place to manage our risks.

Corporate governance requirements are increasingly demanding the Board to understand and address the risks and thereby support the embedding of its risk management framework in the company's overall governance and reporting processes. However, the nature of the insurance activity is fraught with many inevitable risks.

VALUES: OUR VALUES ARE THE FOLLOWING:-

- The Company abides by the highest ethical standards of integrity, trust, the strictest privacy and confidentiality when conducting any kind of transaction.
- The management strives to build long-lasting relationships with our customers by satisfying their evolving needs and attempts to meet the requirements of the company's clients by developing and creating new products.
- The Management makes every effort to upgrade our services to reach the highest level of excellence.
- The Company offers a congenial work environment and development opportunities to our staff who are considered the most valuable assets.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE:

The Company is complied with the provisions laid down by the issued Code of Corporate Governance for Joint Public Companies issued by Circular No. (E/4/2015) of Capital Market Authority, and Code of Corporate Governance for Insurance Companies issued by Circular No. 7/7/2005. The Board of Directors reviewed the strategies and internal control systems and their adequacy during the year. An independent report of Corporate Governance is incorporated within the Annual Report after audit by the statutory auditors.

CHALLENGES & CHANGES IN THE LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY INFRA-STRUCTURE:

Beside the expected slowdown in economies in the region as a result of the continuity of the outbreak of the pandemic COVID 19, the lower oil prices, the fierce pricing competition and the lack of liquidity in local equity market, the implementation of the Value Added Tax Law in April 2021 by the Oman Investment Authority is another form of change in the legislative and regulatory infrastructure.

In addition to the implementation of new IFRS No. (9) & (17) in 2023, the aforementioned stringent terms and conditions of reinsurance treaties and rates, altogether may impact the results of the company and its market share.

The Capital Market Authority is exerting its utmost efforts to implement the Mandatory Health Insurance Scheme for the employees of the private sector and residing in the Sultanate (Dhamani). As the legislative and regulatory infrastructure is ready, especially after the issuance of the unified medical insurance policy and the Licensing the Business of Medical Insurance Claims Management Regulation, this project will contribute to enhance the growth of the insurance sector and entering a new stage of development as a result of the expected vol-

ume of demand for medical insurance products.

FUTURE OUTLOOK VISION:

In respect of developing operations process, we have been diversifying our business and creating new products. We also focus on growth of retail business (Individual Insurance & their properties) through effective utilization of the available selling outlets through our marketing department and expanding the branches & agencies network. The company also has been using modern technologies to give more facilities to the customers and meanwhile reduce costs. Our ultimate objective is to maximize the profit to our shareholders, protection of the policyholders' rights meanwhile increasing our market share, creating more products and developing staff skills.

OMANIZATION:

The Board is constantly ensure monitoring the Omanization percentages and presently many of the leading positions in the company are occupied by Omanis who have been trained by the company. The Omanization percentage of insurance activity reached to 84%, which exceeds the limit, specified for insurance sector as per the ministerial decision No 113/2018. The management has been taking the necessary actions in order to comply with Omanization percentages in all administrative levels as instructed by Government Authorities.

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

	2021 RO	2020 RO
Gross written premiums	30,458,362	30,908,180
Reinsurance premium ceded	(16,126,593)	(15,059,235)
Net insurance premium revenue	14,331,769	15,848,945
Movement in unearned premium reserve	1,554,357	160,136
Net premium earned	15,886,126	16,009,081
Commission income	2,440,611	2,420,161
Total insurance revenue	18,326,737	18,429,242
Gross claims paid	(17,047,306)	(18,099,991)
Reinsurers' share of claims	7,628,294	10,240,417
Net claims paid	(9,419,012)	(7,859,574)
Movement in outstanding claims - net	(256,776)	(165,672)
Net claims incurred	(9,675,788)	(8,025,246)
Commission expenses	(2,420,023)	(2,497,172)
Total insurance cost	(12,095,811)	(10,522,418)
Net underwriting results	6,230,926	7,906,824
Investment income - net	2,948,926	2,106,129
Other operating income	856,853	366,148
Total net income	10,036,705	10,379,101
General and administration expenses	(5,366,046)	(5,157,546)
Profit before taxation	4,670,659	5,221,555
Taxation	(710,849)	(967,228)
Profit for the year	3,959,810	4,254,327
Other comprehensive income		

Items that will be reclassified to profit or loss:

Net change in fair value of available-for-sale investments	(89,313)	(49,499)
Total comprehensive income for the year	3,870,497	4,204,828
Earnings per share	0.040	0.043

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:

In the AGM meeting held on March 31, 2021, the shareholders approved the allocation of R.O 50,000 for Corporate Social Responsibility. On top of that, the Board of Directors approve donation of R.O 100,000 to Oman Charity Organization to support relief efforts for those affected by Cyclone (Shaheen) that recently hit the Sultanate of Oman. During the year 2021, the total amount spent by the company is R.O 142,372, the allocated amount was spent in accordance with the annual CSR plan approved by the Board of Directors, through which the company delivers its CRS philosophy, policies, and community-based principles. Community segments and social fields targeted by the company as well as the amounts expended will be included in the agenda of the company's AGM to be held on 31st March 2022 and to ratify the aforementioned donation amount.

The Board of Directors also proposes to the AGM allocating an amount of R.O 50,000 (Fifty Thousand and Omari Riyals) for the company's plan towards social responsibility in the year 2022. In compliance with the directives of the Capital Market Authority pursuant to Resolution No. 172/2021, a percentage of (20%) of the allocated amount will be deducted for the benefit of the Oman Charitable Organization.

AWARDS OF THE COMPANY IN 2021:

We are pleased to inform our honorable

shareholders that the company was rewarded by ALAM AL EKTISAD Magazine among the best performing companies under the MID Cap Category.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

In conclusion and on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank Almighty Allah for another successful financial year in the company's progress. I would like also to thank the shareholders. As usual our thanks are also extended to our customers for their unstinted support, patronage and confidence which they have reposed in the company. We also thank the management of the company and the staff for their loyalty. Our thanks are also extended to our insurance brokers and reinsurers for their full support and cooperation.

Our special thanks and appreciation to the Government of the Sultanate and all other governmental entities and in particular to Capital Market Authority (CMA) for their tremendous support in regulating and developing the insurance market and for their assistance which has led to the smooth functioning of our operations. Finally, our sincere thanks and gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq for his wise leadership and we all pray to Almighty Allah to shower him with blessings and keep him in good health and give him long life.

Thank you and God bless us all.

SALIM NASSIR AL BUSAIDI
CHAIRMAN
February, 2022

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

	2021 RO	2020 RO
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Property and equipment	1,494,477	1,603,240
Investment property	2,076,364	2,142,352
Available-for-sale investments	734,800	976,624
Deposits	35,150,000	41,400,000
Reinsurance contract assets	5,684,000	6,861,000
	45,139,641	52,983,216
Current assets		
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	3,640,082	4,304,329
Insurance and other receivables	9,076,932	7,212,165
Deposits	21,438,822	17,146,400
Reinsurance contract assets	28,715,326	23,726,982
Cash and cash equivalents	773,410	1,936,502
	63,644,572	54,326,378
Total assets	108,784,213	107,309,594
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		
EQUITY		
Share capital	10,000,000	10,000,000
Share premium	871,519	871,519
Legal reserve	3,333,334	3,333,334
General reserve	100,000	100,000
Fair value reserve	165,927	255,240
Contingency reserve	10,000,000	10,000,000
Retained earnings	6,359,005	5,899,195
Total equity	30,829,785	30,459,288
LIABILITIES		
Non-current liabilities		
Insurance contract liabilities	6,594,000	8,141,000
Employees' end of service benefits	764,632	846,912
Deferred tax liability	128,692	125,481
Lease liabilities	276,610	294,082
	7,763,934	9,407,475
Current liabilities		
Bank overdraft	-	2,405,907
Insurance contract liabilities	52,583,108	48,522,345
Trade and other payables	16,808,302	15,470,715
Lease liabilities	46,007	68,206
Tax liability	753,007	975,658
	70,190,494	67,442,831
Total liabilities	77,954,428	76,850,306
Total equity and liabilities	108,784,213	107,309,594
Net assets per share	0.308	0.305

NOTE:

The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder who request them in either Arabic or English within 7 days of receipt

Celtic beat Livingston to restore three-point lead



Celtic's Japanese professional footballer Daizen Maeda celebrates with teammates after scoring a goal in the 17th minute

Glasgow, United Kingdom - Celtic restored their three-point lead at the top of the Scottish Premiership on Sunday with a 3-1 win at Livingston.

Daizen Maeda put Celtic ahead in the 17th minute, soon after Callum McGregor missed a penalty, and Nicky Devlin's own goal doubled the visitors' lead in the opening moments of the second half.

Andrew Shinnie pulled a goal back within a minute of James

Forrest's 55th-minute effort, but there was never any danger of Celtic relinquishing their lead.

The win takes Celtic to 73 points, three clear of defending champions Rangers with eight matches to go.

Ange Postecoglou's side's commanding performance stretched their unbeaten domestic run to 29 games.

Celtic were awarded a 14th-minute penalty for handball when Maeda's shot hit the

grounded Jack Fitzwater from close range.

