



MONDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2021
www.muscatdaily.com
Email: muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om
To subscribe, call toll free no: 80076000

29°C/21°C

TUNISIANS PROTEST AGAINST PRESIDENTIAL 'COUP'
GO TO PAGE 08 WORLD

Organ transplant centre gets nod

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The decks have been cleared for the establishment of a National Centre for Organ Transplantation with the blessings of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, according to Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed al Sa'eedi, Minister of Health.

Oman Transplantation Society recently held a national symposium on organ transplant under the auspices of Dr Sa'eedi, in the presence of Sheikh Dr Kahlan Nabhan al Kharusi, assistant grand mufti.

During the opening of the symposium, Dr Sa'eedi confirmed that His Majesty the Sultan has given his blessings for the establishment of the National Centre for Organ Transplantation.

According to the minister, establishment of the national centre requires unifying efforts in the health sector and enhancing awareness in society on organ donation through media, including social media.

He also noted that localisation of organ transplantation is a basic



priority and organ donation the responsibility of every individual in society.

Dr Sa'eedi informed that organ transplantation in Oman started in 1988 with kidney transplants, "but it is unfortunate that development in this field was very slow for several reasons. In 2017, we started liver transplants. The outbreak of the pandemic forced us to stop that programme. However, now it has resumed at The Royal Hospital".

He described the challenges facing organ transplantation in Oman as "many", including non-availability of medical personnel specialised in the field. "Also, the number of donors makes trans-

Setting up the national centre requires unifying efforts in the health sector and enhancing awareness on organ donation

plantations very limited."

There are more than 2,260 patients on dialysis in the sultanate, who often visit dialysis centres in the morning and then leave for work, Dr Sa'eedi informed. "These patients face psychological and physical suffering. The sultanate is equipped to perform organ transplantations, especially kidney transplants. We must now begin to do more organ transplantations, including liver, bone marrow and cornea."

Assistant grand mufti Dr Kharusi clarified that organ donation is permissible under Islamic law because it saves lives.

"But organ donation must be free of charge; an organ must not

be sold. Islam urges saving lives and donating organs is one way of doing so. God has said in the Holy Quran, 'And whoever saves one life, it is as though he has saved the lives of all mankind,' Dr Kharusi said.

The decision has been welcomed by many in the sultanate. Suleiman al Hashemi tweeted, "The establishment of the centre is very good news. It will help many patients who suffer from organ failure and need urgent transplants."

Khalid al Balushi described the centre as a step in the right direction. "It will save thousands of patients in need of organ transplants. I hope Oman Transplantation Society and competent authorities in the Ministry of Health follow up and expedite the process of setting up the centre."

Ali al Hamdani said, "Many people travel abroad for organ transplants and pay a lot of money. Unfortunately, some of them are also duped. The centre will protect these patients and save them money, effort and time."



(Syed Fasiuddin/Muscat Daily)

50th anniversary of UN membership marked with launch of stamp

Muscat - The Foreign Ministry, in collaboration with Oman Post, launched a commemorative stamp to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Oman's membership of the United Nations on Sunday in Muscat. Oman's flag was raised at the UN headquarters in New York, USA, on October 8, 1971, as the 131st member state.

The stamp was unveiled during a ceremony held at the Foreign Ministry under the patronage

of H H Sayyid Kamil bin Fahad bin Mahmood al Said, in the presence of H E Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, and H E Said bin Hamood bin Said al Mawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology. The ceremony was also attended by undersecretaries and representatives of the Foreign Ministry and Oman Post.

See also Page 03

► NEWS BRIEFS

OMAN TAKES PART IN GCC INTERIOR MINISTERS' MEET

Manama - Oman, represented by the Ministry of Interior, took part in the 38th meeting of GCC ministers of interior on Sunday in Manama, Bahrain.

Oman's delegation was headed by H E Sayyid Hamoud Faisal al Busaidi, Minister of Interior.

Dr Naif Falah al Hajraf, GCC Secretary General, said that the 38th meeting laid emphasis on the importance of joint GCC action in sustaining security and facing challenges.

The meeting also stressed the importance of enhancing mechanisms of cooperation in the field of cybersecurity and developing joint projects in combating crime and bolstering collective security.



Pact to train jobseekers from low-income families signed



Muscat Stock Exchange announces ESG initiatives

Omran unveils Yiti masterplan

Muscat - Oman Tourism Development Company - Omran Group - has revealed a masterplan and the brand identity of Yiti, one of the largest integrated tourism developments in Oman.

The project is in line with the efforts to transform the tourism and real estate sector in the sultanate in accordance with Oman Vision 2040. The development sets a new model for urbanisation, as it connects and extends the city of Muscat, enriching its offerings and possibilities, through a multi-phased expansion approach.

Spread over 11sqm, the Yiti development is strategically located overlooking the Sea of Oman. The masterplan of the development is designed according to placemaking principles that ensure the establishment of innovative standards in urban development and architecture, as well as the activation of valleys, plateaus and coasts that harmonise within the topography of the site.

The project will be built in four phases, offering a plethora of opportunities for domestic and foreign direct investments alike. This phased development approach takes into consideration accessibility to infrastructure, connection to main roads, and ease of



An artist's impression of the Yiti development (Supplied image)

development.

Putting sustainability at the heart of the development, the masterplan focuses on creation of a well-balanced integrated mixed use residential and resort-oriented community that will include various components, including tourism, commercial and business spaces, besides residential areas, leisure and entertainment attractions, and educational

and health facilities. The masterplan envisions inclusivity for the residents through diverse and open-to-all public and community facilities.

Commenting on the landmark project, Hashil bin Obaid al Mahrouqi, CEO, said, "At Omran, we take immense pride in our developments. The Yiti development masterplan is an epitome of progression, embodying compo-

nents complementing each other, and based on a vision of balanced land use and urban design as key elements of its ethos. We have created a plan that will be executed through holistic partnerships with world-class expertise. It is anticipated to create a modern integrated urban hub that sets new urban planning standards for future developments in Oman and the region."

Work starts on 1,500m zipline in Musandam

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In efforts to attract tourists and revitalise the tourism sector, the Omran Group has started construction of a zipline project in Musandam governorate.

"Construction work of the zipline has begun in Khor Qada in the wilayat of Khasab. The zipline is part of the first phase of the Adventure Centre in the governorate," an official of Omran Group said.

According to the official, the zipline will cover a distance of 1,500m, beginning at the top of a mountain at a height of 250m above sea level and ending at Atana Khasab. "The project is expected to be completed in less than a year."

The Omran Group has invested more than RO20mn in Musandam, including Atana Musandam Resort, Atana Khasab Hotel and Dibba Beach Hotel, offering a combined total of more than 200 rooms.

The zipline project comes on the heels of recent Royal directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq to implement several key projects aimed at fu-

The zipline will begin at the top of a mountain at a height of 250m above sea level and end at Atana Khasab

elling the governorate's socio-economic development. These include a proposal to upgrade Port Khasab to a maritime hub for shipping, logistics and cruise tourism. Mahas, where quarrying activities are carried out, is proposed to be redeveloped into a dedicated tourism and economic zone incorporated in Khasab Industrial City.

Musandam's renowned natural features include the creeks Najd, Shamm, Al Hablain and Ghab Ali. Besides diverse formations of coastal rocks, there are several islands scattered across the governorate, such as Al Teer and the famous Telegraph Island.

In 2019, as many as 332,489 tourists and 72 cruise ships visited the governorate.

Gadhafi's son Seif al Islam registers to run for Libya presidency

Tripoli, Libya - Seif al Islam Gadhafi, son of slain Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi, registered to run in the December presidential polls, seen as crucial to helping the country turn a page on a decade of conflict, on Sunday.

Libya's first ever direct presidential poll, with a first round on December 24, is the climax of a process launched last year by the United Nations to draw a line under years of violence since the

revolt that toppled Gadhafi in 2011.

'Seif al Islam Gadhafi submitted... his candidacy for the presidential election to the High National Electoral Commission office in the city of Sebha,' a statement by the commission said. Long-considered his father's erstwhile heir apparent, Seif al Islam was seen registering his candidacy, dressed in traditional robes and headdress.

Libya opened registration on Monday for candidates in presidential and parliamentary polls.

Both are slated for December 24, but in early October parliament split the dates of the vote by postponing legislative elections until January.

Foreign powers have been pushing hard for both elections to be still held on the same date, as agreed at UN-led talks last year.

On Friday, world powers at a



Seif al Islam Gadhafi registers for the presidential polls in Sebha on Sunday

Paris summit repeated that call, saying Libya was at a "crossroads" that would determine its future.

Speculation had been mounting for months over a possible presidential bid by Seif al Islam, who is wanted by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity allegedly committed during the 2011 NATO-backed popular revolt.

AFP

Over 55,000 expats repatriated under amnesty scheme: MoL

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Over 55,000 expatriates left Oman in the period from November 2020 to September 2021 taking advantage of a Ministry of Labour (MoL) amnesty scheme.

