

Oman Surgical Society elects new BoD

The Sultanate of Oman's first body for surgeons, The Oman Surgical Society (OSS), has elected its Board of Directors for 2022-2024 and has set plans for several conferences and events. OSS aims to support, engage, advocate and represent all surgeons in the Sultanate of Oman, allowing them to deliver and maintain the highest standards of care to the citizens and residents of the country. Dr Yassen al Lawati and Dr Abdullah al Rawahi have been elected President and Vice-President of the OSS. **DETAILS ON P2**



P8

THE FOUR THINGS YOU MUST TRY DOING DURING THIS LONG HOLIDAY

P9

OO'S BISAT OILFIELD THIRD CRUDE PROCESSING PLANT BEGINS OPERATIONS

P17

ENGLAND IMplode TO HAND SECOND ODI AND SERIES TO AUSTRALIA

MUSCAT

EMBASSIES CELEBRATE 52ND NATIONAL DAY

The embassies and consulate-generals of the Sultanate of Oman in the UAE, Japan Singapore and Tunisia organised reception ceremonies and cultural events on the occasion of the glorious 52nd National Day. In Tokyo, Dr Mohammed bin Said bin Khalifa Al Busaidi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Japan, praised the historical relations between the two friendly countries, as they celebrate this year the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations. **SEE PAGE 3**

SHARM EL-SHEIKH

NO COP27 DEAL YET AS DEADLINE LOOMS

Countries were struggling to reach agreement at the COP27 climate talks in Egypt on Saturday, with some threatening to walk away if negotiators failed to make progress on fighting climate change. With the talks already in overtime, officials from the 27-country European Union said they were worried about a lack of progress overnight and even the possibility of backsliding from parts of the COP26 climate deal agreed in Glasgow, Scotland, last year. "We'd rather have no decision than a bad decision." **SEE PAGE 5**

OMAN OBSERVER

FIRST DEDICATED ENGLISH NEWS APP IN OMAN

INSIDE

OMAN TALENT HUB LAUNCHED AT KOM

P4

KIM REVEALS DAUGHTER AT MISSILE LAUNCH

P5

Iranian president receives Badr

TEHRAN: Dr Ebrahim Raisi, President of Iran, received Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, in Tehran on Saturday. During the meeting, Sayyid Badr conveyed the greetings of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to the president and Iranian people. The Iranian president conveyed greetings to His Majesty the Sultan and congratulations to the Sultanate of Oman on the occasion of the 52nd Glorious National Day. - **ONA** **SEE ALSO P2**

14,977 voters to elect 21 OCCI board members on Tuesday

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 19

About 14,977 voters will cast their votes on Tuesday to select 21 members of the Board of Directors of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) for 2022-2026.

The board of directors will consist of five members from the Muscat Governorate, 10 chairmen of the boards of directors of the branches, 5 members representing the companies listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange, and one member who will represent foreign investors.

Dr Saleh bin Said Masan, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry and Chairman of the OCCI Elections Committee, said Royal Decree No 56/2022 gave more powers to enable the

FDI climbs to RO 19.9 bn

MUSCAT: The volume of foreign direct investments (FDI) inflows into the Sultanate of Oman amounted to RO 17.981 billion as of end-June 2022, which included RO 2.66 billion in new inflows during the previous 12 months, according to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

The biggest beneficiary was the Oil & Gas sector,

which accounted for 68.14 per cent of total FDI, followed by the manufacturing sector (9.42 per cent), financial intermediation sector with an 8.74 per cent share.

The United Kingdom retained its position as the biggest source of FDI with a 49.99 per cent share (equating to RO 8.989 billion.

SEE ALSO P9

Chamber to exercise its role as a representative of the private sector and and strengthening its voice in decision-making.

He said the addition of public shareholding companies and foreign residency to the OCCI board is a quantum leap and also confirms the openness of Oman to foreign investment.

The under-secretary said the committee has completed all preparations to hold elections, which

will be held from 8 am to 6 pm on Tuesday. Key venues include Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre in the Governorate of Muscat, Sultan Qaboos Complex for Culture and Entertainment in Dhofar, and the Chamber's headquarters in the wilayats of Khasab and Dibba in the Musandam Governorate, while the branches of the Chamber's administrations will be the centres to vote in other wilayats. Dr Masan said voters can cast vote from any polling centres in the country.

Dr Masan said the online electoral register is in line with Oman Vision 2040 objective of digital transformation.

To ensure election of qualified members and also help voters to know their candidates, the committee allowed contestants to speak to voters in public meetings, during which they talk about their programmes and visions.

HM awards medals to Royal Court officers

SALALAH: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander, bestowed the Medals of Excellent Service and the Royal Commendation to a number of officers and non-commissioned officers of the Royal Court Affairs in Salalah and Muscat. Nasr bin Hamoud al Kindi, Secretary-General of the Royal Court Affairs, presented them with the medals in Salalah, in appreciation of their efforts in serving the country and performing their duties. **SEE ALSO P2**

US congratulates Oman on National Day

MUSCAT: The US congratulated Oman on the occasion of the 52nd National Day. Dr Anthony Blinken, Secretary of State of the US, on behalf of his country, expressed his good wishes to the Sultanate of Oman on this happy occasion.

Anthony Blinken said that he is looking forward to the continuation of the partnership between the two friendly countries. He said that the US is aware of the great role of the Sultanate of Oman in working towards a peaceful political solution in Yemen and appreciated its unwavering support for humanitarian issues.

Fifa will earn up \$700m more from Qatar World Cup

DOHA: FIFA will earn up \$700 million more from the Qatar World Cup than it did four years ago despite relentless criticism in the build-up to the tournament, President Gianni Infantino said on Saturday.

Infantino said media rights were up about \$200 million compared with the 2018 tournament in Russia, sponsorship was \$200 million extra and tickets and hospitality would bring in \$200 to \$300 million more. "All in all, this World Cup will generate for Fifa around \$600-\$700 million more than the last World Cup," he said ahead of the Sunday's match between Qatar and Ecuador.

Infantino said he would reveal Fifa's global revenues for the past four years to national associations on Sunday. But he insisted the

An Argentina fan plays football at the opening of the FIFA fan festival in Doha on the eve of World Cup kick-off on Saturday. - **Reuters**

Starting today, the **Observer** will bring out an eight-page supplement on Qatar World Cup 2022 with match reports, graphics and analysis.

Qatar tournament — which has faced criticism over rights issues and its climate — had defied doubters.

"I was told that sponsors will jump from Fifa, people will switch off their TV, they will not watch the World Cup because of the scandal, nobody will come to Qatar anyway because it is winter."

Hailing a "commercial success", Infantino said: "If so many people around the world have invested so much money in the World Cup in Qatar, they invest because they believe in Fifa" and "trust" Qatar.

"Either those people are stupid, or somebody, those who say nobody will watch it, that nobody cares about this World Cup, might be little bit wrong as some of the polls in some countries were wrong as well."

— AFP



HM awards Medals of Excellent Service to officers



SALALAH: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander, bestowed the Medals of Excellent Service and the Royal Commendation to a number of officers and non-commissioned officers of the Royal Court Affairs in Salalah and Muscat in

appreciation of their efforts in serving the country and performing their duties. Nasr bin Hamoud al Kindi, Secretary-General of the Royal Court Affairs, presented the medals to officers in Muscat, while Shaikh Said bin Hilal al Khalili, Head

of the Human and Financial Resources and Support Affairs, presented the medals to officers in Muscat. The two occasions were attended by a number of officials and senior officers of the Royal Court Affairs. — ONA

OMAN, IRAN FMS MEET



Iranian Foreign Minister Dr Hossein Amir Abdollahian welcomes Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, in Tehran on Saturday. Sayyid Badr and Abdollahian discussed a number of issues related to bilateral relations and ways to follow up their development. — ONA

Oman Surgical Society elects new BoD



Dr Yassen al Lawati Dr Mohamed al Hosni Dr Nawal al Sharji Dr Manar Nasser



Dr Noreen al Balushi Dr Salim al Riyami Dr Abdullah al Rawahi

KABEER YOUSUF

The Sultanate of Oman's first body for surgeons, The Oman Surgical Society (OSS), has elected its Board of Directors for 2022-2024 and has set plans for several conferences and events.

OSS aims to support, engage, advocate and represent all surgeons in the Sultanate of Oman, allowing them to deliver and maintain the highest standards of care to the citizens and residents of the country.

Dr Yassen al Lawati and Dr Abdullah al Rawahi have been elected President and Vice-President of the OSS.

Dr Yassen al Lawati is a Consultant Thoracic Surgeon, and Dr Abdullah al Rawahi is Consultant, Upper GI and Esophageal Surgery at the Sultan Qaboos Comprehensive Cancer Care and Research Centre.

Dr Mohammed al Hosni, Consultant Surgical Oncologist at the Sultan Qaboos University Hospital, is the newly appointed General Secretary of OSS.

Dr Manar Nasser, Consultant Colorectal and Robotic Surgery at the Royal Hospital and member of OSS board, has been elected to be the Head of the Academic Committee, while Dr Noreen al Balushi, Consultant

Hepatopancreatobiliary and Liver Transplant and member of the OSS board, is the Head of Research Committee.

Dr Salim al Riyami, Consultant Hepatopancreatobiliary and Liver Transplant Surgeon and OSS member, is the Chair of National Best Practice and QI Committee.

OSS aims to bring together all surgeons in Oman under one umbrella, creating a strong network that allows them to share clinical and scientific knowledge and create a local group that is able to establish ties with regional and international surgical bodies, allowing the members to actively participate in the advancement of the profession.

OSS will also strive to improve the quality of surgical care, techniques and postoperative outcomes and ensure the well-being of surgeons in Oman through a number of different initiatives.

OSS will also support the surgical trainees by providing them with the opportunity to attend workshops, courses and complete advanced training abroad. It aims to support the community and educate them regarding society's role in patient care.

Dr Nawal al Sharji, Pediatric Surgeon at the Royal Hospital, has been elected to be the Treasurer of the OSS.

دار الأوبرا السلطانية مسقط
ROYAL OPERA HOUSE MUSCAT

Opera La Cambiale Di Matrimonio

A Rossini Opera Festival and
Royal Opera House Muscat Coproduction

Gioachino Rossini (1792 – 1868)
A New ROHM Coproduction with ROF

24th November | 7:00 PM 26th November | 4:00 PM

The collaboration between ROHM and Rossini Opera Festival continues with the comic farse, *La Cambiale di Matrimonio*. A merchant's daughter struggles against her father's scheme to marry her off to a wealthy suitor. This brilliant production is under the baton of Alessandro Bonato.

BOOK NOW
rohmscat.org.om

SEASON 2022 -2023





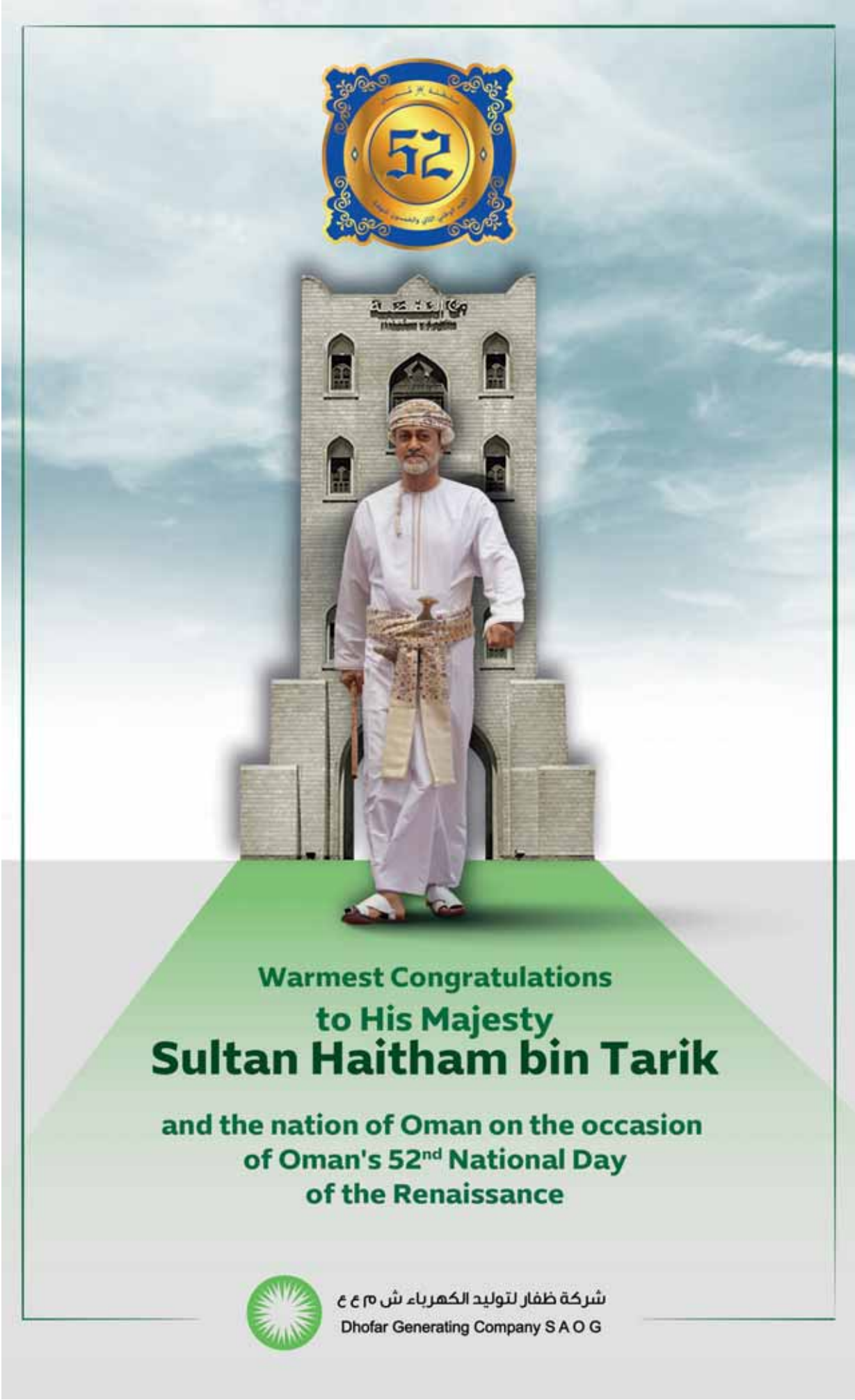
On the auspicious occasion of the
52nd National Day of
the Renaissance
Oxy Oman is pleased to extend its
sincere congratulations and best wishes
to His Majesty
Sultan Haitham bin Tarik.
We would also like to congratulate all
Omani people on this blessed occasion,
wishing His Majesty good health,
wellness and long life,
and for the continued progress and
prosperity of the Sultanate.