With main penalty taker Josip Juranovic on the bench, McGregor stepped up but struck his effort against a post.

The first goal came when Maeda reacted quickly to head the ball over the line after the ball came back off Livingston goalkeeper Max Stryjek.

Celtic doubled their lead seconds after the restart -- Maeda missed Anthony Ralston's cross

but the ball flashed in off Devlin.

Forrest made it 3-0 when he ran on to Jota's through-ball and fired a left-footed strike beyond the goalkeeper.

Livi responded immediately when Devlin's long throw was flicked on and Shinnie stabbed home at the near post but Celtic remained in control and could have added to their lead.

"It's great to win but our performance was excellent," Postecoglou told the BBC. "We

started the game really well and put them under a lot of pressure.

"They were always a threat from set pieces but even then we competed really strongly.

"We focus hard on being as good a pressing team as we can be. We want to be damaging when we have the ball but if we can limit the opportunities of the opposition, that really helps us."

AFP



Nice's French midfielder Mario Lemina (L) challenges PSG's Lionel Messi during their French L1 football match (AFP)

PSG lose at Nice without suspended Mbappe

Paris, France - Paris Saint-Germain lost 1-0 at Nice in Ligue 1 on Saturday ahead of next week's trip to Real Madrid in the second leg of their blockbuster Champions League last-16 tie.

Substitute Andy Delort struck two minutes from the end as Nice won for just the second time in 18 league meetings with PSG, who struggled to create chances without suspended top scorer Kylian Mbappe.

Nice bolstered their chances of qualifying directly for a first appearance in the Champions League group stage, climbing into second place and moving two points above Marseille.

PSG remain 13 points clear at the top but the loss serves as a warning that Mauricio Pochettino's side must sharpen up considerably to keep their European dreams intact on Wednesday.

"We were a little bit unlucky. In the end maybe we didn't deserve to win, but we didn't deserve to lose," Pochettino told broadcaster Canal Plus.

"We didn't find the solutions in the last 20 metres but we have to think about the next game against Madrid. It's very important for us but we are very disappointed with the defeat."

Mbappe's 24 goals this season are more than Lionel Messi, Neymar, Angel Di Maria and Mauro Icardi combined, and his absence at the Allianz Riviera further underlined just how he important he is to the French champions.

"They have (Marco) Verratti, Neymar, Di Maria, Messi... they go well with other players but there's a PSG with Kylian and one without," said Nice coach Christophe Galtier.

AFP



2021
**MOST TRUSTED
BRAND AWARDS**

**Thank you
for your trust
for the 5th time**

**oman
OASIS**
BALANCED DRINKING WATER

TOLLFREE 800 71 222

C.R.No.: 1365452

Bilal shines in Oman's win over UAE in opening match of five game tour

United Arab Emirates - Oman beat the United Arab Emirates by 12 runs in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup League 2 in UAE on Saturday.

Put to bat after losing the toss, an 85-run fourth-wicket partnership between Shoaib Khan and Ayaan Khan provided the foundation for Oman to build on. Shoaib top-scored with an 89 ball 61 and the pair consolidated remarkably well after the early dismissals of both openers.

However, both were sent back in the space of four overs to place the UAE in command once again. Rohan Mustafa provided the initial breakthrough with Ayaan's wicket and Zahoor Khan claimed the prized scalp of Shoaib. The two of them were UAE's top performers with the ball, picking up two and three wickets respectively.

A 35-run contribution from captain Zeeshan Maqsood to go with Sandeep Goud's 22 took Oman past the 200 mark. They eventually finished on 225/7



Bilal Khan finished with figures of 5/31 in 9.5 overs

after 50 overs.

In response, the hosts were bundled out for 213. Vriitya Aravind, who claimed three catches along with a stumping in the first innings, top scored with

a 65-ball 44.

Kaleemullah was imperious in the powerplay for Oman. He sent the dangerous opening pair of Muhammad Waseem and Chirag Suri packing for a combined

score of 12. Ayaan Khan, Mohammad Nadeem and Khawar Ali all picked up one middle-order wicket apiece but undoubtedly the star with the ball was Bilal Khan, who cleaned up the UAE lower order all on his own. He finished with figures of 5/31 in 9.5 overs.

A lack of strong partnership proved costly for the UAE. Chandangapoyil Rizwan, Asif Khan and Rohan Mustafa all got starts but none of them crossed the 25-run mark. Basil Hameed and Ahmad Raza did so but were unable to play a match-defining knock like Shoaib Khan had done in the first innings. Oman on the other hand were disciplined in the field and with the ball, clinching a deserved victory in the end.

BRIEF SCORES:
Oman 225/7 in 50 overs (Shoaib Khan 61 (89) 3 x 4; Zahoor Khan 55/3) **beat** **UAE** 213/10 in 48.5 overs (Vriitya Aravind 44 (55) 5 x 4; Bilal Khan 31/5) by 12 runs

22 wounded in violence at Mexican football match

Mexico City, Mexico - At least 22 people were wounded when violence erupted Saturday in the stands of a Mexican football match, which was called off when the clash spilled onto the field.

The game between Queretaro and Atlas at La Corregidora stadium in the city of Queretaro was in its 63rd minute when fights between fans broke out.

As security guards opened the stadium doors to allow fans to get to safety, some instead continued to exchange blows, forcing the game to be stopped and sending the players to the locker room.

Chaotic scenes unfolded, with fans tumbling over each other and others cowering under a shower of furious kicks and punches.

AFP

**oman
OASIS**

sifr

SODIUM FREE DRINKING WATER

The healthy choice



Call Toll-Free 800 71 222 or GSM 9275 5522

 OmanOasis  OmanOasisOfficial  OmanOasisWater www.omanoasis.com

C.R. No.: 1365452



MSX rises 1.21%; volumes down

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The benchmark index of the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) rose 1.21 per cent to close at 4,183.96 points on Sunday.

Trading activity deteriorated from the previous session as turnover declined 19.76 per cent to RO5.99mn and volumes fell 1.66 per cent to 26.8mn shares.

The gains in the main index were supported by all the subindices. Financial index rose 1.25 per cent, Industrial index climbed 0.98 per cent and Services index rose 0.3 per cent. The MSX Shariah Index closed up by 0.24 per cent at 497.64 points.

Market breadth remained positive as 17 companies closed up, while eight companies closed down. The rest 26 traded stocks closed flat for the day.

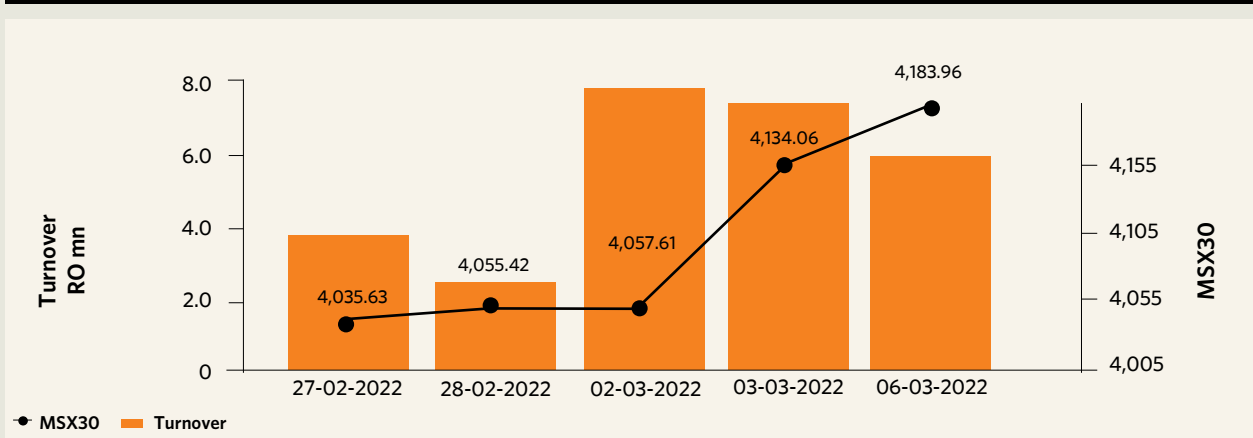
Top gainers were Oman Investment and Finance Co (5.52 per cent), Al



Omaniya Financial Services (4.17 per cent), Al Anwar Ceramic Tiles (4.09 per cent) and Sohar International Bank (3.7 per cent).

Top losers were Al Sharqiyah Desalination (-10.0 per cent), National Gas (-3.57 per cent), Muscat Desalination (-2.63 per cent) and Ooredoo (-2.24 per cent).

MSX INDEX AND TURNOVER OF FIVE TRADING DAYS



World Defense Show kick-starts in Saudi

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia - Saudi Arabia's World Defense Show opened its first-ever edition on Sunday, under the patronage of King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud, with an expected 30,000 visitors attending throughout the four-day show, from March 6-9.

Founded by Saudi Arabia's General Authority for Military Industries (GAMI), World Defense Show - set to be held every two years - will accelerate the future of the industry by showcasing the latest technological developments from around the globe, demonstrating defence interoperability across all major domains - air, land, sea, space and security systems.

