

DIVERSIFICATION OF TOURISM SECTOR

The government of Oman has presented several projects for investors from across the world as part of the efforts to diversify the tourism sector in the country and increase its contribution to the economy. Among projects that were opened for investors on Monday, the most important was the plans to establish a multi-purpose sports hall in Muscat (on the likes of the Coca-Cola arena in Abu Dhabi), which can host world championships and other mega international events throughout the year.

SEE P2



P9

ENGLAND SURVIVE NIGERIA SCARE



P11

THE INSPIRING STORY OF THE SAGE OF THE MOUNTAINS



P13

OMAN UNVEILS STRATEGY TO DEVELOP SPORTS AND ADVENTURE TOURISM



MUSCAT

OMAN CONDOLES MOROCCO

The Sultanate of Oman has expressed its sincere condolences to the government and people of Morocco on the accident of a bus crash in the province of Azilal. In a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry, Oman also expressed heartfelt sympathy to families of the victims. — ONA

GLASGOW

RAO SHINES IN MUSIC COMPETITIONS

The Royal Army of Oman's music band achieved a number of advanced places in the first leg of the international music competition and the qualifiers for the final competitions which will be held in Glasgow, Scotland. The Royal Army of Oman (RAO) won first place in the infantry and discipline categories and second place in the music play competition that saw the participation of 19 music bands from all over the world.

SEE P2



SAYYID SHIHAB BIDS FAREWELL TO GERMAN AMBASSADOR

Delegated by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, on Monday received Thomas Schneider, Ambassador of Germany to Oman, to bid him farewell at the end of his tour of duty. HH Sayyid Shihab thanked the ambassador for the efforts he made to enhance relations between Oman and Germany. He wished the ambassador success in his future assignments. The ambassador praised the strong relations between the two countries. He voiced his delight and appreciation for the high level cooperation extended to him during his tenure in Oman. — ONA

Team identifies space launch sites in Oman

AHMED AL KAABI
Muscat, Aug 7

A research team has identified optimal locations for space launch platforms in Oman, marking a significant milestone in Oman's journey towards advancing its presence in the space industry and promoting peaceful space exploration.

The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation honoured the talented for the study, which was conducted in collaboration with Oman's Global Space and Technology Company.

Over the course of 18 months, the team diligently analysed various geographical, climatic, and technological factors to pinpoint the most suitable sites for commercial space launch platforms.

The event was presided over

by Dr Rahma bint Ibrahim al Mahrouqiyah, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, in the presence of Major General Hamed bin Ahmed Sukron, President of the Academy of Strategic and Defence Studies, and Dr Munther bin Hilal al Busaidy, Deputy Head of the Follow-up Unit for Implementing Oman Vision 2040.

Bahiya bint Hilal al Shuaybiyah, Founder and CEO of the Global Space and Technology Company, expressed her company's unwavering commitment to contributing to Oman's space sector. She emphasised that the space industry represents a promising and critical sector, leveraging Oman's strategic geographical location and diverse investment opportunities.

TURN TO P3

Oman Air's turnaround plan takes off

NEW NATIONAL AVIATION BOARD ON AUGUST 19

KABEER YOUSUF
@kabeeryousef

The strategy to turn Oman Air around was unveiled by Eng Said bin Hamoud al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MoTCIT), on Monday. The Transformation Plan which aims to make the national carrier profitable in 4-5 years includes naming a new acting CEO.

Al Maawali also announced the setting up of a new board for the civil aviation sector that brings all transport and aviation companies under it. The board will be announced on August 19.

"We have a comprehensive programme to restructure Oman Air based on a specialised study conducted by globally renowned consultant Oliver and Wyman, which will assess and suggest ways to make good the continuous operating losses and accumulation of financial debts," said Al Maawali who is also the chairman of Oman Air.

At a press conference

Eng Said bin Hamoud al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, addresses the media in Muscat on Monday. — ONA

held at the Oman Air headquarters, the minister appointed Nasser al Salmi as the new Acting CEO. Salmi replaces Abdul Aziz al Raisi.

The Transformation Plan of the national carrier will ensure financial Sustainability, better corporate governance and rightsizing of fleet and personnel.

The Board of Directors has approved the recommendations of the study by Oliver Wyman. It may be noted there was a Royal Order by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to assign a specialised consultant to probe the state of Oman Air.

TURN TO P2

1 PLAN TO MAKE OMAN AIR PROFITABLE IN 4-5 YEARS

2 NASSER AL SALMI NAMED AS THE NEW ACTING CEO

3 BOARD OKAYS STEPS SUGGESTED BY OLIVER WYMAN TO TURN OMAN AIR AROUND

4 HM HAD ORDERED TO NAME A SPECIALISED CONSULTANT TO PROBE THE STATE OF OMAN AIR

5 OMAN AIR BOARD TO INCLUDE FOUR AVIATION EXPERTS COMPRISING 3 EXPATRIATES AND AN OMANI

6 STRATEGY TO RIGHT SIZE PERSONNEL AND REVAMP FLIGHT SCHEDULE



Don't fall for the dubious parcel trick through emails or phone calls

KABEER YOUSUF
@kabeeryousef

If you get calls from couriers companies informing that you have an undelivered package due to unpaid customs fees. Hang up. A wave of courier service scams are being reported in Oman and the rest of the Middle East.

Con artists are employing deceptive tactics to swindle money or reveal bank card details, according to IT security firm Kaspersky.

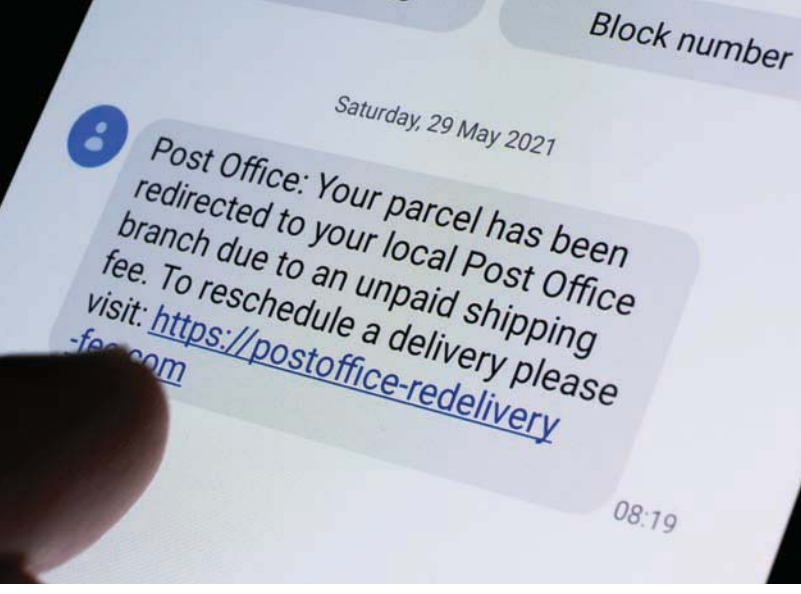
In some countries, victims get calls from 'officials' asking for bank

details, accusing you of sending packages with illegal items or claiming you can transfer money to clear your name.

A number of people in Oman have said that they have received emails or phone calls from fake courier services. Some of them smelled the trouble while others paid the money.

"I sent the money to the account sent to me for a parcel believing that the first payment didn't get through," a private sector employee said.

Khalil Akel, an employee with a global courier company, was taken



One should be alert in case of such emails or calls. Call the customer service to verify before taking any steps. The best thing one can do is to demand Air Way Bill

NAUSHAD SULAIMAN
MD of ATS Courier Service

aback to know that 'senders' who have supposedly sent some parcels did not do so.

"Many whom I contacted after receiving a parcel confessed to me that they weren't expecting any parcel and that they were totally clueless," Akel said.

To create a sense of urgency, the email urges users to click on a provided link for further instructions. When users click on the link, they are redirected to a fraudulent website masquerading as a legitimate courier service portal and prompted to give their bank card credentials.

TURN TO P2





Open an account for your child and
give them the best start today

24775777 | www.maisarah-oman.com

For more Information
Please scan the QR code



#MAISARAHWORLD



PLANS FOR A MULTI-PURPOSE SPORTS ARENA IN THE CAPITAL

Diversification of tourism sector on cards

VINOD NAIR
@vinot_nair

The government of Oman has presented several projects for investors from across the world as part of the efforts to diversify the tourism sector in the country and increase its contribution to the economy.

Among projects that were opened for investors on Monday, the most important was the plans to establish a multi-purpose sports hall in Muscat (on the likes of the Coca-Cola arena in Abu Dhabi), which can host world championships and other mega international events throughout the year.

The authorities also sought investments for a women's club in the capital.

There are also plans to set up a High Jumping Training Centre in Al Jabal Al Akhdhar, which will support talented athletes with top-quality facilities, coaching, and



other services necessary to develop into world-class performers.

Eng Rashid al Hinai, Director of the Oman Vision 2040 Office at the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MoHT), said that the ministry will focus on tourism investment in four governorates — Dhofar, Al Dakhiliyah, Al Sharqiyah South and Musandam.

Investment opportunities have been offered in many wilayats such as Khasab, Al Hamra, Al Jabal Al Akhdhar, Qurayat, Al Rustaq, and Saham.

MoHT aims to raise the contribution of the tourism sector to the GDP to RO 9.5 billion by 2040 from around 11 million tourists. As of 2022, the country had around 30,332 hotel rooms on offer to welcome tourists.

Dr Siham al Harthy, chairperson of the Tourism Committee at the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), said that the contribution of tourism to GDP increased to three per cent last year from 2.9 million foreign tourists.

The number of tourists visiting the country this year is estimated to be around 3.5 million, largely aided by incentives such as visa exemption for citizens of 103 countries for stays up to 14 days.

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) said that the Foreign Capital Investment Law guarantees foreign investors ownership of projects by up to 100 per cent.

Don't fall for parcel trick

FROM PAGE 1

When contacted, the courier companies functioning in the country have said that any email demanding money against a parcel should be verified.

"At a time when people are receiving surprise gifts from their dear and near ones, such frauds become widespread," said Naushad Sulaiman, MD of ATS Courier Service.

"One should be alert in case of such emails or calls. Call the customer service to verify before taking any steps. People have a duty to be safe and secure. The best thing one can do is to demand Air Way Bill and verify it's authenticity on the website," says Sulaiman.

"The use of courier services continues to grow amid increasing eCommerce. The sad reality is that cybercriminals see this as an opportunity to trick people with scam and phishing mails," says Roman Dedenok, a spam analysis expert at Kaspersky. One must watch out as scammers often try to evoke fear, excitement, or urgency, to manipulate recipients into taking impulsive actions. Take a step back and analyse how the email makes you feel.

Oman hosts GCC forum on youth volunteering



SALALAH: The GCC Forum on Youth Volunteering 2023, code-named "Isnad", kicked off on Monday. The event, hosted by the Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, is held at Sultan Qaboos Complex for Youth, Culture and Entertainment in Salalah.

Thirty two youth from GCC countries are taking part in the forum, which runs till August 11, 2023.

The forum includes several workshops and lectures that cover a spectrum of topics, such as the definition of volunteering, challenges facing volunteering and managing volunteer projects.

It also highlights successful models of pioneer youth initiatives in the volunteering field, as well as exchanging experiences and expertise in the same sphere. — ONA

OMAN AIR'S TURNAROUND PLAN TAKES OFF

FROM PAGE 1

The Oman Air Chairman said four top-notch aviation experts comprising three expatriates and an Omani will join the Oman Air board as part of the sustainability plan.

Of the seven members on the board of directors, two are representatives of the government who will look after the carrier's operations.

The minister said radical and sustainable transformation of Oman Air requires qualified experts. In this regard, many changes will be made in the current executive team of Oman Air during the

coming months, with the re-formation of the members of the company's board of directors by attracting experts in the aviation sector.

Commenting on corporate governance, he said specialised committees affiliated with the Board of Directors would reformulate governance in the areas of human, financial and commercial resources.

Based on the recommendations of international experts, a decision will be taken to revamp flight schedules.

The plans involve coordination with budget airline SalamAir on domestic or

international air destinations.

Al Maawali hoped that these measures would improve quality and ensure reliability of the services provided.

"The review of the transformation plan of Oman Air was announced in the interest of financial sustainability and the continuity of the company as an airline that operates according to commercial principles capable of fulfilling its current and future obligations. We have a clear indication that we are moving in the right direction. The positive results will be visible in the coming days," the minister said.

RAO wins music competitions in Scotland

GLASGOW: The Royal Army of Oman's music band achieved a number of advanced places in the first leg of the international music competition and the qualifiers for the final competitions which will be held in Glasgow, Scotland.

The Royal Army of Oman (RAO) won first place in the infantry and discipline categories and second place in the music play competition that saw the participation of 19 music bands from all over the world. First sergeant Mohammed bin Khamis al Amri won second place in the stick-wielding contest and sergeant Nadir bin Jamaan Jabli came third and captain Abdullah bin Juma al Mihajiri finished fourth.

In a separate competition held in the town of Bridge of Allan, RAO achieved first place in the infantry and discipline competitions which saw the participation of 32 music bands from across the world. Sergeant Nadir bon Jamaan Jabli won first place in the stick-wielding contest and first sergeant Mohammed bin Khamis al Amri won second place. — ONA



Labour firm convicted for not honouring agreement

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, AUG 7

A labour recruitment office in Suhar has been convicted for not complying with providing the service properly, the Directorate General of Consumer Protection in Al Batinah North Governorate stated.

As per the details, a consumer had an agreement worth RO 1,300 with a labour recruitment office for the recruitment of a



domestic worker.

He paid RO 500, but the office retracted from bringing the worker and returned RO 200 to the consumer, refusing to return the remaining RO 300.

As it was also evident that the office was basically working without a license, the client submitted a complaint to the directorate and as per subsequent measures, the case was referred to the Public Prosecution. A fine of RO 400 was imposed on the company.



Invitation to attend Extraordinary General Meeting

The Board of Directors of Oman Fisheries Co. SAOG (Company) is pleased to invite the shareholders of the Company to an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) scheduled to be held at 03:00 pm on Wednesday, 23 August 2023 through the electronic platform for holding General Meetings, which you can login through the website of Muscat Clearing and Depository Company (www.mcd.gov.om). In the event that quorum for holding the EGM was not achieved, the second EGM shall be held at 03:00 pm on Thursday, 24 August 2023 to discuss the following agenda:

- Studying the company's conditions for capital erosion and approving the company's plan to achieve break-even and profits in the future.
- Amending Articles No. (6,4) of the Company's Articles of Association.