Oman embassies celebrate 52nd National Day



The embassies and consulate-generals of the Sultanate of Oman around the world organised reception ceremonies and cultural events on the occasion of the glorious 52nd National Day. The ceremonies saw the participation of honoured guests, senior government officials, heads of Arab and foreign diplomatic missions, and Omani students and their colleagues from the respective countries. – ONA



■ SUHAR FESTIVAL KICKS OFF



MUSCAT: The activities of the Suhar Festival in its first edition kicked off on Friday evening under the auspices of Mohammed bin Sulaiman al Kindi, Governor of North Al Batinah, in the presence of a large number of spectators. The month-long festival coincides with the celebrations of 52nd Glorious National Day. The opening ceremony of the festival included a national operetta, which included five paintings expressing Oman Vision 2040, titled: Man and Society, Economy and Development, Governance and Institutional Performance, and The Sustainable Environment Pillar, in addition to the main painting on The Renaissance of Oman throughout History.



Oman Talent Hub launched at KOM

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 19

Oman Talent Hub, an initiative by Nortal, the global digital transformation powerhouse, in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP), was launched at the KOM coinciding with the Sultanate's 52nd National Day.

Held under the auspices of Qais bin Mohammed al Yusef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, the talent hub will offer valuable

work experience across a variety of advisory and technology fields through the Nortal University programme.

Ingrid Amer, Ambassador-Designate of Estonia to the Sultanate of Oman, Dr Amer al Rawas, Consul of Estonia to Oman, Taavi Einaste, CEO, Middle East and Africa, Nortal, and Tomy Bosco, Partner, Business Area Director, Nortal, together with several other members of the executive management and staff at Nortal were in attendance.

"Nortal has played a key role in Oman's digital transformation



Omani youth and 10th Five-Year Plan

AFRAH AL BALUSHI
@Afrahalbalushia

Oman attaches a special focus on youth development, considering the fact that the future belongs to the youth. There is an emphasis on their all-round development in education, health and skill development, which are part of the Sultanate of Oman's 10th Five-Year Plan.

"The Sultanate of Oman's firm belief is in the vital role of the youth in continuing the country's renewed renaissance, setting their aspirations and hopes for a brighter future in which they contribute to the Sultanate of Oman's advancement and prosperity," HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, said on the occasion of the Omani Youth Day.

The government has been paying great attention to young people since the beginning of the blessed renaissance. It has been harnessing all possibilities for them to carry out their responsibilities.

Oman celebrates Omani Youth Day on October 26 every year. The day reflects the importance that the country and its ruler, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander, attach to the aspirations of the Omani youth.

The Tenth Five-Year Plan has created a special group to develop the youth within the work groups for the first time in the history of the five-year plans, as it works to ensure the involvement of the youth in developing programmes and initiatives that achieve the highly anticipated goals of Vision 2040.

The focus of the country towards youth development is manifold. It encourages the participation of young people in several specialised areas, such as scientific research and development, entrepreneurship, technology, communications and many others.

National data shows that the total number of Omani youths, according to the 2020 survey,



has reached 549,969. Youth aged between 18 and 29 years constitute 19.4 per cent of the Omani population, while 268 Omani youngsters have registered in the Business Opportunities Programme for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). In addition, there are 4,687 young Omani artisans in the country.

The Tenth Five-Year Plan is keen to provide the Omani youth with diverse and sustainable funding sources that support applied scientific research that enhances innovation in various fields, documenting and promoting the bonds of true partnership between academic and research institutions and private sector institutions, as well as concerted efforts between various stakeholders.

The local programmes and competitions have created more than 260 emerging and innovative researchers among youth. Some of them include the 'The Falling Walls Lab' competition, the 'Biodiversity Ideas Marathon', the 'Chamber's Innovation Award', the 'Programme for transforming student graduation projects in the technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) into start-up companies', the competition to 'create smart applications to confront the Covid-19 pandemic', the 'London International Forum for Young Scientists', and the 'Lindau Forum of German Nobel Laureates', to name a few.

Fetching the fruits of the national focus on youth

empowerment, Sumayya al Siyabi was recently crowned the first Arab woman to win first place in the 'Stars of Science in the Environmental Field' bio-analysis of microplastics in a new way of biological and nanotechnology. Innovation, as a major driver of economic development, establishes an integrated system of work tools in all sectors, and its economic and social objectives can only be achieved if it represents a basis for creativity and innovative production that competes nationally and globally.

The 'Youth Centre' was opened under the auspices of HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, which includes halls and integrated facilities and provides services for young people in various cultural, artistic and technical fields.

"The Youth Centre reflects the lofty interest of His Majesty the Sultan on the importance of youth and ensuring their participation in making the future of the Sultanate of Oman in line with their aspirations and ambitions," said Zaid bin Abdullah al Salmani, Executive Director of the Youth Centre.

In terms of the science and engineering outputs index from the total number of graduates, the Sultanate of Oman is ranked first globally, and in the government spending index per student globally, it ranks third, according to the results of the Global Innovation Index for the year 2022 issued by the World Intellectual Property Organisation.



omanobserver.om/podcast

world

OMANDAILYOBSERVER

SUNDAY | NOVEMBER 20 | 2022

5



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, along with his daughter, inspects an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). – AFP

Kim reveals daughter at missile launch

SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un oversaw a test of Pyongyang’s newest intercontinental ballistic missile with his daughter in tow for the first time, state media reported on Saturday.

Declaring he would meet perceived US nuclear threats with nukes of his own, Kim supervised the launch on Friday of the black-and-white missile, which the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said was

the Hwasong-17 — dubbed the “monster missile” by analysts.

The launch of the “new major strategic weapon system” was successful, KCNA said.

KCNA said Kim attended the launch “together with his beloved daughter and wife”, and state media images showed a beaming Kim accompanied by a young girl in a puffer jacket and red shoes as he walked in front of the missile.

North Korean state media has never mentioned Kim’s

children, and this was the first official confirmation that he had a daughter, experts said.

KCNA’s report on Saturday did not name the daughter, however.

The most significant takeaway from Friday’s ICBM launch is “the permanence of the Kim regime’s weapons programme, because it is so integral to Kim’s own survival and the continuity of his family’s reign,” Soo Kim, a former CIA analyst now with the RAND Corporation, said. — AFP

COP27 delegates struggle to reach deal as deadline looms

SHARM EL-SHEIKH: Countries were struggling to reach agreement at the COP27 climate talks in Egypt on Saturday, with some threatening to walk away if negotiators failed to make progress on fighting climate change.

With the talks already in overtime, officials from the 27-country European Union said they were worried about a lack of progress overnight and even the possibility of backsliding from parts of the COP26 climate deal agreed in Glasgow, Scotland, last year.

“All (EU) ministers ... are prepared to walk away if we do not have a result that does justice to what the world is waiting for — namely that we do something about this climate crisis,” EU climate policy chief Frans Timmermans told reporters on the sidelines of the summit. “We’d rather have no decision than a bad decision.”

The outcome of the conference, which was meant to end on Friday, aims to strengthen global resolve to fight climate change, even as a war in Europe and rampant consumer inflation distract international attention.

But after two weeks of talks



An attendee poses for a picture near a model earth during the COP27 climate summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on Saturday. – Reuters

in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, none of the key issues in discussion this year had been resolved.

The Egyptian COP27 president urged parties to “rise to the occasion” and unite around a final deal, while defending the version so-far drafted.

“The text does keep the 1.5 alive,” said Sameh Shoukry, who is Egypt’s foreign minister.

Negotiators said they had not

seen a fresh draft of an overall deal since Friday morning, although they had reviewed separate draft compromises for deals on the stickiest issues.

That draft had reaffirmed past commitments to limit warming to 1.5C, but did not meet demands by some, including the European Union and Britain, to lock in country commitments for more ambitious efforts to curb climate-warming emissions. — Reuters



OMAN CHLORINE S.A.O.G. عمان كلورين ش.م.ع.م

P.O. BOX 193, POSTAL CODE 134, MUSCAT, SULTANATE OF OMAN TEL: 24695839 - FAX: 24695768

Chairman’s Report For the nine months period ended 30 September 2022

Dear Shareholders,

After greetings,
On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to present parent and consolidated unaudited results for the nine months period ended Sept 30, 2022.

The summarized operating result for the above period is as under:

Details	Parent			Consolidated		
	30-09-22 RO'000	30-09-21 RO'000	Variance % YOY	30-09-22 RO'000	30-9-21 RO'000	Variance % YOY
Sales	9,808	6,676	46.91	23,470	13,165	78.28
Cost of sales	(5,817)	(3,853)	-50.97	(14,919)	(9,440)	-58.04
Gross profit	3,991	2,823	41.37	8,551	3,725	129.56
Selling and distribution expenses	(848)	(754)	-12.47	(2,040)	(1,659)	-22.97
General and administrative expenses	(746)	(733)	-1.77	(1,434)	(1,347)	-6.46
Operating profit	2,397	1,336	79.42	5,077	719	606.12
Finance charges	(177)	(48)	-268.75	(1,965)	(2,070)	5.07
Other income	226	143	58.04	123	141	-12.77
Share of loss of Joint Venture	-	-	-	(140)	(455)	69.23
Profit before taxation	2,446	1,431	70.93	3,095	(1,665)	285.89
Taxation	(319)	(216)	-47.69	(319)	(216)	-47.69
Profit after tax	2,127	1,215	75.06	2,776	(1,881)	247.58
Profit attributable to parent co. shareholders	-	-	-	2,536	(459)	652.51
Share of profit/(loss) attributable to minority shareholders	-	-	-	240	(1,422)	116.88

1. Performance Overview of Parent Company:

- The Company’s brownfield expansion of its Caustic Soda Plant (30 MTD) is in commercial production since November 2021 and the new Calcium Chloride Plant became operational from August 2022.
- The enhanced capacity of the Caustic Soda Plant from 45 DMT to 75 DMT has led to higher customer retention and improved revenues whilst cost efficiency has improved.
- The company consistently maintained the capacity utilization of the plant at higher levels with combined capacity utilization of 100.1%, the existing plant achieved over 95% capacity utilization and the brownfield expansion plant was operating at 107.7 % during first nine months of 2022.
- The global caustic and Calcium Chloride prices increased substantially due to global supply chain constraints resulting in higher realization of prices in our products during this period. Thus the overall sales increased during 2022 by 46.9% due to combination of higher selling prices and increased capacity.
- The export sales volume was higher, and this is partly on account of reaching new areas in MENA, East Africa, and some European regions.

The profitability of the parent company is to be considered exceptional

2. Performance overview of Subsidiaries

2.1 Union Chlorine LLC (UAE)

For the first nine months of 2022, the company posted a positive EBITDA of RO 2,569K (Q3-2021 RO 501K). Profit of RO 885K reported during first nine months of 2022 against the net loss was RO 1048K corresponding period 2021. The parent company’s share of profit including its 100% subsidiary (OICD) is RO 530K. The plant operating at capacity utilization of 103%, the revenue was higher while capitalizing on the international demand and securing more contracts at higher realizations.

Amount RO ('000)

Particulars	Q3-2022	Q3- 2021
Revenue	6,994	4,279
EBITDA	2,569	501
Profit/(Loss) after Tax	885	(1,048)

2.2 Gulf Chlorine LLC (Qatar)

For the first nine months of 2022, the company posted a positive EBITDA of RO 1,437K (RO.325K in Q3 2021). The net loss was RO 234K (RO 2,044K in Q32021) The parent company’s share of loss is RO 119K.

Amount RO ('000)

Particulars	Q3-2022	Q3- 2021
Revenue	7,119	3,127
EBITDA	1,437	325
(Loss) after Tax	(234)	(2,044)

Revenue during the period has jumped from RO 3,127K to RO 7,119K. The company has managed to post net profits for the quarter Q3 2022 and also has achieved its highest export sales during the same quarter (July 2022 to Sept 2022)

2.3 Oman Industrial Development Company SAOC

Oman Industrial Development Company is fully owned by Oman Chlorine and the company holds an 11.1% economic interest in Union Chloride LLC – Abu Dhabi. posted loss of RO 2,262/- for the first nine months of 2022 (RO. 3,965/- for 9M 2021).

Outlook:

a. Parent:

The current global conflicts along with uncertain condition of international economies is creating demand supply gap in the Caustic Soda market, based on these conditions we foresee that the prices will be maintained like previous quarters.

The brownfield expansions of both Chlor Alkali plant and the new Calcium Chloride plant with the capacity of 85 TPD in 2022 has resulted in cost optimization, also the company is exercising all available options by effectively utilizing the operational resources, cost curtailment initiatives and improving efficiencies to sustain operating margins.

These measures will enable the parent company to cater for local demand and compete effectively with imports in the local market and also to offer competitive price to export customers.

Unaudited Condensed Interim Separate and Consolidated Statement of Financial Position as at 30 Sept. 2022

ASSETS

Non-current assets

	30-09-22 RO'000	31-12-21 RO'000	30-09-22 RO'000	31-12-21 RO'000
Goodwill	-	-	-	-
Property, plant and equipment	16,528	15,859	76,788	77,520
Investment in subsidiaries	14,353	13,544	-	-
Subordinated Loan	2,302	2,302	-	-
Investment in Joint Venture	-	-	1,156	1,295
Right of use assets	799	831	2,489	2,556
Total non-current assets	33,982	32,536	80,433	81,371

Current assets

Inventories and consumables	1,119	1,178	3,136	2,850
Trade and other receivables	2,983	3,540	7,209	7,488
Cash and bank balances	2,169	1,473	3,474	2,712
Total current assets	6,271	6,191	13,819	13,050
Total assets	40,253	38,727	94,252	94,421

EQUITY AND LIABILITIES

Capital and reserves

Share capital	6,810	6,810	6,810	6,810
Statutory reserve	2,848	2,848	2,848	2,848
General reserve	850	850	850	850
Cashflow hedge reserve	-	-	(258)	(270)
Retained earnings	18,605	17,669	12,281	10,937

Equity attributable to the Parent Company’s shareholders

	29,113	28,177	22,531	21,175
--	--------	--------	--------	--------

Capital contribution from Non-controlling interest

	-	-	7,903	7,128
--	---	---	-------	-------

Non-controlling interest

	-	-	(1,481)	(1,728)
--	---	---	---------	---------

Total equity

	29,113	28,177	28,953	26,575
--	--------	--------	--------	--------

Non-current liabilities

Term loan	5,237	4,601	43,627	46,719
Liability on land lease non current	829	830	2,606	2,569
End of service benefits	159	157	337	302
Cashflow hedge reserve	-	-	327	356
Deferred tax liability	774	742	774	742
Total non-current liabilities	6,999	6,330	47,671	50,688

Current liabilities

Trade and other payables	2,795	3,633	9,277	9,432
Liability on land lease current	73	73	117	114
Current portion – Term Loan	931	218	5,507	3,443
Short term borrowings	-	-	2,278	3,778
Cashflow hedge reserve	-	-	107	95
Provision for income tax	342	296	342	296
Total current liabilities	4,141	4,220	17,628	17,158

Total liabilities

	11,140	10,550	65,299	67,846
--	--------	--------	--------	--------

Total equity and liabilities

	40,253	38,727	94,252	94,421
--	--------	--------	--------	--------

Net asset per share

	0.428	0.414	0.425	0.329
--	-------	-------	-------	-------

b. Subsidiaries

Union Chlorine LLC

The company has established long term supply agreements with major oil and gas companies and has also established direct supplies to end user within UAE and GCC, this is expected to positively reflect in the performance. The management is continuously adopting cost cutting measures and has also managed to secure the lowest industrial electricity tariff by getting higher ICV and economic multiplier rating.