In a statement, MoL said, 'The ministry received 69,467 requests from expatriates to leave the country without payment of any fines or fees. Of the total, 55,023 have exited the sultanate till September 30, 2021.'

In this period, ministerial teams conducted inspection visits in various governorates to arrest workers violating the labour law.



Indian expatriates queue up at the Indian Embassy in Muscat to register for the amnesty scheme to exit Oman in this file photo (Muscat Daily)

A total of 2,107 expats were arrested, including 842 in Muscat, 338 in North Batinah, 243 in Dakhiyah, 204 in Al Wusta, 159 in Dhahirah, 97 in Dhofar, 94 in

South Batinah, 63 in North Sharqiyah, 57 in South Sharqiyah, seven in Buraimi and three in Musandam.

The expat amnesty programme

was first announced on November 15, 2020, and set to end on December 31, 2020. This was extended till March 31 this year and further to June 30 in a subsequent extension. There were two further extensions - to August 31 and December 31.

According to MoL, expats who register in the scheme must exit the country before January 31, 2022.

The ministry has urged all undocumented expats who have not registered to take advantage of the scheme.

Undocumented workers and overstaying visitors can register in MoL's website - <http://www.mol.gov.om> - or at Sanad offices.

NATIONAL MUSEUM EXHIBITS COPY OF E-CENSUS SIGNED BY HM THE SULTAN



National Museum, in cooperation with the National Centre of Statistics and Information, has put on display the 2020 e-Census Record of Population, Housing and Establishments. The copy is personally signed and approved by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. Also on display is the first recorded census of 1993 showing the name of the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said as the first citizen (Supplied photos)



Pact inked to train jobseekers from low-income families

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Social Development, the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development (ASMED) and Oman Education & Training Investment Co have signed an agreement to train jobseekers to set up small and medium enterprises. The training programme caters specifically for social security and limited income families.

Besides securing employment for jobseekers from this section

The SMEs set up following the training will increase the industrial sector's contribution to the GDP

of society, the SMEs set up following the training will increase the industrial sector's contribution to the GDP in line with Oman Vision 2040.

The agreement was signed by



(Supplied photo)

H E Sayyid Salim bin Musallam al Busaidi, Undersecretary for Human Resources Development in the Ministry of Labour, H E Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed al Shamsi, Undersecretary in the Ministry of Social Development, Qais bin Rashid al Toubi, vice president of ASMED, and Retd Maj Gen Hassan bin Ihsan Nasib, chairman of the Board of Directors of Oman Education & Training Investment Co.

The agreement includes provision of support from various government agencies to ensure sustainability of the SME projects

set up following the training and focus on the skills needed in the industrial sector.

ASMED will follow up on the establishment and implementation of these projects and ensure their sustainability, in addition to promoting these and marketing their products. The authority will conduct project feasibility studies, provide consultancy and guidance services, and supervise business incubators, a press release said.

According to H E Busaidi, the agreement is in line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.



Dhofar International Development And Investment Holding Company (SAOG)

P.O.Box 2163, Salalah, Postal Code 211, Sultanate of Oman, Tel: 23295400, Fax: 23291500, Email: didico@omantel.net.om, Website: www.didic.com

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to present the Unaudited Financial Results of Dhofar International Development & Investment Holding Company SAOG ("DIDIC") for the period ending 30 September 2021.

During the first nine months of 2021, all the securities markets in the region, including Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) continued their recovery in their respective indices. MSX improved by 284 points and closed at 3943 points as on September 30, 2021 which is a 8% increase over the nine months period. Most other indices in the GCC region witnessed a better improvement for the period ranging from 10% to 53%. During this nine months period, the Company's investments in equities recorded an increase of RO 2.565 million, on account of increase in prices of its key equity investments.

The Company also successfully completed its Rights Issue of RO 28.60 million comprising of 150,526,316 shares resulting in an increase in its paid up capital to RO 54,472 million. Also, the Company settled all the outstanding Subordinated Bonds including accrued interest partly by issue of additional equity shares through the Rights Issue and partly by cash.

Group Consolidated Performance

During the nine months period ending 30 September 2021, net profits were RO 5.01 million and the total comprehensive income attributable to our shareholders amounted to RO 1.81 million as compared to net profit of RO 46.65 million and total comprehensive profit of RO 44.26 million for the same period last year. The nine months comparative period of last year included one-time deemed acquisition gain of subsidiaries and associates of RO 45.72 million. The Group ended the first nine months with total assets of RO 226.34 million, a

marginal decrease of 1.3% while shareholders' equity of RO 122.48 million registered a considerable increase of 25% from the first nine months of 2020 where total assets amounted to RO 229.22 million and shareholders' equity attributable to our shareholders was RO 97.66 million.

Performance of Key Associates

Bank Dhofar, our banking associate, reported net profit of RO 28.293 million for the nine months period ended 30 September 2021 as compared to RO 26.635 million for the same period in 2020, representing an increase of 6%. This increase in profits is mainly on account of increase in net fees and commission income and savings in its operating costs. The bank continues to build on a strong foundation for future growth, where the total assets of the bank were at RO 4.42 billion in September 2021 as compared to RO 4.12 billion at end of 30 September 2020, an increase of 7%. The Net Loans, Advances and Financing to customers stood at RO 2.88 billion as at 30 September 2021, showing a growth of 2.8% from RO 2.80 billion as at 30 September 2020. Total customer deposits also showed a considerable growth of 11.7% increasing to RO 2.57 billion as of 30 September 2021 as compared to RO 2.30 billion for similar period for last year. Total shareholders' equity in the bank registered an increase of 1.8%, growing to RO 550.623 million from RO 540.812 million a year prior.

Dhofar Insurance, our insurance associate reported an increase of 20% of gross premium written to RO 45.79 million from RO 38.24 million a year earlier for the nine months period. However, their net underwriting results showed a marginal decline of 1% from RO 6.39 million in the first nine months of 2020 to RO 6.33 million a year later which alongwith an increase of 12% in operating expenses resulted in the net profit for the nine months period dropped by 27% from RO 3.15 million to RO

2.32 million. The shareholders equity has increased by 10.5%, from RO 24.77 million as at 30 September 2020 to RO 27.36 million as at 30 September 2021.

Oman Investment & Finance Company, our billing and collection associate that has also ventured into money exchange and contracting operations through two specialized subsidiaries, has continued noteworthy improvements in its group operations in the first nine months of 2021, with operating profits increasing to RO 755,203 from a loss of RO 124,145 a year earlier. Also, the improvement in OIFC's share of profits in its associates, mainly for Bank Sohar increased by 46% while a substantial increase in its other income for the period has resulted in an increase of the company's group net profits by more than 3 times from RO 797,876 in 2020 to RO 2,717,416 for the period ended 30 September 2021. However, the Shareholder's equity has decreased by 3.6%, from RO 29.55 million as at 30 September 2020 to RO 28.47 million as at 30 September 2021.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the board of directors, I would like to extend our gratitude to the leadership of the CMA, CBO and MOCI for their continued support. I would also like to thank the management teams of DIDIC, our subsidiaries and associate companies for all their hard work and dedication.

Finally, we wish our country continued safety and stability under the wise leadership and guidance of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, may God protect him and prolong his life.

Khalid Bin Mustahail Ahmed Al Mashani
Chairman

UNAUDITED INTERIM STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

	Group 2021 RO	Group 2020 RO	Parent Company 2021 RO	Parent Company 2020 RO
ASSETS				
Cash and bank balances	4,240,542	1,230,264	3,560,637	724,051
Receivables and prepayments	719,228	785,096	2,085,912	1,262,825
Inventories	21,014	22,314	-	-
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss				
- Investment in equities	40,420,684	38,147,701	28,018,173	24,878,652
- Investment in term deposits	3,930,000	11,180,000	3,930,000	11,180,000
Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income				
Investment in subsidiaries	9,279,688	10,372,300	-	-
Investment in associates	162,116,923	161,748,994	162,116,923	161,748,994
Loan to subsidiary	-	-	4,950,000	4,950,000
Investment property	247,212	247,212	247,212	247,212
Property and equipment	5,361,942	5,507,207	591,172	661,083
Total assets	226,337,233	229,221,088	215,089,866	218,267,333
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES				
Equity				
Share capital	54,472,000	25,872,000	54,472,000	25,872,000
Legal reserve	9,124,654	8,624,000	9,124,654	8,624,000
General reserve	7,070,404	7,070,404	7,070,404	7,070,404
Investment revaluation reserve	(7,931,934)	(2,396,284)	(7,931,934)	(2,396,284)
Retained earnings	59,747,782	58,492,017	59,747,782	58,492,017
Total equity due to shareholders of the Parent Company	122,482,906	97,662,137	122,482,906	97,662,137
LIABILITIES				
Other liabilities	2,316,060	5,575,347	1,923,077	5,430,975
Income tax payable	9,383	9,383	-	-
Loans and borrowings	101,528,883	101,188,653	90,683,883	90,388,653
Subordinated bonds	-	24,785,568	-	24,785,568
Total equity and liabilities	226,337,233	229,221,088	215,089,866	218,267,333
Net Assets per share	0.225	0.377	0.225	0.377

