



50
GLORIOUS YEARS

MUSCAT DAILY

AN APEX MEDIA PUBLICATION

WEDNESDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2020

16 PAGE ISSUE

www.muscatdaily.com
 Email: muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om

32°C/21°C

OWYA 2020 WINNERS - LAILA ABDULLAH AL HADHRAMI & NADHIRA AL HARTHY
 GO TO PAGES 09 & 16



'World needs nations like Oman that build trust'

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman's foreign policy and the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik have been praised by Volkan Bozkir, president of the United Nations General Assembly.

Bozkir said that the world needs nations like the sultanate that try to prevent rift between countries, support peaceful resolution of disputes, and encourage building trust between people.

He was all praise for the wise policies of the current government when he visited Oman's Permanent Mission to



H E Dr Mohammed bin Awad al Hassan and Volkan Bozkir

the UN in New York.

He said that the sultanate under the leadership of His Majesty the Sultan is characterised by wisdom and realism.

Praising the foreign policy of the sultanate, he said it is based on respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, which has earned it international respect.

The meeting at the sultanate's Permanent Mission was attended by H E Dr Mohammed bin Awad al Hassan, Oman's Permanent Representative to the UN, ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and a number of Arab ambassadors.

IKEA to open at Oman Avenues Mall in Q1 2022

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The globally renowned furniture brand IKEA is all set to enter Oman with its first mega store being developed at Oman Avenues Mall in Muscat.

Spread over two floors, the new store would be one of the iconic Swedish retailer in the region. The announcement was made following the signing of a development agreement between Al Taher Group, a diversified business group in the sultanate, and the UAE-based conglomerate, Al Futtaim Group. The strategic partnership promises to boost the diverse retail offering of Oman Avenues Mall, as it reenergises the country's thriving trade landscape.

Commenting on the announcement, Sheikh Mohammed bin Saud al Khalili, board member of Al Taher Group, said, "We are pleased to collaborate with Al Futtaim Group to bring the globally renowned IKEA brand to Oman Avenues Mall. At Al Taher, we are well equipped to confidently approach new market opportunities on a global scale, while continuing to build winning relationships."

"This move is in line with the vision to provide the necessary impetus to promote the sultanate as a premier investment



We are pleased to collaborate with Al Futtaim Group to bring the globally renowned IKEA brand to Oman Avenues Mall

SHEIKH MOHAMMED
BIN SAUD AL KHALILI

destination across the region and beyond. We believe that IKEA Oman will not only strengthen the position of Oman Avenues Mall as the premier shopping destination, but also position the mall firmly as the shopping mall for the whole of Oman."

The construction of the IKEA store is now in full swing, with the expected opening slated for Q1 of 2022. Oman's first IKEA store will not only serve its capital city and the vicinity, but also attract shoppers from across the sultanate.

Talking about the brand's strong expansion roadmap, Vinod Jayan, managing director of IKEA-Al Futtaim Group, said, "We are very excited to announce the entry of IKEA into Oman, which wouldn't have been possible without an expert partner like the Al Taher Group and a shopping mall platform like Oman Avenues Mall. Choosing the right partner, right location and developing the right infrastructure for an IKEA store is critical to the brand's expansion in a new market. These decisions were indeed instrumental in our choice of being associated with a strong mall partner like Oman Avenues Mall, that will now enable the new destination IKEA to be placed in the heart of Muscat."

"The presence of leading global brands with a flavour of local shopping at Oman Avenues Mall is in perfect synergy with IKEA's local-global philosophy. We look forward to a mutually rewarding association."

Continued on Page 03

Team formed to curb 'hidden trade' activities

Our Correspondent
Muscat

H E Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, has issued Ministerial Decision No (183/2020) to form a team to look into the practice of multiple commercial registrations and reduce the phenomenon of 'hidden trade'.

The team will be headed by H E Dr Saleh bin Said Masan,

Undersecretary for Commerce and Industry in the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, and include members of a number of competent authorities such as Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Interior, Royal Oman Police, Ministry of Labour, Muscat Municipality, Dhofar Municipality, Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Riyada.

The team will review the mechanism of multiple com-

mercial registrations and ensure that private establishments continue to conduct business legally and companies are committed to decisions on provision of adequate housing for expatriate workers.

The team will also propose appropriate solutions to curb the practice of hidden trade and follow up on its implementation. Among other things, also called 'free visa' earlier, the practice involves registering

multiple companies with employees who are brought into the country. Such employees don't work for the registered company but instead pay the owners a monthly fee.

The team will also hold meetings with the private sector and authorities to discuss their proposals to limit multiple commercial registrations, and ensure that companies adhere to the Omanisation rates.

Continued on Page 02



MARINA
HOME
URBAN • EXOTIC

NEW
arrivals

22 060 999 OMAN AVENUES MALL, AL KHUWAIR, MUSCAT

MARINAHOMEINTERIORS

Oman's unique geology, caves to be discussed at London event

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The 800mn-year story of Oman's unique geology and caves will be the topic of discussion at Oman Natural Heritage Lecture 2020, the fifth in the series of annual lectures. This year, the lecture will be broadcast live online on October 21 at 4pm from the Royal Geographical Society (RGS), London (7pm in Muscat).

The two distinguished Omani speakers, Dr Mohammed al Kindi and Nabil al Saqri, will be giving the lecture showcasing Oman as a paradise for geologists. 'Many text-book examples of rocks, fossils, structures, caves, meteorites and land terrains are found in the sultanate. Oman's geology is unique and of interest to all earth scientists of all ages around the world,' stated the organisers.

Oman hosts the best-exposed and largest ophiolites, slabs of old oceanic plates, which can be easily observed within a short drive from Muscat.

Thousands of meteorites can be found on Oman's desert plains, including rare Martian and lunar meteorites that provide a lot of information about the solar system. Cavers also love Oman, as new discoveries are being made today. 'The cave systems in Oman are among the largest, deepest and most beautiful in the world. In Oman, evidence of the oldest fossils of plants and animals are found. Early man passed through, even settled, as is evident from the huge number of



(Supplied photos)



Dr Mohammed al Kindi



Nabil al Saqri

Oman is considered one of the most attractive destinations for cavers from across the globe. The cave systems are among the largest and most beautiful found in the world

artefacts that he left behind. Civilisations flourished in this land once called Majan and Mazoon.'

Oman is also considered one of the most attractive destinations for cavers from across the

globe. It includes a wide spectrum of caves formed by different types of rocks in the mountain chains of north and south Oman. They contain huge cave chambers, very deep pitches, spectacularly decorated rooms, large sinkholes, narrow tunnels, and complex passage systems. Many of these are home to unique cave fauna, and some have been used by humans, since the Paleolithic, for various purposes.

Despite decades of cave exploration in Oman, conducted by numerous caving teams including members of the Oman Cave Exploration Team, of which Kindi is an important part, many caves in Oman are still under-explored or not properly surveyed or reported. Kindi,

along with his team, has conducted a project to document these caves and describe them to the scientific community and keen adventurers.

Saqri is a schoolteacher of information technology from Jebel Akhdar. Having lived in one of the most diverse natural attractions in Oman, Saqri, over time, became deeply passionate about the documentation and protection of wildlife and natural wonders in Oman. He specialises in macrophotography of fauna and flora, particularly of insects. He is a member of the Oman Cave Exploration Team.

Registration for the Oman Natural Heritage Lecture 2020 can be done for free on www.eventbrite.co.uk

439 new COVID-19 cases, 8 deaths

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Health (MoH) on Tuesday confirmed 439 new cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), taking the total to 111,033. The number of deaths reported during the same time was eight. This is the first time the number of new cases are below 500 since September 15 – a good sign thanks to the current night curfew.

The number of those who have recovered has also increased by 549. 'The number of recoveries has increased to 96,949, while the number of deaths is 1,122,' an MoH statement said.

As of Tuesday, a total of 501 patients were admitted in health institutions, including 207 in ICUs.

MoH advises all citizens and residents to continue washing hands with water and soap, avoid touching the face, nose, mouth and eyes, and follow healthy habits when coughing

CASES FROM OCT 13 TO 20	
Oct 13	638
Oct 14	563
Oct 15	520
Oct 16 to 18 (Average - 552)	1,657
Oct 19	641
Oct 20	439

and sneezing.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning has announced a temporary suspension of work at its department in Buraimi governorate.

In a statement, the ministry said, 'Services will be temporary suspended at the Urban Planning Department in Buraimi governorate as a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The resumption of work at the department will be announced later.'

Team formed to curb 'hidden trade' activities

Continued from Page 01

Following the ministerial decision, there was a flurry of activity on social media.

"This is an excellent decision and companies must adhere to the Omanisation rates," Sultan bin Majid al Abri tweeted.

Another Twitter user commented, "It is necessary to activate inspection patrols for

commercial activities to monitor business owners and their obligation to the rights of their workers in terms of wages and housing."

Nabil al Riyami said, "It is an excellent decision and we hope to see real results."

According to Azad al Omari, it is a "beautiful decision at the right time".

Oman Women of the Year

Congratulations,

You have the drive!

The drive to change norms. The drive to take up challenges.
The courage to dream and the drive to make it come true.

Mazda celebrates 'woman power' with the thirty extraordinary achievers.

Stamp launched to mark Oman and China relations



Muscat - In recognition of the sultanate's special relationship with China, Oman Post, in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry, has launched a new stamp.

The launch ceremony was conducted with the participation of H.E. Mohammed bin Nasser al Wahaibi, Undersecretary for Administration and Financial Affairs in the Foreign Ministry; H.E. Ali bin Khalfan al Jabri, Undersecretary for Information in the Ministry of Information; H.E. Li Lingbing, Ambassador of China to Oman; and Abdulmalik al Balushi, CEO of Oman Post.

Commemorating 40 years of official diplomatic relations between the two countries, the



stamp depicts one of China's most famous historical landmarks, the Great Wall of China, as well as an Omani fort and the historical Sindbad voyage from Sohar to Guangzhou. The special issue includes 500 first day covers and 3,000 souvenir sheets.

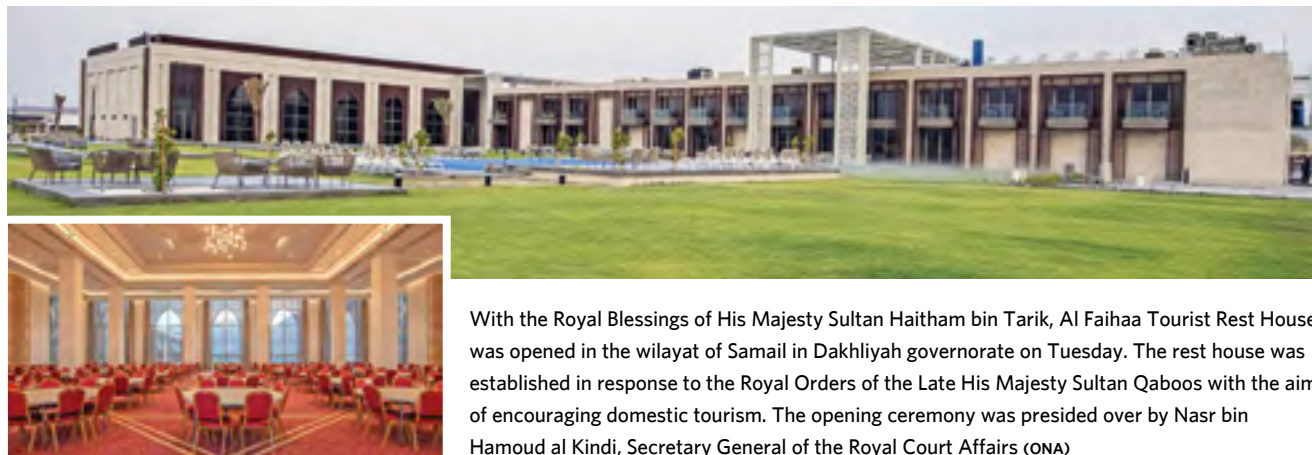
Balushi said, "We're proud to celebrate the unique friendship Oman and China share. At Oman Post, we always seek to create stamps that represent

topics of historical, political and cultural significance and immortalise them for all to enjoy. Our latest issue is a great reminder of the positive connections Oman has made throughout history."