Management outlook for the selling Prices in the near term remains positive which is expected to generate positive returns and healthy inflow.

Gulf Chlorine WLL

The company expects promising outlook in terms of production, revenue growth, EBITDA and bottom-line for remaining months of 2022. During the period the company has entered various export markets and is expecting to further increase its exports in GCC, MENA and Europe in future.

The JV, producing Calcium chloride, in which the company holds 35% share is operating at 95% capacity as there is strong demand for the products.

Oman Industrial Development Co. SAOC (OICD)

The improved operating performance of Union Chlorine LLC will result in improved operating performance of OICD.

The above measures will enhance the future cash flows of the company and its subsidiaries and will improve the financial leverage of the group.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Management, we wish to express our loyalty and thanks to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik May Allah protect Him and guide him for the benefit of Oman and its People.

The Board records its sincere appreciation to Government Authorities for their support and encouragement in particular the Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Investment Promotion, the Capital Market Authority as well as all the employees of the company and management for their sincere efforts, leading to the continued success of the company.

Said Mohamed Ahmed Alharthy

Chairman of Board of Directors

Unaudited Condensed Interim Separate and Consolidated Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the 9 months period ended 30 Sept. 2022

	Parent		Consolidated	
	30-09-22 RO'000	30-09-21 RO'000	30-09-22 RO'000	30-09-21 RO'000
Revenue	9,808	6,676	23,470	13,165
Cost of sales	(5,817)	(3,853)	(14,919)	(9,440)
Gross profit	3,991	2,823	8,551	3,725
Selling and distribution expenses	(848)	(754)	(2,040)	(1,659)
General and administrative expenses	(746)	(733)	(1,434)	(1,347)
Operating profit	2,397	1,336	5,077	719
Finance charges	(177)	(48)	(1,965)	(2,070)
Other income	226	143	123	141
Share of loss of Joint Venture	-	-	(140)	(455)
Profit before taxation	2,446	1,431	3,095	(1,665)
Current tax	(287)	(234)	(287)	(234)
Deferred tax	(32)	18	(32)	18
Profit for the period	2,127	1,215	2,776	(1,881)
Other comprehensive income:				
Items that are or may be reclassified to profit or loss:				
Currency translation difference of foreign subsidiaries	-	-	-	-
Net changes in cash flow hedge reserve	-	-	19	(331)
Total comprehensive income	2,127	1,215	2,795	(2,212)
Results attributable to:				
Parent Company shareholders	-	-	2,536	(459)
Non-controlling interest	-	-	240	(1,422)
	2,127	1,215	2,776	(1,881)
Parent Company shareholders	-	-	2,546	(657)
Non-controlling interest	-	-	249	(1,555)
	2,127	1,215	2,795	(2,212)
Earnings per share on profit attributable to the Parent Company shareholders – Basic and diluted	0.0312	0.0178	0.0372	(0.0067)

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

How to stop unwanted thoughts

“Unwanted thoughts are often strange, disturbing thoughts that pop into your mind and bring on feelings of worry or shame”.

Last week I was teaching at an outside institution and half way through my talks a few students started talking to each other. They were loud enough to be noticed, I used the classical technique of going silent for a while so they know they were noticed but this did not work with them, I then moved to step two, I raised my voice a little higher but again they did not seem to back off. I then said “if any one has a question please ask me now, it’s difficult for me to focus when you talk among each other at the same time.”

I knew this may be harsh but it worked. After the lecture I reflected on the situation but found myself bothered about it, was it a wise thing to do? Did I embarrass them? Was my talk boring to them and so on. I found myself distressed by these unwanted thoughts despite them being temporary.

When conducting a workshop about stress management I often ask the participants to avoid thinking about a pink elephant and then ask them to tap on the table if a pink elephant comes to their minds.

On most occasions, they tapped on the table more than once per minute on average. And later, when I asked them to think of a pink elephant the animal came to their minds more often than when they were asked to avoid thinking about it. Unwanted thoughts are often strange, disturbing thoughts that pop into your mind and bring on feelings of worry or shame.

Psychology tells us that trying to block out unwanted thoughts causes them to be more prominent. That’s why it’s not



Dr Hamed al Sinawi @alsinawi

The writer is a senior consultant psychiatrist at Sultan Qaboos University Hospital

UNWANTED THOUGHTS COME TO ALL OF US, AND THEY ARE NOT CONSIDERED MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS UNLESS THEY ARE REPETITIVE AND DISTURBING TO THE DEGREE THAT THEY DISTRACT US FROM DOING OUR WORK OR COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS IN THAT CASE THEY PERSON MAY BE SUFFERING FROM OBSESSIVE DISORDERS

helpful to tell a depressed person to avoid thinking of his miserable thoughts because they would end up thinking about them more.

The same principle applies to suppressed emotions and feelings. We often hear about men divorcing their wives for very silly reasons when in fact the anger has been building for many years and the incident before the divorce was the feather that broke the camel’s back.

Unwanted thoughts come to all of us, and they are not considered mental health disorders unless they are repetitive and disturbing to the degree that they distract us from doing our work or communicating with others. In that case the person may be suffering from obsessive disorders.

The unwanted thoughts that come to most of us can be triggered by stress or anxiety, or they can be due to biological factors, such as hormone changes that are seen in women after the birth of a child.

So how to deal with intrusive thoughts? As we saw from the example at the beginning of this article, fighting intrusive thoughts does not work so it’s better to learn to live with them and manage them better. When you are troubled by such thoughts try out the following steps:

First, recognize the thought as intrusive. Tell yourself this is just an intrusive thought, it’s not what I believe, and it’s not what I want to do.

Do not fight with the thought, just accept it. Don’t try to make it go away. Don’t judge yourself for having strange or disturbing thoughts. It doesn’t mean that something is wrong with you. If the thoughts are persistent and start affecting your concentration at work or stop you from sleeping or you become very distressed by them then you should consult a psychiatrist. Help is available so don’t suffer in silence.

RUSSIA, HERE WE COME



Young cadets sing the national anthem during a solemn shoulder straps giving ceremony for the “Cadet Corps” of the lyceum-boarding school in Kyiv on Friday. – AFP

The eco-warrior: A fatuous force for change!

I think we, as global societies, have achieved so much in diversity acceptance in recent years, rather than continuing at this exhausting pace, we should now, to paraphrase Simon and Garfunkel, ‘slow down, we’re moving too fast...’ In many respects change was needed, acceptance was wanted, and in so many respects we’ve got what we went looking for fifty years ago. Inequalities still exist, you are never going to rid the world of bigotry. Unfortunately, that’s the flipside of liberalism, that in legislating to unshackle those who deserve a voice, a presence, and the freedom to be heard, we also ensure opportunities for those who have less wholesome objectives. It is one of the great ironies of our contemporary freedom is that a handful of ‘eco-warriors’ in the UK and Europe are discomfiting motorists currently, as they promote their own societal agenda.

The Just Stop Oil website supports their opposition to the continued extraction of oil and gas resources as “an obscene and genocidal policy that will kill our children and condemn



Ray Petersen r.j.petersen52@gmail.com

The writer is a media consultant

GETTING YOUR WAY IS NO LONGER A ‘SULKY KID’ EXERCISE, WHEREUPON IF YOU CRY LOUD ENOUGH, FOR LONG ENOUGH, YOU WILL GET WHAT YOU WANT.

humanity to oblivion,” saying “It just has to stop!” Well, as much as I may initially applaud such noble objectives as environmental and conservational imperatives, I am yet to understand how choking motorways, preventing tens of thousands from going about their work or leisure, is ever going to change that! I’m unconvinced that righteous indignation, fuelled by the view that anyone finds oil exploration obscene, is immoral or indecent. They may find it an offence against their moral principles, scandalous, even more... However, these are personal and individual characteristics, and require nobody but me to take offence... and I don’t need others to assume that offence on my behalf. In fact, I am offended that the ‘Just Stop Oil’ faction freely state they are acting on my behalf. They have, I think, no mandate, and are simply seeking to circumvent the democratic or parliamentary processes.

I feel too, that to identify oil and

gas exploration and distribution as genocidal is another fallacy behind which these self-appointed guardians of our well-being operate. Defined as the “deliberate killing of many people of a national or ethnic group with the objective of destroying them,” genocide is not only a poor language choice, but it becomes almost offensive to all those who have suffered persecution under its abhorrent aims and objectives.

Their campaign further cautions that oil and gas will ‘destroy families and communities,’ ‘starve and slaughter billions,’ and ‘betray our children, and their

future.’ Who writes such absolute drivel? Oil and gas have fed, housed, nourished, and sustained billions, for decades, and betrayed nobody. Honestly, I have, and have had, secondary and graduate students who could write much more empathetic prose, seeking support and encouragement from those I know, and certainly offering greater appeal to those I don’t. What rhetoric is this with which to engage society? Such statements do not garner popular support but alienate it! Certainly, I personally have one deep and abiding belief... and that is that we cannot continue to reap the

benefits of the planet if we do not mitigate our demands upon it going forward.

However, I will not be swayed towards, or support, pseudo-activism by a group that uses such arrogance and propaganda to push its barrow. I have my ways, and I will seek to influence others, while hearing and recognizing their views, appreciating that if I am to be a good advocate, I must also be an attentive audience. Getting your way is no longer a ‘sulky kid’ exercise, whereupon if you cry loud enough, for long enough, you will get what you want.

I seek to influence change through discussion, knowing “change” as Heraclitus wrote, “is the only constant in life,” that nothing stays the same, also saying more circuitously, but with infinite wisdom, “you cannot step twice into the same stream.” Maybe there are activists, out there, who whilst remaining strong in their beliefs, regret their activity, who can pause to consider that gentle wisdom?



Gustav Klimt’s painting “Tod und Leben” is seen after activists of Last Generation Austria (Letzte Generation Oesterreich) spilled oil on it in Leopold museum in Vienna, Austria. – Reuters

The four things you must try doing during this long holiday

With November 30 and December 1 declared as official holidays, four days is plenty of time to embark on a new adventure. Whether you plan to explore the mountains or the deserts, here are some suggestions of what you should do for this long weekend... **P8**



It's a Rossini weekend as ROHM presents two masterpieces

THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE Muscat is delighted to announce the upcoming weekend of wonderful Rossini music. Since 2017, the Royal Opera House Muscat has been working in collaboration with the Rossini Opera Festival to produce the Rossini farces.

La Cambiale di Matrimonio is the last in the series and represents five years of an enriching partnership with ROF, producing fabulous editions of Rossini's comic farce to audiences in Oman and across the region.

For 2022, the ROF has been invited to present an evening celebrating the

Rossini repertoire with a concert entitled Homage to The Swan of Pesaro with the Rossini Symphony Orchestra to create a sensational weekend of Rossini. Artists from the Rossini Opera Festival, who are counted among the best Rossini interpreters of this generation, will perform arias and duets from across the broad repertoire of this much loved Italian composer.

La Cambiale di Matrimonio tells the story of merchant who deals his daughter into a marriage with a wealthy associate for the sake of money, a young couple who resist the manipulations of



a greedy man and a genial but confused foreigner who sits between the two factions. How will they resolve the tricks and twists so everyone is appeased?

Audiences can delve deep into the heart of Rossini this weekend. From the pre-performance talk which will take place one hour ahead of the evening and matinee performances of La Cambiale di Matrimonio, (which will include conversations with the creative team behind the opera, as well as exploring the incredible work of the ROF in researching and publishing new critical editions of Rossini's work), to the magic and fun of Rossini's story in the opera, and the concert which offers an extension into the canon of great work he produced. This is a fantastic opportunity to experience a wealth of culture and enriching performance.

La Cambiale di Matrimonio will take place at the Royal Opera House Muscat on Thursday, November 24, at 7 pm and Saturday, November 26, at 4 pm. Homage to 'The Swan of Pesaro' with the Rossini Symphony Orchestra will take place on Friday, November 25, at 7 pm. For details or to book tickets, visit the ROHM box office, website, or app.

READ

CINEMA SPECULATION

BY QUENTIN TARANTINO

The film-maker shares his love of cinema with special attention given to key American films of the 1970s.



MUSEUM WATCH

Mayor of Antwerp Bart De Wever takes a selfie photograph in front of a signed copy of the lithographic version of Norwegian artist Edvard Munch's iconic "The Scream" in marge of a press conference of Museum De Reede to present a major and important addition to the museum's collection, in Antwerp. Thanks to a donation, the copy will be added to the museum's permanent collection. — AFP



CULTURE

Dancers perform during the ongoing 'Abhivyakti' art and cultural festival at Gujarat University Campus in Ahmedabad. — AFP



art & life

Local Scene

f t i y v @omanobserver

SUNDAY | NOVEMBER 20 | 2022

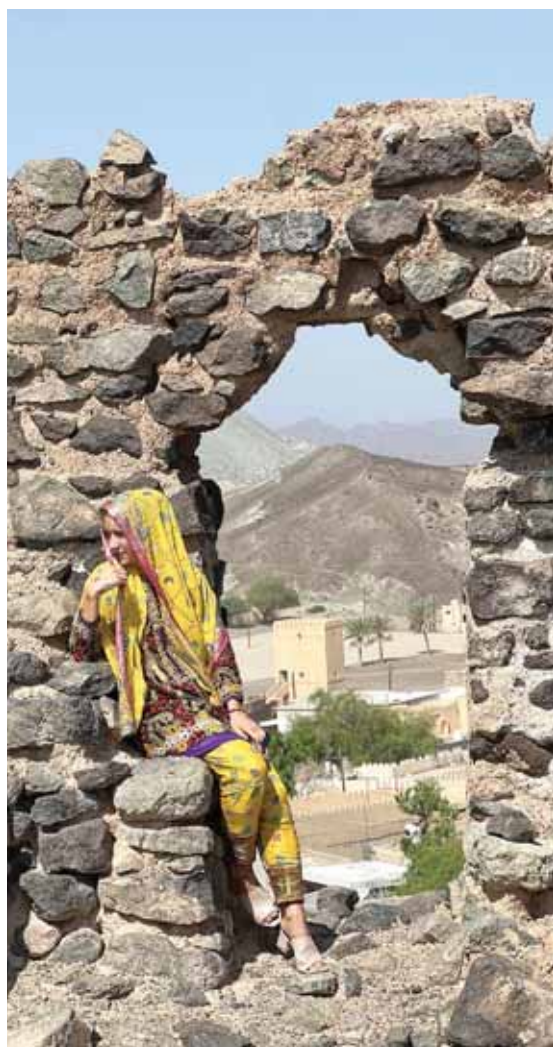
The four things you must try doing during this long holiday



By Yeru Ebuen
Instagram: @yru_here

The end of the month will be a long holiday. Four days is plenty of time to engage in different activities and chances are, you're looking for activities that the family can do together.