As per the regulations of the convening of the general meetings through electronic platforms, issued by the Capital Market Authority (CMA), we would like to attract your kind attention to the following:

- Only juristic persons have the right to authorize a natural person to attend the general meeting and vote on their behalf through the electronic systems, provided that this natural person has an investor number at Muscat Clearing and Depository Company.
- Voting on the subject items offered for voting in the agenda starts before a period of not more than three (3) days and until the end of the voting process on day of the general meeting. If the shareholder's shares are increased or decreased, the voting process will be cancelled and the shareholder will have to vote again on the day of the general meeting.

For any queries please contact to **Mr. Khalil Ali Ahmed Al-Amri** on phone No 99317115 or e-mail at: khalil@omanfisheries.net

Chairman

Legal Advisor

Auditor



OMANFISHERIES



Omani women associations play vital role in shaping society



SIHAM AL SAIDI
SAHAM, AUG 7

In recent years, the active engagement of Omani women associations has been instrumental in advancing the role of women in society. These organisations have played a pivotal role in empowering women, fostering leadership, and promoting gender equality. Through various initiatives, Omani women associations have become essential agents in highlighting women's remarkable contributions to vibrant societies.

These associations are catalysts for change, challenging societal norms and advocating for women's rights. An exemplary case is the Saham Omani Women Association in the Al Batinah North Governorate, showcasing the broader impact of such groups.

The association has collaborated with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and

The Saham Omani Women Association stands as a local beacon within the broader network of Omani women associations. Its achievements inspire communities and sectors, showcasing that empowering women fosters positive change and active participation in building robust societies.

Water Resources, to implement projects that support women's production. Notably, workshops on dairy product manufacturing and fruit preservation using modern, healthy techniques have boosted local markets. A gathering for women entrepreneurs further encouraged labour market engagement and home-based businesses.

Aligned with their strategic goals, Omani Women's Associations prepare and empower women through education, training, and entrepreneurship. The Saham Omani Women

Association highlights women's rights and gender equality through workshops and awareness campaigns, dismantling cultural barriers and fostering equality.

Education and skill development are paramount for the Saham Omani Women Association. By providing educational opportunities and training, the association equips women to play diverse roles in projects, life skills, community support, and decision-making. Collective efforts are also championed, as community engagement programmes encourage women to address

local challenges, contributing to Al Batinah North's Governorate welfare.

Leadership development is a core focus, with leadership training programmes empowering women to assume influential roles. This has elevated women's representation in local decision-making bodies, enabling policy shaping that benefits the governorate.

The Saham Omani Women Association stands as a local beacon within the broader network of Omani women associations. Its achievements inspire communities and sectors, showcasing that empowering women fosters positive change and active participation in building robust societies. By advocating for rights, promoting education, fostering community engagement, and encouraging leadership, these associations exemplify how women's empowerment drives societal progress.

Team identifies space launch sites in Oman

FROM PAGE 1

The establishment of space launch platforms for commercial purposes is envisioned to serve as a national project that nurtures a new generation of talented Omani youth, fostering expertise in the space domain and its allied fields.

Sultan bin Salem al Yahyai, the head of the research team, shared his insights in an interview with Oman Daily Observer, emphasising that the primary goal of the project was to pinpoint the most suitable location for a rocket launch platform. He highlighted the team's remarkable achievements in navigating the

complexities of establishing a scientific foundation for site selection, factoring in multiple scientific criteria.

Al Yahyai acknowledged the unique challenge presented by Oman's diverse terrains, underscoring the team's unwavering commitment to striking a delicate balance between technical and scientific excellence while ensuring comprehensive regional development coverage.

At the end of the event, Dr Rahma and Bahiya, presented tokens of appreciation to the 24 participants for their invaluable contributions to the research study.

RNO officer gets patent of robotic device



MUSCAT: Sub Lieutenant Ali bin Said al Hashmi of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) received a patent for a robotic device that performs underwater maintenance and repair of ship hulls. The patent was registered at the national office of intellectual property of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, as well as the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Geneva, and the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

The innovation is envisaged to reduce the use of human divers in ship hulls' repair underwater in future. The device is fitted with sensors and it is capable of detecting holes in the hulls of ships.

The device is capable of sticking to any part of the hull at

various angles and structures, to quickly bridge the holes before they aggravate. This contributes to restoring the hull to its normal position in record time and avoid having to lift the vessel for maintenance.

The device is distinguished for high water insulation, oxidation resistance and a wireless control feature that allows sending electromagnetic vibrations to communicate commands underwater.

The innovation can be used in different navigational situations to carry out maintenance and repair operations on submerged hulls in record time.

Sub Lieutenant Ali bin Said al Hashmi is currently embarked on designing the first experimental model for this innovation. — **ONA**

Environment Authority launches tree planting campaign

QASIM AL MAASHANI
SALALAH, AUG 7

The Environment Authority (EA), represented by the Directorate General of Environment in Dhofar Governorate, has launched an ambitious campaign aimed at tree planting in Salalah.

The campaign is part of a series of strategic agricultural projects scheduled throughout the year, and it is designed to expand the green cover and combat desertification in the governorate.

In alignment with the broader national initiative to plant ten million trees in Oman, EA's efforts focus on propagating indigenous wild plants. The campaign is expected to span a duration of five days, during which approximately 5,500 wild trees will be planted in strategic locations across Salalah.

In remarks to the Observer, Dr Abdullah bin Ali al Amri, Chairman of the Environment Authority, emphasised the authority's commitment to



meticulous planning, especially in preparation for the autumn and Dhofar seasons. These periods witness a substantial increase in the resident population of the Dhofar Governorate.

A pivotal component of the authority's strategy is the implementation of a comprehensive environmental

protection programme. This entails mobilising a dedicated team of regulatory experts, equipped with advanced logistics, cutting-edge technology, and specialised devices.

Their role is to ensure the smooth flow of tourism while safeguarding the governorate's essential pastures, forests, and

overall ecological balance.

Simultaneously, the authority places significant emphasis on public awareness initiatives. Utilising both traditional and digital media platforms, as well as various television channels, these campaigns aim to educate and engage the public in environmental preservation efforts.



Beyond awareness, EA undertakes proactive measures to restore and enhance the governorate's vegetation and tree cover. Recent milestones include the successful planting of over a million and a half seeds, coupled with extensive consultations involving tens of thousands of wild trees across the mountainous expanse of the far area. These projects extend beyond mere planting, encompassing activities such as expert tree pruning to

ensure longevity, revitalisation, and the mitigation of pest-related challenges.

In essence, EA's campaign in Dhofar Governorate underscores a dedicated commitment to sustainable practices and collaborative partnerships. Their holistic approach, spanning from tree planting to awareness campaigns, reflects a profound commitment to preserving Oman's natural heritage for generations to come.



DON'T MEDDLE WITH YOUR SLEEP



SHADDAD AL MUSALMY
@shadadm

Small changes in sleeping patterns can lead to an increased risk of health problems. This includes people's liberty to adjust sleeping time even during work and rest days. The change in pattern, according to experts, leads to unhealthy changes to the bacteria in the guts.

A study by King's College London scientists reveals that even a 90-minute difference in the

midpoint of your night's sleep over the course of a normal week could influence the types of bacteria found in the human gut.

A change in going to sleep and waking up at different times during the weekdays and weekends is known as social jetlag.

It is thought to be more common in teenagers and young adults and then tapers off as people get older.

The researchers found that three out of the six microbiota species which were more plentiful in the guts of the social jetlag

group are linked to poor diet quality, obesity and higher levels of inflammation and stroke risk.

Health experts in Oman have reiterated the importance of getting enough sleep or face an increased risk of developing health problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes.

Dr Sulaiman al Shereiqli, Senior Specialist in Public Health at the Ministry of Health, said: "To maintain good health, the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends seven hours or

more of sleep per night for adults up to the age of 60 and slightly more thereafter. Many of us struggle to get this amount of sleep all year round due to late night social gathering and wakefulness to watch favoured TV programmes."

Dr Al Shereiqli said long hours of wakefulness are also associated with bad eating habits, craving meals being fattier, sugary and in large amounts, and this eventually results in weight gain.

When routines go awry, social activities keep people awake well

into the night, leaving them at risk of health problems.

Dr Matlooba al Zadjali, Senior Consultant of Public Health (cardiovascular diseases) and Founder and Managing Director of Heart Vascular Centre (HVC) said sleep is essential to maintain health and well-being, both physically and mentally.

"Lack of sleep can affect your decision-making when it comes to what to eat, often leading to giving in to cravings for fatty, sugary junk food and making weight gain more likely," she said.



Carriers face longer flights as Niger closes airspace



Children walk past burned cars outside the headquarters of president Bazoum's Nigerien Party for Democracy and Socialism in Niamey on Monday. — AFP

LONDON/GDANSK: European carriers on Monday reported disruptions and suspended flights across the African continent after Niger's junta closed its airspace on Sunday.

West African leaders will hold a summit on the crisis in Niger this week after the country's military rulers defied an ultimatum to restore the elected government or face possible military intervention.

In its first official reaction since Niger ignored the deadline on Sunday to reinstate democratically elected President Mohamed Bazoum, the ECOWAS regional bloc said it would meet in

the Nigerian capital Abuja on Thursday.

"The ECOWAS leaders will be considering and discussing the political situation and recent developments in Niger during the summit," the 15-nation bloc said on Monday.

No foreign troops were visible on the streets of Niger's capital, Niamey, after the deadline came and went on Sunday.

A source close to ECOWAS said an immediate military intervention to restore Bazoum was not being envisaged at this stage.

The flight disruption adds to

a band of African airspace facing geopolitical disruptions including Libya and Sudan, with some flights facing up to 1,000 kilometres in detours.

"The closure of Niger's airspace dramatically widens the area over which most commercial flights between Europe and southern Africa cannot fly," tracking service FlightRadar24 said in a blog post.

Air France has suspended flights to and from Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso and Bamako in Mali until August 11, the company said on Monday, with longer flight times expected in the west African region.

A spokesperson added that Air France expected longer flight times from sub-Saharan hub airports and that flights between Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris and Accra in Ghana were set to operate non-stop. But aviation analyst James Halstead said that airlines would mostly have to find alternative routes and difficulties should be limited given the small number of African air connections.

"I'm not sure this is huge disruption ... it will affect routes from Europe to Nigeria and South Africa and probably from the Gulf of the Ethiopia to West Africa," he said.

— Agencies

Cambodia king okays PM's son as successor

PHNOM PENH: Cambodia's king on Monday approved the nomination of the Western-educated son of Prime Minister Hun Sen to become the next premier, confirming a much-anticipated transfer of power by one of the world's longest-serving leaders.

The decree endorsing 45-year-old army general Hun Manet requires the approval of the National Assembly, which will be dominated by the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) after its landslide win in a July 23 election in which all viable opposition was sidelined.

The decree was first posted on the Telegram channel of premier Hun Sen, a former Khmer Rouge guerrilla, who has ruled for nearly four decades at the helm of a fast-changing country rebounding from decades of war and poverty.

Analysts had long expected Hun Sen, a self-styled strongman who turned 71 on Saturday, to take on a key CPP role to protect his son from internal competition and allow him to earn legitimacy among the public and networks of power



Hun Sen and Hun Manet. — Reuters file photo

Hun Sen detailed his long record of service on Monday and made clear he would be sticking around longer.

"I will continue serving in other positions at least until 2033," he said.

"Thank you, my dear wife, for raising this unfortunate child during the hardest times so he can become the nation's top leader today."

The legislature is expected to meet on August 22 to vote to approve Hun Manet, who has given no clues on his vision for Cambodia and its 16 million people.

In stark contrast to his father, who has no formal education, Hun Manet studied in the United States and Britain, where he received a master's degree and doctorate respectively, both in economics.

He is also a graduate of the prestigious West Point military academy in the United States and has served as Cambodia's deputy armed forces commander-in-chief, as well as army chief and deputy head of his father's bodyguard unit.

The transition will be closely watched for whether Hun Manet maintains his

father's authoritarian status quo, or pursues a more liberal democracy with closer ties to the West after years under the influence of biggest investor China.

The election, in which Hun Manet won a house seat, was derided as a sham by human rights groups and criticised by the United States as being neither free nor fair, after an opposition party was barred from running.

The leader of a US business lobby for Southeast Asia said it planned to host Hun Manet in New York after he becomes prime minister, saying he was "a different person".

Hun Sen has locked horns with Western countries and the United Nations for decades and has ignored calls for an end to his fierce, years-long crackdown that decimated his political opposition and led to calls for his suspension from Facebook for threatening rivals.

He has said he would lead the CPP, become president of the upper house Senate, and would step back in to the prime minister's job if his son did not perform well.

— Reuters



Women protest over the atrocities against Meitei women in Imphal on Monday. — AFP

India top court to monitor Manipur violence probe

NEW DELHI: India's Supreme Court said on Monday it will monitor all cases of violence against women committed during three months of sectarian clashes in the northeastern state of Manipur since May.

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud said it will appoint a retired senior police official to oversee all complaints of sexual violence to be probed by the federal Central Bureau of Investigations.

The retired police official will report back to the Supreme Court,

Chandrachud said.

Last month videos of two tribal Kuki women being paraded naked by a mob of allegedly majority Meitei men had surfaced attracting international condemnation.

The women had said in their police complaints that they were later gang-raped.

Since then several other cases of women being deliberately targeted in violence that has resulted in more than 180 deaths and rendered tens of thousands homeless.

— AFP

US surgeons in Gaza perform operations, train local doctors

GAZA: A team of US orthopaedic surgeons is visiting the Gaza Strip to perform a series of joint replacement operations and provide training to local doctors.

Khaled Saleh, president of the US-based non-profit Fajr Scientific, said the visit would help patients immobilised by joint problems and chronic pain, as well as those in wheelchairs or who use a cane to walk.

The five-day mission aimed to operate on 150 patients, train local surgeons, and donate \$4 million worth of vital equipment.

"Our hope is to restore their function and in doing so restore their hope in the fact that they can be active members of their families and their society," Saleh said as he exited a surgery theatre at the Nasser Hospital in southern Gaza.

Economic sanctions and years of blockade have weakened the economy of the Gaza Strip, a coastal enclave



US orthopaedic surgeons perform a surgery at Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis on Sunday. — Reuters

controlled by Hamas, and left major holes in the health system, with long waiting lists for orthopaedic surgery.

The visit by the US team, hosted by the Gaza health ministry, was aimed at building up the capability of local surgical teams, said Fajr Scientific chief executive Mosab Nasser.

"The purpose is not only to do the surgeries by themselves, as much as it is training and building the local capabilities so they will also be a help in doing more surgeries as we progress," he said.

Halima Abu Hayya, 57, said she had waited three years to get a knee joint replacement, because she couldn't afford

expensive treatment outside Gaza, and the numbers on patient waiting lists at Gaza hospitals were huge.

"I am hopeful. They told me I would soon walk without pain and that I would not have to worry about losing my knee," the mother of four told Reuters a day after undergoing surgery.