Oman and China have enjoyed a friendly relationship since official diplomatic ties were established in 1978, although traditional ties date back 1,200 years. Due to its strategic location on the trade route between the East and the West, Oman's port of Sohar was once known as the 'Gateway to China'.

To reserve the new stamp, subscribe to the Philatelic Department through philatelic@omanpost.om

REST HOUSE OPENS IN SAMAIL WITH HM'S BLESSINGS



With the Royal Blessings of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Al Fahaa Tourist Rest House was opened in the wilayat of Samail in Dakhiliyah governorate on Tuesday. The rest house was established in response to the Royal Orders of the Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos with the aim of encouraging domestic tourism. The opening ceremony was presided over by Nasr bin Hamoud al Kindi, Secretary General of the Royal Court Affairs (ONA)

Higher education ministry to fund 248 research projects

Muscat - The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation has announced its approval to fund 248 research projects at a cost of RO1.2mn.

The ministry stated that the projects fall within the Block Funding Programme in 28 governmental and private institutions in the sultanate. The ministry has completed the signing of the support and funding agreements for the research proposals approved for the 2020-21 academic year.

The application period for the programme ended in June, and all the submitted proposals were reviewed and checked to see if they complied with the an-

nounced research funding conditions.

The research projects approved for support this year were chosen from 738 proposals that were submitted. The academic and non-academic governmental and private institutions benefiting from the support for this year include various scientific research sectors, namely the communications and information systems sector, the environment and natural resources sector, the health and community service sector, the energy and industry sector, and the education and human resources sector.

The financial aid is distributed at various academic levels, such

as research projects for doctoral holders, research projects for master's and doctoral students, and research projects for students of academic institutions as well as students studying at their own expense outside the sultanate. Dr Omar al Abri from the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, said the research support provided by the ministry aims to build local research capacity, provide a stimulating environment for scientific research and researchers and build their capabilities at various academic levels.

"The Block Funding Programme is considered one of the important research support and

funding programmes, as it has been developed to keep pace with the requirements of the research and provides institutions with a wider scope to present competitive research after evaluating and presenting it as a package."

Dr Abri said 72 projects will be funded among PhD holders with up to RO20,000 for each project as a maximum for a period of two years, while 62 projects for master's holders funded with up to RO3,000 per project as a maximum, and 114 student projects from higher education institutions funded at a maximum of RO1,500 for each research project.

Furniture brand IKEA to open at Oman Avenues Mall

Continued from Page 01

Along with enhancing the road/flyovers infrastructure around the mall to handle the increased volume of traffic with the expansion, Al Taher Group is also developing additional parking facilities which would connect horizontal and vertical parking to the store as well as a new link to the second floor of the existing mall which houses the food court, cinemas and the entertainment centre.

Expressing gratitude to Al Taher and Al Futtaim Group, Ananth A V, director, Lulu Group International that operates the mall, said, "We are pleased and proud to be hosting IKEA at the Oman Avenues Mall. It is our constant endeavour to provide unmatched shopping experience to our customers all under one roof, hassle-free and safe. The opening of one of the largest IKEA stores in the Middle-East at Oman Avenues Mall is a testament to this and is in line with our commitment to sustained growth, in light of the changing retail environment. We are committed to building Oman Avenues Mall as the most trusted and dominant mall brand in Oman that would stand the test of time for the future of retail trade in Oman."

ANNOUNCEMENT

Internal Tender Committee, Ministry of Labour, invites the following Tender:

Tender No.	Tender Description	Establishments entitled to subscription and are registered with the board of tenders	Last date for electronic purchasing	Date of tender submission
39/2020	Providing cleaning services for the General Directorate of Labour in Al Dakhiliya Governorate, Samail District, and the Joint Inspection Building in Dakhiliya	—	Sunday 15/11/2020 at 02:00 pm	Sunday 29/11/2020 at 10:00 am

- Specialized establishments can obtain electronic documents from this link below, starting from Wednesday 21/10/2020, 7:30 AM.

https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om/

- Each bid is to be attached with a bank guarantee or a certified cheque from one of the banks operating in the Sultanate of (1%) of the value of the tender for the Ministry of Manpower, valid for a period of (90) days from the date of submission of the tender.
- Each electronic bid is to be attached with a copy of the bank guarantee and the original bank guarantee must be submitted at Internal Tender Committee, ground floor at the Ministry's Building at Airport Heights, no later than the date of submission.
- Tenders envelopes will be opened at 11:00am on Sunday 29/11/2020.

(The ministry is not bound to accept the lowest price of or any tender)

labour_OMAN

Send your comments to muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om

ANNOUNCEMENT

IDP STUDY ABROAD
VIRTUAL SEMINAR

Take a step towards your international education ambition with IDP

Meet 115 leading universities from Australia, UK, USA, New Zealand and Ireland coming to your city

Scan today for free registration and list of participating universities

Oman
 Thursday, 22nd October 2020 - Saturday, 24th October 2020
 Australia & New Zealand 9:00 am - 1:00 pm (Oman Time)
 United Kingdom & Ireland 3:00 pm - 8:00 pm (Oman Time)
 United States & Canada 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm (Oman Time)

Tel: 240 91800
Email: info.muscat@idp.com

/idpOMAN
www.idp.com

Sifra

OMAN'S ONLY SODIUM FREE DRINKING WATER

Sodium Free Drinking Water

The healthy choice

It is beneficial to limit sodium intake if you have blood pressure, diabetes, heart or kidney disease.

5 IN GALLON BOTTLE

Call Toll-Free **800 71 222** or GSM **9275 5522**

OmanOasis OmanOasisOfficial www.omanoasis.com
 OASIS WATER COMPANY LLC P.O.Box: 87, PC: 124, Rusayl, Sultanate of Oman.

OAB launches ‘Step to the Future 3.0’

As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance its digital services and improve its overall customer experience, Omani Arab Bank (OAB) announced the launch of a wide range of advanced digital solutions set to provide superior customer experience within the banking industry in Oman. Introduced at a conference on Tuesday, these new services emphasise the bank’s commitment to technological progress. Entitled ‘Step to the Future 3.0’, this marks the next stage of OAB’s digital evolution, with various AI-driven e-payment solutions and facilities set to make banking for its customers even easier.

Any Omani citizen or resident can now take advantage of a one-of-a-kind simplified and secure online onboarding system via the OAB Online App, which allows the opening of an account in under five minutes, without the need to physically visit the branch or sign any printed documents. Additionally, OAB customers with personal loans can instantly top-up their existing loans through the app, receive approval and have the additional amount transferred to their bank account almost immediately.

Lastly, customers who open new accounts through the app can benefit from a new Super Growth savings account, which offers a special interest rate of 3 per cent per annum.

Commenting on the launch of



‘Step to the Future 3.0’, Rashad al Shaikh, acting head of the Retail Banking Division at OAB, said, “OAB has continuously en-

deavoured to strengthen its presence in the digital arena and implement innovative solutions and modern facilities to position

itself as a pioneer in the local banking sector. Given the rapid changes brought about by technological advancement, we

are aware that businesses across the globe are transitioning into the digital space. Therefore we aim to continuously

invest in our digital platforms by introducing first-to-market solutions that provide exceptional customer experience and rein-

forcing our position as an innovative agile financial institution.

“We are keen on enhancing our customers’ experience by offering a comprehensive and convenient way to bank, something that has grown in importance especially now, when it is advised to socially distance at every opportunity. By visiting the OAB Online App, customers can take advantage of our products and services, complemented by advanced levels of security and confidentiality features.”

“Furthermore, we have introduced a new functionality for the OAB Online App. As part of our recently launched 50th National Day campaign, existing customers can now submit their referrals in a few simple steps. The campaign is our way of thanking our valued customers by offering them cash prizes in exchange for nominating their friends or family to open a new OAB account,” Shaikh added.

“The recent restrictions on mobility to ensure everyone’s health and safety has resulted in the need for a reliable digital infrastructure. Regardless of these developments, we at OAB believe that to keep pace with rapid technological changes, we must adapt accordingly. This is why we took the decision to invest in modern technology, several years ago, which has led to the launch of our ‘Step to the Future’ initiative. “



FINCORP AL AMAL FUND

UNAUDITED RESULTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Dear Unit holders,

On behalf of the Investors' Committee, I hereby present to you the un-audited financial results of Fincorp Al Amal Fund (AIGF), for the period ended September 30, 2020.

FUND PERFORMANCE

Particulars	Amount in RO				
	Q3 2020 30-Sep-20	Q2 2020 30-Jun-20	YTD 30-Sep-20	YTD 30-Sep-19	FY 2019 31-Dec-19
Total Income/(Loss)	827,329	729,345	-288,782	265,114	548,884
Fund Expenses	-46,513	-51,382	-152,874	-138,179	-198,643
Net Investment Gain/(Loss)	777,816	677,963	-441,656	126,935	350,241

Particulars	Amount in RO			
	30-Sep-20	30-Sep-19	H1 2020 30-Jun-20	FY 2019 31-Dec-19
Net Asset Value (in RO)	8,056,427	8,206,900	7,278,412	8,840,620
Units Outstanding	8,006,177	7,606,901	8,006,177	7,985,174
Net Asset Value per unit	1.006	1.079	0.909	1.107
Fund Performance (net of fees)	-5.05%	9.01%	-13.82%	11.62%
S&P GCC Composite Price Index	-7.20%	3.71%	-16.07%	8.30%

Q3 2020 PERFORMANCE

Global markets gained in Q3 2020 albeit with some divergence in regional returns as US and Asian markets outperformed European markets. US markets gained on the back of the Fed's loose monetary policy and improving economic data while European markets were lower as infections escalated leading to new restrictions. Asian markets ended the quarter on a positive note benefitting from improving macro data, softer US dollar and flat commodity prices even as rising Covid cases and tensions in China-US relations persisted. Strength in the GCC markets continued in Q3 led by strong gains in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Dubai markets as governments announced further economic stimulus measures and labour reforms. OPEC announced its expectations that oil supply glut could diminish by 2021 as road transport as well as aviation sectors, which have been severely impacted due to the pandemic, begin to recover. Crude oil prices remained flat during Q3 after posting a strong recovery in Q2 2020. During Q3 2020, Al Amal Fund gained 10.69% compared to the benchmark's gain of 10.57%. For 9M 2020, your Fund is down 5.04% compared to the benchmark's loss of 7.19%.

MARKET OUTLOOK

As signs of economic improvement emerge in several economies, we believe, capital markets could see further gains in the near term supported by loose monetary policies and ample liquidity. Rising hopes for a vaccine by early 2021 will also support an upward trend. Downside risks to markets could arise from elevated valuations in the US and some regional markets, emergence of a second wave of Covid 19 infections leading to more lockdowns and US election outcome. As commodity prices normalize and economic activity recovers globally as well as in select sectors in the region, there is good scope for GCC markets to perform reasonably well in the short term.

INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The fund's investment strategy seeks to build a portfolio of stocks with attractive fundamentals, valuations, and dividend yields, while actively managing downside risk in case of market corrections. In view of the unexpected impact of Covid-19 on markets in general, the Investor Committee took measures to enhance the strategy of the fund and Al Amal has expanded its investment mandate from being only GCC to include international markets as well. Given the current uncertain environment, your Fund is well positioned to take advantage of opportunities as clarity of market direction emerges in line with the fund's strategy.

IN CONCLUSION

The Investors' Committee would like to express its appreciation and gratefulness to His Majesty Haitham bin Tariq Al Said and the Omani Government for providing a secure and stable economic environment focused on driving growth and continued prosperity for all.

The Committee also wishes to thank the Capital Market Authority and Muscat Securities Market for their sustained and continued efforts in building a vibrant capital market and the management team for their diligence and dedication in managing the fund successfully in a challenging economic environment.

On behalf of the Investors' Committee, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the unit holders for their continued support and confidence.