UNAUDITED INTERIM STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

	Group 2021 RO	Group 2020 RO	Parent Company 2021 RO	Parent Company 2020 RO
INCOME				
Dividend income	1,498,661	1,782,736	1,209,207	1,360,890
Net revenue of a subsidiary	237,288	205,173	-	-
Realised gain/(loss) on sale of financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	(251)	9,991	299	-
Unrealised gain/(loss) on financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	2,564,886	(1,376,474)	2,387,148	(1,261,305)
Interest income	545,839	601,095	693,306	734,471
Other income	113,004	127,969	115,911	107,874
Total income	4,959,427	1,350,490	4,405,871	941,830
EXPENSES				
Administrative and general expenses	(1,362,562)	(1,277,944)	(1,004,115)	(911,351)
Depreciation	(137,946)	(142,691)	(58,781)	(63,601)
Total expenses	(1,500,508)	(1,420,635)	(1,062,896)	(974,952)
Operating profit/(loss)	3,458,919	(70,145)	3,342,975	(33,022)
Finance costs	(6,968,671)	(7,217,777)	(6,422,798)	(6,711,355)
Amortization of deferred finance cost	(444,939)	(249,362)	(444,939)	(249,362)
Share of loss from subsidiaries	-	-	(429,930)	(543,545)
Deemed acquisition gain of subsidiaries	-	772,128	-	772,128
Share of profit from associates	8,961,223	8,472,245	8,961,223	8,472,245
Deemed acquisition gain of associates	-	44,945,654	-	44,945,654
Profit for the period before tax	5,006,532	46,652,743	5,006,532	46,652,743
Income tax	-	-	-	-
Profit for the period	5,006,532	46,652,743	5,006,532	46,652,743
Other comprehensive income / (loss)				
Items that will not be subsequently reclassified to profit or loss				
Changes in fair value of financial assets through other comprehensive income	(920,092)	(200,016)	-	-
Share of other comprehensive loss of subsidiaries	-	-	(920,092)	(200,016)
Share of other comprehensive loss of associates	(2,281,046)	(2,196,268)	(2,281,046)	(2,196,268)
Other comprehensive loss for the period	(3,201,138)	(2,396,284)	(3,201,138)	(2,396,284)
Total comprehensive profit for the period	1,805,394	44,256,459	1,805,394	44,256,459
Basic earnings per share	0.012	0.114	0.012	0.114

Note: The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder who request the company in either Arabic or English as requested within 7 days of receipt of the request.

Oman Post curates exhibition on life and legacy of Sayyid Tarik



(Supplied photo)

In the coming days, the exhibition on Sayyid Tarik will move to Opera Galleria

Muscat - At the launch of a commemorative stamp to mark Oman's 50th anniversary of UN membership at the Foreign Ministry on Sunday, a special exhibition on the life and legacy of the late Sayyid Tarik bin Taimur al Said was also opened.

The stamp features a photograph of Sayyid Tarik delivering Oman's first speech on the occasion of its membership of UN.

On the occasion, Sayyid Nasr bin Badr al Busaidi, general manager of Customer Experience at Oman Post & Asyad Express, said that Oman's membership to the UN marked the start of

the sultanate's modern diplomatic journey.

"It is a journey guided by principles set by the architect of Oman's modern renaissance, the late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said and is being carried ahead by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik as he leads Oman in its renewed renaissance," Busaidi said.

"Oman is known for its role in building bridges of cooperation among world nations. The new stamp is our way at Oman Post, in collaboration with the Foreign Ministry, to reflect on the sultanate's journey as a safe,

stable and modern country that has always worked tirelessly in pursuit of peace and intercultural dialogue worldwide. This stamp is a great source of pride for us, and we are confident that this timeless piece will be embedded in our nation's proud history."

The special exhibition curated by Oman Post serves as a platform to commemorate the remarkable life and legacy of Sayyid Tarik and his contribution to the progress of Oman over the years.

In the coming days, the exhibition will move to Opera Galleria for the public to see landmark moments in Sayyid Tarik's life and the sultanate's rich history.



(Syed Fasiuddin/Muscat Daily)

Hospitality academy opens with Swiss collaboration

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Muscat Hospitality Academy (MHA) has partnered with the EHL Group, Switzerland - a leading source of hospitality education and advisory services in the world - to open its first Vocational Education and Training/VET by EHL licensed training institute in Oman.

MHA, which is part of Heart of Hospitality (HOH), in partnership with the EHL Group, will set the standards in excellence for vocational education and training in hospitality, offering the next generation an opportunity to build their career in the hospitality industry, both within Oman and globally, stated a press release.

The academy will initially

focus on various programmes in four key specialisations - culinary, service, rooms and hotel administration. The programmes are designed to cover almost 80 per cent of the job skill demand of the industry. All curriculum and course materials are developed in Switzerland by the EHL Group and delivered by VET by EHL approved industry experts.

The academy was inaugurated on Sunday under the patronage of H E Salim al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage and Tourism. "It is quite a significant venture and an important addition to the hospitality training sector. All the new tourism related projects need qualified manpower to run the facilities and institutions like this can facili-

itate the manpower needs of the sector," said H E Mahrouqi.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Xia Cai, managing partner at HOH, said, "We are very proud of the fact that MHA has already been very well received by the hospitality sector in Oman, with commitment from many four- and five-star brands, which includes more than 370 employment opportunities for Omani nationals upon successful completion of our VET by EHL programmes.

"We are presenting a fantastic opportunity to Omanis who will receive unique world-class vocational educational training by hospitality industry experts, incorporating rigorous practical internships to ensure that they are equipped to be ready for the job

market from day one of graduation."

She added that MHA will be running open days between November 14 and 16. "It is all about selecting the right candidates to suit the work profile. These courses are for freshers who are passionate about the hospitality industry and for those already in the hospitality sector and wish to upgrade their skills and climb up the ladder."

Aman Aditya Sachdev, director and regional head - Middle East, South Asia & Myanmar - EHL Advisory Services, said, "On behalf of the EHL Group, it is my pleasure to welcome MHA to our distinguished and select global network of hospitality institutions delivering the VET by EHL programmes."

COVID-19 UPDATE

No deaths, 19 new cases in 3 days

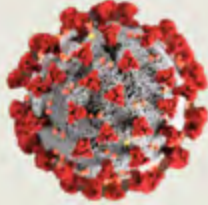
Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Health (MoH) reported 19 new cases of COVID-19 in three days in Oman on Sunday. There were no related deaths reported during the same time.

According to MoH data, a total of 304,429 positive COVID-19 cases have been registered in the sultanate. 'The total number of COVID-19-re-

lated deaths is 4,113,' the MoH statement said.

While the number of recov-



eries has increased, hospital admissions have decreased significantly. With 299,840

COVID-19 patients having recovered, the recovery rate now is 98.5 per cent. 'There are a total of ten patients in health institutions, including three in intensive care units. Currently, there are 476 active cases.'

Meanwhile, the Supreme Committee will address the media on Monday with the latest updates on COVID-19 in the country. The press meet will be broadcast live on Oman TV at 11am.



MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No.(51 /2021)

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

Tender No.	No E- Tender	Description of Tender	Tender Fee	Last date to collect the tender	Tender return date	Grade
PRE/20/017	2021/MM/HQ-33	Construction of Storm Water Drainage Channel in AL Ghubrah North - Phase 1C (E- Tender)	Rial 245	09/12/2021	13/01/2022	Excellent

Tender Conditions :-

- Bidders shall submit their offers electronically accompanied with an electronic copy of bond issued by any local bank in Oman addressed to Muscat municipality. The bond shall be (1%) of the tender value valid for ninety (90) days starting from the date of bids submission. Any tenders which do not meet the required bond shall not be accepted.
- Original Tender Bond envelope should be sealed with red wax and entitled to His Excellency/ Head of Intrnal Tender Committee and to be placed in the Tender Box at Muscat Municipality HQ, Third Floor, before **10:00 am** as per the date Mentioned in the above table. All envelopes are to be clearly marked with the name of the Tender being presented and no other marks.
- For any inquiries regarding tenders, please visit e-tendering website: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) .
- For technical support of e-tendering system please send an email to (etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om) or call (+96824402200).