Some will definitely take the opportunity to check out the desert. Others will head out to villages in the mountains while others may opt for beach or wadi adventures. While there are plenty of things to choose from, we decided to make the following recommendations that will hopefully guide you to have a meaningful long weekend.



A DAY TRIP TO AL QABIL AND MUDHAIRIB

Our recent discovery of Al Qabil and Mudhairib made us fall in love with this place. There are plenty of reasons why but the top of this is its rich history followed by the astounding provincial scene offered by this agricultural town located a few kilometres away from Rimal Al Shariqiya. A two-hour trip from Muscat, this day trip will allow your family to see a different side of Oman — one that will immerse your kids in ancient and abandoned villages and meet locals that can teach them key cultural practices.

EXPLORE THE WATERS OF WADI DAYQAH



If you want some water activities that the family can enjoy, the new water adventures available in Wadi Dayqah will impress you and your kids. An initiative by the government, several water adventures like kayaks, standup paddle boards, doughnut boat rides, rafting, mountain biking and even camping are making Oman's biggest dam a key attraction about an hour away from Muscat. Explore beautiful cliffs and mountains as well as breathtaking views while doing different adventures — a perfect way for the family to unwind and relax.



DISCOVER AN ABANDONED VILLAGE IN THE DESERT



If you plan to explore Oman's desert and look for a place with soul, then you can't go wrong by exploring the abandoned village in Wadi al Muir in Jaalan Bani Bu Ali. Check out the stone houses all covered up by sand and be mesmerised by the power of nature as the strong wind that often visits the abandoned houses moves the sand around. It's also a few kilometres away from places like Ras al Jinns and Ras al Rowais giving you ample options to go beach swimming on top of what to us is already a memorable experience.



EXPLORE THE HIKING PATHS OF MISFAT AL ABRUYEEN

Many of us are already in love with Misfat al Abriyeen. What is there not to love? Historic, beautiful village? Check. Year-round green gardens? Check. A great selection of coffee shops? Check.

But if you're the kind of parent that wants to challenge your kids, then the hiking path outside of the village through the W9 Trail will open up a whole new world for you and the family — one that's made of amazing rock formations and intimidating cliffs. Be warned though, this is quite a challenging hike so if you're bringing kids, make sure that they can do some of the more challenging paths.



business



Follow us on
omanobserver.om/business



**For the first time in the Sultanate,
BankDhofar introduces the PaySticker**

Now you do not have to worry about forgetting your debit card. Place the sticker on your mobile phone and use it to pay by tapping your mobile phone on the POS machine.*

*The maximum payment via the PaySticker is OMR 40 per transaction, OMR 100 per day.

For more information:
<https://www.bankdhofar.com/en-GB/PaySticker.aspx>



the best bank for you 2479111 www.bankdhofar.com

Total foreign direct investment climbs to RO 17.9 bn

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, NOV 19

The volume of foreign direct investments (FDI) inflows into the Sultanate of Oman amounted to RO 17.981 billion as of end-June 2022, which included RO 2.66 billion in new inflows during the previous 12 months, according to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

The biggest beneficiary was the Oil & Gas sector, which accounted for 68.14 per cent of total FDI, followed by the manufacturing sector (9.42 per cent), financial intermediation sector with an 8.74 per cent share.

The United Kingdom retained its position as the biggest source



of FDI with a 49.99 per cent share (equating to RO 8.989 billion. The

United States was next with a 13.91 per cent share (RO 2.500 billion),

followed by the United Arab Emirates (6.31 per cent), Kuwait

THE BIGGEST BENEFICIARY WAS THE OIL & GAS SECTOR, WHICH ACCOUNTED FOR 68.14 PER CENT OF TOTAL FDI, FOLLOWED BY THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR (9.42 PER CENT), FINANCIAL INTERMEDIATION SECTOR WITH AN 8.74 PER CENT SHARE

(5.41 per cent), China (5.11 per cent), Qatar (1.9 per cent), India (1.53 per cent), The Netherlands (1.39 per cent), and Switzerland (1.02 per cent). Several other countries accounted for the balance 11.25 per cent of FDI.

Meanwhile, the number of commercial records registered with the ministry reached (349,894 as of October-end 2022, the ministry said, attributing this growth to the business-friendly environment created by the government to encourage new companies to invest in Oman.

The total transactions handled by the “Invest Easy” platform amounted to 802,524 transactions as of October-end 2022, representing a jump of 26.36 per cent over the preceding year.

Contributing to this growth were seamless procedures put in place by the ministry via the Invest Easy platform with the support of Sanad offices and single windows opened at free zones in Suhar, Duqm and Al Mazunah.

OQ’s Bisat oilfield third crude processing plant begins operations



JOMAR MENDOZA
@JmObserver

OQ, Oman’s government-owned integrated energy group, announces the start of operations at the third crude oil processing plant at Bisat oilfield, located in its Block 60 concession. The plant’s production would rise to 60,000 barrels per day (bpd) early next year.

At full capacity, the plant will boost OQ’s total production capacity of 219,000 bpd of oil equivalent, representing 12.6 per cent of Oman’s total oil production.

Engineer Ahmed bin Saeed al Azkawi, CEO of the upstream sector at OQ Group, confirms to Oman News Agency that the plant will support the group’s strategy to enhance investments in oil exploration and production while containing the environmental impact.

The Bisat Development Programme in Block 60 is one of OQ’s mega projects for its transformative phase, spanning the 2020-2024 timeframe.

These mega schemes include the \$6.4 billion Liwa Plastics petrochemicals complex; the \$826 million Salalah LPG project at Salalah Free Zone; the \$8.2 billion Duqm Refinery development, the Bisat Oilfield Development Programme in Block 60, the ambitious Greater Barik scheme, and Project Samharam.

Oman exchange rate peg is appropriate: IMF

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, NOV 19

The Omani currency’s exchange rate peg continues to serve as a suitable anchor of monetary policy in the Sultanate of Oman, helping also stabilise inflationary pressures, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The UN affiliated financial agency, in a recent report of its Article IV consultation with Oman, also commended efforts by the Omani government to institute fiscal reforms with a view to strengthening the country’s financial sector.

“The exchange rate peg remains appropriate,” said the IMF in its report.

“The peg has provided a credible monetary anchor, helping to deliver low and stable inflation. Official foreign reserves, fiscal prudence, and structural reforms would continue to reinforce the peg.”

It noted however the need for better coordination between fiscal and monetary authorities, improved liquidity management, and deeper financial markets in improving the capacity for a more independent monetary policy.

For well over 35 years, the Omani rial has been pegged to the US dollar with an exchange rate peg that has remained unchanged at 2.6008 US dollars per Omani Riyal (RO).

Depending on the day to day movements in the exchange rate of the US Dollar in relation to the currencies of other countries, the exchange rates of the RO also changes accordingly.

The Central Bank of Oman (CBO), which administers monetary policy in the country, has stressed that the fixed peg and associated stability of the exchange rate has contributed significantly to sustaining an atmosphere that is conducive to trade, investment and growth in Oman.

The IMF report also referenced steps initiated by the apex bank to strengthen the banking and financial sector. It said: “Financial system risks are low, but the CBO should continue its close monitoring of bank asset quality and its efforts to



strengthen regulatory frameworks.

Restoring prudential rules to pre-pandemic levels should be a priority. Enacting the new Banking Law would align the legislation with international best practices.”

The Washington DC-headquartered Fund also cited the government’s initiative to establish the Treasury Single Account (TSA) — a project launched by the Ministry of Finance to help streamline the handling of public finances.

When eventually implemented, the scheme will cover as many as 57 government ministries and departments, effectively elevating the Sultanate of Oman into the ranks of modern economies that have embraced the Treasury Single Account model to ensure prudence and probity in the management of financial resources.

“Careful coordination is needed to ensure that banking system liquidity remains adequate as plans to enhance the liquidity management framework and establish the TSA are implemented.

Progress in developing capital markets is welcome,” the report further stated.

Significantly, there was praise for the Omani government’s commitment to fiscal consolidation.

“Establishing strong fiscal frameworks with clear objectives and a long-

term anchor would help achieve fiscal sustainability,” the International Monetary Fund noted.

“Ongoing reforms to improve public financial management and transparency are welcome and developing a sovereign asset and liability management framework should be a priority.”

Chairing a meeting of the Council of Ministers on November 17, 2022, His Majesty Haitham bin Tarik issued Royal Directives for the launch of the National Fiscal Sustainability and Financial Development Programme — an initiative designed to make the financial sector a basic enabler for the growth of investments, as well as the economy.

The three-year programme begins from January next year.



AUDI VEHICLES RECALL CAMPAIGN
MODEL S3 Year 2022

المتميزة للسيارات
Premium Motors



Sultanate of Oman
Consumer Protection Authority



Campaign Date : 20/11/2022
Campaign Type : Safety Action
Campaign Section : Mechanical / Replace both front seat belts
Product Description : Audi Vehicles

Production Year	Vehicle Model	VIN No.	No. of Affected Vehicles
2022	S3	WAUZZZGY2NA017099	WAUZZZGY2NA016678
		WAUZZZGY2NA017118	WAUZZZGY5NA016996
		WAUZZZGY8NA017267	WAUZZZGY5NA017002
		WAUZZZGYXNA017349	WAUZZZGY1NA017062
		WAUZZZGY8NA017365	WAUZZZGY3NA017077
		WAUZZZGY3NA017838	WAUZZZGY0NA017084

- Description**
Discrepancies in the manufacturing process at the responsible supplier company could lead to the full restraining capability of the belts being these results in an adverse influence on the restraining potential of the entire restraint system.
- Action:**
Replace both front seat belts.
- For More Information:**
Owners of affected vehicles may contact Premium Motors to book an appointment starting 20/11/2022.
- Contact Data:**
Premium Motors Service Center, Ghala, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.
Tel: 22845112 – Mob: 95700737
P.O. Box: 94, P.C: 105
Sunday to Thursday, From 8:00 AM To 5:00 PM

Lulu celebrates Oman’s 52nd National Day by promoting Omani products



MUSCAT: Coinciding with Oman’s 52nd National Day celebrations, Lulu Hypermarket launched its signature initiative to promote Omani products in all its stores. The Omani products exhibition was inaugurated by Qassem al Ameri, Member of Majlis AshShura, representative of the Wilayat of Seeb, on November 17, 2022, at Lulu Hypermarket, Al Bandar, Mawaleh.

The campaign, held under the auspices of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, aims to provide endorsement and support to SMEs by providing them an opportunity to promote their local products in the market, which will directly support the economy. The promotion will run from November 17 to December 10 at selected Lulu outlets across the country.

Commenting on the campaign, Saif al Mamari, Export Development Director General Assistant at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, said, “The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion devotes its efforts to raising awareness of the importance of supporting local made products and increasing their competitiveness.” He also added, “By buying local products, we help stimulate the economy and contribute to achieving the diversification goals of Oman Vision 2040.”

As part of National Day celebrations, all the Lulu outlets have been decked up in national colours. Various cultural activities and other exciting events have also been planned. Also, specially devised aisles reflect the Omani market concept and replicate the traditional style.

Different SMEs will showcase their products in the Omani market, creating awareness among consumers

and motivating them to buy locally manufactured products.

Speaking on the promotion of the Omani products, Ananth A V, Director of Lulu Hypermarkets Oman and India, stated, “I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the citizens and residents of this nation on the occasion of the 52nd National Day. We are proud to play a small part in this remarkable transformation journey. This is a momentous occasion for each of us to celebrate the country’s growth and achievements under the able leadership of His Majesty.” “We are glad to have launched this promotion to coincide with our 52nd National Day celebrations as an ideal platform to market Omani products. We are sure this promotion will also create awareness among local and expat consumers on the high quality and uncompromising standards of locally manufactured products and highlight the importance of buying local products to contribute to the national economy,” he added.

Shabeer K A, Regional Director – Lulu Hypermarkets, Oman, stated, “The Omani products promotion is in line with our commitment to encourage customers to buy local products to provide a fillip and thrust to the local producers. This is also an initiative to extend support to Omani entrepreneurs and owners of small and medium businesses to develop their ventures as well as market their local products. We thank the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for supporting us in organising this promotion to spread awareness on the importance of supporting Omani products among various segments of the society.”

Bank Muscat celebrates 52nd Glorious National Day with a grand event at the head office

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, celebrated the Glorious 52nd National Day with a grand celebration at its Head Office at Airport Heights. National pride and patriotic fervor were on full display at the mega event at the Head Office, which was well decorated with the national colours of red, green and white.

The bank’s Management Team and employees participated actively in the celebrations and extended their sincere appreciation and best wishes to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and the people of Oman on the occasion. The highlights of the 52nd National Day celebrations included live performances by a traditional Omani music band and a classical ensemble.

An Omani crafts exhibition featuring traditional weaving and pottery stations was the other highlight of the festivities. It enthralled both employees and visitors alike while showcasing the Sultanate’s vibrant heritage and culture and offering a rare opportunity to interact with veteran craftsmen pursuing popular traditional crafts.

A selection of traditional Omani cuisine was also served to those gathered for the festivities via a live food station featuring tradition Omani cuisine like Rakhel bread, Luqaimat and Omani Halwa, with large numbers of customers and visitors enjoying the celebrations.