On Behalf of the Investors Committee
Aymen bin Hamed Al Bussaidi
Chairman

Dated: October 19, 2020

UN AUDITED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT

	30 September 2020 RO	30 September 2019 RO	31 December 2019 RO
ASSETS			
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	7,128,312	6,700,241	8,228,784
Amounts due from brokers	901,576	—	148
Other receivables	1,409	6,755	8,064
Cash and cash equivalents	60,393	1,564,266	687,068
Total assets	8,091,690	8,271,262	8,924,064
Liabilities			
Amounts due to related parties	27,325	45,653	64,259
Accruals and other payables	7,938	18,709	19,185
Total liabilities	35,263	64,362	83,444
Total net assets attributable to the Unitholders	8,056,427	8,206,900	8,840,620
Net asset value per unit	1.006	1.079	1.107

UN AUDITED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

	30 September 2020 RO (9 months)	30 September 2019 RO (9 months)	31 December 2019 RO (12 months)
INCOME			
Dividend income	196,408	206,268	211,530
Net realized (loss) / gain on investments at fair value through profit or loss	(843,087)	(66,091)	(84,627)
Fair value changes in investments at fair value through profit or loss	337,172	97,238	387,073
Net foreign exchange gain	13,220	15,621	16,734
Interest income	3,774	12,074	18,170
Other income	3,731	4	4
	(288,782)	265,114	548,884
EXPENSES			
Management fees	31,289	28,457	40,123
Advisory fees	25,600	23,283	32,828
Administration fees	25,600	23,283	32,828
Custodian fees	8,026	4,479	6,923
Performance fees	—	—	15,067
Brokerage commission expenses (transaction cost)	38,275	13,604	17,623
Investors' Committee's remuneration and meeting attendance fees	7,788	23,942	28,734
General and administration	16,296	21,131	24,517
	152,874	138,179	198,643
Net (loss) / profit and total comprehensive income for the period	(441,656)	126,935	350,241
(Loss) / profit per unit	(0.055)	0.020	0.053

Note:
The complete accounts, either in Arabic and English as requested, will be sent by mail within 7 days of request to any unitholder who requests the Fund at the address: PO Box 782, PC 131, Sultanate of Oman, Tel : +968 24822327, Fax : +968 24822390



شركة المركز المالي ش.م.ع.
The Financial Corporation Co. SAOG

ادارة الاصول | وساطة | تمويل الشركات والاستشارات | بحوث
Asset Management | Brokerage | Corporate Finance and Advisory | Research

P.O. Box 782, P.C 131,
Sultanate of Oman, Phone: (968) 24822327,
Fax: (968) 24822390, E-mail: fincorp@fincorp.org,
Website: www.fincorp.org

MALE & FEMALE PHYSIOTHERAPIST VACANCIES

Looking for male and female
physiotherapists available in Muscat,
Oman with attractive salaries depending
on experience and can start immediately.

Candidates must have Oman Ministry
of Health license, copy of passport,
ID card, transfer certificate from
previous employer, etc.

Candidates must send their CV and other
documents to raed.hassan@alanzoar.com &
justine.anunciacion@alanzoar.com



INTRODUCING

Region's first Zinc and Copper
fortified drinking water specially formulated to
help boost your immune system. Get your daily
dose of good health on the go with Immuno.

Available in leading outlets across Oman.



معززة
بالزنك والنحاس
Fortified with
Zinc & Copper

NEW

Oasis Water Co. LLC, PO Box 67, Rusayl 124, Sultanate of Oman.
CALL TOLL-FREE 800 71 222 or GSM: 9278 5522.
www.oasisoasis.com  [OmanOasis](https://www.facebook.com/OmanOasis)  [OmanOasisOfficial](https://twitter.com/OmanOasisOfficial)



Week of Italian language

Under the theme 'Italian Between Word and Image: Graffiti, Illustrations, Comic Strips', the 20th edition of the Week of Italian Language in the World kicked off worldwide on October 19.

Organised by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and its diplomatic and consular network, the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism and the Ministry of University and Research, as well as the main partners of linguistic promotion in Italy, the 'Week' has over time become one of the most important initiatives dedicated to the celebration of the Italian language in the world. An important partner of the initiative is the Government of the Swiss Confederation, one of whose official languages is Italian.

For the 2020 edition, the Italian Embassy in Muscat will propose, among various activities, a reading and illustration online workshop for children by the illustrator Chiara Armellini and dedicated to Gianni Rodari, to celebrate this famous author on the occasion of the centenary of his birth.

To discover and compare the realities of comics between Italy and Oman, Lorenzo Ceccotti 'LRNZ', an Italian visual artist, will lead a workshop with the Omani author Nof al Zadjali and other Omani illustrators.

Lucca Comics will also include an online competition for young talents in comic strips.

Bank Muscat wins Best Bank for SMEs award from Asiamoney

Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the sultanate, has won the Best Bank for SMEs 2020 (Oman) from Asiamoney in recognition of its role in strengthening small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) so as to diversify the sultanate's economy and create job opportunities for Omani youth.

Facilitating financial inclusion, Bank Muscat's SME products and services have created a benchmark, helping SMEs to overcome hurdles and chart successful ventures with proper planning, financial discipline and prudent management. Early on, Bank Muscat identified the opportunities and challenges faced by this vital segment to develop a relevant suite of products and services, which have been making a world of difference to this crucial pillar of the economy over the last two decades.

Ibrahim bin Khamis al Balushi,

assistant general manager - Small & Medium Enterprises, Bank Muscat, said, "The SME sector plays an important role in the development of economies across the globe. This award recognises the bank's pioneering efforts in boosting the SME sector in Oman so as to contribute in a big way towards creating employment, improving economic diversification and increasing its contribution to the GDP. We are very happy and encouraged to see our efforts in developing this sector recognised by a top international publication like Asiamoney."

Recognising the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) early on as an economic engine of growth, Bank Muscat launched its Al Wathbah programme to provide financing to the sector in the early 2000s. Over the last many years, the programme has succeeded in



building up this crucial part of the economy to one of substantial strength. The bank's focus on SMEs has been gathering pace and the bank has supported thousands of enterprises with different banking and financing facilities over the years.

An important part of the bank's drive to promote sustainability is the non-financial support extended to SMEs. Several initiatives have been launched over the years including the Souq al Wathbah annual exhibition

and the Al Wathbah SME Business Zone dedicated for usage by SME customers of the bank. Also, the bank has been running the unique Al Wathbah Academy training programme to develop the skills and knowledge of Omani entrepreneurs. About 160 candidates have benefited from the SME Academy since it was launched in 2014.

Bank Muscat's "Najahi" programme is another important part of helping micro and small enterprises grow and strengthen the economy. The specially-designed suite of Najahi products include collateral-free credit facilities for micro and small businesses. The Najahi suite of products include the value-added Najahi Current Account, Najahi Flexi Loan to support working capital, business expansion and other business needs; the Najahi Business Credit Card; and Najahi PoS Receivables fi-

ancing for customers who use PoS machines for sales. On the non-financial services, Najahi offers knowledge-sharing sessions under "Najahi Talks" as well as digital training programmes such as "Maharat Min Google".

It must be noted that the bank also provides Sharia'a-compliant products and services to SMEs for their different business needs like Diminishing Musharakha, Murabaha, Ijarah and Wakalah Bilisthimar through its Meethaq SME unit. As the largest financial services provider in Oman, Bank Muscat's unique initiatives are particularly important in the backdrop of the government's top priority to develop the SME sector in Oman. The bank has reaffirmed its commitment to continue strengthening sustainable development in the sultanate with both existing as well as new, innovative products and services in the future.



Verstappen of Honda second in Eifel Grand Prix

Max Verstappen fought through his very last lap around the Nurburgring to stay in the hunt for second in the Formula 1 World Championship, finishing second in Sunday's Eifel Grand Prix while earning the extra point for the fastest race lap on the last of his 60 trips around the 3.198-mile circuit.

Verstappen had a strong weekend in the Honda-powered Aston Martin Red Bull, qualifying third and running in the top three all day en route to his sixth top-two finish of the year. The Dutchman's performance, coupled with a DNF by Valtteri Bottas, promoted him to within 14 points for the second spot in the championship with six races to go.

The Red Bull driver and eventual racewinner Lewis Hamilton - who equaled Michael Schumacher's all-time record of 91 F1 wins Sunday - ran away from the field and threatened to put everyone else in the race a lap down before Lando Norris' stricken McLaren brought out a safety car with 15 laps to run.

But while the safety car pro-

vided a free pit stop for new tires, the cold temperatures (49F) and the five laps it took to clear the Norris car meant that grip would be tough to find on the cold tires. Verstappen was equal to the task in holding off the Renault of Daniel Ricciardo however, and chased Hamilton home to take second place.

Scuderia Alpha Tauri's Pierre Gasly carded his second-best result of 2020 with a sixth-place run, making up six positions after starting 12th. The Frenchman ran 32 laps on his first set of tires to climb to eighth before his first stop, and then made passes of Romain Grosjean and Charles Leclerc after the Lap 50 restart to secure the sixth spot.

Verstappen said, "Overall it was a positive weekend and I think we can be very pleased with another second place. I tried to keep as close as possible to Lewis during the race and we just didn't quite have the pace to fight him but overall I was pleased with the performance. We have taken a step forward with the car this weekend, so I am of course happy with that."

Oman Refreshment honours tennis star Fatma



Oman Refreshment Company has presented the tennis player, Fatma al Nabhani, a gift to celebrate Omani Women's Day. This comes in addition to her being the brand ambassador of Aquafina in Oman. Fatma also renewed the annual partnership for the third consecutive year.

Oman Refreshment Company, who are the licensed bottler and distributor of Pepsi Co products in Oman, held the signing ceremony in its Muscat head office.

The ceremony was attended by company CEO, Youssef Ezzikhe, Fatma and several of the company's senior management. The signing ceremony was held a day after the Omani Women's Day celebrations.

Ezzikhe said, "We are pleased to have Fatma on board with us for a third year. We recognise her achievements on the international tennis scene and continue to encourage her, and the Omani community towards achieving greatness."



KARWA MOTORS

The TENDERS Committee announces the following tenders:

Tender No.	Subject	Document Fees	Closing Date
MJN-KWM-PM-TED-00009	Design, Supply, Installation & Commissioning Of Portacabins Temporary Staff Accommodation For Karwa Motors Project	OMR 10/-	27th October 2020

Conditions:

- ▶ The tender documents package can be obtained from the Finance Department of the company on 21st, 22nd and 25th October 2020 from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM, upon payment of a non-refundable document fees and signed authorization letter to collect tender document with company stamp.
- ▶ KEY DATES:
 - Issue Tender Package – 21st October 2020, 22nd October 2020 and 25th October 2020
 - Last Date for Submission – 27th October 2020
- ▶ Tender should be submitted not later than 12.00 noon on the closing date and must be deposited. Karwa Motors Tendering Office, located Office No 5-25, 02nd Floor, Finaa Al Fardan Building No.254, Way 4204, Plot No 836, North Al Ghubra, Postal Code: 1115, Muscat, and should be in sealed envelopes addressed to: Tender Committee, Karwa Motors quoting the Tender No. and subject.
- ▶ Offers arriving after the closing date & time shall not be accepted.