— Reuters



Sultanate of Oman سلطنة عُمان
وزارة التراث والسياحة
Ministry of Heritage and Tourism

TENDERS ANNOUNCEMENT

Tender No.	98/2023/MHT/HQ-19	Tender Name	Restoration project of three Gates (Sabahat) in the Bahla Wall at the Bahla Fort site			
	100/2023/MHT/HQ-20		Restoration and maintenance of Al-Kafi Mosque Jalan Bani Bu Ali			
Fees of Tender Documents (Non-refundable)		25 O.R				
Tender Document Sales End Date		27/8/2023				
Last Date for Bid Submission		20/9/2023				
Grade	98/2023/MHT/HQ-19	Third				
	100/2023/MHT/HQ-20	First				
E-Tendering Portal		https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om				
- Interested Companies registered with Tender Board (in the mentioned Grade) may obtain Tender documents from the E.Tendering website: https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om, against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document. - The Tenderers must acknowledge commitment to the bid. - The Ministry shall not be obligated to accept the lowest or any other bids. - The bid submission period starts after the end of the inquiry period shown in the e-tendering system, until the last date for submitting bids before (10:00 am, Oman time).						
Support and inquiries	For more information, related to the tender, kindly communicate through the website of the e-tendering system: https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om					
	For inquiries related to the technical support for the e-tendering system, kindly communicate through etenderhd@ita.gov.om or 24402200					
For further information	Email : stotc@mht.gov.om Phones : 22088348 - 22088085					



■ BACK ON TRACK



Workers repair a damaged track, a day after the derailment of a passenger train in Nawabshah on Monday. Investigators scoured the wreckage on August 7 of a weekend train derailment that killed at least 34 people, the latest deadly crash to hit Pakistan's antiquated railway network. – AFP

16 dead, dozens missing in shipwrecks

TUNIS: Sixteen migrants have died in shipwrecks off the coasts of Tunisia and Western Sahara, officials said on Monday, as North Africa faces a spike in Europe-bound sea crossings.

Much of the North African coast has become a major gateway for irregular migrants and asylum seekers primarily from other parts of the continent, attempting perilous voyages in often rickety boats in the hopes of a better life.

At least 11 migrants died in a shipwreck off the coast of Tunisia's second city of Sfax, said local court spokesman Faouzi Masmoudi, revising an earlier toll of four fatalities.

Another 44 are missing while two others were rescued from the

boat that had 57 people on board, all of them from sub-Saharan African countries, Masmoudi added.

Survivors of the sinking, near Tunisia's Kerkennah Islands in the Mediterranean Sea, said the makeshift boat had departed over the weekend from a beach north of the coastal city of Sfax.

Masmoudi said coastguard units were searching for more survivors.

The distance between Sfax and Italy's Lampedusa island is only about 130 kilometres.

Authorities in Morocco meanwhile said the bodies of five migrants, all from Senegal, had been recovered while 189 had been rescued after their boat capsized off Western Sahara.

The five bodies as well as 11

migrants in "critical condition" were transferred to a hospital in Dakhla, the disputed Western Sahara's second city on the Atlantic coast, a military source told Rabat's state-owned MAP news agency.

According to the source, the boat had embarked from "a country located south of the kingdom" and was headed towards Spain's Canary Islands before being discovered off the coast of Guerguarg, just north of Mauritania.

It was in a "difficult situation," the source added.

The migrants who were rescued, including at least one woman, were taken to Dakhla on Sunday and handed over to Moroccan authorities, according to the source.

— AFP

Ukraine says Russia frees 22 of its soldiers

KYIV: Ukraine said on Monday that 22 of its soldiers had been freed from Russian captivity, the latest apparent prisoner swap between the two sides.

"Today, another 22 Ukrainian soldiers were returned home from captivity," Andriy Yermak, the head of Ukraine's presidential office said in a post on social media.

He added that officers, privates and sergeants were among those released, and that some of them had been wounded.

Yermak posted a video purporting to show some of the released men posing for cameras and draped in Ukrainian flags.

Despite ongoing hostilities, Kyiv and Moscow regularly announce prisoner swaps between the two sides.

Neither side reveals how many prisoners of war are in their custody.

Moscow did not immediately comment on the release of the prisoners or how many, if any, of its soldiers had been released.

Russia said on Monday a peace settlement with Ukraine was only possible if Kyiv put down its arms, after talks were held in Saudi Arabia over the weekend without Moscow's participation.

Representatives from around 40 countries including China, India, the United States and Ukraine took part in the peace summit, which was held in Jeddah.

Russia, which was not invited, said that a resolution was possible if Ukraine "stopped the hostilities and terrorist attacks" and if Western countries stopped arms



Ukrainian prisoners of war are seen after a swap at an unknown location in Ukraine on Monday. – Reuters

supplies to Kyiv.

It also called on Ukraine to cede its occupied territories to Moscow.

"The original foundations of Ukraine's sovereignty — its neutral, non-aligned and non-nuclear status — must be confirmed," foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in a statement.

Over a year into Moscow's campaign in Ukraine, Kyiv's forces were pressing ahead with their long-awaited offensive to retake occupied territory. — AFP

Russia to launch lunar mission on Friday, first in nearly 50 years

MOSCOW: Russia said on Monday it plans to launch a lunar lander this week after multiple delays, hoping to return to the Moon for the first time in nearly fifty years.

The launch, which is scheduled for the early hours of Friday, comes as Russia's Ukraine offensive stretches into a second year, sparking huge tensions with the West.

With the Luna-25 lander, Russia's first since 1976, Moscow is keen to restart and build upon a pioneering Soviet-era lunar programme.

The Russian space agency said that a Soyuz rocket had been assembled at the Vostochny

cosmodrome in the Russian Far East for the launch of the Luna-25.

"The launch is on August 11," Roscosmos said in a statement.

"The Luna-25 will have to practise soft landing, take and analyse soil samples and conduct long-term scientific research," the statement added.

The four-legged lander, which weighs around 800 kilograms, is expected to touch down in the region of the lunar south pole. By contrast, most Moon landings occur near the lunar equator.

The launch is the first mission of Moscow's new lunar programme and comes as Russia looks to strengthen cooperation



in space with China amid ruptured ties with the West.

After President Vladimir

Putin sent troops to Ukraine last year, the European Space Agency (ESA) said it would not

cooperate with Moscow on the upcoming Luna-25 launch as well as future 26 and 27 missions.

Despite the pullout, Moscow said at the time it would go ahead with its lunar plans and replace ESA equipment with Russian-made scientific instruments.

Speaking at the Vostochny cosmodrome last year, Putin said the Soviet Union put the first man into space in 1961 despite "total" sanctions. He insisted Moscow would develop its lunar programme despite current Western sanctions.

"We are guided by the ambition of our ancestors to move forward, despite any difficulties and any attempts to prevent us in this movement from the outside," Putin said at the time. — AFP

SHORT TAKES

BANGKOK

Thai election runners-up announces coalition

Thailand's election runners-up announced a fresh coalition with a government-aligned party on Monday as lawmakers attempt to overcome resistance from military and pro-royalist senators to break a political deadlock.

The kingdom has been unable to form a government after the reformist Move Forward Party (MFP) fell short of a majority, despite winning the most seats in May's polls, and was later excluded from a progressive coalition.

The party's closest rival,



Pheu Thai, announced the new partnership on Monday with another party, Bhumjaithai, bringing together a total of 212 seats in the Thai parliament's lower house.

LJUBLJANA

Death toll from Slovenia flooding climbs to six

The death toll from days of heavy rains and flooding in Slovenia has climbed to six, police said on Monday, as clean-up operations continued with help from neighbouring countries.

Prime Minister Robert Golob has described the torrential rains and severe flooding that hit the Alpine country of two million as its worst natural disaster since independence three decades ago.

Flash floods and landslides that began on Thursday had submerged large swathes of



central and northern Slovenia, cutting off access to villages and disrupting traffic. On Sunday, emergency workers recovered the body of a 35-year-old man in a river.

NEW YORK

Judge dismisses Trump's defamation claim

US judge on Monday dismissed Donald Trump's defamation counterclaim against the writer E Jean Carroll, who won a \$5 million jury verdict for defamation and sexual assault against the former president in May.

Trump had sued Carroll for defamation after she said "oh yes, he did; oh yes, he did" when asked on CNN about the jury's finding that he had not raped her, but that he was liable for sexual assault. US District Judge Lewis Kaplan in Manhattan



said Trump's defamation claim must be dismissed because Carroll's statements were at least "substantially true," and Trump failed to show that Carroll made them with actual malice.

Interconnected world is Changing



Dr C K Anchan

Every region in the world depends on another significant region for at least 25 per cent of a flow it values most. The world remains deeply interconnected, and flows have proved remarkably resilient during the most recent turbulence. Furthermore, no region is self-sufficient. The challenge therefore is to harness the benefits of interconnection while managing the risks and downsides of dependency — particularly where products are concentrated in their places of origin. Growth in global flows is now being driven by intangibles, services, and talent. One of the most striking trends is flow representing knowledge and know-how, such as IP and data, and flows of services and international students have accelerated and are now growing faster than the flow of goods. Flow of data grew by more than 40 per cent per annum over the past 10 years. Professional services, such as engineering services, are among those more traditional trade flows that have been growing fastest, at about 6 per cent a year, versus resources, which have slowed to

just around two per cent. Anything that involves real know-how — engineering, but also providing, say, call centre support — is in that category. The flows of IP are growing even faster. IP also includes movies, streaming platforms, music, and any sort of cultural elements that we consume. It's also important to consider flows of patents and ideas and the way countries or companies will use ideas or know-how developed in one country to help what they do broadly across the world. Those flows have been growing at roughly 6 per cent per year as well. Concentration often reflects specialisation that enables efficiency gains. However, interruption of concentrated trade flows can be particularly disruptive when they are harder to replace at short notice. The world remains deeply interconnected, and flows have proved remarkably resilient during the most recent turbulence. Furthermore, no region is self-sufficient. The challenge therefore is to harness the benefits of interconnection while managing the risks and

LOOKING AT THE ENTIRE RANGE OF GLOBAL FLOWS, THE WORLD IS NOT DEFAULTING TO EGLOBALISATION, BUT THAT GLOBAL CONNECTIONS ARE RECONFIGURING

downsides of dependency — particularly where products are concentrated in their places of origin. Even the smallest firm can find new opportunities to expand its integration with the world, enabled by technological advances, new forms of cross-border finance, and regulation. Multinational corporations can have disproportionate influence on flows because they are the current centre of the system. They account for about two-thirds of exports, and they are over-represented in sectors where intangibles are the most relevant and where concentration is the most pronounced. To negotiate an era that may be more complex and challenging requires a deeper understanding of the full picture of global flows, their networks and evolution, and potential scenarios for the future. Looking at the entire range of global flows, the world is not defaulting to deglobalisation, but that global connections are reconfiguring. Firms that reimagine rather than retreat from interconnection can reshape value chains in ways that contribute to both growth and resilience.

Water-stressed Iraq dries up fish farms

SALAM FARAJ

Iraqi villager Omar Ziad gazes at the cracked and barren earth where his fish farm once stood, lost to water conservation efforts during a devastating four-year drought. As the alarming water crisis blamed mostly on climate change drags on, officials see the need for trade-offs in an effort to meet the country's demands. Drastic government measures have restricted water use for some purposes, including crop irrigation, and authorities have cracked down on illegal practices they long ignored. Since late May, unauthorised fish farms like Ziad's have become a target. "I've worked in this industry since 2003," the 33-year-old said at his village of Al-Bu Mustafa in Iraq's central Babylon province. He had watched helplessly as officials from the water resources ministry sealed his family's seven fish ponds. Surrounded by fields and majestic palm trees, this was where Ziad, his father and seven brothers would rear carp, which Iraqis use to make their beloved grilled fish dish known as masguf. At full capacity, the farm held about 50,000 fish and earned the family the equivalent of \$1,300-2,600 a month, far more than many in the country. "We would share the revenues", said Ziad, who also works as a teacher. He added that they sold their fish "cheaply", but since all but five of the village's 80 fish ponds shut down, the price of carp has almost doubled, now selling at more than 8,000 dinars (around \$6) per kilogram, he said. From a bird's-eye view, the backfilled dry patches of land that replaced the ponds are marked out by unpaved roads. The monotony of the barren landscape is occasionally interrupted by ponds that still hold water. These were spared because their owners had the necessary permits, according to Ziad. Water supply in Iraq, which the United Nations ranks as one of the five countries most impacted by some effects of climate change, is in a dire state. Declining rain over the past four years coupled with rising temperatures has brought water levels in the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to staggering lows, for which Baghdad also accuses upstream dams built by neighbouring Turkiye and Iran. Some of Iraq's 43 million inhabitants share the blame, he told AFP, due to water-intensive "irrigation practices". Ayad al-Talibi, president of the Iraqi association of fish farmers, said he accepted the shutting of unauthorised ponds but questioned whether the water that has been saved was "properly used". — AFP

The curious case of Lenin's brain



Sergey Plekhanov

The writer is the author of 'A Reformer on the Throne: Sultan Qaboos bin Said

In January 1924, Vladimir Ulyanov died, who became known to the world under the pseudonym Lenin. This leader of the Communists of Russia was a fierce opponent of religion. By his order, many thousands of priests and monks were killed, temples and monasteries, objects of worship of millions of people of different faiths, were defiled. But after his death, he was not interred, not burned in a crematorium, his mummy was dressed in a bourgeois costume and put up for worship in a mausoleum in the centre of the Russian capital. Although the head of the secret police, Dzerzhinsky, initiated this, the Bolshevik newspapers claimed that the working class did not want to part with the dear dead at all. Several inspired resolutions of labour collectives, such as a locomotive depot, were actually received, but the death of the tyrant did not cause any regrets among the vast majority of Russian people. However, the "followers of the cause" were determined to smuggle the mummy into the community of the living. They reported that the deceased genius had a brain that was not comparable in size to the brain of an ordinary person. The Institute of the Brain was specially created to study this amazing organ sent down to mankind. And then it was like a dam broke: they renamed Petrograd to Leningrad, any Moskovskaya or Dvoryanskaya — to Lenin Street, then Leninabad and Leninakan went, and there were many thousands of factories, collective farms and ships with this pseudonym. Generation after generation fell asleep and woke up under the affectionate supervision of the "eternally alive" (no joke, it was this title that was constantly attached to the name of Lenin): at 6 in the morning and at 12 at night, the national anthem thundered from each loudspeaker: "The sun of freedom shone through the storms, And The great Lenin lit the way for us." Each institution or public institution was obliged to decorate the walls with Lenin's sayings, which seemed to have sacred power. Entering the cinema, they saw an emanation of the Great Brain lined



PERHAPS IF HE LIVED LONGER, HE HIMSELF WAS HORRIFIED BY THE WORK OF HIS OWN HANDS. MOST LIKELY, THE FORMS OF THE CULT PROMOTED BY HIS ASSOCIATES WOULD HAVE DISGUSTED HIM. NO CONNECTION BETWEEN GENIUS AND BRAIN SIZE HAS EVER BEEN ESTABLISHED. BY THE WAY, LENIN HIMSELF HAD THIS ORGAN OF A MODEST SIZE —1,340 GRAMS, FOR COMPARISON, THE WRITER TURGENEV HAD 2,012 GRAMS

with tiles "For us, the most important of the arts is cinema", at the post office — a stuccoed "Socialism without mail, telegraph is an empty phrase". The workers of the power plant were haunted by the gigantic inscription "Socialism is Soviet power plus electrification." But woe was to him who would doubt the genius of these trivial statements. A huge museum was opened next to the mausoleum, where objects that the new saint touched were exhibited. The objects of worship here were coats, trousers, boots, even a Rolls Royce, supposedly presented to the red autocrat by the English workers.