As the nation’s flagship bank, Bank Muscat seizes every opportunity, especially occasions of national importance, to reach out to citizens and residents across Oman. To enhance public participation in National Day celebrations, the bank launched competitions on its social media channels (Instagram and Twitter) and FM radio channels for the general public to promote the National Day celebrations. Exciting prizes will be given



away to the lucky winners.

To know more about the competitions, please check out the details from the bank’s official accounts on Twitter and Instagram.

Over the past decades, Bank Muscat, which is celebrating its 40th Anniversary this year, has been closely involved in facilitating the development of projects in Oman, in line with its strong support for Public-Private Partnership efforts including those that promote Oman as a unique destination. Bank Muscat, which is itself a major milestone in the Renaissance of Oman, continues to contribute significantly to the rapid growth and development of the Sultanate of Oman and its people.

With about 95 per cent Omanisation across its various departments and sections as a result of its continuous investments in human resources, Bank Muscat is a dream employer for Omani youth and well-known for

its positive work culture, common values, fostering of innovation, employee engagement activities, and sound HSE (Health, Safety and Environment) practices.

Bank Muscat is also the first choice for over 2 million customers in Oman, with 174 branches and more than 800 touchpoints including Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs), Cash Deposit Machines (CDMs) and Fully Functional Machines (FFM) installed across the country.

The bank continues to play an important role in enhancing financial inclusion in Oman through a number of new products and services targeting different demographic segments like the youth, pensioners and persons with disabilities as well as by expanding its network in rural areas.

The bank has achieved remarkable successes in the field of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability through the

implementation of many sustainable initiatives and programmes, which have benefited many citizens.

Furthermore, it has contributed a lot to the development of the Omani society in a number of spheres including financial literacy, sustainable tourism, green environment and an enriched lifestyle.

Bank Muscat, which is Oman’s leading financial services provider, runs over 10 long-term social responsibility projects including the flagship Green Sports programme, Al Wathbah SME Academy, the Maliyat financial literacy programme and Irshad financial coaching, which are all aimed at supporting different segments of Omani society.

In 2022, the bank extended its support to 20 youth sports teams as part of its flagship Green Sports programme.

The bank has recently signed an agreement to implement an advanced training programme for 30 Omani entrepreneurs.

The bank also successfully continued the 2022 edition of its Tadamun programme for social welfare families. Bank Muscat continues to work closely with government institutions and a number of civil-society organisations to support programmes, which create sustainable and positive changes in communities across the Sultanate.



Oman Trading Establishment LLC



Sultanate of Oman
Consumer Protection Authority

RECALL CAMPAIGN

For HYUNDAI TUCSON NX4



Date of Campaign : 20 / 11 / 2022

Campaign Type : Recall

Recall Segment : Mechanical

Product Description : Hyundai Tucson NX4

Model Year	Division	Vehicle Model	Affected Vehicle VIN Range	No. of Affected Vehicles in Oman
2021	Hyundai	Tucson NX4	TMAJC81BHMJ132572 to TMAJB81AGNJ139795	6

Description:

Some Vehicles might be equipped with rear brake caliper which have material defect possible to Cause lower brake performance, this does not affect to all the vehicles in the production range.

Procedure:

Perform inspection of the rear right hand side brake caliper inspect the batch No and if required replace the caliper with new one.

For More information:

Customers of affected vehicles may please call Oman Trading Establishment for further details/booking Appointment etc from Date – 20/11/2022

Contact Details:

Toll free No 80050003 on all working days between 8.00 AM to 1.00 PM & 2.00 PM to 5.30 PM with effect. from Date 20/11/2022

KPMG Lower Gulf appoints new CEO

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 19

KPMG Lower Gulf (LG), comprising the UAE and Oman, has announced the appointment of Emilio Pera as the company’s next Chief Executive Officer, effective on January 1, 2023. He takes over from Nader Haffar who resigned from the company after five years as chairman and chief executive.

Haffar will remain in office until December 31, 2022 to ensure continuity for KPMG’s clients and people and support a smooth transition over this period. Pera, who brings over 30 years of professional services and international business experience, is currently KPMG LG’s Acting Head of Tax.

He was previously the Head of Audit



and has been with the firm since 2016. As Head of Audit, he embarked on a significant transformation of the business.

He turned the audit practice around in a relatively short period, navigating some of the toughest times in the industry with

added pressure of a global pandemic with related economic challenges.

Emilio Pera, CEO-elect, said, “KPMG Lower Gulf has experienced tremendous growth and transformation over the past five years. Our impressive list of clients is testament to the trust they place in the KPMG brand. We continue to strive towards being the most trusted and trustworthy firm of choice for our clients and are proud to provide the largest private companies, public sector entities and governmental bodies across the UAE and Oman with Audit, Tax and Advisory solutions. With our significant investments in our people, infrastructure and technology, our highly skilled team of experts are well-prepared to meet the region’s increasing need for high quality services.”

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

شوبين جفت Shoppinggift

GET FREE SHOPPING VOUCHER with every purchase of TallyPrime single user

Contact: Guruprasad +968 79248644, 98753781
Email: guru.prasad@asiasolutions.net
<https://www.asiasolutions.net>

ASIA SOLUTIONS
TALLY GOLD PARTNER
TALLY FOR VAT

SUNDAY

NOVEMBER 20, 2022

RABEE AL THANI 25, 1444 AH

Observer Classified Section

Mohammed al Rashdi: 99841230
m.alrahd186@yahoo.com

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

Saada al Rashdi
95919344

94501166
24649593
24649595

We are a leading Web-Solutions company based in Muscat, Oman.

APPLY NOW **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

UI/UX Designer (WEB)

REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum 3 Years of experience.
- Should have experience in creating UI/UX design interfaces for Web Portal and Web Applications.
- Should have good proficiency in latest design tools.
- Good knowledge in front-end development web programming languages such as HTML5, CSS3, JQuery and Java Script.
- Experience in creating wireframes using Adobe XD and other latest tools.
- Good team work and communication skills.
- Bachelors degree in Design, Computer Science or relevant field.

TO APPLY
Send latest CV at
career@gulfcybertech.com

GULFCYBERTECH & Solutions

We are a leading Web-Solutions company based in Muscat, Oman.

APPLY NOW **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

Application Development Projects Lead

REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum of 5 years experience in ASP.NET.
- Strong technical expertise in developing custom made web application in C#, .NET, ADO.NET, MVC, Web Services, HTML5, CSS, WCF, Ajax, JQuery, JavaScript.
- Experience in system analysis, including defining technical requirements and performing high-level design for complex solutions.
- Strong analytical, problem-solving and communication skills.
- Master's degree in computer science, CIS or related fields.

TO APPLY
Send latest CV at
career@gulfcybertech.com

GULFCYBERTECH & Solutions

مجموعة شركات الشنفري
SHANFARI GROUP OF COMPANIES
ESTABLISHED 1990

National Day OFFER

**ARE YOU BUILDING HOUSE?
ARE YOU BUILDING A BUSINESS PROJECT?**

On occasion of National day, Shanfari Aluminium Company LLC would like to offer 10% Special discount on Fabrication of Aluminium & Glass works for Residential Villas and Commercial Buildings.

Interested may please contact **99317836**
Email : estimation@shanfari.com
© Shanfari_Aluminium

SITUATION WANTED

Well experienced Indian Finance Manager. M.com with 20 years experience in Finance, Accounts, Tax Matters and Reports. Noc and DL available.

GSM : +968 95392251

Driving School

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

Contact No: 99074072

URGENTLY REQUIRED SALES ENGINEER

- One of the leading Omani Organisations is seeking to hire multiple sales engineers in their Oil & Division.
- Preference is given to candidates who have at least 3-4 years of experience in Trading of Instrumentation, Electrical & Mechanical Products to all the Oil & Gas industry in Oman. He must possess an Omani / GCC driving license.
- Salary is among the best in the best in the industry with fixed and variable components. Annual bonus and Incentives are provided against good performance.

Kindly send your CV's at
Recruit.oman4@gmail.com

SIT. WANTED

PAKISTANI, SAP certified accounts manager CMA, 13 years diversified experience, accounts up to finalisation, presently in Oman. Looking for better placement. Contact: 97635300.

12 YEARS Accounting experienced Indian (7 years in Oman) having experience in senior role. Looking for senior Accountant job. 79860638.

INDIAN female (M Tech Civil Structural Engineering) having 7 years experience as Quantity Surveyor cum Quality Control Engineer, looking for suitable position. Contact: 96154505.

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

WORLD WIDE DOOR TO DOOR CARGO

INDIA • BANGLADESH
NEPAL • SRILANKA • INDONESIA
PHILIPPINES • AFRICA • EUROPE
USA • ALL GCC

TOLL FREE NUMBER
80066766
www.alnamanicargo.com

FREE PICK UP 24/7

Branches: Ruwi, Hamriya, Ghala, Seeb, Barka, Suwaid, Sohar

HAVE A PROPERTY FOR RENT?

Advertise with us.

Contact us on: 99639264

SIT. WANTED

GENERAL manager with 16+ years experience in Oman, MBA — BE, seeks suitable placement. Contact: 94008034.

INDIAN male graduate Executive Secretary/ Stenography/ Oman DL and Muscat experience available. Contact: 79256679.

PLANNING engineer, PMP. Indian male Civil Eng. Around 10 years experience in construction projects. Softwares: Primavera P6, MS Office, ERP, having Oman driving licence. Ready to join, email: engineer4planning@gmail.com, Call: 78002582.

AUDIT, ACCOUNTING, VAT, TAXATION

Contact: **97239696 95355638**

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

سماء الخضراء للتجارة
SAMA AL KHADRA TRADING SERVICES:

PIPING SYSTEMS VALVES
DRAINS INTERCEPTORS

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

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

SERVICES

AUTOCAD/ REVIT ARCH MEP, part/full- time.
Contact WhatsApp: 97103168.

BUILDING of 1.500 sqm
3 stories, accommodation, store and office at Misfa.
99432177, 99010964.

FOR RENT

AL SUMRI AC maintenance. We are ready to repair and install all types of Air-Conditioner within Muscat Governorate. 94301888.

RENT A CAR

Buttercup Rent A Car AMAZING OFFERS

- Rent a car for 10 days and get an extra free day.
- Rent for one month and get 5 days free.

All the cars are 2016 brand new special prices for public departments, companies and long-term contracts. 972494490.

LUXURIOUS Toyota bus 2016, air-conditioned, 30 passengers, offered for daily/monthly/annually, Muscat. Contact: 98080609, 96316269.

FOR RENT

FLAT for rent in Darsait, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, kitchen, with small sea view, near the Indian School. Rent RO 230 monthly. Contact 99315986.

COMMERCIAL space for rent on main road next to Apollo Hospital 250m2 + with complete furnished interior. Contact 24834825.

FLATS 2bhk and 1 bhk in Muntaz. Contact 99341138 and 90991079.

DAWOOD

JOB VACANCY

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

- Senior Quantity Surveyor:**
Bachelor degree with min 15 yrs experience and under 40 years.
- Quantity Surveyor:**
Bachelor degree with min 10 yrs experience.

Required: Oman Driving license holder.

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

To advertise on our social media platforms and website

Please Contact our Team
95210257

OMAN OBSERVER
www.omanobserver.com

www.omanobserver.com

LAMASAT BUSINESS CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Accounting Services, VAT and Consultancy Services

Contact: **24571454** GSM: **95392251**

URGENT HIRING FOR SALES/ PURCHASING EXECUTIVES AND WATER QUALITY EQUIPMENT TECHNICIANS

- Minimum more than 2 years work experience in Oman/GCC
- Driving License in OMAN

Suitable candidate can send CV to: **recruitment74@gmail.com**

CHANGE OF NAME

We, Ragavesh Dhandapani (Indian Passport No: S3095261) and Rajyalakshmi Gopalakrishnan (Indian Passport No: S3095671), having permanent address in 11, Mariamman Kovil Street, Thiruvadathanur, Thanippadi, PIN 606708 and presently residing at NUST, PB No 2322, PC 111 Sultanate of Oman, hereby solemnly affirm and declare to change the name of our child Master SRIVISHVA BARATH (PP: S1216807) date of issue: 13/12/2017 issued at Muscat. The name of our child will be henceforth known as SRIVISHVA BARATH RAGAVESH for all purpose. Any objection towards the change of name of our minor child may be communicated to the Embassy of India, Muscat, PB 1727, PC 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman.

Now get news on the go

To receive news updates from OMAN OBSERVER,

WhatsApp <your name> to 96473232

www.omanobserver.com @omanobserver

Agritech essential for a less oil-reliant economy



STEFANO VIRGILLI
stefano@virgilli.com

The author is a member of the International Press Association

Oman has emphasised the need to upgrade and expand the agriculture sector, as well as to promote its export potential. The economic development policies have emphasised expanding such non-oil sectors as agriculture, fishing, industry, and mining, as it seeks to diversify the economy and reduce dependence on oil exports.

Targeted investments aimed at improving food security have seen advances by Oman's agricultural and fisheries sectors, as the government searches for ways to support its growing population and promote a more diverse economy. Agricultural and fisheries sectors in Oman saw growth of 9.8 per cent in 2019-20, in spite of Covid-19.

The growth in digital agriculture and associated technologies has opened up vast new data opportunities. With increasing technology usage in farms through tools such as sensors and drones, increasing amounts of data are being collected about soil types, nutrition, crop diseases, irrigation practices, and other factors that may contribute to farmers credit profiles.

The use of technology such as this helps address information asymmetries and deficiencies faced by farmers, especially small-scale farmers, that could increase farm productivity and reduce costs, as well as helping to mitigate environmental impacts of farming activities.

Technologies could contribute to transforming the worlds food-production system, as well as mitigating its impacts on climate and environment. Artificial intelligence, analytics, connected sensors, and other emerging technologies could further improve crop productivity, improve the efficiency of water and other inputs, and create resilience and sustainability in

crop production and livestock rearing.

The main drivers for improved farm productivity and higher incomes are farmers adopting innovations in technologies and practices. The success of any agriculture technology ultimately depends on the speed at which it is adopted among farmers, especially small-scale farmers.

We can ascribe a lot of that success to farmers who adapt to and adopt the new technologies. A new generation of extension services is now needed to accelerate small-scale farmers adoption of digital technologies, especially in developing countries.

Extension services must focus more and more on developing systems for farm innovation, which allow smallholder farmers to be involved in adopting technologies like the ones discussed in this issue of frontier technologies.

The private sector, in turn, could spur faster adoption of new technologies by farmers. New funding vehicles would also be crucial to the procurement of the climate-resistant equipment and seeds needed to bolster small-scale farming.