E-Mail: tendercommittee@karwamotors.com

WE ARE HIRING

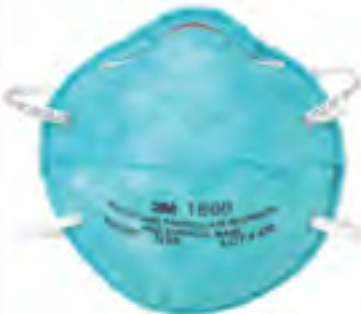
A well-known, leading and reputable Omani manufacturing company in the FMCG industry, having presence across GCC has the following job openings to be filled in immediately :

- Territory Development Manager – Oman
- Trade Marketing Manager - Oman
- Product Manager - Oman
- Area Sales Manager – Saudi Arabia
- Business Development Executive – Pharmacy – Oman
- Business Development Executive – Key Accounts – UAE
- Export Logistics Executive - Oman
- Sales Executives / Pre-Sellers- Oman
- Sales Executives – UAE
- Truck Salesmen - Oman
- Merchandisers - Oman
- Regulatory Affairs Executive – Oman
- Electrician or Instrumentation Technician - Oman
- Electrical / Mechanical Supervisor for Process plant - Oman

Salaries and perks will be commensurate with qualification and experience. Candidates with 4-6 years of relevant experience and qualification can send their CV to Omanjobs2021@gmail.com

MEDICAL SUPPLY SERVICES for Home, Hospital, Clinic, School, College, Ministry, Club, Company/Factory

3M N95



1860/1860S

3M N95

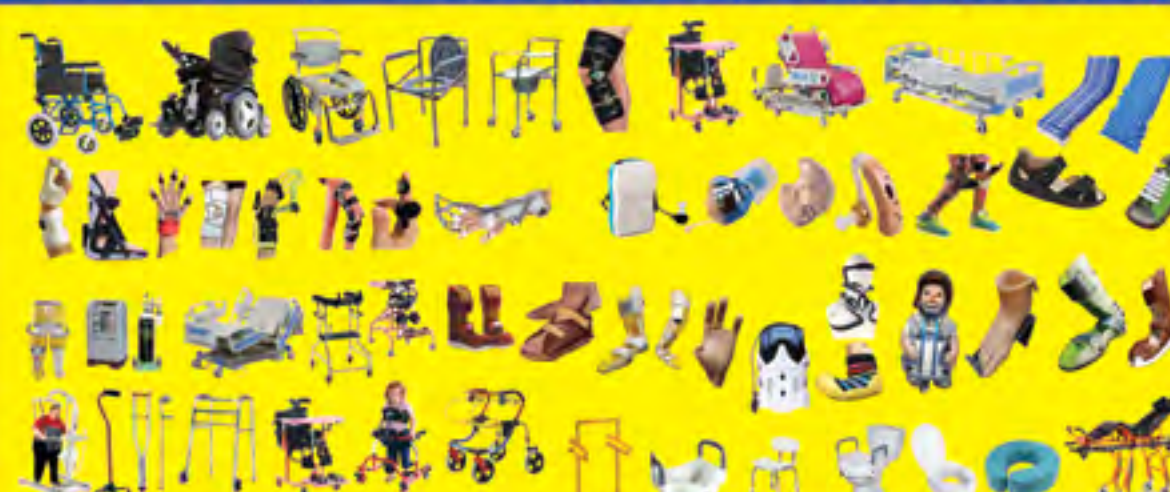


8210

3M N95



9010



For any information please Contact us by phone call & WhatsApp

DR. KUMAR RAKESH
92989109 97700963

Clean City LLC,
Opposite Al Nahada Hospital, Muscat, Oman

EDUCATION FURNITURE



uniQue
CITY TRADING

CAMP FURNITURE



Contact: 9611 5353 / 9611 5252 Email: mybusinessoman@gmail.com

VACANCY- REAL ESTATE ADMINISTRATOR

In the field of real estate development and investment, subject to the following conditions:

Bachelor's degree in Architecture engineering – Civil engineering - Project Management – Commerce (accounting major) or Business Administration.	5-8 years of experience in the areas of real estate and residential complexes management, administration, finance as well as maintenance.
Proficiency in Arabic and English.	Valid Driving License.
	30 to 35 years old.

The deadline set for the submission of applications is 22.10.2020

Please send your recent CV to the following email: hr.recruitment102020@gmail.com

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

أوربت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

- 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

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

Golden opportunity for INVESTOR VISA in Oman, Residency, investment company without local sponsor, furnished office, complete documentation.

Contact Al Mamari Global
+968-97447717, 94279160

• RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • OFFICE

DISINFECTION SERVICES for COVID 19



30 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN OMAN

For ENQUIRIES call
94021502 • 95437921 • 98400408

We only use Electro Chemically Activated Solution/disinfectant which is safe and certified.

- FREE ESTIMATES
- 24x7 AVAILABILITY
- PROFESSIONAL TEAM
- EMERGENCY SERVICES

MODERN CLEANING SERVICES AND TRADING LLC
A Subsidiary Unit of W.J. Towell & Co.

PROPERTY FOR SALE

Keelkattalai, Chennai, Duplex house 2BHK, built up 1400 sqft 90 lacs (negotiable), Contact on WhatsApp +917550280258

FREE CLASSIFIED LISTING

Muscat Daily now offers free classified listings for individuals in the following categories: Situations Wanted/ Accommodation Wanted or Available/ Sale of Household Items/ Car for Sale or Wanted/ Matrimonial Alliances (Word limit is 35)

Please email your listing to dailyclassifieds@apexmedia.co.om or call 99104346

The BEST THINGS in life are Sweet!



Wedding Cakes
DELICIOUS SWEET & LOVE

TO ADVERTISE IN MUSCAT DAILY CLASSIFIEDS
CALL 99104346 OR E-MAIL dailyclassifieds@apexmedia.co.om



IPL 2020





QUOTE OF THE DAY
The wicket was stoppy, wasn't easy for batting. Strange game but nice to be on the winning side.
Steven Smith
Rajasthan Royals skipper, after his team's win over Chennai Super Kings, on Monday

Punjab's third win in a row

Dhawan hits back-to-back hundreds; Pooran, Maxwell help Kings XI keep playoff hopes alive



Nicholas Pooran

53

28 BALLS



Shikhar Dhawan

106*

61 BALLS

SCOREBOARD	
DELHI CAPITALS	
P Shaw	c Maxwell b Neesham 7 (1)
S Dhawan	not out 106(61)
S Iyer	c Rahul b Ashwin 14 (12)
R Pant	c Agarwal b Maxwell 14 (20)
M Stoinis	c Agarwal b Shami 9 (10)
S Hetmyer	b Shami 10 (6)
Extras	(lb 1, w 3) 4
TOTAL: 164 for five	
Fall of wickets: 1-25, 2-73, 3-106, 4-141, 5-164	
Bowling: G Maxwell 4-0-31-1, M Shami 4-0-28-2, A Singh 3-0-30-0, J Neesham 2-0-17-1, M Ashwin 4-0-33-1, R Bishnoi 3-0-24-0	
KINGS XI PUNJAB	
KL Rahul	c Sams b Patel 15 (11)
M Agarwal	run out 5 (9)
C Gayle	b Ashwin 29 (13)
N Pooran	c Pant b Rabada 53 (28)
G Maxwell	c Pant b Rabada 32 (24)
D Hooda	not out 15 (22)
J Neesham	not out 10 (8)
Extras	(lb 1, nb 1, w 6) 8
TOTAL: 167 for five in 19 overs	
Fall of wickets: 1-17, 2-52, 3-56, 4-125, 5-147	
Bowling: D Sams 4-0-30-0, K Rabada 4-0-27-2, Axar Patel 4-0-27-1, T Deshpande 2-0-41-0, R Ashwin 4-0-27-1, M Stoinis 1-0-14-0	

TODAY'S
MATCH

ABU DHABI 6PM



KOLKATA
KNIGHT RIDERS

VS



ROYAL
CHALLENGERS
BANGALORE

POINTS TABLE

TEAMS	P	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
DC	10	7	3	0	14	+0.774
MI	9	6	3	0	12	+1.201
RCB	9	6	3	0	12	-0.096
KKR	9	5	4	0	10	-0.607
KXIP	10	4	6	0	8	-0.177
RR	10	4	6	0	8	-0.591
SRH	9	3	6	0	6	+0.008
CSK	10	3	7	0	6	-0.463

P: Played, W: Won, L: Lost, NR: No Result, PTS: Points, NRR: Net Run-Rate

CSK: Chennai Super Kings

RCB: Royal Challengers Bangalore

DC: Delhi Capitals

KKR: Kolkata Knight Riders

KXIP: Kings XI Punjab

MI: Mumbai Indians

RR: Rajasthan Royals

SRH: Sunrisers Hyderabad

Dubai, UAE - Shikhar Dhawan became the first batsman to score back-to-back hundreds in the IPL but it wasn't enough as the Kings XI Punjab beat the Delhi Capitals by five wickets to give their playoff hopes another boost with third straight win, which took them to fifth spot.

Batting first, the Capitals could manage only 164 for five despite Dhawan's unbeaten 106 off 61 balls, which included 12 fours and three sixes. The main reason being the lack of support from the other batsmen, who could muster only 54 from 59 balls, and some excellent death

bowling by the Kings XI bowlers. The Kings XI lost their openers early in the chase but Chris Gayle's 13-ball 29 and Nicholas Pooran's 28-ball 53 meant Punjab stayed on course without any trouble.

Kagiso Rabada dismissed Pooran and Glenn Maxwell in his second spell, but it was too late by then with the Kings XI needing just 17 from the last four overs.

R Ashwin and Axar Patel bowled two quiet overs but James Neesham hit the last ball off the penultimate over deep midwicket to take his side home.

Another Dhawan ton
Prithvi Shaw had scores of 4, 0 and 0 coming into this game and there was no respite for him on Tuesday night either. He tried to go inside-out over extra cover against Neesham, in the fourth over. But a slight roll of fingers over the ball meant Shaw handed a skier to Maxwell at extra cover.

Before the game against the Chennai Super Kings, Dhawan had never scored a T20 hundred in 267 outings but now has two in two. He started with a four and a six off Maxwell in the first over of the match. Dhawan and Shreyas Iyer took the

Capitals past 50 in the sixth over. The two added 48 off 31 balls for the second wicket before Ashwin had Iyer caught behind.

Rishabh Pant didn't have a fruitful outing and was caught at long-on off Maxwell. But there was no stopping for Dhawan, who brought up his fifty off 28 balls. Employing an array of sweep shots, he looted 61 off 32 against the spinners and reached his second successive hundred, in 57 balls, in the 19th over.

Kings XI pull it back
The Capitals were 117 for three at the end of the 15th over but could

manage only 47 in the last five overs. The main reason behind that was Mohammed Shami, who sent down yorker after yorker and gave away only 13 from his last two overs - 18th and 20th of the innings - while also picking up the wickets of Marcus Stoinis and Shimron Hetmyer.

Chasing 165, the Kings XI didn't have the best of the starts. While KL Rahul deposited a free hit from Daniel Sams for six over long-off, Axar Patel had him soon after. With Gayle new at the crease, Capitals used Sams and Tushar Deshpande for the next two overs, and Gayle took full ad-

vantage of that. He tonked Deshpande for three fours and two sixes to take the Capitals to 50 at the end of the fifth over before R Ashwin came into the attack and bowled him with his second ball, for 29 off 13.

Pooran started with a cover drive off Ashwin and two balls later, dropped the ball on the off side for a quick single only for Mayank Agarwal to be run out.

Pooran tried the same thing two overs later but this time Maxwell sent him back and he survived. Pooran, though, didn't let those incidents deter him and kept finding the boundary. Desh-

pande once again came in for harsh treatment as Pooran hit his three consecutive balls for 6, 4 and 4 in the ninth over.

With 45 required from the last eight overs, Iyer brought Rabada back and had immediate success as he had Pooran caught behind. But by then, Punjab was on path to victory. Maxwell, who was on 16 off 15 balls then, took over the baton and doubled his score in the next nine balls before becoming Rabada's second wicket. But there was no further panic as Kings finished the game with one over to spare.

Cricinfo

Srikanth slams Dhoni after Chennai's seventh defeat

Abu Dhabi, UAE - Kris Srikanth, the former India captain and chairman of the selection committee, had strong words for MS Dhoni after the Chennai Super Kings succumbed to a seven-wicket loss against the Rajasthan Royals, calling his selections throughout the season as 'ridiculous' and 'rubbish'.

Monday's defeat was the Super Kings' seventh of the tournament, leaving them rooted to the bottom of the points table and in danger of missing the playoffs for the first time in their history.

After the game, Dhoni told the official broadcaster Star Sports that the youngsters in the team had not showed him the kind of 'spark' that would have warranted their inclusion in the side.

A visibly distraught Srikanth, however, rubbished all of Dhoni's claims, taking particular umbrage over the continued



MS Dhoni, Chennai Super Kings skipper



Kris Srikanth

selections of Piyush Chawla and Kedar Jadhav, who he had suggested needed a scooter to move around quickly on the field.

"I will never accept what Dhoni is saying about this process," Srikanth told Star Sports Tamil. "This process he keeps talking about is meaningless. You keep talking about process, process... but the process of selection itself is wrong."

Srikanth, who was the brand

ambassador of the Super Kings franchise during the inaugural IPL season, singled out the case of N Jagadeesan as an example of someone who had not been given a fair chance in the team; Jagadeesan has played just one game all season, scoring 33 against the Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Jadhav, meanwhile, has played eight matches making just 62 runs in total, and has struggled to make an impact.

"What is Dhoni's deal? He says Jagadeesan doesn't have spark, but does 'scooter' Jadhav have that spark? This is ridiculous. I will not accept this answer today. All this talk of process, and Chennai's tournament itself is over.