A strange paradox at first glance — the persecutor of religion has become the object of deification. The anti-religious frenzy of Lenin and his followers could hardly be explained by their materialistic views. In a paradoxical form, this thesis was refuted by one believer, who entered into a discussion with an atheist lecturer: "Do you believe that there is no God?" "Yes, I'm sure of it!" "So why do you fight with such fury for many decades against something that does not exist?" Tyranny cannot do without a deity. Therefore, he endows a human being with supernatural properties, attributing to him numerous virtues, portraying him as a standard of humanity, a role model. This did not prevent Lenin, who was brought up in a humane society, from enthusiastically putting together a political sect that made terror and destruction a means of developing a "new man". Perhaps if he lived longer, he himself was horrified by the work of his own hands. Most likely, the forms of the cult promoted by his associates would have disgusted him. But this did not bother them at all — the cynicism of the organisers of the temple was fully consistent with the precepts that the Great Leader left. The owner of the Huge Brain (which was announced to children without fail already in the first grade) left a lot of detailed instructions on any issues. All others, who had a significantly smaller brain, could only obey the keepers of his precepts. But his admirers never learned about the results of studying Lenin's brain.

The institute, created for its study, in order to justify its existence, began to collect the brains of all prominent statesmen, scientists, writers. Of course, the brain of the head of the secret police Menzhinsky also got there. The brains of women were not interested in inquisitive researchers. An exception was made only for Lenin's wife Nadezhda Krupskaya — as explained at the institute "out of respect." This infernal collection still exists, although no connection between genius and brain size has ever been established. By the way, Lenin himself had this organ of a modest size —1,340 grams, for comparison, the writer Turgenev had 2,012 grams.

To comment & email: opinion@omanobserver.om

Nature calls out to women

Gender equality sometimes framed as feminist initiative and other times as a goal of equal rights but now more than ever before it is becoming a necessity.

Proof of that is the theme that was celebrated on World Desertification and Drought Day in June. What is the connection?

Every possible connection exists because women have known to work closely with nature since ancient days.

Whether it was agriculture, gathering food or drawing water and walking for km to take it home, women have been known to partner with nature.

According to the study by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) nearly half of the global agricultural labour force is female. But what the study discovered was that less than one in five landholders in the world are women.

What has been an eye opener was also the fact that women were unable to inherit their husband's property at least in over 100 countries.

In fact, women have also chosen in the past to write and publish their work using men's names. Why did they feel so? We can only reflect.

This year UNCCD's chosen theme for the campaign was, "By recognising excellence, leadership and efforts in sustainable land management by women and girls."

So this year the theme was - 'Her Land, Her Rights,' and it focused on women's land rights: 'Essential for achieving the interconnected global goals of gender equality and land degradation neutrality by 2030 and contributing to the advancement of several other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).'

The UNCCD was adopted in 1994 and binds the international agreement that links environment and development to sustainable land management.

So women have the significant



Lakshmi Kothaneth
@lakshmioman

The writer is a senior journalist and a radio anchor

WOMEN FACE THE DIRECT IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION. BUT NOW SHE HAS A SAY IN HOW THE LAND IS USED, ESPECIALLY WHEN SHE OWNS IT.

role of protecting and managing natural resources such as soil, forests, agricultural land and water.

Maybe the recognition has come in late, nevertheless it is important that the time has arrived.

Women have been responsible for the nutrition of the family and now she has the right to protect what goes into the soil and what is reaped from it and how the land is treated.

Women face the direct impact of environmental degradation. But now she has a say in how the land is used, especially when she owns it.

There is a symbiotic relationship between women and nature but now nature is leading women toward empowerment. Goes on to prove how silently nature has been teaching mankind. Women have been half of the workforce, yet in many countries women had not been enjoying the right to own the land and protect it.

It is not just the rights that can lead to the protection of land from desertification and drought, it still requires education, awareness and implementation of sustainable practices.

Growing deserts and eroding mountains demand urgent attention toward overgrazing and deforestation. As cities expand and real estate boom, land continues to shrink to catch water and preserve it by enriching the groundwater.

Felling of trees leads to the imbalance that has brought in crises in various forms from lack of rain to water shortage and on the other hand flooding and erosion and landslides.

It is not just responsibility of protecting the environment that will lead the way to success, but what is important is to have the courage to dream and have hope and most significantly the ability to fulfil the dreams by being innovative.

Women might have been practicing all that for centuries but now they are in the spotlight to fight desertification and drought.

The stage is yours, ladies.

READY FOR AMAZON



An indigenous woman from the Kayapo applies traditional body paint during a Dialogos da Amazonia (Amazon Dialogues) event before a summit of Amazon rainforest nations at the Igarape Park, in Belem, Para state, Brazil. – Reuters

Achieving zero hunger is still possible

This year marks the halfway point for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the ambitious set of global targets introduced by the United Nations in 2015. These 17 goals, devised to address today's most pressing challenges and put the world on the path to sustainability, seek to reduce poverty, improve access to health care and education, and mitigate the worst effects of climate change by 2030. But when it comes to meeting the critical goal of eradicating food insecurity, much of the progress made over the past decade has been undone.

When the SDGs were launched, the target of eliminating food insecurity and malnutrition worldwide within 15 years seemed ambitious but within reach. At the time, hunger levels had been trending lower for more than two decades, largely thanks to rising agricultural productivity and global economic growth.

Over the past few years, however, the world has been hit by a series of compounding crises, from the Covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing war in Ukraine to extreme weather events caused by climate change. As a result, global hunger has surged, with the world's poorest people suffering the most.

According to a new UN report, approximately 735 million people are experiencing food insecurity, an increase of 122 million people since 2019. Alarmingly, seven countries – Somalia, Afghanistan, Burkina Faso,



Jordan Dey

The writer is CEO of GrainPro, a social-enterprise company

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, ALONGSIDE PUBLIC- AND PRIVATE-SECTOR ACTORS, MUST DO MORE TO BOLSTER LOCAL CAPACITY AND ENCOURAGE INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAINS.

Haiti, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Yemen — are now on the brink of famine. Not only are we falling short of reaching zero hunger by 2030, but we are worse off than we were in 2015.

So, where do we go from here? To meet the UN's zero hunger target, we must first recognise who makes up the majority of the world's poor and understand where most of their food comes from. The answer to both questions is surprisingly straightforward.

The vast majority of the world's poorest individuals are the smallholder farmers who also produce most of the food consumed in many developing countries.

These farmers have been hit hard by the shocks of the past few years, in addition to the systemic challenges that have kept them trapped in poverty and food insecurity.

Yet within the current crisis lies an opportunity. By supporting smallholder farms, the international community could make significant strides toward ending global hunger.

Governments and international institutions can aid smallholder farmers and eliminate global food insecurity in several ways.

First, most smallholder farms in developing countries generate disproportionately low crop yields compared to their developed-



A combine harvests wheat near Kramatorsk, in Donetsk region. Known as the world's "bread basket", Ukraine grows far more wheat than it consumes and it's exports contribute to global food security, especially in African countries, which now fear food shortages. – AFP

country counterparts, largely because they lack basic inputs, such as improved seeds and organic fertilisers.

This is particularly evident in Sub-Saharan Africa, where yields for staple food crops are significantly lower than global averages. Increasing access to high-quality farm inputs, especially those that help farmers adapt to climate change, could thus greatly enhance food security.

Second, lack of access to credit prevents most smallholder farmers from purchasing improved agricultural inputs or investing in their farms. Greater global support for programmes that provide these farmers with financing would help.

Third, smallholder farmers

typically harvest crops once or twice a year. This means that food must be stored for months to ensure that supplies last until the next harvest.

Given the limited access to proper storage technology, staple food grains are frequently exposed to damage by insects, mould, and other pests, contributing to post-harvest crop losses and household hunger.

These smallholder farms require greater access to advanced storage options, including low-cost, hermetically sealed bags that can preserve crops for extended periods and eliminate the need to treat stored grains with potentially harmful insecticides.

Finally, smallholder farmers need better access to viable markets for their crops, enabling

them to move beyond subsistence and build reliable livelihoods.

The international community, alongside public- and private-sector actors, must do more to bolster local capacity and encourage investment in agricultural value chains.

This would empower more smallholders to develop sustainable businesses.

Despite the massive challenges ahead, achieving zero hunger remains a feasible target. In September, global leaders attending the UN General Assembly will evaluate progress toward achieving the SDGs. If we are to create a world free from hunger, supporting agriculture and smallholder farmers must be at the top of the agenda.

©Project Syndicate, 2023



England players celebrate their victory after a penalty shoot-out during the Australia and New Zealand 2023 Women's World Cup round of 16 match between England and Nigeria at Brisbane Stadium in Brisbane on Monday. – AFP

AUSTRALIA MARCH INTO
WORLD CUP QUARTERS

ENGLAND SURVIVE NIGERIA SCARE

BRISBANE: England survived the sending-off of Lauren James to scrape past Nigeria in a penalty shoot-out on Monday and were joined in the Women's World Cup quarterfinals by co-hosts Australia.

European champions England will play either Colombia or Jamaica in the last eight on Saturday, but they got there the hard way.

Chloe Kelly scored the winning penalty in Brisbane as England beat Nigeria 4-2 in the shoot-out after a tense last-16 tie finished 0-0 at the end of extra-time.

England had a major scare before a crowd of 49,461, having come through the whole of extra-time a player short following the 87th-minute sending-off of James for a stamp on Nigeria's Michelle Alozie.

Coach Sarina Wiegman, who welcomed key midfielder Keira Walsh back into her side after injury, called it "a very, very hard game".

"How we did that and how the team just kept going, I'm so proud of them," said Wiegman, whose side are regarded as favourites to take the crown from beaten holders the United States.

Georgia Stanway put the first penalty of the shoot-out wide for England, but Desire Oparanizie



Australia forward Caitlin Foord scores a goal past Denmark goalkeeper Lene Christensen during the Australia and New Zealand 2023 Women's World Cup round of 16 football match between Australia and Denmark at Stadium Australia in Sydney on Monday. – AFP

and Alozie followed suit, both missing the target with Nigeria's first two attempts.

Beth England, Rachel Daly and Alex Greenwood all scored for England before Kelly converted the decisive kick.

"It's amazing, anything that's thrown at us we show what we're capable of," said the Manchester City forward Kelly, who scored the winning goal in last year's European Championship final.

"We've been practising (penalties) a lot and it's

working." The defeat was cruel on Nigeria, the world's 40th-ranked team, who followed up their impressive performances in the group stage by pushing England all the way.

Their England-born defender Ashleigh Plumptre crashed a shot off the woodwork in the first half and Uchenna Kanu also hit the frame of the goal.

However, this was the third game out of four at this World Cup in which Nigeria failed to score.

"We had every opportunity to get the result and unfortunately we didn't get it done," said their American coach, Randy Waldrum.

"I think we could have (won it in 90 minutes). We had the best chances, we hit the crossbar twice in regulation play. We were a bit unlucky not to get something out of it.

"But credit to England, they are a great side."

England will discover the identity of their quarterfinal

opponents on Tuesday when Colombia face surprise-package Jamaica in Melbourne.

KERR RETURNS

Australia are also into the last eight as Sam Kerr came off the bench in a 2-0 win over Denmark in front of nearly 76,000 fans in Sydney.

They will play France or Morocco on Saturday in Brisbane after making fairly light work of a toothless Denmark.

To cap a good night's work

for the Matildas, talismanic striker and captain Kerr came on with 10 minutes left to huge cheers for her first action of the tournament after a calf injury.

The dangerous Caitlin Foord ran Denmark ragged throughout and scored a fine first after being set up by the impressive Mary Fowler on 29 minutes.

Hayley Raso grabbed a second to make the game safe 20 minutes from time.

The Chelsea predator Kerr, who was supposed to have been the face of the World Cup before injury struck on the eve of the tournament, said it was "a big relief to be back".

"I feel good. I think I was a bit rusty, but, no, I feel great.

"I'll sleep better tonight than I have for the last three weeks."

The home side are thriving on growing excitement at what they can achieve at this World Cup, where the demise of the United States has opened the door for a new champion.

"I think we're embracing it, I think the girls are loving it," Kerr said of the expectation.

"The Australian public has been amazing. We've felt the love, just walking down the street it's been a real buzz."

Sweden will face Japan in the quarterfinals on Friday, with the Netherlands taking on Spain the same day. — AFP

Oman Sail heads to Netherlands for Sailing World Championships



MUSCAT: Two teams from Oman Sail will represent the nation at the 2023 Allianz Sailing World Championships, The Hague, as part of a 1,200-strong fleet across all Olympic classes and three Para Sailing classes for the first time in event history. Oman will be represented in Men's iQFOiL, RS Venture Connect, and Men's and Women's Hansa 303 with two coaches and team managers also travelling to Europe.

Murjan al Balushi will compete in the Women's Hansa 303, while Nasr al Rahbi will compete in the Men's Hansa 303 event. They will be joined by Sami al Sulaimi and Ghaliya al Jabri in the RS Venture Connect. All four athletes have the opportunity to become World Champion in each discipline.

The Para Sailing team will be coached by Hamad al Subhi and Rami al Arami and managed by Fatima al Zadjali.

The 2023 Allianz Sailing World Championships, The Hague, also



Coach Hamed al Subhi

serves as a qualification event for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. Abdulmajeed al Hadhrami will take part in the Men's iQFOiL event where he will be managed by Mohsin al Busaidy, as he aims to achieve his goal of representing the Sultanate of Oman at the Olympic Games.