SULTANATE OF OMAN MINISTRY OF HEALTH




ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Health invites specialized companies to participate in the following Tenders: -

Tender Ref.	Description	Last date for Collection of tender Document	Closing Time/ Day/ Date	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
MOH/HQ-173/2021	Supply and Installation of Medical Gases System (Oxygen) at Saham Hospital in North Al Batinah	25/November/2021	Before 08 am on Wednesday 22/December/2021	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board	R.O 25,000 Per set
MOH/HQ-174/2021	Supply & Installation of PABX Telephone System for Al Nahdha Hospital in Muscat Governorate	25/November/2021	Before 08 am on Wednesday 22/December/2021	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board	R.O 25,000 Per set

Notes:-

- All Specialized and interested Companies registered with Tender Board on the above mentioned Grade may obtain Tender documents from the E. Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document.
- Tenders should be submitted on line on the given website signed and sealed. The Tenderer should enclose scan copy of Bank Guarantee or a certified Cheque issued by a Local bank for not less than One percent (1%) for the Tender value validity for (90) days from the Tender Submission date, addressed to The Chairman of the Tender Committee before one day of date submission.
- The Original Bank Guarantee should be submitted to the office of Director of Purchase and Tenders one day before the submission date for all Tenders.
- Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any tender.

(<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)

Any Clarification, you may contact via

Telephone: 24402200

Email id etenderhd@ita.gov.om

MARKET WATCH

MSX30	4,000.92
BSE Sensex	60,686.69

FOREX RATES

(RO1 equals)	
Indian Rs	193.00
Pakistani Rs	456.12
Bangladeshi Taka	222.72
Philippine Peso	129.36
Sri Lankan Rs	524.50

*Rates as on November 14
Source: xe.com

BRIEFS

AstraZeneca to take profit from COVID-19 vaccine sales

British pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca said it has begun to sell its COVID-19 vaccine at a profit as the company posted a third quarter loss on higher costs.

AstraZeneca, which has sold its vaccine at cost during the pandemic in contrast to rivals including US giant Pfizer, said it expects 'to progressively transition... to modest profitability as new orders are received' in the current fourth quarter and beyond.

AstraZeneca posted a net loss of US\$1.65bn for the third quarter compared with a profit after tax of around US\$650mn in the July-September period last year.

AstraZeneca said it experienced higher costs in the current third quarter following its US\$39bn takeover of US biotech company Alexion, as well as increased research and development expenses.

The group added that revenue from its COVID vaccine, developed with the University of Oxford, totalled US\$2.22bn in the year to date following delivery of around 580mn doses worldwide.

Muscat Stock Exchange announces ESG initiatives

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) on Sunday announced the establishment of a new section to focus on the important environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues and diversity and inclusion (D&I) to achieve sustainable growth in Oman's capital market sector.

The new section will be operating within the MSX under the name of 'ESG and D&I'. The Muscat Stock Exchange has appointed Majida bint Sheikhan al Mamari as the head of this initiative.

The establishment of the 'ESG and D&I' section comes under exchange's keenness to support good governance policies in the sultanate as well as to keep pace with global best practices and to achieve sustainable growth in the capital market sector.

In a press statement, Mohammed bin Mahfoud al Ardhi, chairman of the board of directors of MSX, stated that the MSX board has signified the importance of ESG and D&I in the strategic planning of the exchange's development.

"This is an important initiative, especially during the time when global sustainability initiatives and events such as COP26 climate conference have brought environmental sustainability and inclusive corporate policies at the forefront of global business practice," he said.

Ardhi explained that ESG goes beyond standard corporate social responsibility (CSR) measures and takes into account a long-term sustainable view on



ESG initiative goes beyond standard CSR measures and takes into account a long-term sustainable view on the environmental, social and governance issues

MOHAMMED BIN MAHFOUD AL ARDHI

the environmental, social and governance issues.

"At the Muscat Stock Exchange, we believe in sustainable business growth and ethical deployment of capital, which in turn reflects into increased investor confidence, and improved profitability," he added.

Ardhi said that this [ESG and D&I] initiative comes under MSX's dedicated efforts to improve market transparency in disclosures and include market participants in endeavours such

as environmental and social governance.

"Today's investors are focused more than ever on sustainability factors in their investment decisions and the exchange is committed to harmonise the principals of investment with the investors' sustainability goals from a more diverse and inclusive platform," he said.

The MSX has adopted ESG as a best practice in line with the UN Principals for Responsible In-

vestment (PRI) that are dedicated to promoting environmental and social responsibility among world's investors.

According to UN PRI Standards, the ESG in investments is evolving from a risk management practice to a driver of innovation and new opportunities that create long-term value to business and society, a journey the MSX happily embarks upon with the promise to create a sustainable impact on its investment value chain.



Bank lending in Oman grows 4.9% in September

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Bank lending in Oman has shown signs of revival in past few months and credit growth has further increased in September, the Central Bank of Oman's (CBO) data showed.

Oman's bank loan growth picked up in September 2021 to 4.9 per cent, signaling that the sultanate's economic recovery is continuing into the fourth quarter of this year.

Total outstanding credit extended by Oman's banking sector grew by 4.9 per cent year-on-year to reach RO27.7bn at the end of September 2021, according to the CBO data published by Oman News Agency.

Credit growth in Oman had dropped below 2 per cent last year after the dual shock of the coronavirus crisis and oil price collapse hit the economy hard.

Bank lending to the private sector also showed an improved growth of 2.6 per cent as of September this year compared to less than 1 per cent recorded in

the first half of 2021, the central bank's data showed.

The shares of non-financial corporate sector and household sector (mainly personal loans) in total private sector credit stood at 46.4 per cent and 45.2 per cent, respectively, at the end of September 2021. The share of financial corporations was 4.9 per cent and other sectors received the remaining 3.5 per cent of total private sector credit.

On the deposits side, the CBO data indicated that total deposits held with the Omani banks (conventional and Islamic) registered an year-on-year growth of 2.7 per cent to reach RO25bn at the end of September 2021.

Total private sector deposits increased by 5.2 per cent to RO17.2bn in September compared to the year ago period. In terms of sector-wise composition of private sector deposits, the biggest share goes to household deposits at 51.5 per cent, followed by non-financial corporations at 32.4 per cent, financial corporations at 13.7 per cent and the other sectors at 2.4 per cent.

Oman and US review investment opportunities



Sohar - Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (OCCI) North Batina branch organised a meeting between representatives of the US Embassy in Oman and business persons in the governorate.

The meeting aimed at reviewing investment opportunities as per the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed between the two countries.

Held at the Crown Plaza Sohar, the event was attended by Eng Ridha Juma al Saleh, OCCI

chairman and some officials from the government and private sectors in the governorate.

During the meeting, chief of the political/economic section at the US Embassy gave a presentation on the incentives offered by the FTA between Oman and the US.

On his turn, chief commercial officer at the US Embassy touched on horizons of the economic cooperation between the two countries.

ONA

Airbus takes \$33bn mega order at Dubai Airshow

Dubai, UAE - Airbus took a mega-order for 255 single-aisle A321 aircraft on Sunday, the European plane-maker said in a statement, on the first day of a major air show in Dubai.

It said the order came from Wizz Air, Frontier, Volaris and JetSMART - all from US company Indigo Partners - for a total value of more than US\$33bn, according to the latest list price published by Airbus in 2018.

The total cost of the order was not disclosed, but list rates are rarely applied to large deliveries.

Hungarian low-cost carrier Wizz Air will receive 102 aircraft, American Frontier Airlines will receive 91, while 39 will go to Mexico's Volaris and 23 to Chilean JetSMART.

Airbus CEO Guillaume Faury said that because the four companies fall under the same aviation-focused equity firm, it allowed for a large order and for an attractive price, adding, "It's a give and take situation."

Deliveries are set to begin in 2025.



The embattled aviation industry flocked to the Dubai Airshow on Sunday as it emerges from coronavirus pandemic travel restrictions and faces pressure to reduce its impact on climate change.

The five-day event in the United Arab Emirates is the industry's first large gathering since COVID-19 clipped the sector's wings last year, when border closures left airports deserted and hundreds of aircraft idle.

Air traffic has bounced back since then, though it was still 53

per cent lower in September than its pre-pandemic levels.

Indigo Partners chief Bill Franke said the company wanted 'to be early in the [recovery] process'.

Christian Scherer, Airbus chief commercial officer and head of Airbus International, said the Indigo Partners airlines had 'acted fast and decisively over the last few months to position themselves for this landmark order as the effect of the pandemic recedes and the world wants more sustainable flying'.

AFP

Special Discount

24.24% DISCOUNT

22.72% DISCOUNT

NO 64,700 NO 50 ONLY

• Hot & Cold Dispenser

• 2 Full Bottles

• 15 Refill Coupons

BUY & WIN 310 PRIZES

Get 1 Raffle Coupon for every RO 20 spent on 5 Gallon Products.

• Gold Coins

• Gift Vouchers

• Oman Oasis Siffr Water Coupons

Register your raffle coupon number at www.omanoasis.com/discount2021 to win.

CALL TOLL-FREE 800 71 222 or GSM: 9275 5522

Special discount valid from 20th August 2021 to 19th November 2021. Conditions apply.