"Dhoni now says that since the pressure is off, he'll give the youngsters a chance. Come on, yaar. I don't understand this rubbish about the process at all. What spark didn't he see in Ja-

gadeesan? What spark did he see in Jadhav and Piyush Chawla?

"Karn Sharma at least took wickets. Chawla simply goes through the motions of bowling, coming on when the game is already lost. Dhoni may be a *pistha* (big shot) and there is no doubt he is great, but I cannot agree with him or accept this."

Dhoni admitted that they are having a poor run. "It's fair enough, this season we weren't there," Dhoni said.

Dhoni, 39, said his team, dubbed as the 'Dad's Army' by the media, will give the youngsters a go in the remaining games of the league.

"Today the result what it really does is give those guys (youngsters), whatever is left in our league stage, a chance and they play without pressure," said the veteran wicketkeeper-batsman.

Cricinfo



QUICK RUN

Former France goalkeeper Martini dies aged 58

Bruno Martini, who became 'one of France's greatest goalkeepers' only after a failed exam blocked the path to his chosen career as a sports instructor, has died at the age of 58, his last club Montpellier announced on Tuesday. Martini, who spent much of his playing days with Auxerre, suffered a heart attack as he returned to his car after a training session at Montpellier. He made 31 appearances for France including Euro '92 and a cameo on the bench at Euro '96. While major international honours alluded him he was a member of the France U20 team that took the 1988 world title with Laurent Blanc and Eric Cantona. While his only club trophy was the 1994 French Cup with Auxerre he set a record for the longest run without conceding a goal: 892 minutes in the 1986-87 season. After hanging up his boots he was France goalkeeping coach, helping *Les Bleus* to the Euro 2000 title and to the final of the 2006 World Cup.

Doping charges against Bahrain's Salwa dismissed

The doping charges brought against Bahrain's 400m women's world champion Salwa Eid Naser have been dismissed, the Athletics Integrity Unit announced on Tuesday. The 22 year old Salwa was provisionally suspended in June and charged with failing to meet 'whereabouts' criteria in circumstances the World Athletics Disciplinary Tribunal said 'would have been comical were the consequences not so serious'. The AIU charged the Nigerian-born runner with four alleged 'whereabouts' failures which included three missed tests between March 2019 and January this year. Salwa powered to the third-fastest 400m time in history to win the world title in Doha last year. Her time of 48.14 seconds has only been bettered by East German Marita Koch in 1985 and former Czech runner Jarmila Kratochvilova in 1983.

AFP

FOOTBALL ROUND-UP

Liverpool captain Henderson: We've got to win as many games as we can for Van Dijk



Liverpool's captain Jordan Henderson (centre) trains with his teammates on Monday ahead of their Champions League game against Ajax

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE GROUP STAGE

London, UK - Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson says the loss of Virgil van Dijk is a 'big blow' but he wants the English Premier League (EPL) champions to use his absence as an added incentive to stay in the trophy hunt.

Liverpool face their first challenge without Van Dijk in Wednesday's Champions League Group D match away at Dutch side Ajax. Defensive talisman Van Dijk requires surgery after suffering knee ligament damage during Saturday's Merseyside derby with Everton.

Manager Jurgen Klopp is reluctant to put a timescale on the Dutchman's return but admits he faces a lengthy absence after being clattered by Everton goalkeeper Jordan Pickford in the 2-2 draw.

Henderson is confident Liverpool can cope in Van Dijk's absence, even though he has been a pivotal player since he joined the club in 2018.

"It's a tough one. It's a big blow for us," Henderson told the

club website. "For him personally, obviously. But for us as a team, a massive blow. I'm just gutted for him. It's a difficult moment, but that's when you need to be there for each other."

The skipper said it was up to the team to 'win as many games as we can for him'.

"That's down to us as players to make sure that when he is back and he is fit that we're still fighting to be successful and fighting for trophies," said Henderson.

"You've got to use times like this to be stronger and to be even more together than we already are. And use it as a positive in some way."

Will wait like a good wife: Klopp

Klopp said supporting Van Dijk is his priority. The 29 year old's arrival from Southampton in January 2018 has transformed Liverpool's fortunes.

The Reds won the Champions League in 2019 and the EPL for the first time in 30 years last season.

"We are there for him, he knows that and we will wait for him like a good wife is waiting when the husband is in jail and will do, meanwhile, all what we can do to make it as easy for him as possible," Klopp told Liverpoolfc.com.

Klopp acknowledged he was facing up to a prolonged period without one of his most important players.

"He now will be out for a while, that's clear. We don't want to set any timeframe, to be honest, because each player is different," he added.



Virgil van Dijk

ent and each individual is different," he added.

"So we feel now in this



Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp

Wolves sink Leeds; West Brom held

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

London, UK - Wolves climbed to sixth place in the English Premier League (EPL) on Monday as Raul Jimenez sealed a 1-0 win at Leeds on a night West Bromwich Albion and Burnley played out the first goalless draw in the English top-flight this season.

Nuno Espirito Santo's Wolves clinched their third league win of the campaign when Jimenez's second half strike deflected in off Leeds midfielder Kalvin Phillips.

The Mexico striker's third goal of the season made it back to back wins for Wolves after they beat Fulham before the international break.

"It was a good performance with some aspects to improve. We were better in the second half, but at the start it was very difficult for us," Nuno said. "Leeds were so dynamic. We had to adjust and be more clinical in front. The goal was fortunate but we had chances."

Leeds have now gone two

games without a win as they were beaten for the first time in the league since their narrow opening weekend defeat at champions Liverpool.

"In the first half we should have established a difference, in the second half it was more even," Leeds boss Marcelo Bielsa said.

"We created enough opportunities to establish a lead. I don't think they were better than us but they neutralised our game better."

After a glut of goals across the first 46 EPL matches since the new season started in September, the entertainment dried up at the Hawthorns. Between them West Brom and Burnley had conceded a combined 21 goals in their opening seven games. But the 47th match of the EPL campaign ended without an entry in the scoresheet.

OTHER RESULTS:

ITALIAN LEAGUE

Monday: Verona 0 Genoa 0. AFP

moment extremely, extremely for him because most of us were in a similar situation and we know that these situations are absolutely rubbish.

"You don't need it. You don't need it but you have to get over it and Virgil will get over it, 100 per cent, and today is already the first day, if you want, of the recovery."

Injured Costa to miss clash with Bayern

Madrid, Spain - Diego Costa will miss Atletico Madrid's Champions League opener against Bayern Munich after the La Liga club confirmed on Monday that the striker had suffered a thigh injury.

In a statement, Atletico said that tests 'confirmed he has suffered a muscle injury in the left thigh', meaning that he will not play in Wednesday's trip to Bavaria.

The Brazil-born Spain interna-

tional's place alongside summer signing Luis Suarez in the Atletico attack is likely to be filled by Joao Felix for the match at the Allianz Arena.

AFP

WEDNESDAY'S FIXTURES

(All matches kick-off at 11pm, Oman time, unless stated)

GROUP A

Red Bull Salzburg vs Lokomotiv Moscow (8.55pm)
Bayern Munich vs Atletico Madrid

GROUP B

Real Madrid vs Shakhtar Donetsk (8.55pm)
Inter Milan vs Borussia Monchengladbach

GROUP C

Manchester City vs Porto
Olympiakos vs Marseille

GROUP D

Ajax vs Liverpool
FC Midtjylland vs Atalanta

Zimbabwe side lands in Pakistan without Indian coach Rajput

Karachi, Pakistan - Zimbabwe's cricket squad arrived in Pakistan on Tuesday - minus their Indian head coach, who had been advised to stay away from the rival South Asian nation.

The 20-man Zimbabwe team is competing in a series of one-day internationals and Twenty20s, the first of which is slated for October 30 in Rawalpindi after the players complete a mandatory virus quarantine period.

Pakistan had granted Zimbabwe coach Lalchand Rajput a visa, but he did not travel as per his government's advice.

A statement from Zimbabwe Cricket (ZC) said that the Indian embassy in Harare had sought



A file photo of Zimbabwe head coach Lalchand Rajput (right)

exemption for Rajput visiting Pakistan, citing travel guidelines issued by the Government of India for its citizens.

The statement confirmed that in Rajput's absence, bowling coach Douglas Hondo would

take charge of the team during the tour.

Rajput, 58, represented India in six international games - four ODIs and two Tests - between 1985 and 1987.

He was appointed as

Zimbabwe's full time coach in August 2018, after the team's failure to qualify for the 2019 World Cup.

Zimbabwe are scheduled to play three ODIs against Pakistan in Rawalpindi, before moving to Lahore to play three T20s.

This will be Zimbabwe's first tour of Pakistan since 2015, when they became the first Full Member to visit the country after the terror attack on the Sri Lankan team in 2009.

South Africa is also slated to tour Pakistan in January, while England seem likely to come for the first time since 2005 for a three-match Twenty20 series, also in January.

Agencies

MODERN EXCHANGE

الصرافة الحديثة

Remit to Australia

Charges RO 3.5 only

Our Key Features

- Absolutely no back-end charges
- Credit on same or next working day
- Best foreign exchange rate
- Free insurance coverage RO1,250

98082703 / 98082705 / 98082709

@modernexchangeoman

www.modernexchange.com

Chairman & Editor-in-Chief: Saleh Zakwani, Chief Executive: Mark Riv. Apex Media Publication. Printed at Apex Printing Press, Jiffraim
Email: muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om / Write to us at PO Box 2616, Ruwi 112, Muscat, Oman / Call us on 24799388. Annual subscription: RO52



UBS PROFIT JUMPS

Swiss banking giant UBS said its net profit jumped by 99 per cent to US\$2.5bn in the third quarter of 2020, despite the coronavirus pandemic

BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2020 | MUSCAT DAILY | 09

Oman, India aim to expand bilateral trade, investment

Trade exchange between two countries grew 8.5% to nearly \$6bn

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman and India have reaffirmed their commitment to expand the bilateral trade and encourage businesses to invest in each other's country in order to realize the untapped potential in the commercial and economic relationship between two countries.

According to a press statement issued by the Indian embassy in Muscat, the bilateral trade between India and Oman grew by 8.5 per cent in the year ended March 31, 2020 [Indian fiscal year 2019-2020] over the previous year to reach US\$5.93bn. While India's exports to Oman were valued at US\$2.26bn, India's imports from Oman amounted US\$3.67bn in the Indian fiscal year 2019-2020.

The ninth session of the India-Oman Joint Commission Meeting was held on Monday through the virtual platform. It was co-chaired by Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, India's Minister of State for Commerce and Industry and H E Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef, Oman's Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion. The meeting was attended



by representatives of various government departments/ministries from both sides.

Both sides, among other things, agreed to cooperate in areas of agriculture and food security, tourism, information technology, health and pharmaceuticals, micro, small and medium enterprises, space, civil aviation, renewable energy, and higher education.

The Joint Commission Meeting called on Indian investors to invest in Oman's renewable energy sector, such as wind and solar projects, and food security projects.

The bilateral meeting also reviewed the progress of prospective memorandums of

understanding (MoUs) in the field of mining, standards and metrology, financial intelligence, cultural exchange and information technology, and agreed to conclude them expeditiously.

Both sides, as per the Indian embassy's statement, also agreed to expedite their internal procedures for signing and ratification of the protocol amending India-Oman Double Taxation Agreement and conclusion of the India-Oman Bilateral Investment Treaty.

Shri Puri highlighted the recent initiatives taken by the Indian government for improving the ease of doing business and to boost domestic manufacturing in India, including the production-

linked incentive schemes for various sectors, and invited Omani sovereign wealth funds and private businesses to invest in India.

The increasing bilateral trade and investment between the two countries is a key element of the strategic partnership. India is among Oman's top trading partners. For Oman, India was the third largest source for its imports and third largest market for its non-oil exports.

Indian firms have invested in Oman in various sectors like iron and steel, cement, fertilizers, textile, cables, chemicals, automotive, etc. There are over 4,100 Indian enterprises and establishments in Oman with an estimated investment of US\$7.5bn.

CBO issues RO72mn treasury bills

Muscat - A tender of the government treasury bills (issue number 526) was held at the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) this week. The total value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to RO72mn.

The treasury bills have been issued for a maturity period of 91 days, from October 21, 2020 until January 20, 2021.

The average accepted price reached RO99.801 for every RO100 bill, while the minimum accepted price arrived at RO99.8. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 0.7963 per cent and 0.7979 per cent, respectively.