Across the four trade days, high-level delegations from dozens of countries will visit stands and pavilions featuring products and demonstrations from hundreds of global and local exhibitors, according to a press release.

Ahmad al Ohali, governor of GAMI, said, "March 6th will mark an important milestone in the kingdom's journey towards localising 50 per cent of its military expenditure by 2030. We have seen overwhelming global interest for participating at World Defense Show's first edition and we look forward to providing a conducive environment for networking and cross-border

partnerships to drive innovation in the industry."

Andrew Pearcey, CEO, World Defense Show, said, "World Defense Show is envisioned to be one of the world's best defence and security events. We look forward to inspiring conversations about the future of defence among visitors, delegations and exhibitors from over 80 countries."

Spanning across an 800,000 sqm site World Defense Show features three large exhibition halls, outdoor exhibit spaces, a dedicated interoperability demonstration area, a purpose-built 3km-long runway and space for static aircraft.

Sony and Honda plan joint EV firm

Tokyo, Japan - Sony is teaming up with automaker Honda to start a new company that will develop and sell electric vehicles (EVs), as the Japanese tech and electronics giant leaps into the rapidly growing sector.

Sony Group said on Friday the two Japanese names hope to establish their firm by the end of this year with sales of their first electric model expected to begin in 2025.

The announcement comes on the heels of Sony's January unveiling of a new prototype, its Vision-S electric vehicle, and the announcement of a new subsidiary Sony Mobility to explore entering the EV market.

"Although Sony and Honda are companies that share many historical and cultural similarities,



Sony president Kenichiro Yoshida (left) and Honda CEO Toshihiro Mibe shake hands at a press conference in Tokyo on Friday (AFP)

our areas of technological expertise are very different," Sony Group president Kenichiro Yoshida said in a statement.

"I believe this alliance which brings together the strengths of our two companies offers

great possibilities for the future of mobility."

At a joint press conference, Honda CEO Toshihiro Mibe said discussions on the collaboration had picked up speed when Honda and Sony staff 'felt big

possibilities, like a chemical reaction' at a joint mobility workshop held last year. Honda will be responsible for manufacturing the pair's first vehicle, but both companies will work together on design, tech and sales.

Earlier this year, the Nissan auto alliance promised to offer 35 new electric models by 2030 as it announced a total investment of US\$25bn in the sector.

Toyota, the world's top-selling carmaker, has also recently hiked its 2030 electric vehicle sales goal by 75 per cent in a more ambitious plan for the sector.

And last week, Volkswagen said it was drawing up plans to list its luxury brand Porsche as it looks to raise the funds for its move to electric vehicles.

AFP

Germany to reduce Russian gas reliance

Frankfurt, Germany - Germany said on Saturday it would build a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal on its North Sea coast, as it seeks to reduce its reliance on Russian gas imports after the invasion of Ukraine.

'It is necessary to reduce our dependence on Russian gas as quickly as possible' in light of Moscow's aggression, Economy and Climate Minister Robert Habeck said in a statement.

Germany was financing the

project in Brunsbuettel, northern Germany, via the public lender KfW, together with the state-owned Dutch gas company Gasunie and German energy group RWE.

The process of liquefaction makes LNG easier to transport, allowing it to be imported by sea from producer countries that cannot be connected by pipelines, such as the United States or Qatar.

Before the outbreak of war, Germany imported 55 per cent

of its gas from Russia, via pipelines running through Ukraine, Poland and under the Baltic Sea.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine forced a strategic reassessment in Berlin, with Germany hoping to substitute Russian gas supplies with liquefied natural gas.

Currently, Europe's largest economy does not have any LNG terminals, having planned on expanded pipeline supply from Russia over the past

two decades.

The new terminal, at the mouth of the Elbe River on the North Sea coast, will have a regasification capacity of 8bn cubic metres per year, according to the statement, before later being 'repurposed for the import of green hydrogen'.

The German government will take a 50 per cent participation in the terminal, which will be operated by Gasunie.

AFP

Canon EOS R5

PROFESSIONAL MIRRORLESS REDEFINED

with the Canon EOS R5

- 45 megapixel full-frame CMOS sensor
- Upto 20fps Electronic (12fps Mechanical)
- 8 stop Image Stabilization¹
- Full Frame 8K RAW video
- 4K video up to 120fps
- Animal and people tracking

¹ 8-stops based on the CIPA standard with RF 24-105mm F4 L IS USM at a focal length of 105mm

#liveforthestory

Canon AUTHORISED PARTNER

Genetco GENERAL ELECTRIC & TRADING CO. L.L.C.

51 years of excellence

C.R. No. 1009680 For enquiry call 95713529 Also available at Major Hypermarkets & Electronics Retailers

Canderel

١٠٠٪ استمتاع، بدون سكر مضاف

100% INDULGENCE, 0% ADDED SUGAR

8x ADDED SUGAR

ORANGE & VANILLA

MILK & BUTTER

CHOCOLATE CRISPY & ALMOND

SIMPLY DARK

FRUITY & NUTTY

DARK & MINT

FLAVOUR BOMBS

Distributed by

CATERING SOLUTIONS TRADING LLC

Please contact +968 22060236/237

Ukraine city Mariupol begins fresh evacuation bid; fierce battle rages

Kyiv, Ukraine - Ukraine's besieged port city of Mariupol began a new attempt at evacuating civilians on Sunday, as fierce battles raged around the country and the Ukrainian president warned that Russian forces were preparing to bombard Odessa on the Black Sea coast.

Hundreds of civilians have been killed and thousands wounded in the war, now into an 11th day, sending hundreds of thousands of mostly women and children pouring into neighbouring countries such as Poland, Romania or Moldova for refuge.

The economic bill is lengthening by the day after the West imposed unprecedented sanctions against Russian businesses, banks and billionaires in a bid to choke off the country's economy.

In a sign that sanctions were beginning to bite, the Russian government said on Sunday that retailers in Russia will limit sales of essential foodstuff to limit black market speculation.

Putin has equated global sanctions with a declaration of war and has warned that Kyiv is 'putting in question the future of Ukrainian statehood' with its actions.

The Ukrainian military said on Sunday it was engaged in 'fierce battles' with Russian forces for the control of borders at the southern city of Mykolaiv and the Chernihiv in the north.

"The main efforts are focused on defending the (eastern) city of Mariupol," it said in a Facebook post, adding an operation by Ukrainian forces was also under way in the eastern part of the Donetsk region.



Members of the Ukrainian Territorial Defence Forces walk past anti-tank structures blocking the streets of the centre of Kyiv on Sunday (AFP)

Last bridge

Efforts on Saturday to get people out of Mariupol - one of the most ferocious scenes of war - collapsed almost immediately with both sides accusing each other of breaching a ceasefire agreement.

"From 1200 (1000 GMT) the evacuation of the civilian population begins," city officials said in a statement, which said a ceasefire was agreed with Russian-led forces surrounding the city.

The strategic city of Mariupol on the Azov Sea has for days been under siege and without



Refugees from Ukraine rest at a temporary shelter in the main train station of Krakow in Poland on Sunday (AFP)

The Russians are turning their eyes to the historic port city of Odessa, which has so far been largely spared from shelling. This is going to be a military crime... a historic crime

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY

electricity, food and water, with stop-start ceasefires.

Its mayor, Vadim Boitchenko, said in an interview published on YouTube that 'Mariupol no longer exists' and that thousands of people have been wounded.

"The situation is very difficult," he said. "I ask our American and European partners: help us, save Mariupol."

Elsewhere, Russian forces have been inching closer to the capital Kyiv in an assault that has become ever-more indiscriminate - and deadly.

At Bilogordoka on the outskirts of Kyiv, Ukrainian troops have planted explosives on what they say is the last intact bridge standing in the way of Russian forces advancing down the western flank of the capital.

"This is the last bridge, we're defending it and not letting them break through to Kyiv," said a fighter who gave his name as 'Casper'.

The former paratrooper who joined Ukraine's volunteer territorial defence units said his team will 'do everything possible to keep it together'.

Planes plea

If the Russians advanced, they will blow it up, he worried, saying they will 'make sure to sink as many enemy tanks as we can while we do it'.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky warned that the Russians were turning their eyes to the west to the historic port city of Odessa, which has so far been largely spared from shelling.

"Russians have always come to Odessa. They have always felt only warmth in Odessa. Only sincerity. And now what? Bombs against Odessa? Artillery against Odessa? Missiles against Odessa?" raged Zelensky.

"This is going to be a military crime. This is going to be a historical crime."

Kyiv has urged the West to boost its military assistance, with Zelensky pleading for Eastern European neighbours to provide Russian-made planes that his pilots are trained to fly.

AFP



A child is comforted by his brother at a temporary shelter in the main train station of Krakow in Poland on Sunday (AFP)

UN: Europe's fastest growing refugee crisis since WWII

Geneva, Switzerland - The number of people fleeing Russia's invasion of Ukraine has topped 1.5mn, making it Europe's fastest growing refugee crisis since World War II, the United Nations (UN) said on Sunday.

"More than 1.5mn refugees from Ukraine have crossed into neighbouring countries in 10 days," the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grande tweeted.