Mohsin al Busaidy, Oman Sail's Head of Performance, said, "The Allianz Sailing World Championships bring together the very best sailors in the world, including past and current world and Olympic



Mohsin al Busaidy

champions. We are ultimately aiming for Olympic qualification for the Omani team, and this is a great opportunity to test our progress. We have been working hard to fine-tune technique and tactics in order to give our team the chance to perform to its potential."

Hamad al Subhi, Para Sailing coach, said, "This is a very exciting opportunity for our Para Sailing athletes as we continue to grow as a team. Exposure to high level competition will be beneficial for the long-term

development of the athletes, our coaches, and our programme. Despite not being an Olympic event, this is a chance to compete for a World Championship and judge our progress against more experienced sailors. This is how we improve and help the athletes to fulfil their potential."

The 2023 Allianz World Sailing Championships, The Hague, run from August 10-20, 2023.

Racing in the Olympic Class events will take place in Scheveningen, while Para Sailing events will be in Braasemmermeer Marina, organised by TIG Sports and the Koninklijk Nederlands Watersport Verbond (The Royal Netherlands Watersport Association) in conjunction with World Sailing.

Full information about the 2023 Allianz World Sailing Championships, The Hague, how to watch the event live, and track the races, can be found on the official event website <https://thehague2023.sailing.org>.

Oman Cricket season to start from Sept 22

MUSCAT: Domestic cricket is one of the key pillars on which the national teams are formed and the recent rise of Oman Cricket (OC) at international level has a lot to do with the vibrant competition at domestic levels in the topflight leagues.

Following the summer break, Oman Cricket is now set to launch the 2023-24 season with action set to resume from September 22.

OC has begun the process of teams' registration for the new season and the doors opened for registration on Sunday. Interested teams may register before or by August 27 for all divisions and the last date of players' registration is September 3.

OC Chief Development Officer (CDO) Duleep Mendis hopes for an exciting season and said: "We have seen an improvement in the quality of cricket being played in the top-flight leagues. We have been able to pick few new players in the national teams based on their performance in the domestic league. "We hope to have another entertaining season with intense and closely fought matches."

Last season, Oman Cricket witnessed the participation of a total of 65 teams across all eight divisions, beginning from the Premier to the lowest G division." Mendis thanked the sponsors

for their strong support to domestic cricket as "without the support of corporates and business houses we would not be able to promote the way we are doing now."

A total of eight teams featured in the Premier division, A Division and downwards while nine teams played in the G division last season.

Last season, Muscat CT clinched a grand double in the Premier division, winning the 50-over-a-side and D10 crowns while Majees CT were the D20 champions. Oman Stallions were runners-up to Muscat CT in both the finals while Muscat CT missed a treble when they lost to Majees.

Fagor FCC, who were crowned A division winners in both 50-over-a-side and T20 league, are in contention for the Premier division spot this season, having earned the promotion.

For the registration, teams can do it online on www.omancricket.org > registrations or contact Zeeshan Siddique (+968 92204745) for any related queries.

OC also said that the registration is open for Premier division and senior division while the registration for junior leagues and women's league will open later.

The final groupings of each division will be confirmed once the registrations close.



Oman's Al Noor Association team claims title in Jordan

MUSCAT: The athletes of the Al Noor Association for the Blind goal-ball team showcased their outstanding abilities and determination, securing a triumphant victory in the International Torch Championship in Jordan. The championship, held in the sports hall of Prince Raad bin Zaid Complex in the Jordanian capital of Amman, witnessed exceptional performances by the stars of Oman.

The journey to victory began with an impressive display as the Al Noor Association team defeated Jordan's reserve team with a resounding score of 11-1. Continuing their dominant form, they achieved another triumph by overpowering the Jordanian Al Shula Club with a commanding score of 10-0. The team's prowess was further on display with

a convincing victory against the Kuwait national team, concluding with a score of 14-4. The Saudi Hail Club also experienced the team's might, facing defeat with a score of 11-1. Lastly, the Al Noor Association team defeated the Al Baha Club from Saudi Arabia with a score of 10-0.

In the semifinals, the Omani Al Noor Association team, who qualified as the group leaders, faced off against Jordan's reserve team to win with a score of 10-0.

The final match was a breathtaking spectacle, as the Al Noor Association for the Blind faced the Jordanian Al Shula Club once again.

In a fiercely contested battle, the Al Noor team emerged triumphant, securing the championship with a remarkable score of 22-12.

Evans, Gauff romp to Washington titles

WASHINGTON: US teen star Coco Gauff and Britain's Dan Evans captured titles with straight-set triumphs on Sunday at the ATP and WTA Washington Open.

World number seven Gauff won her fourth career WTA title by defeating Greece's ninth-ranked Maria Sakkari 6-2, 6-3 while 30th-ranked Evans dispatched 37th-ranked Dutchman Tallon Griekspoor 7-5, 6-3 at the hardcourt event, a US Open tune-up.

Gauff, at 19 the youngest Washington WTA finalist, added to a trophy haul that also included 2019 at Linz, 2021 in Parma and this past January at Auckland.

The success came after a first-round exit at Wimbledon last month. "It was really tough a couple weeks ago," Gauff said. "We were all feeling it and I'm glad that I was able to bounce back."

Gauff, last year's French Open runner-up, had lost four of five prior matches against Sakkari, who fell to 1-7 in WTA finals with her sixth consecutive loss in a tour championship match.

"It's pretty disappointing, but a month ago we didn't think I'd be here," Sakkari said.

Evans, a 33-year-old Englishman whose only prior ATP title came in a 2021 outdoor Melbourne event, became the first British champion in Washington



Coco Gauff (USA) celebrates with the Donald Dell championship trophy after her match against Maria Sakkari (GRE) in the women's final on day nine of the Mubadala Citi DC Open at Fitzgerald Tennis Stadium. – **USA Today Sports**



Daniel Evans (GBR) celebrates with the trophy after his men's final against Tallon Griekspoor (NED)

since Tim Henman in 2003.

Evans, with only eight tour-level wins this year entering the week, will advance to a new career high of 21st in the world after arriving in the US capital on a seven-match tour-level losing streak. "I couldn't have really thought about this at the start of the week. Amazing week," Evans said. "It means the world to me. It genuinely does."

Griekspoor was denied his third career title after crowns at Pune in January and 's-Hertogenbosch in June. "First time in DC, making finals, not

too bad I guess," Griekspoor said.

Griekspoor, 27, saved a set point in the 10th game with an ace wide but Evans broke him in the 12th game to take the first set when the Dutchman netted a backhand after 53 minutes.

Evans had 14 winners to only three unforced errors in the opening set.

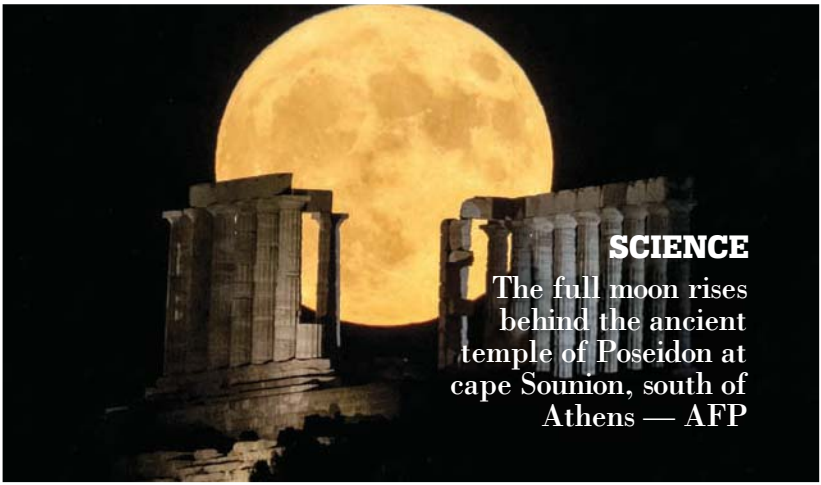
The second set was halted at 2-2 by lightning and resumed after a delay of about two hours and 20 minutes.

Evans broke at love for a 5-3 lead, a backhand winner and backhand lob winner setting up a

break the Dutchman surrendered on a double fault.

The Englishman saved four break points in a tense ninth game and after nearly 10 minutes blasted a service winner on his first championship point to take the title after one hour and 41 minutes.

Gauff held, broke in the eighth game when Sakkari swatted a forehand beyond the baseline, and held again to complete the victory after 84 minutes on a backhand winner. Sakkari, 28, won her only prior WTA title at the 2019 Morocco Open. —**AFP**



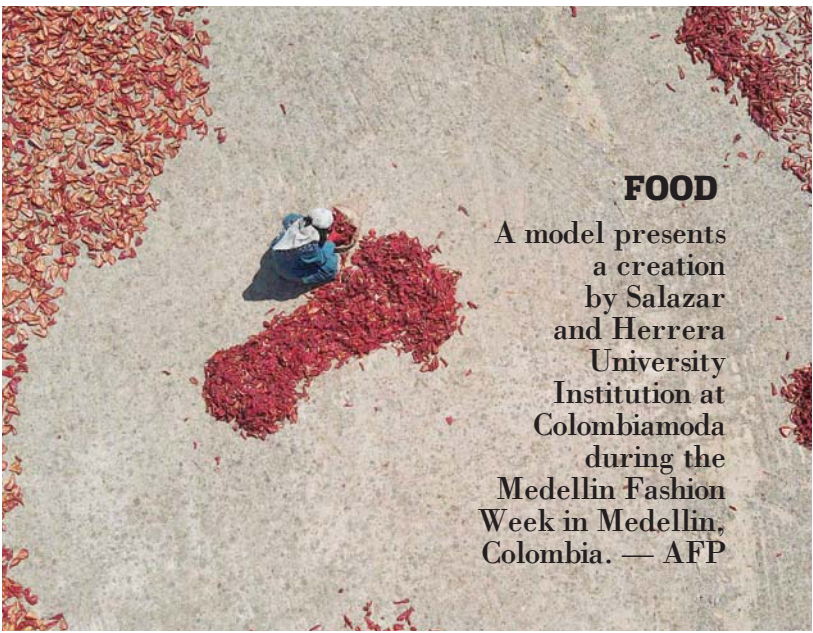
SCIENCE
The full moon rises behind the ancient temple of Poseidon at cape Sounion, south of Athens — AFP



CULTURE
Players of Indonesia’s traditional bamboo musical instruments “angklung” react before achieving the new Guinness World Record for the largest angklung ensemble by 15110 players. — AFP



MUSIC
Syrian singer Mohammed al-Majzoub performs during the opening night of the fourth Damascus Citadel Nights Festival in Damascus — AFP



FOOD
A model presents a creation by Salazar and Herrera University Institution at Colombiamoda during the Medellin Fashion Week in Medellin, Colombia. — AFP



LIFESTYLE
(From front to back) Carson, Rosie and Charlie Surfs Up compete during the World Dog Surfing Championships in Pacifica, California — AFP

art & life

TUESDAY | AUGUST 8, 2023 | MUHARRAM 21, 1445 AH

OMAN OBSERVER f X @ y www.omanobserver.om features@omanobserver.om



BY SIHAM AL SAIDI

He knew the secrets of every tree, the language of every species around him, the story of every hill, and the rhythm of every raindrop.

Living in a quiet village in Dima W'attayeen within the jurisdiction of Al Jabal Al Abyadh, Sulayem al Handhali is a breath of fresh air and an embodiment of youthful spirit and authentic Omani hospitality.

Sulayem , as of late, has gained popularity because of his good nature and his infectious laugh. His snow-white beard and lined face, with a smile that could light up the darkest days, had made him an attraction on his own.

His stone house is located at the edge of the village, amidst the rolling hills. He loves his home, and he considers it his treasure to be able to witness a sea of green as far as his eyes can see.

While his home might be simple and his lifestyle that of a shepherd of goats, he welcomes tourists and locals alike to his home with open arms. As one of his guests, he can regale anyone with his fascinating stories. What makes Sulayem truly a gift is his ability to transport people to a different era, to a forgotten generation of time past.

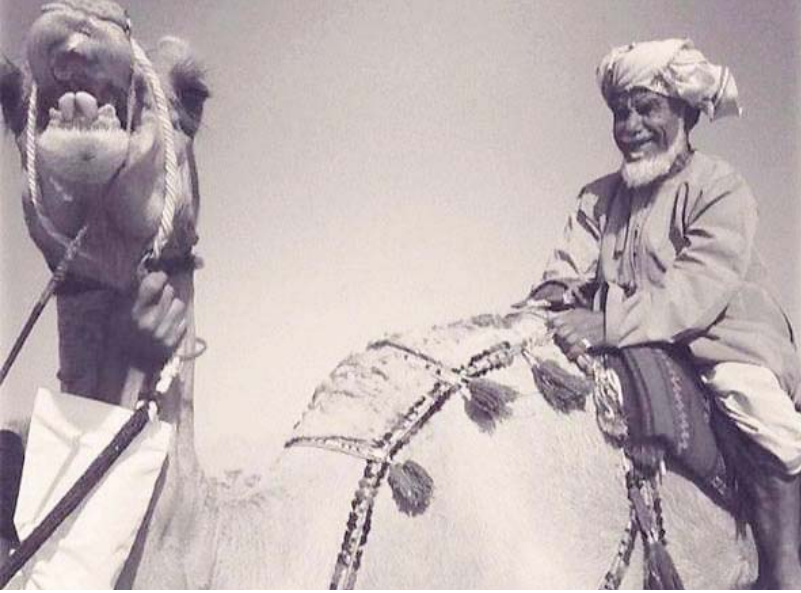
As a result, Sulayem has become a historian of sort — a good resource for all the stories and changes that



have happened within his area.

Sulayem's remarkable, lovely spirit has a magical way of turning frowns upside down and inspiring listeners to break into bubbles of laughter.

Once someone sits down with Sulayem , it is easy for anyone to know that he has gathered wisdom from a long and well-lived life.



As a herder, Sulayem looks after his goats as they explore the mountains for food. At home, he is also a farmer, planting seasonal crops like onions and garlic. He also loves collecting wild thymes that are scattered across the wide expanse of Al Jabal Al Abyadh.

As Sulayem shared, he likes using this fresh, organic produce to garnish his dishes, which he served to visitors to his house.

For those who have visited this



sage of a man, they often fall in love with his dishes made out of goat's milk. The best milk he usually serves is the one with zaatar (thyme).

Surprising to a lot of people is that, despite his simple lifestyle, Sulayem actually has a good social media following. In a world that has embraced technology, Sulayem remained a source of authenticity, sharing snapshots of his daily life with his avid followers.

Observers noted that his viewers

love the simple videos he shares — a beautiful insight into a farm life with all its hardships and challenges but also filled with fun and joy.

Sulayem was recently visited by a group of media and digital creators who belonged to the Safar Majan Group.

They helped him craft some of his videos, allowing him to reach even a bigger audience. From his simple day-to-day activities to some of his fascinating stories, they manage to showcase the best of Sulayem personality, making him one of the most lovable social media personalities.