The interest rate on the repo operations with the CBO is 0.5 per cent, while the discount rate on the treasury bills discounting facility with the CBO is 1 per cent.

Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instru-

ments issued by the Central Bank of Oman on behalf of the sultanate's government. These financial instruments help the licensed commercial banks to gainfully invest their surplus funds, with an added advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities offered by the central bank.

Furthermore, treasury bills promote the local money market by creating a benchmark yield curve for short-term interest rates. The government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures.

ONA

Madayn launches industrial survey

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) has launched industrial survey, value-added measures and investor satisfaction research project. The commencement of the project comes in conjunction with the World Statistics Day that is celebrated internationally every five years on October 20.

The project aims to develop a comprehensive information base on the localised projects in Madayn's various industrial cities, which will play a significant role



Hasan al Marhoon

in the development of prospective plans and strategies.

Hasan bin Marhoon al Marhoon, director general of planning and business development at Madayn, said that Ma-

dayn seeks to develop an integrated survey to bring together statistical data from all the companies and factories based at the various industrial cities using latest available tools and technologies.

"The results of this project will allow decision makers in the sultanate's industrial sector to be aware of the business environment in the industrial cities and the challenges faced by investors at the current phase. This will help in developing effective solutions to tackle the challenges and formulate plans and strategies," he said.



Category: Innovation & Technology

And the winner is...

Laila Abdullah al Hadhrami

Laila al Hadhrami, senior executive-Digital Transformation in the eTransformation team in Ministry of Transport, communications and IT, is also the director of Building Capacity and Awareness in Smart City Platform. She has experience as well as credentials in different relevant fields including Government Innovation, Change Management - UX, Re-process engineering, Business Analysis, Project Management, and Knowledge Management.

Laila has also participated as a speaker in many conferences and seminars in Oman and overseas. Currently, she is leading national projects in Oman, like Government Innovation in emerging technologies in Oman, and other projects related to digital transformation. She is also founder of the Smart City Ambassadors initiative that has been awarded by ITU Innovation Challenges Winning ideas from the Ecosystem best practice challenge category 2020.

Laila is a member in different committees in Oman and overseas as well as in the UN standards evaluation internal committee and the UNESCO ICT Programme in Beirut. She also has a current collaboration with international organisations like ITU and UNI-EGOV to document Oman's experience in Smart City Ambassadors as a Global Best Practice.

Founder of @oman_traveler, Laila has published two translated books, some short stories, and is currently working on two new books about her experience in travel which is one of her hobbies as she visited more than 50 countries.

HEADLINE PARTNER



ASSOCIATE PARTNER



Iran-Ukraine talks over downed plane

Ukrainian deputy foreign minister heading the delegation met with Iran's Foreign Minister on Tuesday

Tehran, Iran - Iran hosted officials from Ukraine in a second round of talks on Monday over compensation for a Kiev-bound passenger plane mistakenly shot down in January, state media reported.

Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 crashed shortly after taking off from the Iranian capital's main airport on January 8.

The Islamic republic admitted days later that its forces accidentally shot down the plane, killing all 176 people on board,

Welcomed Iran's decision to take full responsibility for bringing down the Ukrainian plane

YEVGENIY YENIN

after firing two missiles amid heightened US-Iran tensions.

State news agency IRNA said the talks were held at the Foreign Ministry office in Tehran and that they would continue until Wednesday.

The first round of negotiations were held in Kiev in July, with the Ukrainian authorities



Delegations from Ukraine and Iran meet for the second round of talks on compensation for the families of victims of Ukraine's Flight 752 crash, in Tehran on Monday (AFP)

saying they were 'cautiously optimistic' about the process.

Ukrainian deputy foreign minister Yevgeniy Yenin, who headed the delegation, met

with Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Tuesday, after meeting with his deputy Mohsen Baharvand earlier in the day.

Zarif called the first round of talks held in Kiev 'positive and constructive' and hoped that those in Tehran achieve their desired results, according to a

statement by his ministry.

Yenin welcomed 'Iran's decision to take full responsibility for bringing down the Ukrainian plane and its readiness to en-

sure the same compensation for all the relatives of the victims, regardless of their citizenship', said a separate statement by Ukraine's Foreign Ministry.

Yenin also emphasised the 'need for an unbiased and objective investigation of the circumstances of the air disaster and called on the Iranian side to ensure access' to all of its elements, the statement added.

Canada, which lost 55 nationals and 30 permanent residents in the crash, on Monday reaffirmed its commitment to 'work tirelessly so that the families of the victims can get the answers they deserve'.

Canadian Foreign Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne 'is actively working with his international partners to ensure a thorough and credible investigation', his spokeswoman Syrine Khoury said on Monday.

Canada announced at the beginning of October it would form its own forensic team led by a former deputy spy chief to examine the evidence in the tragedy and advise the government accordingly.

Iran's civil aviation authority has said the misalignment of an air defence unit's radar system was the key 'human error' that led to the plane's downing.

Tehran's air defences had been on high alert at the time in case the US retaliated against Iranian strikes hours earlier on American troops in Iraq.

AFP

UAE delegation heads to Israel on first official visit

Dubai, UAE - A United Arab Emirates delegation left on the country's first official visit to Israel on Tuesday after the two countries agreed to normalise ties last month.

US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who attended a business dinner with Emirati and Israeli officials in Abu Dhabi on Monday, accompanied the delegation on the Etihad Airways flight.

'This morning, UAE prepares to send its first official delegation to Israel,' tweeted Henda Otaiba, director of strategic communications at the foreign ministry.

She added that the UAE delegation was headed by the minister of state for financial affairs, Obaid al Tayer, and Economy Minister Abdulla bin Touq al Mari.

The UAE and Israel signed a US-brokered deal to normalise



US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin speaks at an event in Abu Dhabi on Monday (AFP)

ties at the White House on September 15, marking the first such deal with a Gulf nation.

Bahrain followed suit in a ceremony on Sunday, following a

similar US-brokered agreement.

The Israeli parliament ratified the UAE deal last week.

The two governments are due to sign an agreement on Tuesday authorising 28 commercial flights a week between the countries, an Israeli transport ministry official said.

The UAE and Bahrain are only the third and fourth Arab states to normalise ties with Israel, following Israel's 1979 peace deal with Egypt and a 1994 agreement with Jordan.

On Monday, the Emirati and Bahraini governments ratified the normalisation agreements with Israel, according to the two countries' state news agencies.

According to an Israeli government statement on Tuesday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will greet the UAE delegation at Ben Gurion airport outside Tel Aviv.

AFP

Eyeing China, Australia joins 'Quad' drill

Sydney, Australia - Australia will take part in a large-scale military drill off the coast of India next month that will bring together a quartet of countries concerned by rising Chinese influence.

India, Japan, the United States and - for the first time since 2007 - Australia will take part in this November's Malabar naval exercise, a move that will likely spark Chinese protest.

Australian Defence Minister Linda Reynolds late Monday said the exercise was about 'demonstrating our collective resolve to support an open and prosperous Indo-Pacific' - a well-used allusion to countering China's authoritarian power.

India's Ministry of Defence said the naval drill would take place in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, which has been a hotspot for Indo-Chinese strategic competition.

Over the last few decades, China has tried to significantly increase influence in Myanmar, Sri



This file photo shows US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo hosting a Quad meeting with Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne, Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar and Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi, at the Palace Hotel in New York on September 26, 2019 (US Department of State)

Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh, prompting concern in New Delhi.

The drill comes at a time of diplomatic tensions between China and Australia, economic tensions between China and the United States and military tensions between China and India.

India and China have poured tens of thousands of troops into a remote border zone since fighting a pitched battle in June which killed 20 Indian troops and an unknown number of Chinese soldiers.

The so-called 'Quad' has been touted as a means of countering Chinese influence - including an enormous decades-long investment in modernising the People's Liberation Army-Navy.

AFP

In a boost, Trump says will delist Sudan as sponsor of terror

Washington, US - US President Donald Trump said on Monday he was ready to remove Sudan from a US blacklist of state sponsors of terrorism, a landmark boost for the civilian-backed government as it turns the page on the nation's decades as an international pariah.

Trump said that Sudan, which has sought the delisting for years, had agreed to a US\$335mn compensation package for victims and relatives of past attacks.

'At long last, JUSTICE for the American people and BIG step for Sudan!' Trump wrote on Twitter, vowing to delist Sudan as soon as the compensation is 'deposited'.

Sudan is one of four nations branded by Washington as a state sponsor of terrorism, along with Iran, North Korea and Syria - severely impeding economic development, with few major foreign investors willing to run afoul of US laws.

Sudan was designated in 1993 during the rule of Omar al-Bashir, who had welcomed Al Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden as he imposed a brand of political Islam on the country.

The conflict-ridden nation experienced a historic shift last year as Bashir was ousted in the face of youth-led street protests and a civilian-backed transitional government was later installed.

Trump's announcement marks 'the strongest support to Sudan's transition to democracy and to the Sudanese people', said Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, a reform-minded economist and face of the government that will rule until 2022 elections.

'As we're about to get rid of the heaviest legacy of Sudan's previous, defunct regime, I should reiterate that we are peace-loving people and have never supported terrorism,' he said on Twitter.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell called Trump's decision



This file photo shows the then Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir waving to the crowd during his visit to the Northern Kordofan town of El-Obeid to address a rally of paramilitary troops on April 19, 2012 (AFP)

'momentous' and voiced full support. Under US law, Trump can remove a nation from the blacklist after which Congress has 45 days to object.

More crucially, Congress will

vote on whether to grant Sudan immunity from further claims - an indispensable step for the developing country if it commits US\$335mn to compensate victims and families over anti-US

attacks traced back to Sudanese soil. More than 200 people died in twin Al Qaeda bombings in 1998 of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Then President Bill Clinton responded with

a still disputed missile strike on a pharmaceutical factory on Khartoum's outskirts.

The draft package had divided Congress, with some Democrats saying it was unfair by giving more money for US citizens than Africans, who made up the bulk of the victims.

Other lawmakers want compensation over additional attacks by Al Qaeda, notably the 2000 bombing of the USS Cole off Yemen.

Edith Bartley, a spokeswoman for the families of Americans killed in the Nairobi bombing, said the package would 'vindicate the sacrifice of our diplomats abroad'.

'The victims, and our regional allies who wish to have Sudan emerge as an economically viable supporter of regional peace, are depending on Congress to act swiftly in support of this effort,' she said in a statement released by the White House.

Sudan had long been the tar-

get of international pressure campaigns, including over Bashir's scorched-earth campaign in Darfur the United States described as genocide.

With the country's dramatic changes, some of the same activists have pushed for the removal from the terror blacklist.

"In order to support the transition to a fully civilian-led democracy, Congress must now pass legislation to restore Sudan's sovereign immunity and end its longstanding status as a pariah state," said John Prendergast, who alongside actor and activist George Clooney founded The Sentry, which seeks to cut off dirty money that fuels conflict in Africa.

The Trump administration, seeing leverage as it eyed removing the designation, has also leaned on Sudan to normalise relations with Israel, following the lead last month of the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

AFP

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

India gets back to work

Festival season may trigger a sharp increase in infections in India: Experts



People gather in a large number in a market to shop ahead of the 'Durga Puja' festival, in India's eastern metropolitan city Kolkata, on Monday (AFP)

Sinnar, India - India is on course to top the world in coronavirus cases, but from Maharashtra's whirring factories to Kolkata's thronging markets, people are back at work - and eager to forget the pandemic for festival season.

After a strict lockdown in March that left millions on the brink of starvation, the government and people of the world's second-most populous country decided life must go on.

Sonali Dange, for instance, has two young daughters and an elderly mother-in-law to look after. She was hospitalised this year in excruciating pain after catching the coronavirus.

But after the lockdown exhausted the family's savings, the 29 year old had to return to work at a factory where she earns ₹25,000 (US\$340 approx) a month.

"Now that I have recovered, I am no longer so scared of the disease," she told AFP amid the din of machinery at the Nobel Hygiene plant east of Mumbai.

Worst since 1947

The pandemic's confirmed fatality rate has been heaviest in richer nations with older popu-

lations - the US death toll is double that of India despite having only a quarter of the population.

Poor countries have suffered far worse economic pain, with the World Bank predicting 150mn people could fall into extreme poverty worldwide.