C.R.No.: 1365452 MM 2021/634/06

Scan QR Code to Register

oman OASIS

siffr

SODIUM FREE DRINKING WATER

oman OASIS

siffr

SODIUM FREE DRINKING WATER

The healthy choice

Call Toll-Free 800 71 222 or GSM 9275 5522

f OmanOasis i OmanOasisOfficial t OmanOasisWater www.omanoasis.com

C.R. No.: 1365452

US consumer confidence hits 10-year low



A shopper walks past turkeys for sale in a grocery store ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday in Los Angeles, California on Thursday (AFP)

Washington, US - Rising prices taking a bite out of American wallets caused consumer sentiment to drop to a ten-year low in November, a sign inflation is increasingly a political liability for President Joe Biden.

While the world's largest economy has bounced back strongly from the COVID-19 pandemic impact, global shortages of key components and supply chain snarls have added to a US worker shortage, raising costs and pushing prices higher.

Following a government data report showing consumer price inflation jumped to a 30-year high of 6.2 per cent in October, a survey released on Friday with the sharp drop in sentiment came as another blow, although economists do not expect shoppers to pull back on spending.

The University of Michigan said its preliminary sentiment index dropped to 66.8 this month, a 6.8 per cent decline.

Survey chief economist

Richard Curtin said one in four families suffered eroding living standards but lower income families were feeling the most pain.

Biden last week pledged to make putting a lid on inflation was a 'top priority', but Curtin attributed the dismal sentiment reading to 'the growing belief among consumers that no effective policies have yet been developed to reduce the damage from surging inflation'.

Low interest rates have fueled high demand for homebuying, sending prices higher, while vehicle and petrol prices also have spiked worldwide.

"The description that inflation would be 'transient' has the undertone that consumers could 'grin and bear it,'" Curtin said in a statement.

The headline sentiment index reflected a drop in both the measure of current feelings and longer-term expectations, according to the survey.

AFP

India opens govt bond market to individual buyers

Mumbai, India - India has opened its US\$1tn government bond market to individual investors as it seeks help from the public to fund its ambitious spending plans.

Asia's third-largest economy plans to borrow ₹12.05tn (US\$161.87bn) via bonds this financial year, ending March 2022, as it embarks on huge investment plans to boost growth in the COVID-battered country.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday the new scheme 'allows the smallest investor to participate in the country's economic progress'.

"Small investors will be assured of good returns on a secure investment and the government will get the resources it needs for infrastructure development and building a new India."

Governments in developed economies have long allowed individuals to invest in bonds, which usually offer smaller returns than other investments but



are seen as safer.

India follows other emerging market countries like Brazil, the Philippines and Bangladesh in easing public access to its sovereign bond market.

Before Friday, individual investors in India could only buy government bonds through mutual funds and other indirect facilities. Now they can invest as little as ₹10,000 (US\$134) in them directly through accounts with the central bank.

Bond experts see this as a crucial step ahead of India's expected inclusion in global bond market indices early next year, which should help the government raise more money from foreign investors.

AFP



A'Sharqiya Investments Holding Co. (SAOG)

P.O. Box 47 PC 118 Al Harthy Complex Sultanate of Oman

Tel: +968 24566160 / Fax: +968 24566162 / Email: admin@asharqiya.com

Chairman's Report for the Quarter ended September 30, 2021

Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it gives me great pleasure to present the unaudited consolidated financial statements of A'Sharqiya Investment Holding Company (SAOG) and its subsidiary – Qalhat Real Estate Investments & Services LLC. (QREIS) - for the nine month period ended September 30, 2021.

Overview of Operations and Financial Performance

A summary of the company's operating performance for the nine-month period ended September 30, 2021 in comparison to the corresponding period in 2020 and the full year ended 2020 is presented below:

Quarter ended September 30, 2021	Sep 30 2021	Sep 30 2020	% Increase/ (Decrease)	Full Year ended 2020
Total Operating Income	916	1,006	(8.9)	1,165
Profit after Tax (PAT)	465	525	(11.3)	529
Net change in Fair Value of FVOCI	1,853	(112)	1,750	774
Total comprehensive income/(loss)	2,318	412	462.2	1,303
Total Assets	18,892	15,833	19.3	16,812

The company's operations during the nine month period ended September 30, 2021 generated an income of RO 915,993 as compared to RO 1,005,957 during the corresponding period in 2020. Profit before tax decreased by 12.4% at RO 517,501 as against RO 590,841. The profit after tax arising from the company's operations is RO 465,178 as compared to RO 524,611 generated during the comparable period in 2020 - a decrease of 11.3%.

The increase in fair value of the company's investment portfolio under the fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI) investments during the period stood at RO 1,852,849 compared to a decrease of RO 112,291 recorded during the comparable period in 2020. The total comprehensive income increased to RO 2,318,027 as compared to RO 412,320 during the comparable period in 2020. The total assets of the company as at September 30, 2021 is RO 18,892,195 as compared to RO 15,832,802 as at September 30, 2020, reflecting an increase of 19.3%. Net Assets per share is at RO 0.168 on September 30, 2021 as compared to RO 0.134 on September 30, 2020.

Investment and future Outlook

The global economy is projected to grow 5.9 percent in 2021 and 4.9 percent in 2022 as per IMF World Economic Outlook (October 2021). There is a downward revision of 0.1% for 2021 from the July 2021 outlook, which reflects downgrade for advanced economies due to supply disruptions and worsening pandemic dynamics in low income developing countries. The outlook also forecasts stronger near term prospects for commodity-exporting emerging and developing economies.

Oman is projected to witness a GDP growth of 2.5% in 2021 and 2.9% in 2022. Inflation turned negative in 2020 owing to subdued demand, but it is expected to increase to 3.0% percent in 2021 given the introduction of VAT and recovery in aggregate demand, before declining to 2.7% in 2022. The fiscal deficit is projected to improve to 2.4% in 2021 from 19.3% in 2020 driven by increased Oil revenue, and a move to fiscal surplus is predicted over the medium term.

Though emergence of COVID-19 variants could prolong the impact of the pandemic on the global outlook and financial conditions, and thus intensify the economic impact on Oman, the recovery in economic activity is in full swing with various countries ramping up their vaccination efforts and return to normalcy seems to be the focus among countries.

The operations of some of our investee companies was significantly impacted by the lockdowns in key markets that they operate and expect performance to gradually improve with the ease of restrictions in these markets. We are confident about the full recovery of economic activity and the effect of this benefitting the operations of our investee Companies. Though the risks of further new strains of virus leading to renewed restrictions is not ruled out, the will of countries to continue the economic recovery is clearly visible. The Company will continue to add value to its investee companies with a long-term view and also continue its efforts to structure the portfolio to generate sustainable long-term returns to shareholders.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq for his able leadership of the country during such an unprecedented crisis. I also thank the shareholders for their continued support and for the confidence reposed on the company. My appreciation also goes to the company's management and staff for their contributions and commitment to the company.

Mohammed Ali Al Fannah
Chairman

UN-AUDITED SEPARATE AND CONSOLIDATED CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

	Un-audited 30 September 2021		Un-audited 30 September 2020		Audited 31 December 2020	
	Parent RO	Group RO	Parent RO	Group RO	Parent RO	Group RO
ASSETS						
Non-current assets						
Furniture and equipment	7,275	7,406	10,741	10,960	9,680	9,877
Lease receivables	-	5,142,232	-	5,658,657	-	5,594,315
Investment in a subsidiary	250,000	-	250,000	-	250,000	-
Financial assets at FVOCI	10,039,537	10,039,537	8,367,502	8,367,502	9,238,100	9,238,100
Financial assets at FVTPL	126,749	126,749	-	-	58,439	58,439
Capital work-in-progress	-	214,206	-	5,200	-	46,730
Deferred tax assets	54,467	54,467	38,652	38,652	54,467	54,467
Total non-current assets	10,478,028	15,584,597	8,666,895	14,080,971	9,610,686	15,001,928
Current assets						
Due from a subsidiary	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lease receivables	-	517,479	-	448,332	-	467,747
Prepayments and other receivables	9,759	272,011	24,382	298,183	23,825	485,911
Bank balances and cash	1,401,302	2,518,108	535,583	1,005,316	407,980	856,085
Total current assets	1,411,061	3,307,598	559,965	1,751,831	431,805	1,809,743
Total assets	11,889,089	18,892,195	9,226,860	15,832,802	10,042,491	16,811,671
EQUITY						
Equity:						
Share capital	9,000,000	9,000,000	9,000,000	9,000,000	9,000,000	9,000,000
Legal reserve	1,423,875	1,507,209	1,410,722	1,494,056	1,403,679	1,487,013
Fair value reserve	1,348,895	1,348,895	(1,194,266)	(1,194,266)	(307,846)	(307,846)
(Accumulated losses)/ Retained earnings	(684,807)	3,248,964	(849,516)	2,746,424	(912,179)	2,758,373
Total equity	11,087,963	15,105,068	8,366,940	12,046,214	9,183,654	12,937,540
Total equity	11,087,963	15,105,068	8,366,940	12,046,214	9,183,654	12,937,540
LIABILITIES						
Non-current liabilities						
Finance lease payable	-	3,503,331	-	3,517,147	-	3,566,170
Staff terminal benefits	110,820	138,209	99,976	121,436	101,982	127,291
Total	110,820	3,641,540	99,976	3,638,583	101,982	3,693,461
Current liabilities						
Finance lease payable	-	14,870	-	14,093	-	14,285
Amount due to a subsidiary	651,489	-	712,458	-	697,458	-
Retention payable	-	15,450	-	-	-	-
Trade and other payables	31,710	61,710	29,019	61,324	42,890	82,590
Provision for taxation	7,107	53,557	18,467	72,588	16,507	83,795
Total	690,306	145,587	759,944	148,005	756,855	180,670
Total liabilities	801,126	3,787,127	859,920	3,786,588	858,837	3,874,131
Total equity and liabilities	11,889,089	18,892,195	9,226,860	15,832,802	10,042,491	16,811,671
Net assets per share	0.123	0.168	0.093	0.134	0.102	0.144