Having a positive, joyful personality, it was hard to imagine Sulayem being in a sad state, but when asked what sad memories he had, Sulayem shared that he was admitted abroad for a health issue, and when he came back, he didn't understand why people were staying away from him. Ever the people-loving person, Sulayem felt abandoned by the world when nobody came to visit him.

He even had a point when he asked himself what he had done for his loved ones to desert him.

It occurred much later to Sulayem that the world was going through the Covid pandemic and that people were staying away to help make sure he didn't get sick.

Without guests, Sulayem can usually be found sitting on the corner of his stone house. Even in silence, one can see the smile in his eyes, which also reflects the wisdom of his years. Upon closer inspection, the lines on his face also reveal a life filled with different adventures.

Sulayem's heart is always filled with gratitude, and from his humble abode in the mountains, it is a true miracle that he was able to create connections with thousands of people from around the world.

Sulayem is not just a wise shepherd at the edge of the village in Dima W'attayeen. He is a source of joy who continues to inspire the world, thirsting for a life simple and different but seeking to preserve a heritage.



INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



sheikharis
Salalah, Oman

Follow

...

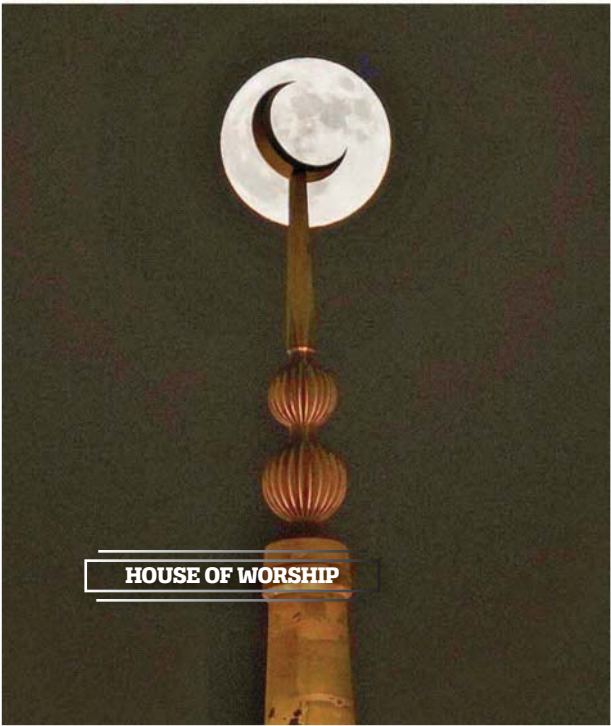




aravind.hp
Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque

Follow

...





thephotodev
Mutrah Souq

Follow

...



SHARE A SLICE OF YOUR LIFE

0

We select three photos daily for our Instagram Top Picks of the Day. The rules are simple. Follow us on Instagram. Upload your photos. Tag us and use **#OmanObserver** and **#BeAnObserver**.

Tunisian brand turns sea plastic into green couture

THE TWO MEN in bright overalls rooting for plastic on a Tunisian beach do so to make a living, but also in the knowledge that they are helping the environment.

What they do not know is that the waste will become part of a synthetic plastic fibre used to make blue denim cloth to create a dress for the eco-friendly fashion label Outa.

The pair are among around 15 “barbeshas”, or informal rubbish collectors, taking part in the Kerkennah Plastic Free programme, backed by the European Union.

This aims to recover the 7,000 tonnes of plastic waste each year that end up littering beaches on the Kerkennah Islands 20 kilometres off the port city of Sfax.

Jean-Paul Pelissier, of the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), is coordinating the EU-funded project.

He said that on the archipelago, “we have an exciting environment in terms of nature and tranquillity. It’s ideal for green tourism”.

Pelissier said the islands were a passage point for migratory birds, and that its waters were abundant in *Posidonia oceanica* seagrass, or Neptune grass.

“But there’s one thing you never see in the pictures – the plastic,” he said. Marine currents carry the waste from Europe into the Gulf of Gabes, and there it washes up to be collected by the barbeshas.

They take their daily harvest to a sorter which passes it on to a collection company and then it is fed into a crusher to be baled.

A partnership has been established with Seaqual Initiative, an international consortium which buys the marine plastic “at a remunerative and stable price all year round”, Pelissier said.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

The initiative’s website says it “works with ocean clean-ups around the world to bring value to the waste that they recover”.

Omar Kcharem is the boss of Kerkennah Plast, which compacts and crushes plastic, and he said working with Seaqual has created



new opportunities, since marine plastic “does not have much value and does not bring in any money”.

The plastic granules recovered after grinding the waste are transformed into “Seaqual Yarn” nylon fibre in Portugal, in one of just four factories in the world equipped with the technology.

“This is innovative,” said Pelissier. “Four or five years ago, you couldn’t recycle marine plastic because of its lengthy exposure to salt water and the sun.”

He said Seaqual Yarn comprises around 10 per cent of recycled marine plastic, but the aim is to increase this.

Apart from the Portugal side of the operation, the rest is definitely “Made in Tunisia”.

In the coastal town of Ksar Hellal southeast of Monastir, a huge machine in the ultra-modern Sitex plant makes an infernal racket as it transforms the Seaqual Yarn into denim.

Sitex is a denim specialist that has supplied brands such as Hugo Boss, Zara and Diesel. Now Anis Montacer, founder of the Tunisian fabric and fashion brand Outa, has entered into a partnership with it.

He chose Sitex “for its sensitivity to the environment, because in 2022, 70 per cent of their manufacturing was based on recycled fibres”.

“We worked together to determine the proper yarn strength and the right indigo dye,” he said, adding that their collaboration will continue to expand Outa’s colour range to include natural dyes.

HIGHER COSTS

“The entire process takes place in Tunisia, from the denim transformed in Ksar Hellal to the Tunisian seamstresses who work on the tailoring” for Outa, Montacer said.

Production costs are 20 per cent higher, though, than for denim without the marine plastic content.

Despite this, Montacer believes he can “bring together other entrepreneurs and inspire designers to produce eco-responsible collections”.

He called on renowned French designer Maud Beneteau, formerly of Hedi Slimane, to design Outa’s first haute couture collection.

“We chose a high value collection because the production cost is higher than with normal thread to create denim fabric,” Montacer said.

Outa creations first graced the catwalk during Tunis Fashion Week in June.

Beneteau saw the first Outa collection as “a challenge, a human dimension in this wonderful project that aligns with the idea of saving the planet”.

She does say there were some difficulties working with a fabric that was “a little thick and stiff, originally designed for sportswear and ready-to-wear, rather than haute couture”.

More used to fine silks, linen and cotton, she admits having some qualms working with the new fibre, even though like her peers in the fashion industry she tries to recycle and buy back unsold stocks in the fight against overconsumption.

But “when you think that this is recycled and ecological, that jobs have been created, people who pick up the plastic... it’s a whole interesting chain,” Beneteau said.

It’s also a great yarn. Plastic fantastic: from sea waste to see waist, you might say. — **AFP**

LIFESTYLE

Mystery in Dubai as mega-wheel stops turning

TWO YEARS AGO, Dubai’s skyscraper-studded skyline welcomed a Ferris wheel touted as the world’s largest, but it mysteriously stopped turning just months after opening.

The much-touted Ain Dubai (Dubai Eye) was designed as a tourist-luring landmark in the United Arab Emirates’ glam-hub, which is home to the world’s tallest building.

But now it stands idle for undisclosed reasons, its extravagant light fixtures the only parts seemingly still working.

“Ain Dubai remains closed until further notice,” says an official website for the attraction.

“We continue to rigorously work on completing the enhancement works that have been taking place over the past months.”

The wheel was supposed to close for just a month but its reopening has since been postponed indefinitely.

Those behind the project inaugurated in 2021 have failed to reply to enquiries.

At restaurants, shops and cafes built around the attraction, employees remain sceptical that the structure, which took around six years to build, will ever turn again.

“Last year they promised us that in winter it will be open, even now, they are saying that in (the coming) winter it will be open again,” said one employee at a nearby shop.

“But we’re not sure... it will,” said the man who asked to remain anonymous due to fear of reprisal.

The Dubai Eye, built by a consortium of international companies, is located in Bluewaters – a man-made island designed as a retail, residential and entertainment hub.

For more than a year, the main entrance to the attraction has remained closed and ticket booths abandoned. Only a slow trickle of tourists visit the site, snapping pictures of LED lights mounted on its exterior.

“I asked a security guard here about it and he told me that it doesn’t work,” said Marwan Mohammad, an Egyptian tourist.

“I asked him for the reason but he did not give me an answer,” said the 33-year-old business consultant.

With no official explanation, rumours are rife on the Ferris wheel’s apparent technical issues, especially among employees at Bluewaters.

They all spoke on condition of anonymity, fearing repercussions from



authorities or their employers.

“This is a man-made island. I heard that (the wheel) is heavier than the island itself, that’s why it is very dangerous,” said a waiter at a nearby restaurant, adding that it had been noisy during its few months of operation.

“Now... it’s only for show, just for the lighting and that’s it”.

The giant wheel, made of more steel than the Eiffel Tower, features prominently on the list of Dubai’s top tourist attractions.

They include the Dubai Frame monument and Burj Khalifa, the world’s tallest building.

Patrick Clawson, research director at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, said official silence on the Ferris wheel suggested a complicated problem.

UAE authorities are generally “quick to provide information if they have a solution, he said.

But with the Dubai Eye, “whatever the problem, the authorities are not confident they have a solution,” he said. — **AFP**

ENTERTAINMENT

Sublime! 'Barbie' tops \$1bn globally in first for solo woman director

HOLLYWOOD’S PINK WAVE has yet to crest as Warner Bros.’ ‘Barbie’ dominated for a third straight weekend in North American theaters, pushing the film’s global haul past \$1 billion in a first for a woman director, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations said on Sunday.

The Greta Gerwig-directed blockbuster, starring Margot Robbie as iconic doll Barbie and Ryan Gosling as boyfriend Ken, earned a projected \$53 million for the Friday-through-Sunday period, for a domestic total of \$459 million and a whopping \$1.03 billion worldwide.

Not only has ‘Barbie’ thus become the first movie directed solely by a woman to pass the \$1 billion mark, but it did so faster than any film – including those directed by men – in Warner Bros.’ 100-year history, executives there said.

The film, which earlier scored the biggest opening weekend of the year, “has captured the imagination of moviegoers around the world and the results are incredibly impressive,” analyst Paul Dergarabedian of Comscore said.

Universal’s ‘Oppenheimer,’ the dark historical drama that has placed



second to ‘Barbie’ in their debut weeks, was bumped by Warner Bros. Newcomer ‘Meg 2: The Trench,’ an action film featuring gargantuan prehistoric sharks.

‘Meg 2’ pulled in \$30 million for the weekend, while Christopher Nolan’s

“Oppenheimer” earned \$28.7 million to push its global total to \$552 million.

That total made the story about the creation of the atomic bomb the all-time top grossing World War II film, ahead of Nolan’s own ‘Dunkirk’ (\$527 million) and Steven Spielberg’s ‘Saving Private Ryan’ (\$482 million), not adjusted for inflation, according to Hollywood Reporter.

Fourth place for the weekend went to “Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem,” the latest in the franchise about a team of reptilian heroes in a half shell. The Paramount animated comedy, featuring the voices of Jackie Chan and Post Malone, brought in \$28 million.

Disney release “Haunted Mansion” slid two spots to fifth, with the lavishly produced kid-centric film – starring LaKeith Stanfield, Tiffany Haddish and Owen Wilson – earning \$8.9 million.

Holding its own in sixth was the independent “Sound of Freedom,” from Santa Fe Films and Angel Studios, at \$7 million. The low-budget action thriller has sparked controversy, with critics saying its story about child sex trafficking plays into Qanon conspiracy theories.

All in all, it was an exceptional weekend for Hollywood, with the top four films all raking in \$28 million or more.

Not only did the top films come close to doubling the total from the same weekend last year, they surpassed the corresponding pre-pandemic weekend in 2019, analysts said.

Ken might even have said – a line Ryan Gosling reportedly ad-libbed during the filming of ‘Barbie’ – that the weekend was “Sublime!”

Rounding out the top 10 were: “Mission: Impossible – Dead Reckoning Part 1” (\$6.4 million); “Talk to Me” (\$6.2 million); “Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny” (\$1.5 million); “Elemental” (\$1.2 million) — **AFP**



Mahas Industrial City investments total RO 40m



BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, AUG 7

Mahas Industrial City, administered by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), has attracted investments totalling around RO 40 million during the first half of 2023. Mahas Industrial City has successfully attracted five investment projects this year, covering a total area of 50,000 sqm, which has resulted in the overall leased area reaching approximately 191,500 sqm.

Moreover, the workforce in Mahas Industrial City has touched 236, with an Omanisation rate of 40 per cent.

Mubarak bin Salim al Ghailani (pictured), Acting Director General of Mahas Industrial City, said the infrastructure development of the industrial city is on track. The main entrance bridge connecting the industrial city to the main road has been completed.

Moreover, the excavation, expansion, and preparation of the main channel to protect against rainwater and floods, along with the construction of protection walls, have been completed as well. So have the foundation works for main water tank, and water, emergency and sewage pipelines.

The entire project is expected to be fully completed and delivered by mid of next year.

As part of the RO 5 million investment in the basic infrastructure, a 75-metre bridge linking the entrance of the industrial city is being constructed, along with internal roads, rainwater drainage channels and protection



walls of a total length of 4 km; electricity, telecom, water and sewage networks; main water tank; sewage collection tank with a capacity of 1,000 cubic metres; and installation of 100 solar powered pole lights.

This project aims at providing world-class, appealing and dynamic investment environment through implementing road and infrastructure projects that meet international standards and specifications, providing essential services and facilities for the investors, improving traffic flow and enhancing the overall scenery of the industrial city.

These developments highlight the industrial city's thriving landscape and its positive impact on the economic growth, making it an ideal destination for investments and businesses.

Al Ghailani emphasised that Mahas Industrial City was established in response to the directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to expedite economic and industrial growth in Musandam Governorate.

Mahas Industrial City covers a total area of 1,548,821 sqm and is designated for light and medium industries, in addition to logistics, warehouses, technical services, commercial and residential activities, among other activities.

Oman unveils strategy to develop sports and adventure tourism

Strong growth: Tourism sector contributes 3 per cent to local GDP in 2022, with visitor growth rate surging 348% in comparison to data from 2021

HIBBA AL KINDI
MUSCAT, AUG 7

The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) launched a forum here on Monday to promote investment in the tourism sector.

The Muscat Exhibition and Forum for Tourism Investment Opportunities, highlighted various potential investment opportunities within the tourism industry, with a focus on real estate, sports, and medical fields.