Many children in the developing world are now working to help their parents make ends meet, activists say, while thousands of young girls have been forced into marriage.

any major emerging nation and its worst since independence in 1947.

Lockdown catastrophe

When India went into lockdown, it was a human catastrophe, leaving millions in the informal economy jobless, penniless and destitute almost overnight.

No one wants to go back to that, said Gargi Mukherjee (42)

such as Durga Puja, Dussehra and Diwali - may trigger a sharp increase in infections, as consumers crowd markets to snap up big-ticket items on discount.

"Of course corona is to be feared. But what can I do? I can't miss the moments of Durga Puja," said housewife Tiyas Bhattacharya Das (25).

"Durga Puja comes once in the year, so I cannot miss the enjoyment of the shopping."

Hunger or virus

Sunil Kumar Sinha, principal economist at the Mumbai-based India Ratings and Research agency, said Indians faced a stark choice.

"People have to choose whether to die of hunger or risk getting a virus that may or may not kill you," he told AFP.

Indeed India's relatively low mortality rate - about 1.5 per cent of its more than seven million cases - has surprised many who warned coronavirus would lay waste to its crowded cities, beset by poor sanitation and crumbling public hospitals.

Even accounting for some likely undercounting, it is evident that the nightmare scenario of dead bodies piled in the

streets as seen during the 1918 flu pandemic has mercifully not materialised.

The unexpected reprieve has given Prime Minister Narendra Modi leeway to resist a fresh lockdown, with the human toll - and political cost - of another shutdown higher than seeing case numbers soar.

But Bhramar Mukherjee, an epidemiologist at the University of Michigan, warned the government should not simply let the virus run its course.

"In order to open up, you need to intensify public health measures... If you completely take your foot off the brakes, the virus will take off too," Mukherjee told AFP.

Last month, the Indian Medical Association slammed the Modi government for its 'indifference' to the sacrifices of front-line staff in one of the world's worst-funded health care systems. 'It appears that they are dispensable,' it said.

Back in Kolkata, bookseller Prem Prakash (67) was philosophical. "Fearing death too much is not a solution. When that comes, you should accept it gracefully."

AFP



Ireland's Prime Minister Micheal Martin addresses a press conference on reimposition of COVID-19 lockdown, in Dublin on Monday (AFP)

Ireland is first EU country to reimpose curbs

Dublin, Ireland - Ireland will be the first EU country to return to coronavirus lockdown, Prime Minister Micheal Martin said, issuing a nationwide 'stay at home' order but insisting schools will stay open.

Measures coming into effect for six weeks from midnight on Wednesday (2300 GMT) will see all non-essential retail businesses close and bars and restaurants limited to takeaway or delivery service only.

"Everyone in the country is being asked to stay at home," Martin said.

Only essential workers will be 'permitted to travel to work', he said, and citizens will be allowed out to exercise only within 5km of their residence.

The government warned in a statement that 'there will be a penalty' for violating the 5km restriction and that public transport will operate at 25 per cent capacity to serve essential workers only.

Martin said schools and childcare facilities are to remain open 'because we cannot and will not allow our children and young people's futures to be another victim of this disease'.

A ban on visits between different households and on indoor events will also be extended, although two households will be allowed to mix at outdoor venues such as parks.

A 'social bubble' programme will also allow those living alone, at risk of social isolation or mental health issues, to mingle with one other household.

And unlike under the previous shutdown order issued in

March, elite and professional level sports will be permitted behind closed doors across Ireland - which has suffered 1,852 deaths from the coronavirus.

Martin said the Republic's present restrictions were 'probably Europe's strictest regime' but that 'further action is now required'. "If we pull together over the next six weeks, we will have the opportunity to celebrate Christmas in a meaningful way," he said.

Lobby group Retail Ireland predicted 'tens of thousands of

Everyone in the country is being asked to stay at home. Only essential workers will be allowed

MICHAEL MARTIN

retail workers will be out of work' in the interim.

"It is crucial that these measures work and we are in a place to reopen retail in advance of Christmas," warned director Arnold Dillon. "We simply cannot contemplate serious rolling restrictions into the future."

Ireland has generally taken a cautious stance in fighting the fight against coronavirus. There are currently no 'green list' countries on the nation's register of safe travel destinations and the government enacted pub closures dubbed 'Europe's longest'.

AFP

Canada tops 200,000 cases

Ottawa, Canada - Canada, in the midst of a second wave of COVID-19 illnesses, topped 200,000 cases and inched closer to 10,000 deaths Monday, according to official data compiled by Canadian broadcasters CBC and CTV.

About 80 per cent of these cases and more than 90 per cent of the deaths were recorded in the country's two most populous provinces, Ontario and Quebec, which has been the epicenter of the country's epidemic since it broke out in Canada last March.

As of Monday afternoon, Canada had 200,039 cases and 9,772 dead - with its two westernmost provinces still to report their updated tallies - according to the public health data.

That amounts to 532 cases per 100,000 people in the country of 38mn, or five times fewer than in the United States.

In Quebec and Ontario, a resurgence of the novel coronavirus led once again to the closure of bars and restaurants, museums and concert halls, as

well as gyms and sports venues.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford on Monday recommended that children not go trick-or-treating door to door for Halloween in the hardest-hit areas, including Toronto and Ottawa.

"We just can't have hundreds of kids showing up at your door if you live in a hotspot," he said.

Across Canada, authorities have been trying to stem a crush on hospital resources including intensive care beds as 'the number of people experiencing severe illness is also increasing', Chief Public Health Officer Theresa Tam said in a statement.

Meanwhile the US and Canada on Monday extended a ban on non-essential travel between the neighbouring countries to November 21 to limit the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak. The world's longest international border has been closed to nearly all type of crossings except goods trading since March 21.

AFP

Madrid hospital struggles with surge in cases

Leganes, Spain - At Severo Ochoa hospital in a Madrid suburb badly-hit during the pandemic's first wave, the intensive care unit is once again full and exhausted medics dread a repeat of the same 'horror'.

"We're swamped," admits Ricardo Diaz Abad, head of intensive care at this hospital in Leganes, south-west of Madrid, standing in front of the unit's 12 beds, all filled with gravely ill COVID-19 patients.

"Unfortunately we lost two patients [overnight]," he tells AFP as nurses tend to the patients, who range in age from 54 to nearly 80, through a glass window.

Wearing white plastic suits, protective glasses, one or two masks, gloves and plastic shoe covers, the caregivers take turns to enter the unit.

Inside, the heavy silence is broken only by the hiss of the ventilator machines that help the patients breathe, their vitals monitored on a host of glowing computer screens.

Unlike the first wave when the hospital did not have enough beds for COVID patients, 'we



Madrid's regional president Isabel Diaz Ayuso attends a ceremony for virus victims, in Madrid on Sunday (AFP)

can now treat them because we have created space', said Diaz Abad.

But staff fear once again being overwhelmed if infections continue to rise.

When the pandemic hit in March, 'the corridors were full of patients with oxygen bottles sitting on chairs', said emergency doctor Luis Diaz Izquierdo, wearing a green gown and multicolour bandana, and with bags under his eyes.

"The first wave required a great physical and emotional ef-

fort... (now) we're even more tired because we haven't had time to completely recover."

Madrid and the surrounding region has been the worst-hit area of Spain, where the virus has so far claimed nearly 34,000 lives.

At the height of the first wave in March, hospitals were swamped and officials turned a Madrid ice rink into a temporary morgue to cope with the surge in deaths.

Near the city's Barajas airport, an army of cranes is work-

ing round the clock to build a new hospital - expected to open in November - designed to deal with the pandemic.

To try and slow the spread of the virus, a partial lockdown was imposed in early October on the capital and several satellite towns like Leganes.

But many healthcare workers feel the restrictions are not enough to slow the surge of patient arrivals.

At the hospital entrance, posters call for protests, saying: "No more avoidable deaths."

Sonia Carballeira, a 39 year old nurse, said the 'workload sometimes prevents us from making all the video calls that we would like' between patients and relatives who cannot visit in person.

"We expected a second wave would occur but not so soon, since the flu season hasn't yet started," she says at the entrance to the hospital's 'COVID zone' where 48 patients are being treated.

Inside, 61 year old patient Manuel Collazo Velasco still can't get over how the virus has altered his sense of taste.

"It has no sugar yet I find it very, very sweet," he said while eating natural yoghurt.

In another room, Carmen Diaz Coello, a 72 year old grandmother in a white-and-yellow dressing gown, is learning to walk again.

A standoff between the central government and Madrid's regional authorities over what virus restrictions to impose, and a more relaxed attitude among the general public has caused some unease at the hospital.

AFP

US ELECTION

Gulf states count on Donald Trump

Trump’s warm ties with the Gulf states contrast with those of his predecessor Barack Obama



The file photo on the left shows US President Donald Trump (second from right) and Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud (left) dancing with swords at a welcome ceremony, at the Murabba Palace in Riyadh on May 20, 2017; the photo on the right shows Trump (right) and his wife Melania (second from right) with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el Sisi (left) and King Salman during the inauguration of the Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology 'Etidal' in Riyadh the following day (AFP)

Dubai, UAE - Brandishing a sword and dancing to traditional music on his first visit to Saudi Arabia soon after taking office, Donald Trump launched a dramatic relationship revamp that freed the hands of the Gulf monarchies.

More than three years on, regional leaders are playing their diplomatic cards in support of an erratic but valuable partner in Washington as he seeks a second term - one that would likely lead to even deeper tensions with Iran and more opportunities for their one-time enemy, Israel.

The businessman-turned-president's warm ties with the Gulf Arab states contrast with those of his predecessor Barack Obama, whose deal-making with Iran appalled arch-rival Saudi Arabia and its neighbours.

As Trump trails in the polls against Joe Biden - Obama's vice president who would be expected to shift back to a more

The historic visit in May 2017 - the beginning of an exceptional relationship - opened many doors. Decision makers here would want those doors to stay open

A GULF OFFICIAL

conventional stance on human rights and arms deals - the oil-rich region faces a delicate balancing act.

"The historic visit in May 2017 was the beginning of an exceptional relationship with a US President. It has opened many doors," a Gulf official close to political circles in the region told AFP. "Decision makers here would logically want those doors to stay open, but they aren't blind," the official added. "They are also getting ready for the other scenario."

Hero's welcome

On his first foreign trip as US President, Trump was given a

hero's welcome in Riyadh.

Far from accusations of collusion with Russia at home, he accepted a golden medal and addressed Muslim leaders - while vilifying Iran and muting rhetoric on human rights.

His son-in-law Jared Kushner, a property developer and diplomatic neophyte, took the lead on the Middle East peace process. He forged friendships with divisive Gulf figures, including Saudi Arabia's young de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

"It pivoted the relationship between the US and the (Gulf) countries to be more about personalities, that of the President

and his son-in-law, and less about institutions," said Randa Slim, director of conflict resolution at the Washington-based Middle East Institute.

In the years that followed, Trump's unconventional and impulsive strategy produced a head-spinning sequence of signature achievements, risky moves and failed initiatives that have redrawn the Middle East's political landscape.

The US withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran and assassinated its once-untouchable general Qasem Soleimani. It moved the US Embassy to Jerusalem and wound back America's military presence in a region Trump believes has lost much of its strategic importance.

The policies generally played well in the Gulf, despite a lack of action on major incidents like the unprecedented attacks last year against Saudi energy giant Aramco, blamed on Iran.

"Saudi Arabia and the UAE shared a perception that the Obama administration abandoned its traditional Gulf allies," said Elham Fakhro, senior analyst at the International Crisis Group. "Saudi Arabia has vastly improved relations with the Trump administration, owing in part to its decision to impose the 'maximum pressure' campaign against Iran," she said.

As the 2020 presidential election has neared, Trump secured a major victory by sponsoring a deal between the UAE and Israel to normalise ties, giving the Jewish state an unprecedented foothold in the Gulf and forming a united front against their common foe, Iran.

The small kingdom of Bahrain, politically and economically influenced by Saudi Arabia, also agreed to establish diplomatic relations with Israel.

The timing of the deals, long considered taboo without the blessing of the Palestinians, was

seen as an attempt to provide Trump with a foreign policy win ahead of the vote.

'Difficult dance'

With Biden leading in the polls, now both the UAE and Saudi Arabia worry about a rollback on sanctions against Iran under a Democrat administration, said Fakhro.