UN-AUDITED SEPARATE AND CONSOLIDATED CONDENSED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE NINE MONTHS PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

	30 September 2021		30 September 2020	
	Parent RO	Group RO	Parent RO	Group RO
INCOME				
Finance income on lease receivables	-	436,231	-	481,398
Dividend income	413,307	413,307	438,551	438,551
Maintenance services income (net)	-	50,371	-	66,465
Gain on disposal of FVTPL assets	6,203	6,203	12,640	12,640
Other income	45,003	9,881	51,903	6,903
Operating income	464,513	915,993	503,094	1,005,957
EXPENSES				
Interest & finance expenses	(746)	(809)	(1,388)	(1,431)
Staff costs	(165,697)	(165,697)	(170,182)	(170,182)
Finance cost on lease payable	-	(138,582)	-	(138,582)
Decrease in fair values of FVTPL assets	(5,691)	(5,691)	-	-
Depreciation	(2,947)	(3,013)	(3,067)	(3,133)
General and administrative expenses	(81,600)	(84,700)	(98,423)	(101,788)
Operating expenses	(256,681)	(398,492)	(273,060)	(415,116)
Profit before taxation	207,832	517,501	230,034	590,841
Income tax expense	(5,873)	(52,323)	(12,109)	(66,230)
Profit for the period	201,959	465,178	217,925	524,611
Other comprehensive income:				
Net change in fair values of financial assets at FVOCI	1,852,849	1,852,849	(112,291)	(112,291)
Total comprehensive income for the period	2,054,808	2,318,027	105,634	412,320
Earnings per share	0.002	0.005	0.002	0.006

Note: The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder who requests them in Arabic or English as requested, within 7 days of receipt of the request.

www.inapaarman.co.za

Distributed by

Please Contact +968 22060236/237

MEC hosts Distribution Benchmarking Forum

Mazoon Electricity Company (MEC), a member of NAMA Group, was the key organiser of a Distribution Benchmarking Forum (DBF) held in Muscat recently.

Six companies participated in the forum which helped assess the distribution companies' service performance, identify areas for improvement, implement best practices and learn from industry leaders, a press release said.

The vision of the DBF is to be a forum for participants to share experiences, learn from each other, and improve performance through benchmarking.

Eng Khalfan Naser Said al-Burtamani, project manager of the forum and senior manager, Regulatory & Corporate Affairs, in Mazoon Electricity, said, "DBF has been paving the way for shared learning through benchmarking.

The forum helps power util-



ties meet the rapidly growing demand for electricity while managing assets effectively and fulfilling regulatory requirements." The benchmarking on 33KPIs covered topics like network operation performance, customer service performance, financial performance, human resource performance, safety health envi-

ronment performance, asset performance and project performance.

The forum provided an annual overview of the companies' performance for the past three years, the position within NAMA group companies and with other electricity well reputed distribution companies.

It focused on an understanding of areas of improvement and lesson learning from the best performer.

The forum provided an opportunity to learn best practices from the peer group leading performers.

The Distribution Benchmarking Forum (DBF) was established in 2012 on the initiatives of NAMA Holding Company with the goal of "measuring performance to improve", and since the establishment, DBF support NAMA Group distribution companies to improve its performance by adopting best practices.

Alizz Islamic, Al Jenaibi sign agreement

In commemoration of the sultanate's celebrations of Omani Women's Day, and as part of the launch of Hiyya Female Banking, Alizz Islamic Bank and Al Jenaibi International Automobiles announced the signing of a cooperation agreement.

The agreement was signed by Mohammed al Ghassani, AGM-Chief Consumer Banking Officer of Alizz Islamic Bank and Rashid al Zamani, GM of Al Jenaibi International Automobiles, in the presence of a number of executives from the management sides, a press release said.

As part of the agreement Al Jenaibi International Automobiles will have a selection of BMW cars for three consecutive months for women who want to test drive BMW before buying it. A raffle at the ceremony was also conducted by Alizz Islamic Bank at Shangri La Barr Jissah Resort, on the occasion of the celebration of Omani Women's Day. The two winners of the raffle will be able to enjoy test driving a BMW for the weekend.

Commenting on this signing, Ghassani said, "We have committed ourselves to expanding



our banking services and products to suit what Omani women need and deserve. We always strive to honour the spirit of Omani woman in all kinds of ways possible. This agreement is part of a variety of discounts and offers from various stores and merchants. Omani women are

Alizz Islamic Bank the flexibility and ease to try and buy any model of BMW. We believe that such offers are the least we can offer to Omani women."

Alizz Islamic Bank is proud of making the life of its customers easy and flexible through the products and financing offers it provides, as the bank has been focusing heavily on improving its services and products through coordination, continuous meetings, and knowledge of the permanent needs that customers desire.

In a move to honour female entrepreneurs and business executives, Alizz Islamic Bank unveiled its special and exclusive 'Hiyya' awards for women, recently.

Designed to recognise and felicitate women, the 'Hiyya' awards came as an expression of appreciation and gratitude for the pioneering role played by women in building the nation; it is a formal acknowledgement of their contribution in various fields as they continue to demonstrate their expertise and experience in the social and economic arena.



GIS brings leading GCC physicians together

The Gulf Intervention Society (GIS) announces the fourth edition of the leading GCC annual conference that brings together leading cardiologists and interventionalists in its mission to educate and share insight into research and quality patient care, and to successfully develop a vision of cooperation between regional and international bodies in the field of Cardiovascular Intervention.

President Fawaz Almutairi, consultant interventional cardiologist, King Abdulaziz Cardiac Center, National Guard Hospital, Riyadh, said, "The Gulf Intervention Society was established in 2018 to coincide with the growth and success of Gulf interventional cardiac surgeries, both regionally and globally. GIS was created with the aim of gathering insight, knowledge, and best practice to serve the public, States, and health care professionals for scientific research and societal compatibility.

The GIS Board, which forms part of the Gulf Heart Association, including Fawaz Almutairi - president, Abdullah Shehab, professor of Cardiology, UAE - vice president, Mousa Akbar, consultant interventional cardiologist and head of Cardiology Unit

Al Sabah Hospital, Kuwait - general manger, and Khalid Bin Thani, Cardiovascular Medicine and Interventional Cardiology Salmaniya Medical Complex, Bahrain - treasurer, and twenty intervention doctors gathered from the GCC area from Bahrain, Kuwait, UAE, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, welcomes the participation of national and regional cardiac interventionalists to recognise their responsibility towards their patients, fellow physicians and the health care sector as a whole.

Vice President, Abdullah Shehab, said, "The increase in interest in the GIS Conference since it's inauguration is testament to the importance of our mission and vision. We have also seen an increase in the participation of fellow specialists and health care workers from both, the Middle East and the Far East, continuing to achieve our objective to lead the Gulf and Middle East interventional community.

"This year, we will see a combination of in person knowledge sharing alongside live streams from around the world, truly empowering my fellow physicians and sharing the responsibility towards our patients, each other and the health care sector as a

whole."

Since the inaugural event in 2018, the GIS Conference has seen attendance and participation increase by 70% year on year.

Mousa Akbar said "In line with the GIS mission, the conference recognises its responsibility to promote the highest possible educational levels, research tools, community interactions and ethical behaviour by its members, and will feature updates on all new guidelines and recent trials in the field of cardiology intervention amongst attendees with opportunities to network and share experiences with locally based and international experts in the field."

Including professionals from all GCC countries the USA and Europe, the conference will include 4 live-streamed cases from King Faisal Cardiac Center National Guard, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Mount Sinai Hospital, New York, USA, Alqassimi Hospital, UAE, and Paris Sud University Hospital, France, along with 16 recorded live in a box recorded cases, eight workshops with hands-on and hands-off techniques and more than 20 international speakers joining virtually and physically.

ISM revamps old hydroponics project

To promote integrated development in children by enriching them with core values and brilliance in curricular and extra-curricular activities to flourish universally, the Indian School Muscat has started a Hydroponics Project, the first of its kind ever initiated amongst Schools in Middle East and India.