The UN described the outflow as 'the fastest growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War II'. On Saturday it had reported that nearly 1.37mn refugees had fled.

The director-general of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, also expressed grave concern at the worsening humanitarian situation in Ukraine.

"@WHO has confirmed several attacks on health care in #Ukraine, causing multiple deaths and injuries. Additional

reports are being investigated," Tedros tweeted.

"Attacks on healthcare facilities or workers breach medical neutrality and are violations of international humanitarian law."

The WHO said on Sunday it had deployed staff to Moldova, Poland and Romania 'to scale up (the) response capacities of its country offices, including operations, engagement with partners and support to the (Ukrainian) government for the health response'.

The body said it had also mobilised logistics to set up an operational hub in neighbouring Poland and help secure land corridors 'to facilitate rapid movement of supplies to affected populations'.

It added a second shipment of health supplies was on its way to Poland, following a first shipment on Thursday that included trauma and emergency health supplies.

AFP

Russian police detain around 2,500 protesters

Moscow, Russia - Around 2,500 people were detained on Sunday at protests against Moscow's military operation in Ukraine, Russian police said, 11 days after the assault began.

A police spokeswoman said 1,700 people were detained in Moscow after around 2,500 took part in an 'unsanctioned protest', while 750 were detained at a smaller rally of around 1,500 people in the second largest city of Saint Petersburg, Russian news agencies reported.

OVD-Info, which monitors detentions at opposition protests, put the figure of detainees in 49 towns and cities across Russia at 2,575 people.

It said police had used electric shockers on protesters.

It also posted witness photos and videos on Telegram messenger service showing riot police beating protesters with batons and demonstrators with blood



Police detain a demonstrator during a protest against Russia's invasion of Ukraine in Moscow on February 24 (AFP)

running down their faces.

Memorial, Russia's most prominent rights group, said that

one of its leading activists, Oleg Orlov, was detained on the capital's Manezhnaya square as he

held a placard.

Svetlana Gannushkina, another veteran rights campaigner

Israeli PM cites 'moral obligation' to help stem fighting

Jerusalem - Israel's Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said on Sunday his country had a 'moral obligation' to help stem fighting in Ukraine even if chances of success were 'not great', after shuttle diplomacy that saw him visit the Kremlin.

Bennett met for three hours with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin on Saturday, before flying to Berlin to meet German Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

Bennett, acting after Kyiv asked him to launch a dialogue with Moscow in the wake of Russia's invasion, has also held



Naftali Bennett welcomes a child from an orphanage in Ukrainian city of Zhytomyr, on arrival to Israel at Ben Gurion Airport, on Sunday (AFP)

three phone calls in 24 hours with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky.

Speaking before his weekly Cabinet meeting, Bennett said he could 'not expand further' on his talks, but that Israel would press on with its diplomatic efforts 'as needed'. "Even if the chance is not great - as soon as there is even a small opening, and we have access to all sides and the capability - I see this as our moral obligation to make every effort," he said.

Bennett has so far walked a cautious line on the Ukraine conflict, seeking to preserve del-

icate security cooperation with Russia, which has a large military presence in Israel's northern neighbour, Syria.

Bennett has not joined Western leaders - notably key ally the United States - in forcefully condemning the Russian invasion, instead stressing Israel's strong relations with Moscow and Kyiv.

Israel said Bennett's trip was coordinated with Washington and major European powers, but Israeli media have reported that American officials have expressed doubts that Bennett can influence Putin's actions.

AFP

Anti-feminist or foul-mouthed liberal? S Korea to pick new president

Seoul, South Korea - South Korea will elect a new president on Wednesday and voters face a stark choice: A feminist-bashing conservative or a scandal-plagued liberal? So far, it's a dead heat.

The two frontrunners, dour former prosecutor Yoon Suk-yeol of the People Power party and the incumbent Democratic party's maverick ex-governor Lee Jae-myung are trapped in a neck-and-neck race to become the next leader of Asia's fourth largest economy.

And what propels one of them to victory will not be their populist campaign promises or North Korea policy, analysts say. Instead, it's what the papers have dubbed a 'cycle of revenge' in South Korea's famously ad-



A man looks at posters of South Korea's presidential candidates in Seoul on Sunday (AFP)

versarial politics.

"This election is a battle between two opposite forces - the progressives and conservatives," said political analyst Park Sang-byoung.

South Korean presidents are allowed by law to serve a single five year term, and every living former president has been investigated and jailed for corruption after leaving office.

Outgoing President Moon Jae-in himself swept to power in 2017 after his disgraced predecessor Park Geun-hye was impeached over an influence-peddling scandal that also put a Samsung heir behind bars.

Now, Park's conservatives are eager for revenge.

Ironically, their candidate Yoon was chief prosecutor

under Moon and pursued Park when she was impeached - an experience that boosted his profile and popularity and pushed him to enter politics.

Realpolitik

South Korean politics has seen a 'deepening division' in recent years, with elections more focused on party rivalry than policy, analyst Yoo Jung-hoon told AFP.

"Many conservatives still hold a grudge over the impeachment of Park Geun-hye," he said.

Yoon is appealing to these disgruntled voters, offering a chance at 'revenge' for Park's ousting - even going so far as to threaten to investigate Moon for unspecified 'irregularities'.

"We should do it," Yoon

Suk-yeol said last month, referring to prosecuting Moon and his administration.

His comments earned a rare rebuke from the presidential Blue House and the ruling Democratic party's candidate Lee said they indicated his rival was not fit to lead the nation.

But analysts say it's just political business as usual in Seoul.

"The Moon administration has prosecuted many former officials in the name of rooting out deep-rooted corruption," Shin Yul, a political science professor at Myongji University.

"I expect the same standard to be applied under the Yoon government should wrongdoings be found," he said.

AFP

Iran welcomes Saudi Crown Prince's comments on ties

Tehran, Iran - Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian on Saturday appeared to welcome recent comments by Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman about relations between the two regional rivals as a sign of Riyadh's 'desire' to restore severed ties.

"The recent remarks of a high-ranking Saudi official show their desire to establish bilateral relations with Iran, and we welcome that," Amir-Abdollahian told state news agency IRNA.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed told *The Atlantic* in an interview published on Thursday that his country and Iran were 'neighbours forever'.

"We cannot get rid of them, and they can't get rid of us," he said, according to a transcript issued by the official Saudi Press Agency.

"So it's better for both of us to work it out and to look for ways in which we can coexist," he added, expressing hope that 'we can reach a position that's good for both countries'.

In 2016, protesters attacked Saudi diplomatic missions in Iran after the kingdom executed revered Shiite cleric Nimr al-Nimr. Riyadh responded at the time by cutting ties with Tehran.

The two rivals have held four rounds of talks in Iraq since April aimed at improving relations.

"These talks created a good



The remarks of a high-ranking Saudi official show their desire to establish bilateral relations with Iran, and we welcome that. We have different views on some issues in the region

HOSSEIN AMIR-ABDOLLAHIAN



My country and Iran are neighbours forever. We can't get rid of them and they can't get rid of us. So it's better for us to work it out and look for ways in which we can coexist

SAUDI CROWN PRINCE MOHAMMED BIN SALMAN

atmosphere and brought results, albeit small ones, and we are pleased that Saudi Arabia has taken the path of dialogue," Iran's

top diplomat said.

"We have different views and approaches on some issues in the region, but the management

of differences by the sides can serve the interests of the two nations," he added.

Iran and Saudi Arabia support

rival sides in several conflict zones across the region, including in Syria and Yemen.

AFP



Israel President to visit Turkey this week as ties thaw

Jerusalem - Israeli President Isaac Herzog will travel to Turkey to meet his counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan in a sign of thawing ties, his office confirmed on Saturday.

Herzog will be the first Israeli president to visit Turkey for a state visit since 2003. He will be received by Erdogan in Ankara on Wednesday before continuing to Istanbul, where he will meet members of the Jewish community.

"The two presidents will discuss various bilateral issues, including Israel-Turkey relations and the potential for expanding collaboration between their respective states and peoples in various fields," Herzog's office said.

Relations between majority-Muslim Turkey and Israel froze over after the deaths of ten civilians in an Israeli raid on a Turkish flotilla carrying aid for the Gaza Strip in 2010.

A 2015 reconciliation pact formally restored ties, but neither country returned an ambassador to post, with Erdogan frequently criticising Israeli actions in the Palestinian territories.

In recent months, however, the two countries have been working on a rapprochement, with Erdogan, a vocal supporter of the Palestinian cause, holding telephone talks with Herzog.

In January, Erdogan called Herzog's planned visit an opportunity to 'open a new chapter in relations between Turkey and Israel'. Over the past two weeks, Herzog visited Greece and Cyprus to reassure them the rapprochement with Turkey would not undermine Israel's ties with its Mediterranean neighbours.

Herzog's office said the visit, which will end on Thursday, was coordinated with the foreign ministry and the prime minister's office.

AFP

US is finally cleaning up its abandoned, leaking oil wells

Washington, US - Bill Suan bought his family's cattle farm in the mountains of West Virginia a decade-and-a-half ago with little thought for the two gas wells drilled on the property - but then they started leaking oil onto his fields and sickening his cows.