Vertical farms could help us produce more food using less land, less water, and without harmful pesticides, while drone and satellite technologies could enable farmers to assess crop conditions and cut down their dependence on harmful fertilisers. New precision farming companies are developing technologies that enable farmers to maximise crop production while controlling all variables of a crops field, such as moisture levels, pest pressures, soil conditions, and microclimates.

Future farming will utilise complex technologies like robots, temperature and humidity sensors, aerial imagery, and GPS technologies.

Emerging technologies like IoT, ML/AI, blockchain, drones, micro-sensors, robotics, cloud computing, and more are poised to turn this primitive sector into a precision, data-driven sector. Developing countries must significantly boost farm innovations and farmers use of technology in order to end poverty, address rising demand for food, and address the negative impacts of climate change, according to a new World Bank report.

Promising potential for enhanced ties between Oman and Brazil

JOMAR MENDOZA

@JmObserver

The Sultanate of Oman envisions significant potential to boost trade and economic relations with Brazil. Talal al Rahbi (pictured), Oman's new ambassador to Brazil, said he would intensify efforts to expand bilateral trade and investment between the two countries. Following a visit to the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (ABCC) in Sao Paulo on Friday, Al Rahbi spoke with Brazil-Arab News Agency (ANBA) on his mission for the Sultanate of Oman and Brazil to enhance bilateral investment.

“One of my priorities here is to promote investment between the two countries and encourage Brazilian companies to invest in Oman,” said Al Rahbi, pledging assistance to Brazilian companies seeking all necessary support in securing land, gas, and other resources. “I am willing to talk directly with any interested companies,” he added.

Technology, manufacturing, food and logistics are sectors of interest for cooperation, Al Rahbi said, adding, “We are open to this



discussion.”

Commenting on Brazilian mining company Vale's project in Oman, the Ambassador said: “It is a very successful investment. Vale in Oman is very respected because it is a good company in terms of employment, support for local communities, professionalism, and good relationship with the government of Oman,” he added.

Just recently, Vale SA signed a memorandum of cooperation with Oman's Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) to conduct a feasibility study to explore the prospects of developing an integrated industrial complex (mega hub) in Oman that will

contribute to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, in line with international priorities set forth in the Paris Agreement.

ANBA reported that another goal of the ambassador is to transform Oman into a distribution hub for Brazilian products. The idea is that Brazilian companies could export more to Oman and distribute their products to other regional markets from there. The initiative includes the food sector, where Brazil has high production and expertise. Al Rahbi will also work on exports of products from Oman to Brazil.

“I am willing to listen from Brazilian companies about what they need from Oman, be it

fertilisers, petrochemicals, or other products they want to import,” he explained.

Al Rahbi said he intends to connect Omani companies with Brazilian firms with the goal of exploring partnerships. The objective, he said, is to put Brazilians in contact with the right companies to discuss what they intend to export and what advantages they can have.

He underlined the potential for such partnerships to open distribution hubs in Oman to cater to the wider region.

During January - October 2022, the two countries had fairly balanced trade, with exports from Oman to Brazil amounting to \$894.4 million while Brazilian exports to Oman totalled \$984.2 million. In 2021, Omani exports to Brazil amounted to \$692 million while Brazil's exports to Oman amounted to \$1.546 billion in 2021.

Oman mainly sells fertilisers and oil to the Brazilian market, and Brazil exports iron ore and poultry to the Arab country. Oman is the fifth leading market for Brazil in the Arab world and the sixth main supplier to Brazil among the Arabs.

MSX30 Index ends week higher

MUSCAT: MSX30 Index ended the week up by 1.30%. The Financial Index ended the week higher by 1.59%. The industrial Index and service index ended the week up by 1.02% and 0.82% respectively. The MSX Shariah Index was down by 0.14% for the week.

Further to the disclosures made on June 19, 2022 and on July 26, 2022, Sohar International Bank and HSBC Oman announced that their respective Boards of Directors had approved the entry into a binding merger agreement, under which the two banks agreed to take the necessary steps to implement a merger by incorporation.

As agreed, HSBC Oman and Sohar International will merge and all of the assets and liabilities of HSBC Oman will be transferred to Sohar International. On completion of the merger, HSBC Oman will cease to exist as a legal entity and its shares will be cancelled.

The shareholders of HSBC Oman will be offered consideration valuing HSBC Oman at 1.0x book value, with such consideration consisting of shares of Sohar International with the option for the shareholders of HSBC Oman to elect to receive the consideration in cash, provided that the maximum cash consideration payable by Sohar International to the shareholders of HSBC Oman that elect



to receive cash consideration shall not exceed 70% of the total consideration payable by Sohar International.

The shares of Sohar International that form part of the consideration to the shareholders of HSBC Oman shall value Sohar International at 1.0x book value. The respective book value of each bank shall be calculated at a later date (which is currently expected at the end of the first quarter of 2023) before the banks invite their shareholders to vote on the merger in an extraordinary general meeting.

Only at legal completion date will HSBC Oman merge into Sohar International to become a single bank. This is positive news from the banks as entry into a binding agreement means that both banks are committed to undergoing the proposed merger by incorporation.

However, the merger is still subject to approvals from relevant regulatory bodies as

well as from the respective shareholders of the two banks, and is expected to complete in the second half of 2023. As per our calculations, BKSb's BVPS at end-2022 is RO 0.126 while for HSBC Oman, we are forecasting a BVPS for 2022 at RO 0.179.

Our analysis of 9M22 detailed financials of Oman conventional banks indicates that: ECL Stage-wise data indicates that over 70% of total of each bank's exposure is in Stage 1 of impairment or in simpler words, is performing, with the remainder being in Stage 2 and Stage 3, except for HSBC Oman. Bank Muscat, HSBC Oman, Ahli Bank and Bank Dhofar have provision cover > 100%, indicating prudent provisioning norms. HSBC Oman has the lowest NPL ratio at 3.1% while Bank Dhofar at 5.73% has the highest.

The highest exposure in Stage 3 (NPLs) is for NBO and Bank Dhofar (at about 6% each), while the lowest exposure in Stage 3 is for HSBC Oman and Ahli Bank. Within exposures in Stage 3, Bank Muscat has the highest provision cover, followed by HSBC Oman and Bank Dhofar, while Sohar International has relatively lower coverage at 57%. Ahli Bank and Bank Dhofar have the highest % of restructured loans; however, for Ahli Bank, more than 50% of restructured loans are in Stage 3. [Courtesy: U-Capital]

DHL to open new office in Sohar port and Freezone

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 19

DHL, the leading international provider of air, ocean, and road freight services, has announced opening of a new office in SOHAR Freezone. Matrix Prime Logistics, a leading company for warehouse logistics operations at SOHAR Freezone, has signed a lease agreement with DHL

Global Forwarding, for the sublease of warehouse space for the efficient distribution of goods in Oman and other global markets. The warehouse is strategically

located at SOHAR Freezone and the partnership will further cement SOHAR's role in positioning Oman as an attractive global logistics and transit hub.

“The shift to the SOHAR Freezone will enable DHL Global Forwarding to further expand operations and enhance and streamline our process management. We are confident this move will provide even more efficient services and stable supply chain solutions as the international freight market and e-commerce sectors continue to grow,” said Amadou Diallo, Chief Executive



Officer of DHL Global Forwarding Middle East & Africa.

As per Roy Scaria, Country

Manager-DHL, Oman, “This is DHL's step towards contribution to Oman Vision 2040 and capitalise

on SOHAR's land connectivity and provide more solutions to our esteemed customers. DHL is now the only global logistics company with offices in both Salalah Freezone and SOHAR Freezone.

DHL is now well poised to offer faster and greener freight services across the region, particularly with much anticipated imminent launch of 303-km-Oman-Etihad Rail project connecting Sohar to Abu Dhabi.”

Saib Jasim, Managing Partner of Matrix Prime Logistics said, “All our smart warehouses at SOHAR Freezone are riding the waves of

technological innovation. They are designed and built according to the highest international standards and can accommodate various cargo types and activities.

We offer customised warehousing solutions for various commercial, logistics and industrial activities, including for an international freight forwarding specialist such as DHL Global Forwarding.”

SOHAR Port and Freezone acts as the main gateway for import and export in the Sultanate of Oman and to the main shipping routes among global markets.

AL RAYYAN, Qatar: Fifa president Gianni Infantino accused critics of World Cup host Qatar's treatment of migrant workers of hypocrisy on Saturday, adding that engagement was the only way to improve human rights.

In lengthy, and sometimes angry, opening remarks at a news conference on the eve of the start of the tournament, Infantino rounded on European critics of the host nation over the issues of migrant workers and LGBT rights.

"I am European. For what we have been doing for 3,000 years around the world, we should be apologising for the next 3,000 years before giving moral lessons," he said.

"I have difficulties understanding the criticism. We have to invest in helping these people, in education and to give them a better future and more hope. We should all educate ourselves, many things are not perfect but reform and change takes time.

"This one-sided moral lesson is just hypocrisy," he said.

"It is not easy to take the criticism of a decision that was made 12 years ago. Doha is ready, Qatar is ready and of course it will be the best World Cup ever."

Infantino drew on his own experience as the child of migrant workers growing up in Switzerland, saying he had been bullied for being Italian and for having red hair and freckles.

"I know what it feels to be discriminated (against), I know what it's like to be bullied," he said.

"What do you do? You start engaging, this is what we should be doing... The only way of getting results is by engaging.

"I believe the changes that have happened in Qatar would maybe not have happened, or not at least at that speed, (without the World Cup). Obviously, we need to keep pressure, obviously we need to try and make things better."

Infantino's remarks sparked a backlash from human rights advocates.

"In brushing aside legitimate human rights criticisms, Gianni Infantino is dismissing the enormous price paid by migrant workers to make his flagship tournament possible — as well as Fifa's responsibility

for it," said Steve Cockburn, of Amnesty International.

Cockburn said demands for fair compensation should not be "treated as some sort of culture war".

Nick McGeehan of migrant worker advocacy group Fair Square described Infantino's comments as "crass" and "clumsy".

Qatar has said that it is a welcoming country that does not discriminate against people and has denied accusations of abuse of workers.

Infantino also defended the presence of Iran at the tournament despite the current spate of deadly protests there sparked by the death of a woman in police custody in September.

"It's not two regimes playing against each other, it's not two ideologies playing against each other, it's two football teams," he said.

"If we don't have at least football to bring us together... which world are we going to live in? In Iran there are 80 million people, are they all bad? Are they all monsters?"

BEVERAGE BAN

Addressing Friday's decision to ban the sale of alcoholic beer at stadiums during the tournament, Infantino said Fifa had failed to persuade the Qatar government to stand by the original decision to allow it. "We tried and that is why I give you the late change of policy," he said. "We tried to see if it was possible."

Infantino said he had received assurances from the highest level of the Qatari government that LGBT people would be welcomed in the country for the World Cup.

Same-sex relations are illegal and punishable by up to three years of jail-time in Qatar. Some soccer stars have raised concerns over the rights of fans travelling for the event, especially LGBT+ individuals and women, whom rights groups say Qatari laws discriminate against.

— Reuters

FIFA CHIEF ACCUSES QATAR CRITICS OF HYPOCRISY



Fifa President Gianni Infantino speaks during a press conference at the Qatar National Convention Center (QNCC) in Doha. — AFP



Spain defender Cesar Azpilicueta (R) attend a training session at the Qatar University training site in Doha. — AFP

Azpilicueta excited by Spain's 'bold' youngsters

DOHA: Experienced Spain defender Cesar Azpilicueta said on Saturday he was excited by the squad's "bold" youngsters as La Roja set their sights on a second World Cup crown.

Luis Enrique has selected numerous young stars in his squad, including 20-year-olds Ansu Fati, Nico Williams and Yeremy Pino as well as teenagers Gavi and Pedri.

The 33-year-old Chelsea captain, one of the few veterans in Qatar with Spain, said he enjoys watching them play and is impressed by how rapidly they have adapted to top-level football.

"What surprised me most

is their boldness, they're not afraid — the way they fit into the game, it's a pleasure to see this readiness for the age that they have," Azpilicueta said on Saturday.

"In football the youngsters start earlier and earlier. They are mature, they understand the game and they are showing it. Some of them have played in the Euros already, in the Nations League. At 18 years old they are at a World Cup," the defender said.

Another youngster linking up with the squad is 19-year-old Barcelona defender Alejandro Balde, who will land in Doha on Saturday afternoon to replace injured

left-back Jose Gaya.

Azpilicueta, who made his Spain debut in 2013 under World Cup-winning manager Vicente del Bosque in a friendly in Doha, believes Balde is ready for the tournament despite being uncapped.

"We offer our support to Jose," he said. "Yesterday was a sad day for all of us and now we will try and give our all for him, because he's a big loss on and off the pitch."

"Now a great team-mate is coming, he's shown his quality with Barca, and with the under-21 side, he's physical, is very fast and the group will welcome him from the first minute."

The 2010 World Cup winners trained on Saturday under Luis Enrique's watchful eye, with Marco Asensio returning after missing the Friday session.

Azpilicueta hopes to be able to make more of an impact for Spain in his third World Cup, after failing to get off the bench in Russia four years ago.

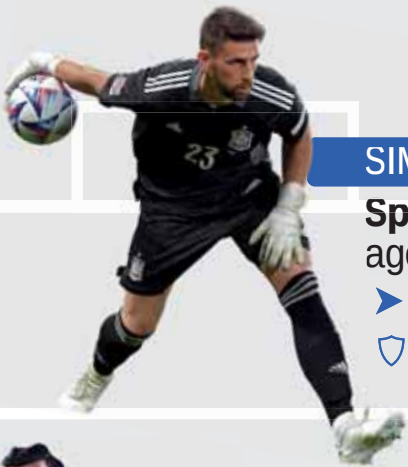
"While it's true I haven't had consistent game time, I've never been able to play at the level I have with Chelsea in the national team," added the right-back.

"You have to be self-critical and realistic, and for that reason I've had a little thorn in my side." — AFP

World Cup's promising players



Selected Goals Club



SIMON
Spain
aged 25
27 matches
Athletic Bilbao



DE LIGT
Netherlands
aged 23
38
2 goals
Bayern Munich



KOUNDE
France
aged 24
12
FC Barcelona



DAVIES
Canada
aged 22
34
12
Bayern Munich



PEDRI
Spain
aged 19
14
Barcelona



MUSIALA
Germany
aged 19
17
1
Bayern Munich



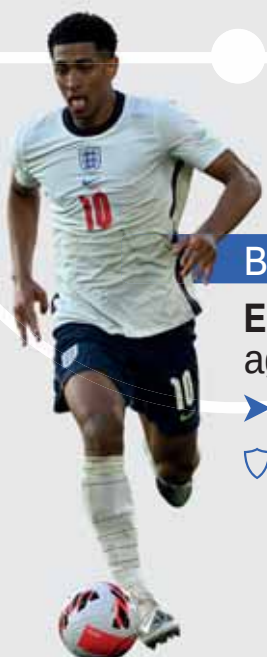
TCHOUAMENI
France
aged 22
14
1
Real Madrid



KUBO
Japan
aged 21
19
1
Real Sociedad



NUNEZ
Uruguay
aged 23
13
3
Liverpool



BELLINGHAM
England
aged 19
17
Borussia Dortmund



VINICIUS JR.
Brazil
aged 22
16
1
Real Madrid

VAN DIJK

READY TO LEAD

RESURGENT

DUTCH

DOHA: As the Netherlands return to the World Cup after missing out in 2018 they will be led by Virgil van Dijk, who has grown into one of the game's best defenders.