Hydroponics is the practice of growing plants using only water, nutrients, and a growing medium. Plants may be grown with only their roots exposed to the mineral solution or the roots may be supported by an inert



medium, such as, perlite or gravel.

There are various types of Hydroponics, such as, Wick Systems/Passive hydroponics, Deep Water Culture (DWC), Nutrient Fluid Technique (NFT), Ebb and Flow (Flood and Drain), Aeroponics and Drip Systems.

Indian School Muscat initiated the project, Hydroponics in the year 2017 aiming at instilling modern scientific flair among students. Indra Mani Pandey, the then ambassador of India to the sultanate had unveiled the Hydroponics project in ISM on November 2, 2017, a press re-

lease said.

In Indian School Muscat, Passive hydroponics system - Drip Back System and Nutrient Fluid Technique (NFT) are established and a team of teachers and students, who have taken up this project are working for it as part of STEAM Education.

Initial training to the students, including sea bed preparation was conducted by the teachers. In addition to this, two Online Hydroponics Training sessions were conducted by the resource person, V Jayasurya, in association with Nanma Krishikootam recently.

Tolerance & Inclusivity Week offers diverse experiences at Expo

Cultivating a culture of inclusion, Expo 2020's Tolerance & Inclusivity Week, which runs from 14-20 November, aims to foster greater common understanding to create more tolerant societies.

From a Firdaus Orchestra performance, to an array of film screenings, music and dance performances, Expo 2020 is hosting an extensive, inclusive cultural programme, open to all, to reflect the beautiful, diverse

world around us, a press release said.

To mark International Day for Tolerance on 16 November, the all-female Firdaus Orchestra returns to the Jubilee Stage. Melding Middle Eastern influences with music taken from world cinema and TV, including Cinema Paradiso, Bombay Theme, Slumdog Millionaire and Maula Ya Salli, as well as featuring a children's choir from GEMS Legacy School.

The Firdaus Orchestra performance is the highlight of a packed International Tolerance Day programme that also includes a call to action from the UAE Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence urging everyone to become a 'Champion of Tolerance' and join its platform to enhance connections, create awareness and open doors to collaborative solutions.

The same day, the USA Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai,

together with the US Mission to the UAE and the Israel Pavilion will screen Amen-Amen-Amen, a film documenting the journey of a Torah scroll made in honour of the founder of the UAE, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. Featuring milestones in the UAE's approach to religious tolerance, including Pope Francis's visit to Abu Dhabi in February 2019, the film will be screened at in Al Forsan Park.



LuLu Hypermarket opens in Jalan Bani Bu Ali

LuLu Hypermarket Oman announced the opening of its latest store in Jalan Bani Bu Ali, in South Sharqiyah Governorate, yesterday.

The new store was inaugurated by H E Sheikh Nayef Ham-moud Hamad al Maamari, deputy wali of Jalan Bani Bu Ali, in the presence of H H Faisal bin Mohammed al Said, Yusuff Ali M A, chairman and managing di-rector, LuLu Group International, and the senior management of LuLu Oman.

The new store will further strengthen the group's presence in the country and will offer cus-tomers a new level of standard in price, convenience, comfort, quality in-store service levels and above all, a new shopping experience.

The new branch features state-of-the-art facilities, elegant interiors, a well-planned retail floor layout, ample aisle space, extensively laid out counters and liberal parking space.

Speaking at the launch, Yusuff Ali said, "We are happy to launch our 28th store in Oman in Jalan Bani Bu Ali. The opening of the new hypermarket is in line with our ambitious plans to rapidly expand our footprint in the coun-try and a reflection of our com-mitment towards the local community. Currently we have 3200 Omanis employed across various departments, including IT, Accounts, Admin and front office. We are one of the largest employer of Omani nationals in the private sector.

"As part of our expansion plan, we are planning to launch more stores across the sultanate in the coming months. The coun-try's robust economy and in-vestor-friendly policies have always been conducive for us to firmly establish our presence here.

"The government has been readily supporting us in all our ventures to date and helping us contribute to the economic and social development of the country."

The hypermarket has 12077.4sqm (130,000sqft) of retail space and is positioned as an ideal spot for essential and lifestyle shopping. It has dedi-cated in-store sections for fresh and frozen food, fruits and veg-etables, groceries, electronics, home products and more, offer-ing an extensive choice of pre-mium and locally sourced products. New features have been put in place throughout the store to make a better overall ex-perience for shoppers.

There are special counters for meat and butchery, bakery prod-ucts as well as an in-store kitchen for freshly made meals.



There is a mix of 23 other outlets in this store, including restau-rants and cafes and a family en-tertainment centre.

Speaking at the event, Ananth A V, director of LuLu Hypermar-kets Oman & India, said, "The opening of the new store in Jalan Bani Bu Ali reflects an emerg-ing need to stay in pace with the evolving consumer needs in this area. It will help generate direct and indirect employment oppor-tunities for the local community here. As the community here

continues to grow and develop, we believe our hypermarket will be a great addition to the existing clientele base."

Shabeer K A, regional director - Oman, stated, "Despite the challenging times, we have been able to bring back a more 'nor-malised shopping pattern' for our customers.

We have also adapted online modes of shopping to enable for a more comfortable shopping ex-perience during the current situ-ation. Customers can also avail

doorstep delivery option using the LuLu shopping app. We are glad to innovate our strategies and ideas on a regular basis and stay updated to meet and exceed customer expectations at all times."

LuLu Group, headquartered in Abu Dhabi, UAE, runs its flagship retail chain of LuLu hypermarkets and supermarkets in the MENA region. Ranked third in the pres-tigious 'Forbes Top 100 Compa-nies', and by Deloitte as one of the 10 fastest-growing retailers.



Boeing affirms commitment to support aerospace growth

Boeing executives expressed the company's commitment to sup-port aerospace industry growth in the Middle East region and confidence in a market recovery leading into the Dubai

Ted Colbert, president and CEO of Boeing Global Services, Michael Manazir, vice president of Business Development for De-fense, Space and Security, and Ihssane Mounir, senior vice pres-ident of Commercial Sales & Marketing, shared their views for regional demand and emphas-ised Boeing's commitment to deepen its regional presence, a press release said.

Boeing will showcase its mar-ket-leading portfolio of commer-cial, defense and services products at the 2021 Dubai Air-show, including the international debut of its newest fuel-efficient



widebody jet, the 777X, along with the company's growing au-tonomous capabilities such as

the Boeing Airpower Teaming System.

A 777-9 flight test airplane

will participate in the Dubai Air-show's flying display and also ap-pear in the static display.

OIC launches unique Regional Insurance Medical Solution

In a bid to drastically simplify and improve access to health in-surance for companies operating in the UAE and across the Middle East, Oman Insurance Company (OIC) has launched its Regional Insurance Medical Solution (RIMS).

This new service, imple-mented in partnership with a leading third-party administrator MedNet and with four other re-gional insurers, will give employ-ees access to a regional network of 13,000 medical providers while giving them a uniform and comprehensive cover, a press re-lease said.

The medical solution was de-signed with the objective of catering to regional organisa-tions with locally-compliant health insurance plans in the Kingdom of Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Sultanate of Oman,

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Commenting on the launch, Dr Yasser Khalifa, head of Em-ployee Benefits at Oman Insur-ance Company, said, "Our objective is to make insurance simple and easy. With our new solution, we massively simplify the process of insuring employ-ees of the same company but working across the Middle East. We are proud to partner with MedNet as well as with our local partners for this new initiative and we are confident that it will enable businesses to manage their employee benefits more ef-ficiently."

Oman Insurance Company, one of the leading insurers in the GCC, based in UAE and Oman, is partnering with Delta Insurance (based in Jordan), KIB Takaful In-surance (based in Kuwait), SNIC

Insurance (based in Kingdom of Bahrain) and Wala Cooperative Insurance Company (based in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) to im-plement the solution. Soon, the solution will be extended to Egypt and Qatar.

With access to MedNet's ca-pabilities, the new solution will enable members to reach out to 13,000 medical providers in the Middle East on a cashless basis. The solution has also been cu-rated in accordance with the laws of each jurisdiction. There-fore, policies will be underwritten and invoiced in the country of the employee's residence.

In addition to bespoke plans for each group, employees can access the Assist America serv-ices when they require emer-gency medical services while travelling 120km or more from their permanent residence.

Tunisians protest against presidential ‘coup’

Tunis, Tunisia - Thousands of Tunisians gathered near the country’s parliament on Sunday to protest a presidential power grab they have deemed a ‘coup’.

It was the latest rally opposing President Kais Saied’s July 25 decision to sack the government, suspend parliament and seize an array of powers, citing an ‘imminent threat’ to the country - the birthplace of the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings against autocracy.

More than 3,000 protesters gathered, shouting ‘The people want to bring down the coup d’etat’ and ‘Kais’s project is a civil war’ and branding the President an ‘agent of colonialism’, AFP correspondents reported.