In her keynote speech, Dr Siham bint Ahmed al Harthiyah, Board Member and Head of the Tourism Committee at OCCI, highlighted the importance of transitioning from the concept of tourism promotion to establishing a "comprehensive tourism industry through partnership projects between the public and private sectors."

According to Al Harthiyah, the tourism sector contributed 3 per cent to the local GDP in 2022, with a visitor growth rate of almost



348 per cent in comparison to data from 2021.

Speaking to the *Observer*, she indicated that the decision to focus on new fields was developed as a strategy to boost year-round tourism in the country.

She explained that the concept of tourism is not limited to relaxation and luxury: but extends to various aspects such as adventure, healthcare, and mediation.

And by investing in these new areas and catering to various tourist interests and demands, Oman can overcome limits such as weather conditions to establish

year-round tourism.

Various government bodies and entities showcased different investment opportunities.

Sara bint Hilal al Kharusiyah, the Sport Sector Lead, at the National Programme for Investment and Exports Development (Nazdaher), presented different sports investment opportunities in association with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, one of which is a sports medicine centre.

According to Al Kharusiyah, the concept of the centre emerged as a result of a Sports Investment

Lab that highlighted a notable sport injury treatment centres in the region.

Other opportunities include desert, mountain and sea sports tourism hubs, specialised one stop hubs that will centralise adventure activities — an integrated adventure city in Al Jabal Al Akhdhar, multipurpose sport halls, and a women's club. Earlier this year, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism shared that the number of ongoing tourism projects in Oman is anticipated to climb to 363 in 2025, with a total investment value of RO 7.49 billion.

Oman issues new regulations to strengthen anti-money laundering efforts

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, AUG 7

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) has issued new regulations to strengthen the country's anti-money laundering (AML) and countering the financing of terrorism (CFT) regime.

The new guidelines, issued via Ministerial Decision 424/2023, defines the real beneficiary as the natural person who owns or exercises final effective control over a customer, directly or indirectly.

It also obliges commercial companies to establish a special register called the real beneficiary register, in which the data of the real beneficiaries of partners or shareholders



who own at least 25 per cent of the company's shares are recorded.

The new regulation is intended to enhance confidence in the national economy and enhance the business and investment environment in accordance with the principles of transparency

and flexibility. It also contributes to keeping pace with international standards in the fight against money laundering and CFT.

Companies that violate the provisions of the new regulation may be subject to administrative sanctions, such as a written warning, an administrative fine of up to RO 1,000, or the suspension of the commercial register for a period of up to 3 months.

The issuance of the new regulation is another important step forward taken by the Sultanate of Oman in the fight against money laundering and CFT.

It is a clear demonstration of the government's commitment to strengthening the country's AML/CFT regime and to creating a safe and transparent business environment.

Oman Shell weighs plan for solar power project at Khazaen

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, AUG 7

Oman Shell, the local subsidiary of global energy major Shell, is studying options for the establishment of a solar power project to supply renewable energy to Khazaen Economic City's expanding portfolio of manufacturing, logistics and other commercial tenants.

An agreement to this effect was signed last year, according to Salim al Thuhli, CEO of Khazaen Economic City (KEC).

"We (...) signed an NDA in 2022 with Oman Shell to explore opportunities to establish a solar plant in the city that will provide

clean energy to investors," Al Thuhli stated in a recent interview to The Energy Year, the well-known London-based energy news portal. Set on an area of over 52 million square metres at Barka in Al Batinah South Governorate, Khazaen is the first integrated economic city of its kind in the Sultanate of Oman.

Investments to date total around RO 316 million and are distributed across the food, pharmaceuticals, warehousing and logistics, light manufacturing and other sectors.

"We are strongly encouraging any projects that entail renewable energy developments within KEC, particularly from SMEs," said Al Thuhli in the interview.



The City is already home to the world's first solar-powered biodiesel plant set up by Omani startup Wakud, he added.

A number of other green energy initiatives are also in the

pipeline for development in the City, according to the official. It includes a project for the recycling of used car oils, while another is focused on the sustainable design of Khazaen itself, he said.

"In fact, what we think of when talking about sustainability is not just the installation of PV modules. We think of developing an environmentally friendly area right down to the city's design," he said.

"We're studying solutions that allow mobility in the most efficient and least polluting ways by considering, for instance, the positioning of the various industrial clusters and how to connect them and its workers with transportation services within the city and the labour village," the CEO added.

Oman Shell has already established a presence in Oman's renewable energy and green

fuels space. Two years ago, local subsidiary Sohar Solar Qabas launched a 25MW solar photovoltaic plant at Sohar Freezone to meet the energy needs of a ferrochrome smelter operating nearby.

Oman Shell and its affiliates are also investing in, among other areas, the production of green hydrogen, renewable synthetic LNG, green ammonia and other zero-carbon fuels. Other initiatives supported by the company include the introduction of solar PV for a number of Omani schools, the roll-out of hydrogen-powered vehicles for Oman Airports, and the development of EV charging infrastructure.

Bank Muscat offers facilitated banking services to the visitors of Khareef Dhofar



MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in the Sultanate of Oman, reaffirms the readiness of its extensive network to provide customers with the best possible services during their visit to khareef Dhofar 2023, which attracted a lot of visitors coming from the different parts of the Sultanate of Oman's governorates to enjoy the exceptional and beautiful khareef this year.

This comes in line with its commitment to participating in different events and helping serve Dhofar Governorate visitors during this exceptional season.

With the continuation of the events and activities being organised in khareef Dhofar and as customers head towards Dhofar Governorate, the customers can take advantage of the services offered by Bank Muscat along the way to Dhofar at main stations located in Adam, Haima, Qarn Alam and Thamrait where ATMs/CDMs exist.

To ensure easy access to banking services 24/7, the bank maintains more than 70 ATMs, CDMs, FFMs, BCDM, Multi-Function Kiosk and statement printers, in addition to 13 branches in Dhofar Governorate.

Customers can also utilise the services provided by the mobile banking unit with an ATM offered and provides a variety of financial services.

The regional management in Dhofar Governorate is responsible for transmitting this unit prepared with state-of-the-art devices, offering customers easy banking accessibility near



their location.

On this occasion, Taya bin Eid Bait Sabeea (pictured), Deputy General Manager – Regional Branches, Bank Muscat expressed his pleasure having said that this khareef season attracted a large number of visitors.

He mentioned that Bank Muscat is keen to offer a vast array of financial services and facilities for all visitors, which demonstrates its commitment to enhancing financial inclusion and actively participating in relevant events.

Further to this, he also mentioned that Bank Muscat has contributed to the success of khareef Dhofar and put considerable effort to ensure the prompt availability of banking facilities and services through branches, ATMs, CDMs and mobile units in Dhofar as well as those situated on the highway between Adam and Thamrait, in addition to the online services provided through the Bank's Internet Banking and m-Banking App.

This allows customers to spend good time with their family members and friends. He further confirmed that the bank will continue upgrading its services in line with its vision "To serve you better, every day."

Pact signed to establish endowment investment fund in Oman

MUSCAT: Bank Nizwa, in partnership with Oman National Investment Development Company (Tanmia) and Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, has taken a significant step towards promoting responsible and professional endowment investment opportunities in the Sultanate of Oman.

The three parties have officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish the first-of-its-kind Endowment Investment Fund in Oman.

Khalid al Kayed, CEO of Bank Nizwa, expressed his enthusiasm for the project, stating, "This joint effort to establish Oman's first Endowment Investment Fund reflects our commitment to fostering responsible investment practices that align with our cultural values and religious beliefs."

Through this unique platform, we seek to encourage the public to make impactful contributions to society while earning competitive returns on their endowment investments."

On this occasion, an endowment forum was held where Dr Mohammad Suwaileh, Sr Manager Corporate Shariah Audit at Bank Nizwa, delivered a presentation entitled



'Determinants and Guidelines of Modern Endowment Investment.' The presentation aimed to introduce endowment investment, present its tools, and discuss modern investment governance, risk management, and compliance within it.

The objective of this pioneering MoU initiative is to create an avenue for individuals and institutions to invest their endowment funds in a carefully managed, Shariah-compliant investment vehicle listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange. The fund aims to provide the community with an attractive opportunity to channel their endowment

money into well-established and professionally managed instruments, adhering to robust Shariah governance principles.

Bank Nizwa, the leading Islamic bank in Oman, will play a crucial role as the Shariah Advisor for the joint endowment investment fund.

Their guidance will guarantee high level of compliance with Islamic principles, assuring investors of the fund's adherence to ethical and Shariah-compliant practices. Under the MoU, the parties will collaborate closely to develop a comprehensive framework for the establishment of the Endowment

Investment Fund.

Tanmia, renowned for its expertise in investment management, will assume the role of the Investment Manager, ensuring prudent financial stewardship and maximising returns for the investors.

The Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs will act as the driving force behind this transformative initiative, serving as the founder and promoter of the fund. The Ministry will take a proactive approach to create awareness about the fund's benefits, seeking to attract endowments and investments from within the local and regional communities.

OOMCO continues to supply SalamAir with fuel

MUSCAT: Oman Oil Marketing Company (OOMCO) and SalamAir have recently announced the expansion of their existing cooperation with a renewed strategic partnership to supply premium aviation fuel to the Oman-based low-cost carrier.

The partnership is one of several of its kind between OOMCO and airlines to support the growth of the nation's aviation industry.

The two-year agreement was signed by Tariq al Junaidi, Chief Executive Officer of OOMCO, and Captain Mohamed Ahmed, Chief Executive Officer of SalamAir.

Tariq al Junaidi, Chief Executive Officer of Oman Oil Marketing Company said, "We are committed to accommodating the



growth of the aviation and tourism sector in Oman by continuing to provide premium aviation fuel to SalamAir, and other carriers.

This step contributes to economic growth and diversification as per the objectives in Oman Vision 2040, while these partnerships also contribute

to our growth as a company. We experienced a 46.7 per cent growth during this year's second fiscal quarter compared to the same period last year."

He added, "Meanwhile, to guarantee the safety, sustainability and high quality of our aviation fuel, our operating standards are

aligned with the International Air Transport Association and the Joint Inspection Group, the entity that sets global standards for quality of aviation fuel."

Captain Mohamed Ahmed, Chief Executive Officer of SalamAir, said, "Oman Oil Marketing Company has been our strategic partner and aviation fuel provider for years and enables us to focus on our fuel efficiency as we continue to further expand our network, while also promoting Oman as a unique tourist destination.

As the first low-cost airline in Oman, we offer affordable journeys to our customers by using high-quality, sustainable, and yet reasonably priced fuel that supports this objective."

Lincoln's exclusive campaign ending soon

MUSCAT: Experience Lincoln luxury by owning any of your favourite Lincoln vehicle and benefit with service 5 years / 100,000kms and 1 year registration. The campaign will end on August 9, 2023. (Conditions apply. For details visit a Lincoln showroom Wattayah.)

Customers can choose from the well-detailed luxury vehicles including Nautilus, Aviator and Navigator.

The Lincoln Nautilus is equipped with a turbocharged engine line-up. A 2.7-litre twin-turbo V6 engine boasts an AWD drivetrain with adaptive suspension and all-wheel drive disconnect. It delivers 335 hp and 515 Nm of torque and includes standard Auto Start-stop capability, plus a new eight-speed automatic transmission with SelectShift capability.



It offers a luxurious environment besides delivering amazing SUV flexibility.

The Nautilus offers a stunning exterior design with a new Lincoln signature grille, new tail lamps, and applique light bar, spoiler and upper rear fascia.

Complementing the new design features and affording the Nautilus

a more luxurious stance, is an all new wheel line up featuring 21" bright machined aluminium with premium painted pockets available for the Reserve trim.

The stylish and luxury Aviator is equipped with standard twin-turbocharged 3.0-litre V6 engine, paired with a 10-speed SelectShift automatic transmission. It delivers

an impressive 400 horsepower and 563 Nm of torque for effortless acceleration.

The Lincoln Aviator offers drivers an engaging drive with the Lincoln Drive Modes' five signature settings – Normal, Conserve, Excite, Slippery and Deep Conditions. The Aviator offers the kind of capability premium clients require in a three-row SUV, with available all-wheel drive.

This feature allows owners to further customise their driving experience, while a 10.1-inch standard configurable LCD instrument cluster confirms their choices with beautiful, easy-to-read dynamic graphics and prompts.

The luxury family SUV – the Lincoln Navigator is equipped with a twin-turbo V6 engine that

can produce 440 horsepower and provides smooth power whenever you need it, delivered through a 10-speed transmission. The Navigator combines modern luxury with advanced technology.

Navigator's lighter, high-strength aluminium-alloy body helps create a more refined ride. The Navigator is equipped with a clean and uncluttered interior layout, with a simple, soothing ambience.

At night, interior ambient lights sequentially illuminate each of the SUV's three rows. During the day, a panoramic roof fills the cabin with natural light. Inside, spaciousness comes in all three rows, including storage in each to keep the cabin clean and organised.

Occupants can enjoy available Revel Ultima audio with 28 speakers that work in concert

with Navigator's interior design and acoustics. Standard SYNC 4 enables clients to manage audio, phone, navigation and more from the vehicle touch screen or steering wheel-mounted controls.

Second-row passengers have their own audio and climate control, while third-row seats feature power recline capability.

Customers wishing to own their dream Lincoln with exclusive benefits are encouraged to visit their nearest Lincoln showroom.

In Oman, Lincoln vehicles are brought to you by Arabian Car Marketing Co LLC.

Please log on to www.lincolnoman.com, or www.facebook.com/lincolnoman or www.instagram.com/lincoln_oman for the latest news, test drive requests and the latest press releases.