Trump was 'also more willing to ensure that arms sales to these states moved ahead swiftly', and a Biden administration would be unlikely to be as accommodating, she added.

The White House has pushed back against anti-Saudi resolutions in Congress over its controversial Yemen war, which has come at the cost of thousands of civilian lives, and the grisly assassination of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in October 2018.

"I saved his ass," Trump told investigative reporter Bob Woodward of the Saudi crown prince, known by his initials MBS, who has remained in power despite the Khashoggi scandal.

"A Biden administration will come with a foreign policy team that is ready to re-examine the underlying tenets of the US-Saudi relationship and will embrace a hard-line position on the Saudi leadership," said Slim from the Middle East Institute.

"As long as MBS is the crown prince and if he were to ascend the throne in the next four years, US-Saudi relations will at best enter a deep freeze."

A Biden administration would most likely attempt to bring Iran back to the negotiating table and adopt more vocal rhetoric on human rights.

"It would be a difficult thing for the Saudis, but at the end of the day, they would have to live with it," said Middle East expert James Dorsey. "It is going to be a difficult dance."

AFP

Trump Heights: A symbol of US shift on Mideast policy

Golan Heights - On a dusty plain in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, a golden-lettered sign with Israeli and American flags stands before a rusty wire fence as the gateway to 'Trump Heights'.

But this is no luxury hotel or golf course set up by the property developer turned president.

Instead, it is an Israeli settlement, inaugurated in June 2019 by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as a celebration to mark US President Donald Trump's recognition of the Golan as Israeli territory.

For residents, it is the most visible legacy Trump has had here.

"There is indeed a big change," said Haim Rokach, head of the Golan regional council, his eyes sparkling at the mention of the US President's name.

"Since Trump's declaration and the decision to build the place, we see a lot of interest from investors."

The Golan Heights, a strategic military zone, was seized by Israel from Syria in the Six-Day War of 1967.

Trump's recognition of Golan was the latest in a string of steps away from global consensus, including recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital, and giving Netanyahu the green light to build settlements deemed illegal under international law.



This file photo shows Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (right) and US Ambassador to Israel David Friedman (left) unveiling the place-name sign for the new settlement of 'Ramat Trump' or 'Trump Heights' in English, in the Golan Heights on June 16, 2019 (AFP)

Along with Trump's backing for normalisation deals between Israel, the UAE and Bahrain - lamented by Palestinians as a 'stab in the back' - Trump has changed the dynamics of the dispute between the Jewish state and the Palestinians.

As he battles to stay in the White House for a second term, Trump's strongly pro-Israel stance has further endeared him to evangelical Christians, a powerful voting bloc.

Settlement expansion

While the Trump Heights sign is new, the settlement is not. It was founded in 1991, following the collapse of the Soviet Union when hundreds of thousands of Jewish people emigrated to Israel.

One group of around 15 families carved out a Jewish settlement here, but the associated farming life is tough. Many struggled to make ends meet, and just five families of Israeli

settlers remain, many of them elderly.

Naming the settlement after Trump has given Israeli authorities an opportunity to revive the community, and 20 Jewish families are due to move to the remote spot by the end of November.

Diggers were recently leveling the land ready for their homes, with the aim of 20 families arriving each year for the next decade, said Shai Toni Yeheskel, from the local Golan council.

"For the first time in almost 30 years they have hope," Yeheskel said.

"It's going to become one of the centres of the Golan."

Living in run-down houses, the ageing residents have steered clear of outsiders who have visited the settlement since it was renamed.

But a group of teenagers live in the community, where they are put through a six-month programme ahead of national

service.

"There are some lonely elderly residents here," said Ayelet Schwab (18) from the settlement of Efrat in the occupied West Bank.

"We help them, to carry things they buy, we talk to them, we check on them."

Standing beside her, 18 year old Adi Hazan said one of their goals was to have more people move in.

"New people will arrive to build this place, they will bring life to it," said Hazan, from Porat in central Israel, as the other teenagers painted stones to decorate a campfire site.

Around 25,000 Israeli settlers live in the Golan Heights, along with some 23,000 Druze, who remained on the land after it was seized in 1967. The numbers of settlers are far greater in the occupied West Bank, where around 450,000 Israelis live in settlements - alongside over 2.8mn Palestinians.

While settlement-building has been Israeli government policy for decades, their approval slowed when US president Barack Obama was in charge.

Trump reversed this trend.

The number of settlement homes approved nearly doubled in the first three years of his presidency, compared to the last three years of Obama's leadership, Israeli anti-settlement organisation Peace Now calculate.

Israel has approved over 12,000 West Bank homes in 2020, a record high for Jewish building in occupied Palestinian territory, it says.

"Settlement building really does coincide with Trump," said Brian Reeves from Peace Now.

With a time gap between approval and construction, Reeves says repercussions will be felt over the next three years - even if Trump is not re-elected in November.

"Trump has done irreparable damage to the entire international consensus on... how you can get to peace," Reeves said.

The Palestinians have cut ties with the Trump administration over its pro-Israeli stance, rejecting a US initiative published in January which included plans for Israel to annex swathes of the West Bank.

In Golan, the US policy shift encouraged investors because the land will remain under Israeli control indefinitely.

There may even be an opportunity for a luxury hotel.

"We have plenty of hotels in the Golan, but not enough rooms. Especially exclusive rooms," said the local council's Yeheskel.

"Hopefully we'll have many more hotels here in the near future."

Time will tell if one of those will be a Trump Hotel.

AFP



PASS THE PASTA

October 25 is World Pasta Day, a day to celebrate your love for this internationally popular Italian food. World Pasta Day was brought into existence as part of the World Pasta Congress on October 25, 1995, when international experts came together to discuss the importance of spreading knowledge of the world's panorama of pasta.

There are over 600 shapes of pasta and their names are descriptive of their shapes. Spaghetti (cord), vermicelli (little worms), rotini (spirals), fusilli (spindles), tortellini (little cakes), linguini (little tongues), conchiglie (shells), fettuccine (small ribbons), penne (quills) and capellini (fine hairs) are some of the most popular pastas with which people all over the world cook.

While people all over the world, including the Middle East, especially Oman, relish pastas, the fact that internationally popular Italian cuisine eateries have mushroomed in different countries is testimony to the universal love for pasta. At lavish buffets, one notices a beeline at the pasta counters while at family dinners with mixed cuisines, one would always hear the most common refrain - Pass the pasta! Here are recipes for two most popular pasta dishes you can make at home.



Shrimp/Chicken Fettuccine Alfredo

- INGREDIENTS**
- Kosher salt, 500g fettuccine
 - 1/2 cup heavy cream, 1/2 cup butter
 - 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan, plus more for sprinkling, Freshly ground black pepper
 - 2tbsp chopped parsley

METHOD

In a large pot of boiling salted water, cook pasta according to package instructions. Reserve about 1 cup of pasta water, then drain.

Meanwhile, in a large skillet over medium heat, add cream and butter. Cook until butter is melted and the cream is bubbling. Whisk in Parmesan and season with salt and pepper. Let sauce simmer 1 to 2

minutes to thicken slightly. Sauce will still be thin, but will thicken more as sauce cools and once pasta is added.

Add cooked pasta and toss until coated in sauce. If you need the sauce thinner, add the reserved pasta water, 1 tablespoon at a time.

In a large skillet over medium heat, heat 1 tablespoon butter until melted. Add shrimp, season with salt and pepper and cook until pink and completely opaque, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Remove shrimp from skillet and add to pasta. The same can be done with shredded chicken - season and saute chunks of chicken, just like with shrimp. When done, shred and add to the pasta. Garnish with chopped parsley.



Fusilli in roasted tomato sauce

- INGREDIENTS**
- 2 cups of fusilli
 - 10 medium tomatoes
 - 2 cloves garlic, 2tbsp olive oil
 - 1tbsp pesto or a handful of fresh basil
 - 1/2tsp salt
 - 1tsp sugar

METHOD

Boil the pasta as per pack instructions, drain and set aside.

Wash tomatoes, cut them into half. Place them, cut sides of the tomatoes down on a cookie sheet and bake at 180°C for about 15 minutes, until the skin wrinkles and juice starts to come out. Put the roasted tomatoes, garlic, olive oil, pesto or basil, salt, and sugar into a blender and blend until creamy (Add a little water, if needed). Add the cooked pasta, toss and serve.



1 Farmed salmon

Farmed salmon offers outstanding nutrition that can help protect against everything from heart disease to depression. Specifically, farmed salmon supports the immune system thanks to two key nutrients that are uncommon in many other foods - vitamin D and Omega-3 fatty acids. While vitamin D is often connected to bone health, emerging research out of Boston University suggests that it may also be vital to proper immune function. Few foods are naturally high in vitamin D, but a serving of farmed salmon offers nearly one-third of daily recommended needs. Omega-3 fatty acids, abundantly found in farmed salmon, are highly anti-inflammatory and support the immune system by reducing chronic inflammation.

BUILD YOUR IMMUNITY

Cold and flu season, combined with an ongoing pandemic, is motivating many people to do everything possible to support immune health. Fortunately, simple lifestyle habits, like a healthy diet, can make a big difference in strengthening the body's de-

fense system. But what foods are best - and why?

When it comes to immune-boosting foods, most people immediately turn to orange juice for a quick fix of vitamin C. While it is true that citrus fruit helps support the immune

system, there are many other foods that offer an impressive profile of nutrients believed to maintain strong immunity. Here are three surprising, dietitian-recommended foods that can help ward off illness this cold and flu season:



2 Red bell peppers

Red bell peppers are rich in vitamins and antioxidants that support the immune system. One example is vitamin C, which encourages the production of the white blood cells that are responsible for defending the body against pathogens.

Red bell peppers contain almost three times more vitamin C than oranges. They are also loaded with vitamin A and the antioxidant beta-carotene, which can be converted to vitamin A in the body, when needed. Vitamin A is important in maintaining the natural mucus barriers located in the eyes, gut and other parts of the body. These barriers are designed to trap bacteria and are essential to optimal immunity. Be sure to choose red peppers because they have significantly more vitamin A, vitamin C and beta-carotene compared to green bell peppers.

While a healthy diet cannot prevent seasonal colds, the flu or other viral illnesses, a combination of the right foods, plenty of sleep, regular exercise and a balanced lifestyle will arm your body's defenses and may help minimise the length and severity of illness.

3 Yogurt

Yogurt and other fermented foods contain healthy bacteria called probiotics. Probiotics are well-known for supporting digestive or gut health by preventing overgrowth of bad bacteria. But maintaining a healthy balance of good and bad bacteria in the gut is also believed to boost the immune system.

Most people do not realise that about 70 per cent of the body's immune system is in the gut. In addition to containing probiotics, yogurt is also one of the few foods that is almost always fortified with vitamin D, which offers additional immune support. Look for yogurt labeled as containing 'Live and active cultures' and steer clear of yogurt that contains added sugar. Try plain yogurt and sweeten by adding fresh fruit and a small drizzle of honey.

(BPT)



Category: Inspirational Woman



And the winner is...

Nadhira al Harthy

Nadhira al Harthy, an ambitious youth with an overwhelming adventurous spirit, is the first Omani woman to scale Mt Everest, the tallest peak in the world in the Himalayas, on May 16, 2019. The day became a red letter day in the history of Oman wherein women achievements reached an outstanding zenith, thanks to her determination and drive.

Nadhira had started out in early April 2019, along with three other Arab women, and their entire journey was filmed and documented by Canadian adventurer and filmmaker Elia Saikaly who had scaled Everest in the recent past. She was inspired to take up this challenge by Khalid al Siyabi, the first Omani to climb Mount Everest in 2010, and underwent rigorous training for over two years before venturing out for her mission.

Being an ultra athlete herself, who has undertaken the 42km Muscat Marathon twice, as well as then 900km Oman UTMB race, she was equipped with what it takes for a challenging expedition to Mt Everest. When she had set out to climb Mt Everest, being the first or second woman from Oman to do so did not matter at all to her. What mattered was accomplishing the task at hand against all odds.

"It's good to have a dream and set a difficult goal before oneself. One needs to build up strength and passion to take on challenges and be successful. It helps in adding some adventure to one's routine lifestyle, besides improving one's personality and moving onto another level in life," Nadhira asserts.

HEADLINE PARTNER



ASSOCIATE PARTNER