Runners-up in 1974, 1978 and 2010, the Netherlands came within a penalty shoot-out of reaching a fourth World Cup final in 2014 when Louis van Gaal's squad defied expectations to make the semifinals.

The straight-talking Van Gaal is back for a third stint in charge of the national team, courageously coming out of retirement while receiving treatment for aggressive prostate cancer.

The 71-year-old underwent 25 bouts of radiotherapy, including during training camps with the national team, and watched from a wheelchair following a bike accident as the Dutch qualified for Qatar last November.

Van Gaal, christened the 'Iron Tulip' in his homeland for his authoritarian style, overlooked a young Van Dijk for the 2014 finals, but the Liverpool centre-back has since developed into the steel backbone around which the team is built.

Van Dijk also missed out on Euro 2020 last year after tearing his anterior cruciate ligament.

So remarkably, through a combination of circumstance and misfortune, only now is the 31-year-old set to appear at his first major international tournament.

"We have to believe in our qualities and ourselves and be confident," Van Dijk said.

"We have a fantastic manager, an experienced manager. We have players who play at the highest level, the biggest clubs in the world."

Van Dijk's emergence coincided with a transitional period for the Dutch, who failed to qualify for Euro 2016 and the 2018 World Cup.

The Oranje suffered a disappointing last-16 exit at Euro 2020 without the injured Van Dijk, but they are unbeaten in 15 games since the reappointment of Van Gaal in August 2021.

"We have experience, we have talent, we have a good mixture. First and foremost we have team spirit — I think that's the start to the key to success," said Van Dijk.

"It's not guaranteed success of course but it's a good way to start and we're looking forward to the first game."

RISE TO THE TOP

Van Dijk became the world's most expensive defender when Liverpool signed him for £75 million from Southampton in January 2018.

Liverpool finished runners-up to Real Madrid in the Champions League a few months later, but the Reds got their hands on European club's football biggest prize the following season.

Van Dijk lost out on the 2019 Ballon d'Or to Lionel Messi by a handful of votes

but earned the recognition of his peers by winning the English PFA Players' player of the year prize.

He played every minute during the Covid-interrupted 2019-20 campaign as Liverpool ended a 30-year wait for the English title, only for injury to then strike him down.

Van Dijk chose to give himself time to fully heal instead of rushing back for Euro 2020, but he has made up for lost time as evidenced by a recent report by global players' union FIFPro.

It showed Van Dijk had played the most minutes of those analysed — 7,597 in 78 games — between July 12, 2021 and October 24 this year.

The report highlighted the unprecedented demands posed by a mid-season World Cup, but in Qatar Van Dijk at least will finally get his chance on the biggest stage.

"It's going to be a very big one against the African champions," he said of Monday's Group A opener against a Senegal side missing star man Sadio Mane, a close friend of Van Dijk's.

"I'm very sad for him that he's going to miss the tournament," said Van Dijk. "I'm definitely going to miss seeing him out there."

"(But) we'll do everything in our power to get a good result and start our World Cup in the best way possible." — AFP



Netherlands' defender Virgil van Dijk takes part in a training session at Qatar University training site 6 in Doha. — AFP



Indian captain Hardik Pandya speaks to media as heavy rain forced the cancellation of the opening Twenty20 match against New Zealand at Sky Stadium in Wellington. — AFP

India cricket board sacks selectors after World Cup exit

NEW DELHI: India's cricket board has sacked its entire selection committee, led by former fast bowler Chetan Sharma, and put out the call for replacements after the team's humiliating T20 World Cup exit.

Rohit Sharma's men suffered a 10-wicket thrashing by England during the semifinal at Adelaide Oval last week, prompting fresh soul-searching by a team that last won a global title at the 2013 Champions Trophy.

Their exit dismayed India's legion of diehard fans and prompted calls from commentators and the public for heads to roll.

A major shake-up had been mooted since the day after the loss, but the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) took a big step on Friday evening when it issued a statement inviting fresh applications to fill all five positions on its selection panel.

It comes a month after World Cup winner Roger Binny was appointed head of the cash-rich board to replace Sourav Ganguly, who was reportedly forced out in a political tussle.

Reports after the England defeat also said the T20

squad will undergo a major transition, with prominent senior players including Rohit, Virat Kohli and Ravichandran Ashwin being gradually eased out.

Rohit, 35, currently leads India in all three formats of the game.

The *Indian Express* newspaper said the new selection panel would be entrusted with the responsibility of appointing separate captains for various formats.

"Split captaincy was the likely direction in which Indian cricket will go after its major ICC trophy drought continued," it said in a Saturday report.

Hardik Pandya, who is currently leading the Indian T20 squad for a short three-match series against New Zealand, is the favourite to take over the reins in the shortest format.

The all-rounder this year led Gujarat Titans to their Indian Premier League title in their inaugural season.

India's first match against the Black Caps was washed out on Friday without a single ball bowled and the teams next meet on Sunday at Mount Maunganui.

— AFP

England implode to hand second ODI and series to Australia



Steve Smith

SYDNEY: Australia wrapped up the three-match one-day international series with a comprehensive 72-run win over England at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Saturday.

Chasing 281 to level the series after Australia won the first match in Adelaide on Thursday, England appeared well on track as Sam Billings and James Vince shared a 122-run partnership for the fourth wicket.

But once Vince was trapped lbw by stand-in Australian captain Josh Hazlewood for 60, the English imploded, losing 4-13 to virtually hand the Australians the match.

On a tricky wicket at the SCG, Steve Smith continued the form he showed in Australia's six-wicket win in Adelaide with a hard-fought 94 to help Australia to 280-8.

The target always looked difficult on a surface that was playing slow with the occasional bad bounce.

"It looks easy to bat on when a partnership is going," Hazlewood said of the surface.

"But you're only a wicket away from causing a collapse on such a pitch. I was very happy with 280."

England got the worst possible start to the run chase when Jason Roy tickled Mitchell Starc's second delivery down the leg side to



Mitchell Starc

keeper Alex Carey.

Three balls later Starc got the key wicket of Dawid Malan with an almost unplayable ball that pitched on leg stump then swung back to take the wicket, leaving England staggering at two wickets for no runs.

Phil Salt and Vince kept playing with the aggression that the England white-ball teams are renowned for, and took the score to 34 after five overs.

But Salt tried one big shot too many, stepping away to try and smash Hazlewood over cover only to miss the ball and see it cannon into his stumps.

Any hopes Australia may have had of crashing through the England batting line-up were dashed by Vince and Billings.

The two mixed caution with aggression as they took the score to 156 before Vince was trapped by Hazlewood as he tried to hoist the Australian skipper over the square leg boundary.

England captain Moeen Ali came in and smashed leg spinner Adam Zampa for a four and a six, then missed a top spinner and was bowled.

At 168-5 after 28.3 overs, Australia were back in control and they tightened their grip one run

later when Zampa bowled Billings for 71.

England wickets kept tumbling as Starc (4-47), Hazlewood (2-33) and Zampa (4-45) wrapped up the English tail.

"We were in a good position with the bat but we lost wickets," Ali said.

"The wicket actually got easier to bat on but we lost wickets — it's just one of those things."

"They bowled well in that phase and the pressure got to us. If you lose wickets regularly, you're not going to win many games."

Earlier, Smith's 94 from 114 balls anchored the Australian innings after Hazlewood won the toss and decided to bat.

Hazlewood was brought into the side for captain Pat Cummins, who was rested with an eye to the upcoming Test series against the West Indies.

The pitch initially offered little help for the seamers but it deteriorated as the innings progressed. — AFP

BRIEF SCORES

Australia 280-8 from 50 overs (Steve Smith 94, Marnus Labuschagne 58, Mitchell Marsh 50; Adil Rashid 3-57)

England 208 in 38.5 overs (Sam Billings 71, James Vince 60; Adam Zampa 4-45, Mitchell Starc 4-47)

Result: Australia won by 72 runs

Sri Lanka's Ranatunga ordered to pay over feud

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's World Cup-winning captain Arjuna Ranatunga has been ordered to pay \$70,000 in a defamation case arising from a long-running feud over control of the island nation's cash-rich cricket board.

Ranatunga has been locked in a bitter battle with Thilanga Sumathipala, a four-time president of Sri Lanka Cricket, and the pair have regularly traded accusations of graft and match-fixing.

Thursday's civil court judgement dates back to an incident in 2003, when Ranatunga said that his arch-rival was corrupt and unfit to helm the sport's national peak body.

"My family and friends and people who believed in me are so happy and relieved," Sumathipala said on Friday.

"I wish my mother was still alive



Thilanga Sumathipala

to hear this court order. Justice delayed is justice denied. Anyhow, it's better late than never."

A court official said that Ranatunga had been ordered to pay 25 million rupees (\$70,000)

for the remarks. Ranatunga's spokesman said the decision would be appealed in a higher court.

Ranatunga captained Sri Lanka to their 1996 World Cup victory and quit after failing to defend the



Arjuna Ranatunga

title in 1999.

He has since duelled with Sumathipala for control of the cricket board, including an unsuccessful tilt in 2019.

Sri Lanka's national team has

over the years been beset by corruption allegations and in-fighting.

Former sports minister Harin Fernando has said the International Cricket Council (ICC) considers

Sri Lanka one of the world's most corrupt nations under its purview.

One of his predecessors, Mahindananda Aluthgamage, told parliament last year that match-fixing was rife in Sri Lanka.

Ranatunga has in the past raised doubts over the integrity of the Sri Lankan team that lost the 2011 World Cup final to India, but stopped short of making direct allegations against players.

He has accused Sumathipala of violating ICC regulations by holding office despite his family's links to the gambling industry — a business Sumathipala says he has no involvement with.

Sumathipala for his part has raised questions over Ranatunga's own conduct when his team failed to defend the World Cup in 1999.

— AFP

Rublev joins Djokovic in Turin ATP Finals quartet

TURIN, Italy: Andrey Rublev sealed a place in the final four of the Turin ATP Finals on Friday rallying from a set down to beat Stefanos Tsitsipas 3-6, 6-3, 6-2.

Rublev's win saw him overtake Tsitsipas in the Red Group to take second place behind Novak Djokovic.

With the group stage now over Djokovic faces the American Taylor Fritz with Norway's Green Group winner Casper Ruud awaiting Rublev in Saturday's semis.

In a winner-takes-all encounter with the last place in the semifinals at stake Tsitsipas looked set to win a third head-to-head with Rublev this season with a powerful first set.

But the world ranked number seven Rublev showed no nerves in the big moments thereafter and overpowered the Greek with the quality of his ground strokes, earning his first ATP finals semifinal encounter.

"I didn't give up. I kept fighting and playing," Rublev said. "I just gave my best and I managed to turn the match around and I am happy to be in the semis."

Djokovic marked himself out as the favourite when he remained unbeaten earlier Friday producing a battling 6-3, 6-7 (5/7) 7-6 (7/2) win over Daniil Medvedev.

The 21-time Grand Slam winner Djokovic had gone into the



Russia's Andrey Rublev celebrates winning a point during his round-robin match against Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas at the ATP Finals tournament in Turin. — AFP



Serbia's Novak Djokovic celebrates after winning his round-robin match against Russia's Andrey Rublev at the ATP Finals tournament in Turin. — AFP

dead rubber already assured of his place in the semis after wins over both Rublev and Tsitsipas.

While Medvedev in contrast was already eliminated after losses in both his outings on the hardcourt in Turin.

After having to dig deep into his mental and physical reserves Djokovic said: "Daniil and I have had some battles in the past and I knew coming into the match that it was going to be his last match of the season and he wouldn't want to finish with a loss."

With both players trading punches like heavyweights in

ATP FINALS RESULTS									
Red Group									
Novak Djokovic (SRB x7) bt Daniil Medvedev (x4) 6-3, 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (7/2)									
Andrey Rublev (x6) bt Stefanos Tsitsipas (GRE x2) 3-6, 6-3, 6-2									
ATP Finals standings									
Standings from the ATP Tour Finals in Turin after Friday's matches (played, wins, losses, sets won, sets lost, games won, games lost):									
Red Group									
1. Novak Djokovic (SRB)	3	3	0	6	1	43	30	Q	
2. Andrey Rublev	3	2	1	4	4	39	39	Q	
2. Stefanos Tsitsipas (GRE)	3	1	2	3	5	40	44		
4. Daniil Medvedev	3	0	3	3	6	47	56		
Green Group									
1. Casper Ruud (NOR)	3	2	1	4	3	40	39	Q	
2. Taylor Fritz (USA)	3	2	1	5	3	47	39	Q	
3. Felix Auger-Aliassime (CAN)	3	1	2	3	4	37	39		
4. Rafael Nadal (ESP)	3	1	2	2	4	28	55		

the ring Djokovic took the first set only for Medvedev to force a decider sealing the second set on

his fourth set point.

Djokovic rallied back from a break down to earn his 40th tour-

level win of the season after three hours and five minutes.

"He was playing really quick. I didn't feel physically well in the third set, struggled a lot. It is a battle and it is a fight," he said.

"But I think the biggest battle, as I've said before, is always the inner battle. If you manage to find yourself in that optimal state of mind and body as often as you possibly can, I feel you can extract the best and reap the best results for yourself in every moment, every point, every match," he explained.

The 35-year-old is aiming to tie Roger Federer's record six

triumphs at the tournament, which is being held in Turin for the second time.

The former World No 1 has now won 16 of his past 17 matches, having triumphed in Tel Aviv and Astana last month.

Aside from his three on court wins this week, he was boosted by the news that he has been granted a visa to play in the Australian Open in January.

He was kicked out of the country in the lead-up to the Melbourne Grand Slam earlier this year after refusing to be vaccinated against Covid-19. — AFP

Verstappen on pole as Red Bull lock-out Abu Dhabi front row

ABU DHABI: Max Verstappen outpaced team-mate Sergio Perez to grab pole position for Sunday's season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix as Red Bull locked out the front row in a closely-fought qualifying session.