WJ Towell Group Company



Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

Muscat 9014 6672, 9679 0684
Sohar 9731 6218 Salalah 9429 9325
www.orbit-oman.com

• Fleet of 2,000 vehicles
• Choose from a wide range of brands & models
• PDO, OXY and BP spec vehicles available
• Attractive rates for short-term & long-term lease

أوربت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

Classifieds



To receive news updates from OMAN OBSERVER,

WhatsApp
 <your name> to
96473232

OMAN OBSERVER

Observer Classified Section

TUESDAY

AUGUST 8, 2023 | MUHARRAM 21, 1445 AH

Mohammed al Rashdi: 99841230
m.alrahdi86@yahoo.com

Ali al Maashari: 99639264
ali.almashari@omandaily.om

Saada al Rashdi
95919344

94501166
24649593
24649595



النماني للشحن
AL NAMANI CARGO
DOOR TO DOOR AIR AND SEA CARGO WORLD WIDE

DOOR TO DOOR
CARGO



INDIA BANGLADESH NEPAL PHILIPPINES UAE INDONESIA EUROPE UK CANADA USA

WHATSAPP
96353654

TOLL FREE NUMBER
80066766

Follow us:  www.alnamanicargo.com

Driving School

Special offers for those wishing to learn driving in (Aziba - Khwair Qurum - Ruwi Al Amirat)

Contact No: 99074072

AUDIT, ACCOUNTING, VAT, TAXATION

Contact: 97239696 95355638

Gulf Center Consultancy & Audit
Muscat, Sohar, Salalah, Sur

EAGLE FREIGHT EXPRESS
DOOR TO DOOR COURIER SERVICES
INDIA | NEPAL | BANGLADESH

25 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE FAST DELIVERY EXCELLENT SERVICES

WORLD WIDE CARGO SERVICE Tel: 99432926, 78211708, 92319472, 93350126
Head Office (H.O.) Room No.: 218, 1st Floor, Aircargo Complex, Branch Al-Hail, Email: eaglefreightexpress@gmail.com

ATR & SEA CARGO FREE PICKUP 24/7 SERVICE

SKT سماء الخضراء للتجارة
SAMAA AL KHADRA TRADING

SERVICES:

PIPING SYSTEMS VALVES
DRAINS INTERCEPTORS

Tel: 24501568, 24502479 • Fax: 24503566
Email: sales@samaalkhadra.com
Website: www.samaalkhadratradingco.com

HAVE A PROPERTY FOR RENT?

Advertise with us.

Contact us on: **99639264**

SIT. WANTED

SUDANESE lawyer and legal adviser, with more than 30 years of experience in Sudanese courts of all levels and types. Available in Muscat, Tel: 79121176, Yasir. Elmahi@hotmail.com

ROYAL CARGO

ALL OVER INDIA INDONESIA NEPAL AIR EXPORT (Port to Port) SEA EXPORT (Container Booking)

DOOR TO DOOR CARGO

SERVICES BY AIR & SEA

FOR MORE INFORMATION JUST DIAL CUSTOMER CARE 93213207
PICK UP FREE ANYWHERE IN MUSCAT 93213206

SIT. WANTED

INDIAN female homeopathic doctor, currently on a family visa in Oman, seeking excellent opportunities in the insurance or medical-related sector. Contact: 97541038, email: bindyabaalan@gmail.com

SENIOR quantity surveyor Chamidu Fernando BSc quantity surveying and construction over 5 years experience visa and driving licence. Contact: +968 96295650

CHARTERED accountant with 17 years experience in Oman looking for suitable opportunity. Contact: 95782629

SIT. WANTED

HEAVY and light vehicle driver having more than 10 years Oman experience with Oman heavy and light vehicle licence (expired) looking for suitable opportunities. Contact: 99055820.

PHILIPPINES male 38 years, worked at Oman Air Business Lounge, Seeks any job opportunities in hospitality, please contact: +63 - 9631183079, Whatsapp # 9631183079, Email: papamamailoveyou1984@gmail.com

EXPERT in sales & marketing, Represented Oman in International Trade Fair & Development of export market. Immense experience in manufacturing, trading, wholesaling & retail industries. I'm ready to shoulder new responsibility or a new startup. A total of 32 years of experience & living in Oman since 1996. Please call me for exploring a new possibility or a new venture. 78501743

DAWOOD

An Excellent grade, ISO 9001:2015 - QMS accredited Construction company wishes to recruit enthusiastic personnel for the following positions:

- Procurement Manager:** Bachelor degree with min 10 yrs experience.
- Procurement Engineer:** Bachelor degree with min 8 yrs experience.
- Finance Executive:** Bachelor degree with min 10 yrs experience.
- Accounts Executive:** Bachelor degree with min 8 yrs experience.
- AC Engineer:** Mechanical Bachelor degree with min 8 yrs experience.

Interested candidates pls forward your CV's to **info@dawood.om**

Applus IAF

PEST CONTROL OMAN CO. L.L.C.

Supply of Pesticides, Gel (crocroaches), Public Health chemicals, Agriculture chemicals, Snake repellent, Rodent baits and other insect repellent from UK & USA

PROFESSIONALS in Pest Control Service, Bedbug Treatment, Rodent Treatment, Snake Treatment and Termite Treatment [Pre & Post Construction]

Tel: 24787606, 24787503
Direct Line: 24786077
GSM: 99382355, 99172309
pcomctom@omantel.net.om
P.O. Box 565, Al Wadi Al Kabir 117, Sultanate of Oman

To advertise on our social media platforms and website

Please Contact our Team

95210257

Store for Rent
(Barka - Alsaqsouq)

Warehouse Area (1560 Sqm)
price is 1.800 OMR per Square meter

Contact Numbers :
99364938, 99021190



OMAN OBSERVER DAILY

Observer

For Advertisements

Please Contact with our Team:

Head Office

Mohd Al Rashdi
99841230
m.alrahdi86@yahoo.com

Ali Al Maashari
99639264
wadiameeh@yahoo.com

Salalah Office

Bakhit Al Shihri
92998577
bakhit.omandaily@gmail.com

Nizwa Office

Abdullah Al Abri
99429094
nizwaofc@omandaily.net.om

Suham Office

Musalam Al Saidi
99429192
sohardaily@outlook.com



@omanobserver
www.omanobserver.om

FRIDAY, JULY 10, 2020 DHUL GAADA 18, 1441 AH

OMAN OBSERVER DAILY

Observer

ESTABLISHED IN 1981 EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: ABDULLAH BIN SALIM AL SHEIKH VOL. 39 NO. 239 | PAGES 16

Be Careful. Be Responsible!
SLAVING, WAR, COVID

HIS MAJESTY ADMINISTERS OATH TO NEW MINISTER

MUSCAT: Before His Majesty Sultan, Jathman bin Tariq, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Dr. Saad bin Abdullah bin Al-Hail, Chairman of the Supreme Court, Saad bin Abdullah bin Al-Hail, Chairman of the Supreme Court, Saad bin Abdullah bin Al-Hail, Chairman of the Supreme Court.

NEW RO 50 BANKNOTE FROM THIS MONTH

MUSCAT: To mark the 50th anniversary of the Omani Banknote, the Ministry of Finance has issued a new 50 Omani banknote, which will begin circulation this month.

STAY APART AND BREAK THE CHAIN

SOME PEOPLE ARE NOT FOLLOWING SOCIAL DISTANCING NORMS

are not "in those critical moments of uncertainty with both physical and mental strain, we should discipline ourselves, and we should follow the guidelines that health authorities say are necessary to keep the coronavirus from spreading, many

are not "in those critical moments of uncertainty with both physical and mental strain, we should discipline ourselves, and we should follow the guidelines that health authorities say are necessary to keep the coronavirus from spreading, many

are not "in those critical moments of uncertainty with both physical and mental strain, we should discipline ourselves, and we should follow the guidelines that health authorities say are necessary to keep the coronavirus from spreading, many

Opportunity Oman: Khazaen Economic City – emerging engine of growth



**DR YOUSUF BIN HAMED
AL BALUSHI**

The author is the founder
and CEO of Smart
Investment Gateway;
email: [yousufh@
omaninvestgateway.com](mailto:yousufh@omaninvestgateway.com)

Khazaen Economic City in Oman has rapidly emerged as a highly sought-after destination for investments, attracting attention from both local and international investors.

Strategically located in the most densely populated part of Oman, Khazaen Economic City aims to become a hub for logistics, light industries, and commercial activities, and its commitments from the Omani government and several international companies have captured the confidence of investors.

The city has successfully lured investments across various sectors, including logistics, manufacturing, and tourism.

The impressive data reveals that Khazaen Economic City has secured over \$820 million in investments from both local and international sources, reflecting the investors' trust in the project's potential and underlying the Omani government's dedication to fostering an investor-friendly environment.

One of the key strengths of Khazaen Economic City lies in its diverse portfolio, accommodating a wide range of industries and sectors, thereby creating a sustainable economic environment.

The city encompasses activities such as medium-sized industries, logistics, and commercial ventures, offering a well-balanced mix to ensure long-term



stability and growth.

Highlighting the broad spectrum of industries within its portfolio, Khazaen Economic City includes manufacturing, logistics, food processing, pharmaceuticals and automotive. This diversity serves as a risk mitigation strategy, safeguarding against over-reliance on any single industry and promoting long-term stability.

Investors in Khazaen Economic City benefit from numerous advantages, including strategic location benefits and a business-friendly environment that encourages success.

The city offers tax incentives, simplified procedures, access to skilled labour, advanced infrastructure, and top-notch logistics facilities.

Moreover, the city's strategic positioning provides access to a consumer base of over 3 billion people in regions like the Indian Subcontinent, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, East Africa, and the Far East.

Key initiatives within Khazaen Economic City play a crucial role in stimulating growth and attracting additional investments. The Khazaen Economic City project, in particular, stands out as an appealing opportunity

for businesses and investors due to its scale and strategic location.

Notably, Khazaen Economic City has already witnessed the initiation of more than 100 projects, attracting over \$820 million in investments. This influx of investments showcases the growing trust investors have in the city's potential and the significant progress being made.

A key aspect of Khazaen Economic City's success lies in its strong partnerships with government agencies, global organisations, and industry leaders. Collaborations with the Oman Investment Authority, ASYAD, and OPAZ enhance the city's credibility, bring valuable expertise, and facilitate vital connections, making it more appealing to investors.

Khazaen Economic City's growth is further bolstered by key anchor projects that contribute to building a robust ecosystem. The Khazaen Central Fruits and Vegetable Market and Khazaen Dry Port are essential components of the city's logistics capabilities, facilitating the smooth movement of goods and fostering trade.

Additionally, the Khazaen Logistics Park plays a vital role in enhancing the city's logistics infrastructure, attracting

businesses, and strengthening the overall supply chain.

Over the course of 30 months, Khazaen Economic City has made impressive strides, attracting more than \$389 million in foreign direct investment.

With over 1,709,964 square meters of leased area and more than 100 signed agreements involving 16 nationalities across six sectors, the city has already created over 300 jobs through 23 ongoing projects.

In conclusion, Khazaen Economic City in Oman presents a compelling investment opportunity for investors from around the world, as well as those within the local and regional areas.

Its significance lies in the commitments made by investors, the diverse range of investment opportunities available, the benefits offered to investors, its strategic location, access to markets, supportive business environment, key ongoing projects, and established partnerships.

With substantial investments flowing into the city and unwavering support from the government, Khazaen Economic City is ideally positioned to drive growth, generate employment opportunities, and contribute significantly to achieving Oman Vision 2040.

ME fintech market experiences rapid growth

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, AUG 7

Recent fintech research conducted by red_mad_robot reveals that the Middle East fintech industry is experiencing significant growth and investment opportunities.

Over the past two three years (2021-2023), Middle East fintech startups have received a total funding of approximately \$2 billion through 140-160 deals, with a 40-43% of a total share in the UAE.

This substantial growth can be attributed to the increasing tech-savviness of consumers who actively utilise digital banking services and non-cash payment methods.

Furthermore, government authorities in the Middle East, including central banks and regulators, are committed to developing the fintech sector by establishing necessary infrastructure such as accelerators, incubators, and fintech hubs.

The comprehensive report not only provides market analysis but also highlights key players in the fintech market and trends within the Middle East fintech environment.

With over 100 promising fintech startups in the region, the Middle East market is dominated by companies specialising in digital payments, instant cross-border payments, buy-now-pay-later (BNPL) services, and digital banking. These companies have later-stage deals and exits, demonstrating their innovative services and growing sustainable business models.

KSA and Egypt account for 46% of the fintech companies in the region, with nine projects in Egypt and six in KSA. Notably, top fintech companies have attracted investments into the region, improving the business environment and showcasing great potential for future growth.



TOYOTA

Festival of Joy

SERVICE**

FROM **2 YEARS / 20,000 KMS**
(WHICHEVER IS EARLIER)

UP TO **5 YEARS / 50,000 KMS**
(WHICHEVER IS EARLIER)

SCRATCH & WIN#



INSURANCE*

1 YEAR



Instalment starting from **RO 108***



Instalment starting from **RO 127***



Instalment starting from **RO 239***



Instalment starting from **RO 116***



Instalment starting from **RO 145***

Campaign Period: 16.06.2023 – 16.08.2023. Benefits applicable for all purchases except Government Organizations & Ministries. *Comprehensive 1 Year Insurance (Oman only, excluding diesel grades) on 21YM / 21 PLT; Hilux 4x2 & Hilux 4x4, 22YM / 21 PLT; Camry 2.5, Camry 3.5, Hilux 4x2 & Hilux 4x4, 22YM / 22 PLT; Camry 2.5, Camry 3.5, RAIZE, RAV4, Fortuner, Hilux 4x2 & Hilux 4x4, 23YM / 22 PLT; Yaris SD, Corolla 1.6, Corolla 2.0, Camry 2.5, Camry 3.5, RAIZE, Corolla Cross, Rush, Velloz, RAV4, RAV4 HEV, Fortuner, Hilux 4x2, Hilux 4x4 & Lite Ace, 23YM / 23 PLT; Yaris SD, Corolla 1.6, Corolla 2.0, Camry 2.5, Camry 3.5, Crown, RAIZE, Urban Cruiser, Corolla Cross, Rush, Velloz, RAV4, RAV4 HEV, Fortuner, Hilux 4x2, Hilux 4x4 & Lite Ace. Insurance benefit under the campaign would be given upto the extent applicable for Private vehicles only. Additional premium as per Insurance norms will have to be paid by the RAC, Taxi & Driving School Company. **2 Years / 20,000 Kms Service (whichever is earlier) covering 2 services at 10,000 Kms service interval based on normal operating conditions (Excluding DSL grades) on RAV4, RAV4 HEV & LC PIUP. **3 Years / 30,000 Kms Service (whichever is earlier) covering 3 services at 10,000 Kms service interval based on normal operating conditions (Excluding DSL grades) on all Toyota models excluding Corolla, Camry, RAV4, LC PIUP, Prado, LC WGN, Lite Ace, Hiace, Coaster. **5 Years / 50,000 Kms Service (whichever is earlier) covering 5 services at 10,000 Kms service interval based on normal operating conditions on Corolla and Camry. # Scratch & win: (Applicable for petrol vehicles). Every customer who buys a vehicle will be eligible for one Scratch & Win card. Chances to win fuel card worth 100 liters of Fuel. Vehicles may include dealer-installed items. For further details & to ascertain availability of stocks, please visit your nearest Toyota showroom. Scratch and win game shown above for illustrative purposes only. # Scratch & win is based on the number of digits of license plate (RAC). # Scratch & win is not a lottery game.



Saud Bahwan Automotive LLC
ISO 9001: 2015 Certified | C. R. No: 1703412

toyotaoman
@toyotaomanofficial
toyotaoman
www.toyotaoman.com