After taking the operator to court, Suan was successful in plugging one well, but the company has since disappeared, leaving him to contend with a small-scale environmental disaster that's a symptom of the larger problem of orphaned oil wells across the United States.

"It's shocking to think that it was like that for decades," Suan said.

From rural areas in the east where modern oil production began to cities in southern California, where pumpjacks loom not far from homes, the United States is pockmarked with perhaps millions of oil wells that are

unsealed, haven't produced in decades, and sometimes do not have an identifiable owner.

The detritus of lax regulation and the petroleum industry's booms and busts, many states have struggled to deal with these wells, which can leak oil and brine into water supplies as well as emit methane, a particularly potent greenhouse gas.

In a first, Washington is making a concerted effort to plug these wells through a US\$4.7bn fund, passed as part of an expansive overhaul of the nation's infrastructure. "The money available to the states (has) never been commensurate to the scale of the problem, and now for the first time it will be," said Adam Peltz, a senior attorney at the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) nonprofit.

The funds will likely not be enough to solve the problem entirely, though, and environmen-



A crew plugs one abandoned oil well at the Placerita Oil Field in Santa Clarita, California on February 22 (AFP)

talists warn that the patchwork of state laws governing oil production include many loopholes that could allow companies to

continue abandoning wells.

Since the first commercial barrel of oil was extracted in Pennsylvania in 1859, the United

States has been at the centre of global petroleum production.

But in many US states, it took more than a century to pass reg-

ulations governing record-keeping for wells and their sealing, or plugging.

Today, the exact number of abandoned wells nationwide is unknown, but the Environmental Protection Agency this year estimated it to be around 3.5mn.

The EDF estimates around 9mn Americans live within a mile of a well that's considered orphaned, meaning that it's neither operating, nor has a documented owner.

In southern California's Kern County, the Central California Environmental Justice Network has received reports of abandoned petroleum infrastructure leaking oil next to schools and homes. "A lot of the infrastructure that was built, that was now abandoned... is very much centred around poor communities," said Gustavo Aguirre Jr, the network's director in the county.

States have largely been left

to their own devices when it comes to addressing these wells.

California plugs a few dozen per-year, according to the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission (IOGCC), and is currently in the process of sealing 56 near the city of Santa Clarita, just north of Los Angeles, some of which date back to 1949.

The bulk of America's orphaned wells are thought to be in eastern states where the industry was born, and where more than 160 years later, it's not unheard of for landowners to find a hole in the ground or a pipe protruding from the earth that's leaking oil or brine.

Pennsylvania, which is thought to have the most, plugged 18 orphaned wells in 2020, according to the IOGCC. In the same year, West Virginia, which has thousands of orphaned wells, plugged one.

AFP

North Korea claims new test of ‘reconnaissance satellite’; analysts say ‘ballistic missile’ launch

Seoul, South Korea - North Korea carried out ‘another important test’ towards the development of a reconnaissance satellite, state media said on Sunday, but analysts warned it was a thinly-veiled ballistic missile launch, just days before South Korea elects a new president.

From hypersonic to medium-range ballistic missiles, Pyongyang test-fired a string of banned weaponry in January and last week launched what it claimed was a component of a ‘reconnaissance satellite’ - although Seoul described it as another ballistic missile.

North Korea is under biting international sanctions for its nuclear weapons programmes, but peaceful satellite launches are not subject to the same level of restrictions - although they use much of the same technology.

The development of a military reconnaissance satellite - along with the hypersonic weapons tested in January - is officially one of Pyongyang’s key defence projects, as outlined by leader Kim Jong Un last year.

“The DPRK National Aerospace Development Administration (NADA) and the Academy of Defence Science conducted



An image of the Korean Peninsula taken on February 27 and released by Pyongyang after ‘an experiment of reconnaissance satellite development’ (AFP)

another important test on Saturday under the plan of developing a reconnaissance satellite,” KCNA news agency said, using the acronyms of the North’s official name. “Through the test, the NADA confirmed the reliability of data transmission and reception system of the satellite, its control command system and various ground-based control systems,” it added.

South Korea said on Saturday that it believed the test - which came just days before the coun-

try votes to elect a new president on Wednesday - was a ballistic missile launch.

Pyongyang has doubled-down on leader Kim’s drive to modernise its military as it ignores US offers of talks and threatens to abandon a self-imposed moratorium on testing long-range missiles and nuclear weapons.

“Since satellites and ICBMs are the same inside and out, a satellite launch will take the Korean peninsula back to the peak of tensions it saw in 2017,” Yang Moo-jin, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, said.

‘Red line’

But Yang added the two tests this month may also be a message to Washington - a way for Pyongyang to implicitly seek concessions so that North Korea does not have to cross the ‘red line’ of an ICBM launch.

Pyongyang has been abiding by a self-imposed moratorium on testing ICBMs and nuclear weapons since leader Kim Jong Un embarked on a flurry of high-profile diplomatic engagement with then US president Donald Trump in 2017.

Talks later collapsed and diplomacy has languished ever since, despite efforts by the administration of US President Joe Biden to offer talks.

“There is uncertainty for North

Korea if it crosses the red line as it has no idea how the Biden administration will respond,” said Park Won-gon, professor at Ewha Womans University in Seoul.

Moreover, with the war in Ukraine dominating global headlines, North Korea doesn’t want to be overshadowed.

“Pyongyang would want to carry out a launch at a time and environment when it can grab the most attention,” Park added.

Lim Eul-chul, a professor of North Korean studies at Kyungnam University in Seoul, said South Korea’s upcoming presidential election appeared to be stirring up Pyongyang’s anxiety over its security.

Tensions with North Korea are no longer a major issue in South Korean elections, analysts say, with topics including domestic income inequality and youth unemployment top of voters’ lists of concerns.

But one of the two frontrunners, dour former prosecutor Yoon Suk-yeol of the opposition People Power Party, has threatened a pre-emptive strike on South Korea’s nuclear-armed neighbour if needed.

AFP

Boat carrying over 100 Rohingya refugees lands on Indonesia coast

Bireun, Indonesia - A boat carrying more than one hundred Rohingya refugees, including dozens of children, landed on the coast of Indonesia’s westernmost province Aceh early on Sunday, police said.

The vessel, which sailed from a Rohingya camp in Bangladesh, arrived shortly after 3am on a beach in Bireun district.

It was carrying 114 people, including 58 men, 21 women and 35 children aged under 15 years old, police said.

“We will conduct a general health check up and COVID-19 rapid antigen tests for these foreigners,” local police chief Mike Hardy Wirapraja told AFP.

He said they would later be transferred to neighbouring Lhokseumawe district which has a shelter for refugees.

Police found out about the arrival after some local fishermen reported that a boat filled with



Rohingya refugees look on in the compounds of a mosque following their arrival by boat in Bireun, Aceh province on Sunday (AFP)

Rohingya people had landed on the beach. The boat appeared to be in good condition and the refugees had sufficient food and supplies during the journey.

“We are originally from Myanmar but we fled to Bangladesh and we started our journey from Bangladesh,” one of the refugees, Omar Faruk, told an AFP journalist, adding that the group had been at sea for 25 days.

“We left Bangladesh because the Rohingya situation at the camp is not good, it’s getting very bad at the moment,” the 11-year-old said in English.

Faruk said he left his mother in

Bangladesh and followed his uncle to start a new life, preferably in a Muslim majority country like Indonesia or Malaysia.

“We left Bangladesh to this country to make a beautiful future... I have no father, only one uncle and my mom is still in Bangladesh. I came here because I want to improve my education,” he added. It is the second arrival by the persecuted minority in Muslim-majority Indonesia in the recent months.

More than 100 Rohingya also arrived in Bireun in late December after drifting for days before the Indonesian government eventually allowed them to land and dragged their stricken boat to shore. Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims have fled Buddhist-majority Myanmar since 2017 after a military crackdown that refugees said included mass killings and rape.

AFP

Mexico’s women police squad on protest frontline

Mexico City, Mexico - At a police station in Mexico City, women train with riot gear in preparation for an International Women’s Day march in one of the countries hardest hit by gender-based violence.

The squad of 500 officers is tasked with ensuring the demonstrations that draw thousands of women do not block roads or damage public property.

Although their work usually involves tense confrontations with fellow women, they feel united with the feminist cause because they too suffer violence and abuse by men.

But they question some of the protesters’ methods.

The demonstrators ‘hit me because they see the uniform and because of history. You see a police uniform and (think of) repression, corruption, impunity’, said Itzania Otero, 35, who commands the unit preparing to police Tuesday’s march.

She favours empathy to show the protesters ‘that this uniform is not what they think’, and that her officers only seek to contain - not repress - them. “We policewomen have also suffered a thousand things,” she said.

In recent years, protests against gender-based violence have brought together thousands of women in the capital and other Mexican cities.

Mexico registered 1,006 femicides last year, marking an increase from 978 in 2020, according to government figures.

Recent victims include Michelle Perez Tadeo, a 29-year-old television host and model whose body was found last month in a wooded area on the outskirts of the capital.

Other gender-based crimes such as harassment, sexual abuse and domestic violence have increased in recent years, resulting in a rising number of calls to emergency lines.