The two-time world champion clocked a best lap in one minute and 23.824 seconds to finish two-tenths clear of the Mexican, delighting Red Bull after a week of reported rifts between the two drivers.

Charles Leclerc was third ahead of Ferrari team-mate Carlos Sainz and the two Mercedes of Lewis Hamilton and George Russell, who claimed his maiden victory last weekend in Brazil.

Verstappen's success brought him his third consecutive pole at



Red Bull's Dutch driver Max Verstappen (R) receives the Pole Position Award after the qualifying session on the eve of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix at the Yas Marina Circuit in the Emirate city of Abu Dhabi. — AFP

the Yas Marina Circuit, his seventh of the season and 20th of his career ahead of a race in which he bids for a record-extending 15th win in a single season.

"Great job everybody, good team effort," said Verstappen on his slow down lap. "Well done everybody," added Perez, the two offering low-key enthusiasm after

a stormy week since their 'team orders' row.

Lando Norris was seventh for McLaren ahead of Alpine's Esteban Ocon and retirement-bound four-time champion Sebastian Vettel of Aston Martin. Daniel Ricciardo was 10th on his last drive for McLaren.

Under the dazzling floodlights, Vettel's father Norbert was conspicuous in his green Aston Martin shirt as he cheered his son from the garage for his final qualifying session.

A full five minutes passed before the 'big guns' emerged, Mercedes delaying their entry to exploit a cooling track on a very warm evening with an air temperature of 30 degrees Celsius and the track at 34. — AFP

Red Warriors to face Belarus in Al Ain city



ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 19

Oman national football team will face off Belarus team at Hazza bin Zayed Stadium in Al Ain city, UAE on Sunday in a friendly game. The match will kick off at 6 pm (Oman Time).

It will be the last warm-up game for the Red Warriors in this camp which started in Muscat on November 10 and run for ten days. The domestic camp featured the international friendly game against Germany which finished for the latter at 1-0 after a top display from Oman.

The Sultanate of Oman football delegation arrived in Al Ain city on the following day of the Germany match on Thursday. The team reported to the training sessions on Friday and had few training sessions under watchful eyes of the Croatian coach Branko Ivankovic. It is expected that the 68 years old will focus on the attacking side of the team as they missed a lot of scoring attempts in the previous friendly warm-up besides other areas.

The completed camp in Muscat and ongoing warm-up gathering in Al Ain is part of the team's preparation for the Arabian Gulf



Cup in Iraq's Basra and the 2023 AFC Asian Cup. Belarus team, on the other side, are still in abroad camp in UAE. The team played against Syria on Thursday and they won the game by 1-0.

OMAN SQUAD: Ahmed al Rawahi, Mohammed al Musallami, Mohammed al Amri, Mohsin al Ghassani, Salah al Yahyaie, Harib al Saadi, Ahmed al Khamisi, Amjad al Harthi, Essam al Subhi, Ibrahim al Mukhaini, Ahmed al Kaabi, Al Mundher al Alawi, Ali al Hinai, Ahmed al Matroushi, Moutaz Saleh, Mousab al Mamari, Ahmed al Adawi, Fahmi Said, Jameel al Yahmadi, Zaher al Aghbari, Omar al Malki and Arshad al Alawi.

570 runners to take part in Himam Mountain Run

WALEED AL JAHWARI
MUSCAT, NOV 19

Nizwa Club representing by Al Sahwah team, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and the Oman Athletics Association, will organise the mountain run 'Himam'.

750 male and female runners from 42 countries will participate in the third edition of the Himam Mountain Run, which will be held from December 1 to 3 in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate.

The sports and tourism event will provide a competitive opportunity for young professional and amateur runners to participate in high level races within international races.

The trails are designed for competitors to go through nature spots, farms and wadies while enjoying and exploring historical sites in the Hajar Mountains.

The first race for a distance of 100 km, 'Hajar Mountains Race',



brings together the professionals from all over the world. The race will start from the Wilayat of Al Hamra towards the summit of the Al Jabal Al Akhdhar, and then the track will head towards the finish line in Birkat Al Moaz in the Wilayat of Nizwa.

The second and third races, 'ascent race', for 55 km and 'amateur race' for 25 km, will start from

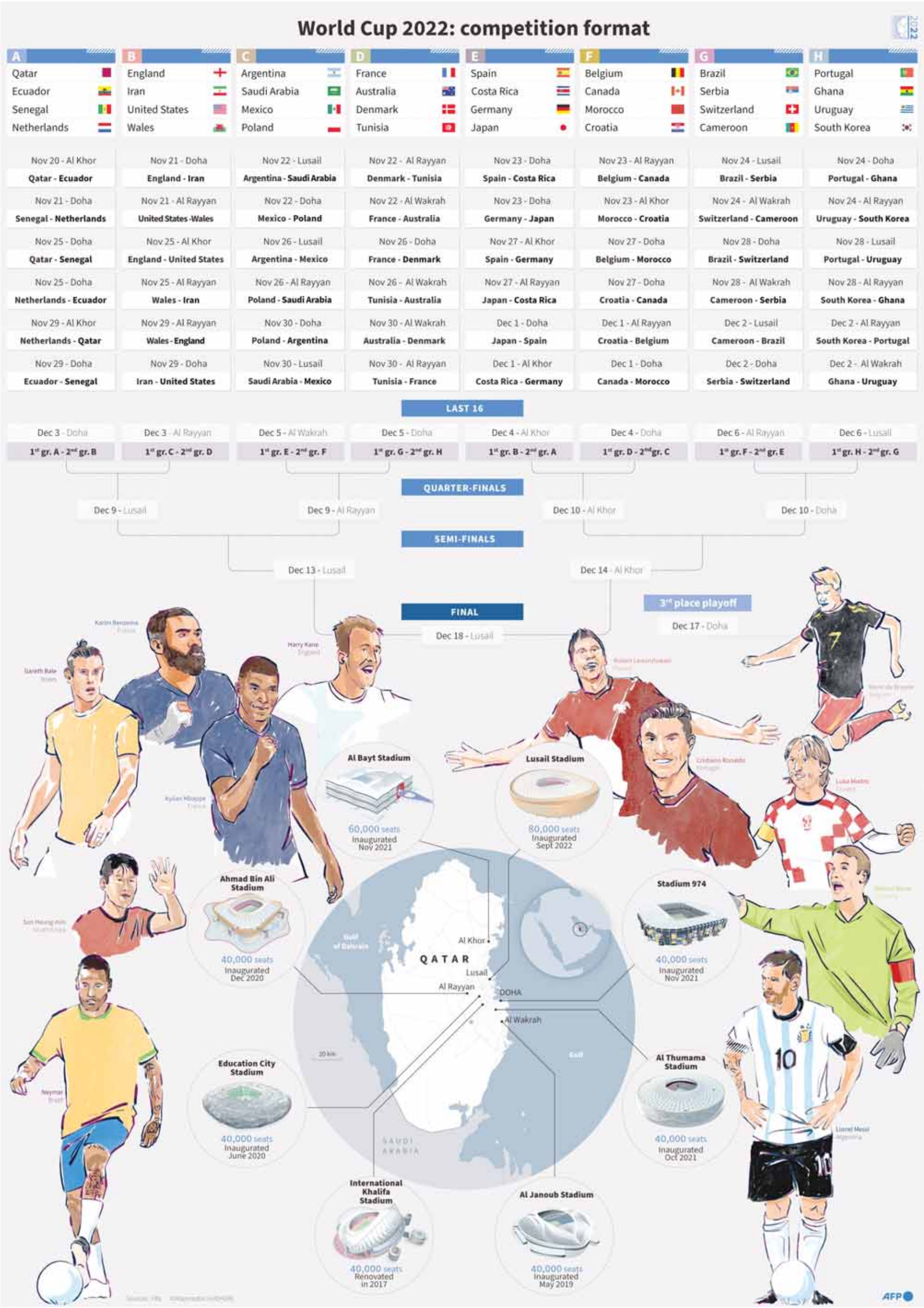
Birkat Al Banaz, passing through ancient farms and traditional village, then towards the wadies and a number of old villages of the Al Jabal Al Akhdhar.

The organisers launched a series of short races for 10 km, 5 km and 2km this year, in order to attract a larger segment of society to explore and participate in mountain running, and to

emphasise the importance of physical health.

The organisers succeeded in obtaining membership in the International Mountain Running Federation, the race distances of 100 km, 55 km and 25 km registered in the global races. This allows the winner to obtain internationally recognised points while raising the rider's global classification in mountain running, in 100 km distance the runner will receive four points, while in 55 km race the winner will receive three points and one point for the 25 km race.

Himam run is supported by the Petroleum Development Oman as the main sponsor, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority, the Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran), the national travel operator 'Zar Oman', Oman LNG, Mazoon Dairy, Al Safa Food and Golden Tulip Nizwa.



Eriksen says being back at WC after collapse is ‘very special’

DOHA: Christian Eriksen says it is “very special” to be back at the World Cup as he seeks to complete a remarkable comeback from his cardiac arrest during the European Championship last year.

The playmaker collapsed on the pitch against Finland in June 2021 and had to be resuscitated in front of a stunned Copenhagen crowd and a television audience of millions.

On the way to hospital he told his wife Sabrina that he would probably never play football again but he was back in action eight months later.

The 30-year-old had an

implantable cardioverter defibrillator fitted, which meant he had to quit Inter Milan due to rules in Italy.

But he signed for Brentford in the Premier League and also resumed his international career.

“It’s very special to be at a World Cup for your national team,” said Eriksen, who is now at Manchester United. “It’s something I’ve tried before and I’m very happy to be back again.

“It (the collapse) gave me an appreciation of being alive and being with my family. I think everything else has just moved to the side.”

Denmark, who face Tunisia



Denmark's midfielder Christian Eriksen meets with fans at Al Sailiya SC in Doha, ahead of the Qatar 2022 World Cup. — AFP

on Tuesday, will also come up against world champions France in Group D and will fancy their chances after beating Les Bleus home and away in the Nations League earlier this year.

With their talisman back in top form Denmark look an even stronger proposition than the side that was only narrowly eliminated from Euro 2020, in the semifinals, by England.

“For me personally being part of the team is always good,” said Eriksen. “I hope I can help the team as much as I can in any way.

“I know we’ve beaten France but normally France in a tournament is a different team

compared to the rest of the year. We know what to do and we look forward to it.

“The national team has always been strong. I do think the belief in the squad and from you guys, the fans, was bigger when I came back from the fall.”

Denmark’s assistant coach Morten Wieghorst said Eriksen was an “inspiration” for his team-mates and the rest of his country.

“In my view he’s been even better than he was before the accident,” Wieghorst said. “I really do believe that he’s become an even better player, if that was possible.” — AFP

Players to watch in the 2022 World Cup in Qatar



Source: AFP



SIX STAR PLAYERS TO WATCH OUT

THE 2022 WORLD CUP GETS UNDERWAY ON SUNDAY IN QATAR, WITH FRANCE HOPING TO BECOME THE FIRST TEAM TO SUCCESSFULLY DEFEND THE TITLE SINCE BRAZIL 60 YEARS AGO. A LOOK AT SIX OF THE WORLD’S BEST PLAYERS WHO WILL BE COMPETING IN THE TOURNAMENT

1

LIONEL MESSI (ARG)
Arguably the greatest player of all time, Messi has yet to emulate past legends Pele and Diego Maradona by winning football's biggest prize. He did finally win a major international tournament with Argentina when he was the driving force behind their Copa America triumph last year. The 35-year-old has said this will "very likely" be his last World Cup and will be desperate to go one better than 2014, when Argentina lost the final to Germany in extra time. Lionel Scaloni's side have high hopes of winning a third world title, heading into the tournament on a 36-match unbeaten run. Messi scored his 91st international goal in a 5-0 friendly win over the United Arab Emirates on

2

CRISTIANO RONALDO (POR)
Messi's long-time rival for the status of world's best player, Ronaldo will also surely be appearing at a World Cup for the final time, aged 37. International football's all-time record scorer recently netted the 700th club goal of his career. Ronaldo won an emotional title at Euro 2016 with Portugal but their best effort with him on a global stage remains a semifinal exit in 2006. He will be expecting to score in a record-breaking fifth straight World Cup, surpassing Pele, Miroslav Klose and Uwe Seeler. Ronaldo will have to put a difficult start to the season with Manchester United behind him, having struggled for form before accusing the club of "betraying" him.

3

KYLIAN MBAPPE (FRA)
His France team-mate Karim Benzema is the current Ballon d'Or holder but the world champions' most important player remains Mbappe, more than four years since he starred at the 2018 World Cup. The Paris Saint-Germain forward became the first teenager to score in a World Cup final since Pele with his strike in France's 4-2 victory over Croatia. Mbappe, now 23, has denied reports he is attempting to leave PSG mid-season just months after signing a lucrative new contract. After winning the best young player trophy in Russia, he will have his eyes set on the senior prize this time around.

4

NEYMAR (BRAZIL)
Brazil head into the tournament as favourites to win a record-extending sixth World Cup. The strong form of Neymar this season for PSG will be a big plus point for coach Tite after a difficult spell for the 30-year-old. Neymar heads to Qatar just two goals short of equalling Pele's all-time Brazil scoring record, albeit having already played 29 more matches. The Selecao were beaten by Belgium in the quarterfinals four years ago, leaving Neymar still waiting to make up for 2014, when he missed the humiliating 7-1 semifinal thrashing by Germany on home soil through injury.

5

EDOUARD MENDY (SENEGAL)
The Chelsea goalkeeper lost his place as first-choice goalkeeper under Graham Potter this season after a string of costly errors but will be crucial to Senegal's hopes of becoming the first African World Cup semifinalists. Mendy, a Champions League winner in 2021, saved a penalty as Senegal beat Egypt in a shootout in the Africa Cup of Nations final earlier this year. The 30-year-old did start Chelsea's last two Premier League games before this tournament after an injury to Kepa Arrizabalaga. Shorn of star forward Sadio Mane due to injury, Senegal will be desperate for Mendy to rediscover the form that saw him named Fifa's 2021 goalkeeper of the year at the other end of the pitch.

6

SON HEUNG-MIN (SOUTH KOREA)
The Tottenham forward is undoubtedly Asian football's biggest star and he will be carrying South Korea's hopes in a tight-looking Group H if he can recover from a fractured eye socket. Son shared the Premier League Golden Boot last season with Liverpool's Salah, despite not taking penalties for Spurs. He has netted 35 times in 104 internationals, including the second goal of the Koreans' stunning 2018 win over Germany which dumped the reigning champions out in the group stage.