Policewomen from the Atenea grouping are seen training at the Mexico City Police facilities in Mexico City, on February 28 (AFP)

The squad of 500 officers is tasked with ensuring the demonstrations on International Women’s Day do not block roads

shin guards and a shield.

She also shows them how to use the shield in cases of aggression and how not to be provoked.

But ‘staying calm while they attack and hit you, enduring the many times that they throw paint on your face and say many things to you, it’s difficult’, she admitted.

Even though the protests put them in direct confrontation, some policewomen emphasize the importance of the feminist struggle to them. “It’s a very complex issue because within our own corporation we suffer the same type of violence and also with our partners,” said offi-

cer Sandra Gonzalez, 32.

The police’s special gender unit is investigating hundreds of cases of alleged abuses committed against female police officers by colleagues and superiors.

But, Gonzalez criticises the use of violence by hardcore protesters, who sometimes hurl Molotov cocktails at the police. She believes there are better ways to express discontent.

The police squad, created in September 2020, is also tasked with implementing protection measures for women victims of violence.

Although the squad says that its role is not to oppress, some protesters accuse them of doing just that, such as when they use fire extinguishers to put out the firebombs and disperse people.

“In the end they have an advantage over us. They have a weapon and are trained to react. We don’t,” said an activist who plans to participate in Tuesday’s march.

AFP

Flood-ravaged eastern Australia braces for more wild weather, recovery efforts to be hit

Sydney, Australia - Australian towns devastated by deadly flooding over the past week prepared for further intense weather on Sunday, with expected downpours halting volunteer recovery and clean-up efforts.

The national weather bureau warned of severe thunderstorms and major flooding in the state of Queensland, where 11 people died in the past week’s floods. Flash flooding is forecast for the major city of Brisbane, home to 2.6mn people.

Heavy rains, large hailstones and damaging winds were also expected to hit further south in the state of New South Wales, including the town of Lismore, which last week saw record flooding and dramatic rescue efforts to save residents stranded on their roofs.

The death toll from the



A family visits a submerged road by floodwaters in the suburb of Richmond in Sydney on Friday (AFP)

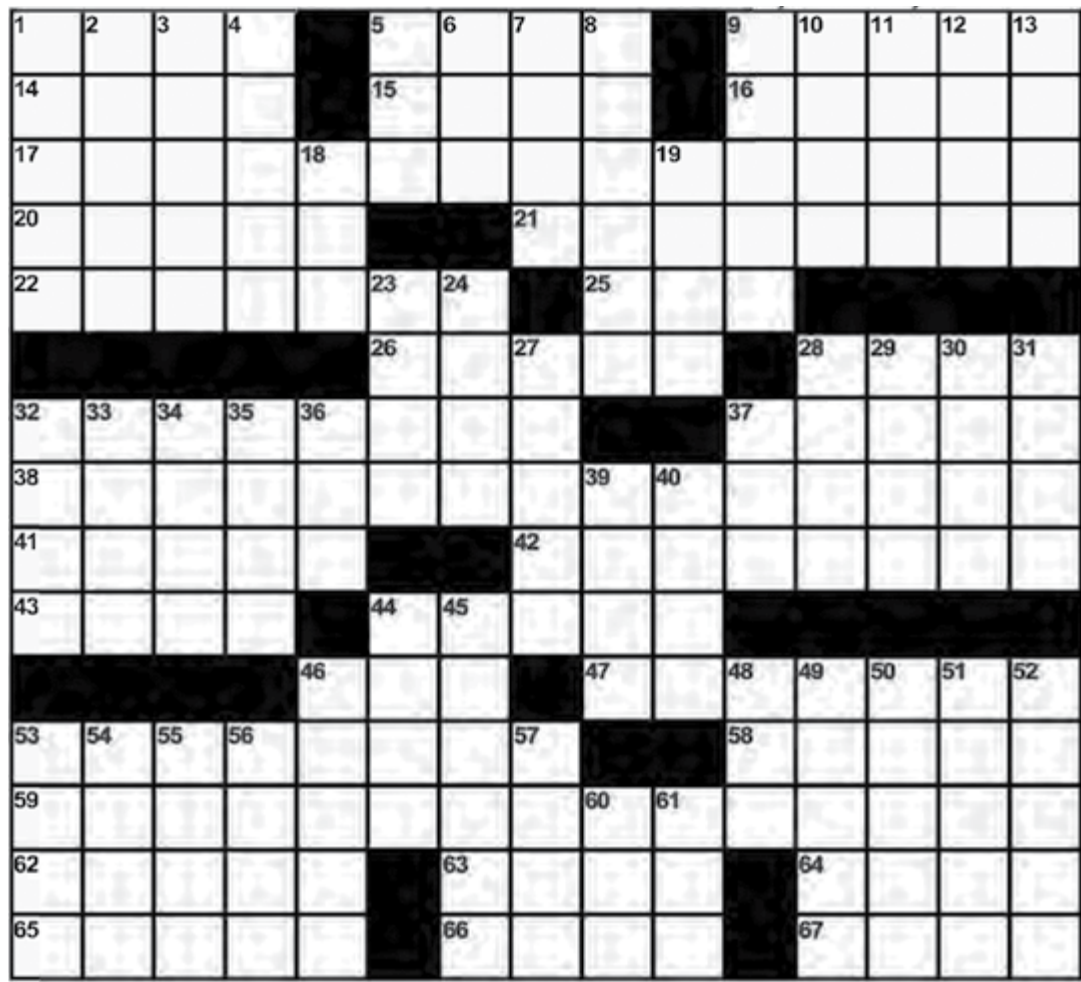
floods in New South Wales stands at five, after the body of a man was found on Saturday.

Some locals in flood-affected areas have taken to social media to vent frustration about what they see as a lack of police, defence personnel and emergency services on the ground to help with the recovery effort.

Defence Minister Peter Dutton Sunday defended the work of his department in the aftermath of the record flooding, saying he was ‘absolutely satisfied with the defence response’.

AFP

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1) Standard
5) Kind of thermometer
9) Comedian Silverman
14) Dueling sword
15) Off-limits double negative
16) "All My Children" vixen
17) Count calories
20) Instant
21) When most people work
22) Clambake item
25) Part of TGIF
26) Sleeveless garments
28) Dance bit
32) Potent pepper
37) Omit a vowel in speech
38) Microwave feature
41) Alpaca relative
42) Military equipment
43) Harp's old cousin
44) Antique shop item
46) Dadaist pioneer
47) Type of horse bit
53) City in Florida
58) Farm machine
59) Reason for an NBA

video review
62) Blazing
63) Brown bag tippler, in stereotypes
64) Endings for East or West
65) Used a 58-Across
66) Traditional Indian bread
67) "Let it stand" in editorial circles

DOWN

1) Small amphibians
2) Eyeball-twisting draw-ings
3) Catch up with again
4) Place of pilgrimage
5) Lennon's bride
6) First name in the "Happy Days" cast
7) From the beginning
8) Become unglued
9) Hunts
10) Extremely dry, as land
11) Capital of Latvia
12) In need of a massage
13) Lids
18) Skirt's edge
19) Dampens

23) "Be it_ so humble ..."
24) You'll get a deal there
27) Navigational aid
28) Like some margins or chances
29) It marches on
30) First habitat
31) Bold and sassy
32) Become cohesive
33) Comrade in arms
34) Type of jet
35) As high as one can get
36) Bake sale org.
37) Flight guess (abbr.)
39) State flower of Tennessee
40) "Follow me!"
44) Gator's cousin
45) Like Billy Joel's girl
46) Posed a question
48) Early school lesson
49) Fearsome threesome of destiny
50) Bat an eye toward?
51) Africa's Sierra_
52) Artist Max
53) Striker's enemy
54)_ Romeo (sports car)

55) Muddy up
56) Farmland measure
57) Highlight for opera

goers
60) Genetic material
61) Long, long time

NOTE PAD

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Now and then you need to purge, start all over again like a rebirth. This is the perfect time to do just that. Your main goal might be to work on your mind, body, or soul, but you need to start with your surroundings. Go through your place one spot at a time and examine every corner. The harder you work, the clearer your thoughts should become. Clear out the old and make room for the new.

LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

You've been somewhat restless recently, and when you get this way, you need to find ways to liven things up fast. Rather than firing up some new drama, it occurs to you that a change of venue could also get the job done without the fireworks! Don't let anyone tell you that you're just trying to bypass the real issues. You're trying to rejuvenate yourself. This is something your intuitive side is screaming at you!

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

You're a natural authority figure, at least as far as you're concerned. That's usually good for you, and your instincts are usually right on, but for now, listening to outside advice could be a good idea. In fact, you might actually need to seek someone out if you want to make your plans work. Choose that one person you're sure can find a happy medium between the hard and fast rules and their own intuition.

TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

Whether you believe that you can fall in love only once or think that a person can have many great loves in their life, you'll see something that gives you a completely different view of romance today. You're moving into a much more philosophical phase where nothing is black-and-white and nothing is simple. Embrace the ambiguity of love and romance and you'll be able to find it in more places more often.

VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Even if things seem to be proceeding superbly, you can't help but worry about the other shoe dropping soon. Your pessimism isn't doing you any favours, so let go of it for now. You may expect perfection even when it's not possible, and you've got to deal with that too. For now, though, what you really want is well within the realm of possibility. Don't beat yourself up. Just take your time and do things right so you can stop worrying.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

You probably have the urge to toss things away, even (or especially) stuff you've been emotionally attached to for some time. Don't stop yourself. Being surrounded by things that belonged to someone who used to be close, or keeping reminders of your past can just hold you back emotionally. Now is a good time for a new start. If you can't get rid of the old, you can't add anything new. You've got good times ahead.

GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

You're a brainy, intellectual person, full of big ideas, big questions, and big plans. For now, you're thinking seriously about starting something all over again in your home or family life. You need to speak with someone about this as soon as possible, someone who can be completely objective even though they care deeply about you. Listen to every word and then make your own decision.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

You haven't been able to sleep all that well for a few days now, mostly because someone close is getting in trouble for their independence. You haven't quite figured out how to handle things, so you're somewhat upset. You can't stop thinking about it until you've dreamed up a plan and reached out to the person who needs you (even if they don't know it yet). For now, get some sleep. You deserve it.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

You're famous for your objectivity. You've even been accused of being too rational, weird as it sounds. While that may be the case sometimes, right now you're dealing with a highly charged situation and trying to find a compromise. You know you can only figure things out by getting someone you trust hear you out, offer their take, and remind you what happened last time something like this came up.

CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

You're an incredibly emotional creature. That's your major claim to fame. For now, you're feeling even more so than usual, yet you're also being asked to handle things using your brain, not your heart. This could be hard! Your best bet is to just sit tight and see what happens next. If it's a decision that could bring you closer to someone you already love, there's really not much to think about.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

You're willing to do whatever it takes to help someone close, and that quality is the stuff that legends are made of (with your people, anyway). You may have found, though, that quality mostly lacking in others. Believe it or not, someone who's got it going on could be coming your way soon, but you've got to take a little risk and let yourself get to know them better.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

If anyone respects the wisdom of experience, it's you. You know just how much time and emotional energy is invested in living and working for so long, and you try to listen and learn no matter the topic. Don't knock your own instincts, though. They're as polished as anyone's. If someone you're advising today isn't quite sure what to say, you can count on them giving you the best answer.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Roughly when was the Hampton Court Maze created?

A. 2000
B. 1800
C. 1900
D. 1700

2. What is a mermaid's purse?

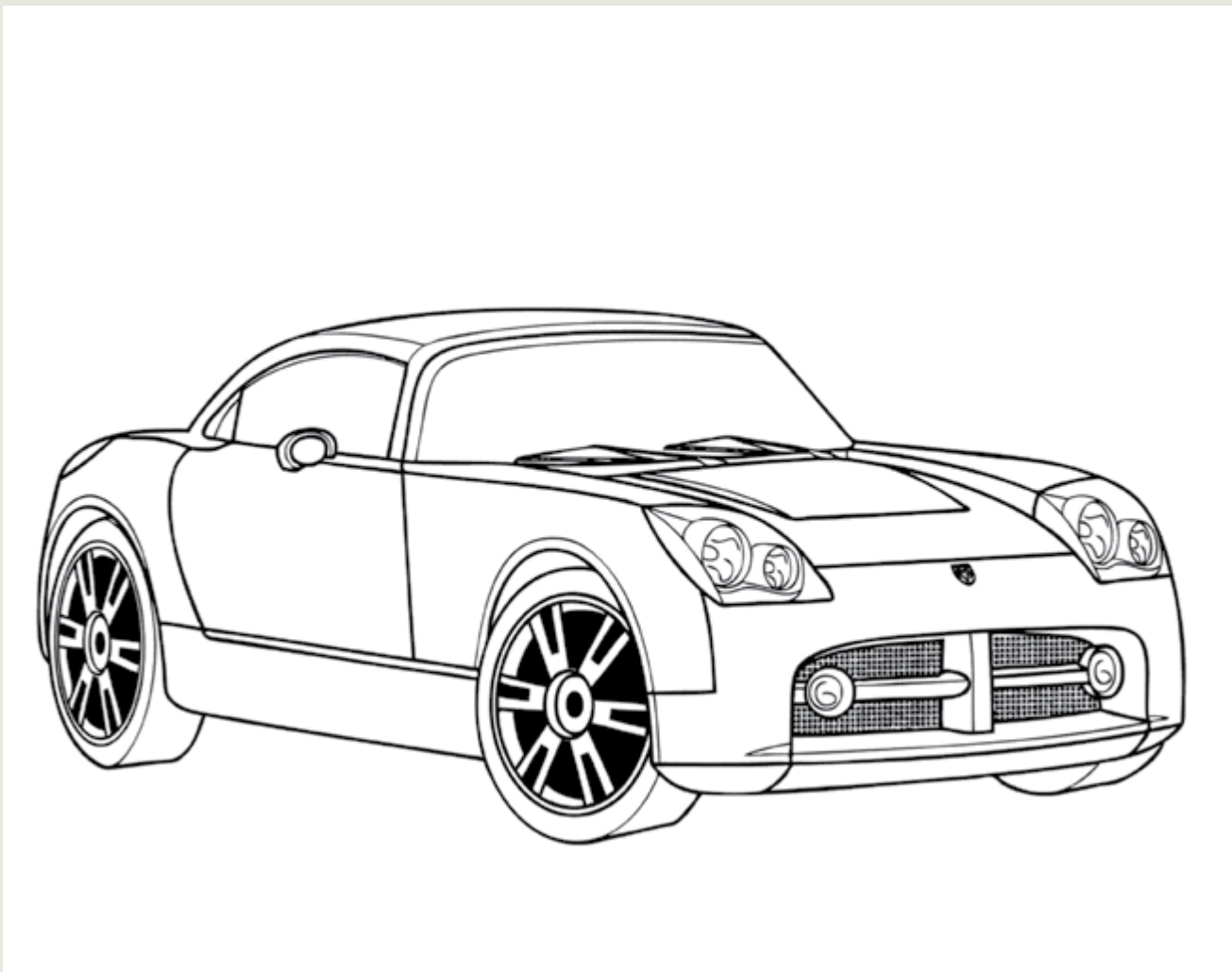
A. A walrus's genitalia
B. A species of seaweed
C. A type of jellyfish
D. The casing that surrounds the egg or eggs of a shark, skate or chimaera

3. In geology, what are nappe formations?

A. A complex fold system of shifted sheets of rock
B. Breaks or faults in otherwise continuous sheets of rock
C. Abrupt changes in level
D. Tablerocks Armada

Answers: 1.D 2.D 3.A

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

G	S	E	Y
L	E	O	K
N	H	E	O
N	O	L	R

Each game will present you with a matrix filled with letters. The objective is to form words by linking adjacent letters - to the left, right, on top, bottom, or diagonal to each other. The Boggles Classic game uses a 4 x 4 matrix. Words are valued at one point for each letter in excess of two letters. A three letter word is worth one point, a four letter word is worth two points, and so on. Valid words must be at least three letters long.

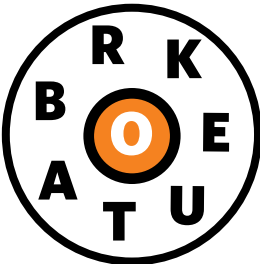
Solution 20-25 words: Excellent, 15-20 words: Very good, 10-15 words: Good, 5-10 words: Average

DO YOU SUDOKU?

LEVEL EASY: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9 and only one instance of each number

	6			4	5		
	3	1		7			4 2
7			8		5		3
3		7				1	
	4						2
		6				7	9
	5		1		9		7
4	9			5		2	1
		2	3				9

WORD BUILDER



You have three minutes to find all the words contained in this word.

Rules: Words should be at least four letters long, proper nouns and duplicates don't count

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

6	9	8	4	3	2	7	1
3	1	7	5	9	8	6	4
7	8	4	6	2	1	3	5
6	5	7	3	8	4	9	1
8	2	3	1	9	7	5	6
9	3	1	2	6	7	8	5
4	6	5	1	8	3	2	7
2	4	8	9	7	6	1	3
1	7	5	4	3	2	6	9

TECHWORKS



Saliba Taimeh, a 39-year-old Jordanian mechanical engineer, pondered how to deal with one contaminated everyday surface - the handrails of escalators in shopping malls and transport hubs

INNOVATION AND INVENTIONS

In the age of COVID-19, Jordanian mechanical engineer Saliba Taimeh pondered how to deal with one contaminated everyday surface: the handrails of escalators in shopping malls and transport hubs. He came up with a device to sterilise them with UV rays - and this is where TechWorks stepped in.

A wealth of ideas would not have seen the light of day without TechWorks, a Jordanian platform aimed at bringing together youth, ideas and resources to jump-start innovations. Set up in 2018, TechWorks says its mission is 'to plug into entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems' and turn ideas into reality.

It is equipped with state of the art technology such as 3D printers and affiliated with a foundation set up by Crown Prince Hussein. Last year, it attracted about 100 inventors and start-up companies, enabling them to produce prototypes quickly and at low cost.

Taimeh, 39, said TechWorks "provided me with every support, back-up, advice and guidance" to help perfect the sterilising device, after 23 attempts over almost two years. His invention sterilises the handrails of escalators from all kinds of viruses, such as coronavirus and bacteria, he said.

The device can send alerts to the mobile phone of a family member through a special application in case the person wearing it falls or is hurt, or if he strays from a certain place

After contacting several international companies, a German firm specialising in health and safety in public places signed up to manufacture the 'Brigid Box'. Weighing in at 7.2kg it can be installed in less than 15 minutes.

Success stories

Taimeh's success story is only one of many. High school student Zain Abu Rumman, 18, has developed a tracking device for elderly patients and people with special needs, worn like a watch or around the neck. The SPS Watch has a battery that lasts eight days and is resistant to water, heat and breakage.

"The device can send alerts to the mobile phone of a family member through a special application in case the person wearing it falls or is hurt, or if he strays from

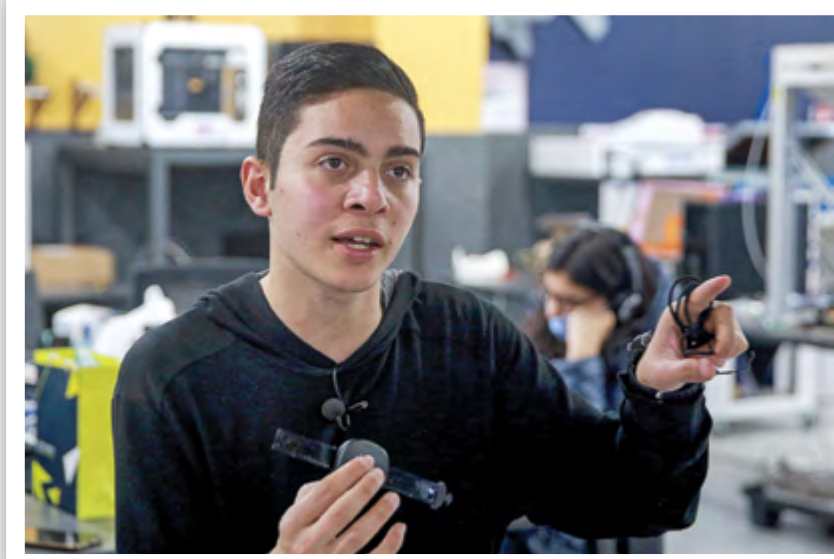
a certain place," Abu Rumman said. It took him two-and-a-half years to perfect and he has struck a production accord with a Chinese company.

Omar Khader, 26, works for Jazri Studio, an industrial design company which has devised a smart plug to protect children from electric shocks. "TechWorks has advanced equipment, engineers and technicians that help us convert our ideas into successful products," he said.

FabLab 'open to all'

Other designers, like 32-year-old civil engineer Malik Nour, still have a long and expensive way to go to refine their products. Nour's brainchild is the 'Pikler Triangle', designed as a safe and environmentally friendly children's toy.

He hopes to attract Swedish furniture



Zain Abu Rumman, an 18-year-old Jordanian student, invented the SPS Watch - a tracking device for the elderly - those with special needs

giant IKEA to take on his products, which he is already selling over social media to customers in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, under the label of 'Fares World', named after his child.

Ismail Hakki, executive director of TechWorks, said its aim is to provide "a creative environment and all the necessary resources to support and enable young people to transform their projects from a mere idea into a real product".

The doors of the project's Fabrication Lab, or FabLab, are open to all. "We support students, entrepreneurs, and startups," he said.

FabLab also provides services to doctors and hospitals in the fields of facial restora-

tion, digital dentistry, face masks and sterilisation.

At the request of a doctor, it transformed the chest x-ray of a patient with a malignant tumour close to the heart into a three-dimensional model of the patient's chest making it easier to operate.

FabLab touts many successes, including a 'smart home' which allows a mobile phone user to control electrical appliances inside the house from afar by turning on heating or cooling systems, and a piano keyboard to help a blind musician play.

It plans to open two more branches in Jordan to provide technology training and help for school and university students. AFP

CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

Sri Lankan teacher with expertise in teaching Science, Maths and English with more than 15 years experience looking for a suitable job. Please contact only via WhatsApp: 95858946

REQUIREMENT

Beautician Cum Henna Designer
Contact Number:99335343

AUDIT, VAT, TAXATION

Accounting, Auditing,
Vat Services, Taxation

Gulf Center Consultancy & Audit
Chartered Accountants

Contact: 92469602/93949235

Offices at Muscat, Salalah, Sohar & Sur
Email: kumar@gccaoman.com

FREE CLASSIFIED LISTING

Muscat Daily now offers free classified listings for individuals in the following categories:

Situations Wanted/ Accommodation Wanted or Available/Sale of Household Items/
Car for Sale or Wanted/ Matrimonial Alliances (Word limit is 35)
Please email your listing to

dailyclassifieds@apexmedia.co.om or call 99104346

SLOVAKIAN BLOGGER

From a tourist to a tour guide – **Marta Ondrejкова’s** journey in Oman has been one long romance in the great outdoors

Showcasing the sultanate

While many people admire Oman’s natural beauty and allure, some have gone beyond just admiration. The sultanate has been instrumental for them to not only re-discover their inner passions but also to reinvent themselves in different ways.

After embarking on a voyage to embrace the unexplored, some visitors now call Oman their home and are determined to showcase its less-known beauty to the world. Celebrating every ounce of this beautiful country, each day is a new adventure and a fresh opportunity for them to be astounded by what it has to offer.

One such tourist who fell in love with the country, Marta Ondrejкова, originally from Slovakia, moved to Muscat in 2015. Fascinated by the Arabian architecture, language, and culture, she was drawn to the Omani heritage.

“Oman is a place where the past meets the present. It is one of the few modern countries that has kept its rich culture and customs intact. The people here appreciate their traditions, and it is this that keeps them connected to their land,” says Marta, describing what makes the country unique.

Travel influencer

What began as solo adventures into the wilderness of Oman, quickly turned into a career for Marta as she soon blossomed into a freelance tour guide, a professional diving master, and an Instagram travel influencer. Her desire to become a travel blogger, share her experiences with the world, and inspire others around her

to push their boundaries began with a push from her friends and has since grown into something she is extremely passionate about.

During her journey, Marta realised that there was so much more to the Sultanate and how unappreciated it was. Persistent to portray Oman in its true sense and attract people to discover this ‘hidden gem’, she started ‘marta.explores.omani’, a handle that gives one a glimpse at what under-valued beauty looks like.

Through the breathtaking photographs and videos which capture the exquisiteness of Oman, Marta has been successful in persuading many to visit Oman and enjoy unique experiences. Her social media accounts has not only inspired tourists but also stunned the locals into revaluing their home country and its inherent attractiveness.

By actively sharing the locations, suggesting hike routes, and planning itineraries, she has been a catalyst for many to visit some of the most beautiful places in the country.

“Travel blogging has allowed me to inspire women who are passionate about adventure and travel to embark on their journey and shatter the social stigma that women should avoid solo adventures. This, in turn, has allowed me to make a small difference in people’s lives.”, Marta said.

Adventure is therapy

Marta describes adventure as therapy, and she has had some life-changing experiences with each trek, dive, or road trip she has taken. Dreaming of it since she was a child,

Oman provided her with the opportunity to experience her first dive. This experience taught her the power of stillness under the sea and transformed her outlook on life.

As a psychology student, she aspires to combine mental health and counseling with adventure and travel. Elaborating on this, she said, “The nature, mountains, sea, freedom, and, most importantly, safe environment that Oman provides is truly ‘therapeutic’, and I don’t believe it can be found anywhere else.”

Being an avid traveler and con-

“The nature, mountains, sea, freedom, and, most importantly, safe environment that Oman provides is truly ‘therapeutic’, and I don’t believe it can be found anywhere else

Marta Ondrejкова

stantly visiting different countries, she could not have envisioned staying in the same country for so long but Oman changed that for her. The warmth of the sultanate and the welcoming spirit of its people taught her that happiness may be found even in a single place with which you truly connect. Even after years of exploring Oman, she still feels as if there is so much more to explore and a never-ending list of locations to visit.

“The explorers in Oman have built a community that respects and inspires one another. I am so grateful to be surrounded by individuals who share ideas and thoughts that I haven’t even considered,” she said, referring to the travel community and other explorers in the country.

Despite the rising use of technology and time spent behind screens, Marta recommends that people in the city enjoy the indisputable beauty of Oman and reconnect with nature by choosing outdoor activities. This will reduce stress levels and make us more appreciative of nature.

(Contributed by Aashna Sanghani)



THE **470** HORSEPOWER
WRANGLER
RUBICON **392**
REWILD YOURSELF



FREE FIRST YEAR REGISTRATION
5 YEARS WARRANTY
5 YEARS ROADSIDE ASSIST

BOOK NOW

Terms and conditions apply.

Jeep
THERE'S ONLY ONE

dhofar ظفار
AUTOMOTIVE للسيارات

Wattayah, Athaiba, Sohar, Nizwa, Salalah
For corporate enquiries **92556617** | For more information **245 005 30** | info@da-oman.com | www.dhofarautomotive.com