Some carried signs reading ‘No to the intimidation of the media’ and demanding ‘an independent judicial authority’.

The demonstrators ‘shut down all the streets, the avenues, the motorways’, said Jawhar Ben Mbarek, a figure of the Tunisian left.

“After shutting down the state, Saied has shut down the institutions, the constitution. He has shut down the country,” he charged.

Social media users shared images of police using cars and mini-vans to block protesters from reaching the suburb of Bardo, where the parliament building is located.

Several members of the Islamist Ennahdha party, a key



Tunisian demonstrators wave national flags as they protest in front of the parliament against the seizure of governing powers by President Kais Saied, in the capital Tunis on Sunday (AFP)

force in the dissolved parliament, were at the forefront of the procession alongside left-wing representatives, holding signs reading: ‘MPs against the coup’.

Other protesters gathered near parliament, Tunisian flags in hand, and shouted their opposition to military trials for civilians.

On Wednesday, Amnesty In-

ternational warned that ‘military courts in Tunisia are increasingly targeting civilians, in some cases for publicly criticising President Kais Saied’. It said that within the past three months, at least ten civilians have been investigated by military courts.

On September 22, Saied suspended parts of the constitution and installed rule by decree, maintaining full control of the ju-

diciary as well as powers to sack ministers and issue laws.

He appointed a new government in October, with Najla Bouden as the North African country’s first female prime minister.

But he has significantly pared back the powers of her office and will technically head the administration himself.

Saied, who was elected in late

2019, made his shock move amid a socio-economic crisis aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some of his opponents have accused him of seeking a new dictatorship, a decade after Tunisia’s 2011 revolt that overthrew dictator Zine el Abidine Ben Ali.

But the President’s supporters say his moves were needed

after years of deadlock among political parties seen as corrupt and self-serving.

Slew of protests

Tunisia has been witnessing a slew of protests during the recent days, bringing the administration of President Saied under pressure.

On Saturday, tear gas and protest cries filled the air in the

town of Agareb over the death of a 21 year old girl blamed on a nearby rubbish dump.

Yousra died in 2019 after being bitten by a mosquito that came from the toxic trash site, her mother Mabrouka Ben Ibrahim said.

“I lost my daughter and I don’t want other families to lose their children because of the filth in this landfill,” the 59 year old said.

Residents say rubbish dumped at the site, including dangerous industrial and medical refuse, has caused a string of diseases from cancer to vision problems and infertility.

Authorities decided to close the site in September after declaring it full but reversed course last Monday, prompting angry street demonstrations that degenerated into clashes with security forces.

In the early hours of Tuesday, a protester died of what relatives said was tear gas inhalation, although authorities have blamed his death on an unrelated health condition.

The protests come amid a garbage crisis across Sfax province that has seen refuse piling up on pavements after the closure of the Agareb site, the province’s main dump.

Residents say the site, around 3km from the town centre and stretching over 35 hectares, has become a public health disaster since it opened in 2008.

AFP

Al Qaeda suspects among 3 killed in Yemen drone strike

Dubai, UAE - A suspected US drone strike on Sunday killed three people in central Yemen, including two alleged Al Qaeda militants, local government officials said.

“A drone that is believed to be American targeted a car carrying a man, who is likely an Al Qaeda member, and his wife, resulting in the injury of both,” a government official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told AFP.

“Three people, a civilian and two suspected Al Qaeda gunmen, who were in a vehicle that was heading to the site to assist the wounded were targeted in another strike and killed.”

A second government official in the border region between the central provinces of Shabwa and Al-Bayda confirmed the two strikes and death toll.

The United States considers Al Qaeda’s Yemen branch - Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) - the most dangerous faction of the militant network.

A long-running US drone war



Yemenis inspect the site an airstrike in capital Sanaa on Thursday (AFP)

against AQAP had intensified after ex-president Donald Trump took office in 2017.

AQAP, and other extremists loyal to the Islamic State group, have thrived in the chaos of Yemen’s civil war which pits the Saudi-backed government against Iran-allied Houthi rebels.

AQAP has carried out operations against both the Houthis and government forces as well as sporadic attacks abroad, including on the offices of the French

satirical publication *Charlie Hebdo* in 2015.

But analysts say its abilities on the ground have dwindled, although it still inspires attacks carried out by ‘lone wolf’ militants or former operatives.

In February 2020, AQAP confirmed the death of its leader Qassim al Rimi after he was killed in a US drone strike, and appointed Khalid Batarfi as his successor.

AFP

Sisi looks to new capital to cement legacy

New Administrative Capital, Egypt - An opulent presidential palace, a brand new parliament, a regal opera house and spacious parks are all part of the vision for an ambitious new administrative capital rising up out of the Egyptian desert.

As far as the eye can see, building sites dot the horizon heralding the arrival of this crown jewel of President Abdel Fattah al Sisi’s grand urban plans.

About 50km east of the north African country’s 1,000 year old capital, Cairo, construction workers are racing to finish the project.

It had been set to be unveiled on June 30 - the date marking the anniversary of 2013 mass protests, backed by the military, which toppled the divisive rule of late Islamist president Mohamed Morsi.

But the launch was postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic that led to a downturn in the market.

After a series of false starts, Sisi this month issued a directive for civil servants to relocate to the new capital in December for



This file photo shows construction work at the business and finance district of Egypt’s ‘New Administrative Capital’ megaproject (AFP)

a ‘six-month trial period’.

The city is forecast to cost around US\$45bn, is roughly the size of Singapore, and has been touted as a solution to overpopulation in the sprawling metropolis of Cairo, home to more than 20mn people.

After being first elected in 2014, Sisi anointed the new capital as ‘the birth of a new state ... and republic’.

Some believe, however, the new city, just known officially as

the New Administrative Capital, will not compete with Cairo in the same way as Brazil’s new capital Brasilia and even risks eventually being swallowed up by its huge neighbour.

“The new capital for me is a mystery,” said Galila El-Kadi, an urban planning professor and director of the Marseille-based Research Institute for Development.

“It’s already on the edge of Cairo without anyone moving

there yet and within a few years it will expand and fuse into Cairo. This will only increase problems of managing human density of such magnitude,” she told AFP.

Sisi has staked his legacy on massive infrastructure projects, and ground has also been broken in other new cities including on the Mediterranean Sea at El Alamein, in the fertile Delta near Mansoura and in the south near Aswan.

In 2019 Sisi inaugurated a massive mosque in the new capital with capacity for 3,000 worshippers, as well as the largest cathedral in the Middle East for the Copt population, seeking to enhance his image as the country’s self-proclaimed unifier.

And the capital remains ‘the biggest project among all other projects undertaken by the state’, Khaled al Hussein, the spokesperson for the main construction firm building the capital, said.

The first phase ‘will span 250km squared and can accommodate up to 2mn citizens’.

AFP

Severe drought forces Iraqi farmers to abandon their land

Mossoul, Iraq - Iraqi wheat farmer Khamis Ahmad Abbas lost it all when his battle with drought forced him to abandon his land, pushing him into unemployment.

Experts have warned that record low rainfall, compounded by climate change, are threatening social and economic disaster in war-scarred Iraq.

“Growing wheat and barley is a gamble. It all depends on the rain,” said the 42 year old father of nine.

Unable to make ends meet, Abbas quit his land in the Plains of Nineveh, northeast of Mosul, part of the so-called Fertile Crescent where agriculture was born 12,000 years ago.

With temperatures soaring above 50°C and little rain, Abbas’s fields quickly dried up.

Three months ago, he packed

up his family - two wives and nine children - and moved to Mosul. “Now I am unemployed,” he said, as he whiled away the time in a coffee shop in Iraq’s second city.

Once the seat of the Islamic State (IS) group’s self-styled ‘caliphate’, Mosul is still rebuilding after the devastating 2017 battle which ousted the militants.

“Sometimes I get small jobs, just enough to feed my family,” said Abbas bitterly, who longs for the old days when he harvested wheat and barley like his father and grandfather before him.

His plight is shared by many farmers in the Nineveh Plains.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 447 families who were forced from their land in Nineveh by IS and then returned to it after the militants’ defeat were forced



This aerial view shows a tractor ploughing a parcel of agricultural land on the outskirts of the town of Tel Keppe, north of the city of Mosul in the northern Iraqi province of Nineveh on October 26 (AFP)

to leave again between June and July this year because of the drought. ‘Nearly all, if not all, the families were displaced due to inability to feed their cattle,’ the IOM said.

For centuries, the Nineveh

Plains were the breadbasket of Iraq, with 6,000sqkm of arable land, said Agriculture Ministry spokesman Hamid al Nayef.

But this year, Nineveh province has been Iraq’s ‘most affected’ by drought and excep-

tionally high temperatures.

In 2020, 927,000 tonnes of wheat were harvested in Nineveh, making it a ‘self-sufficient’ province, said Abdelwahab al Jarjiri, who heads the local cereal authority.

This year production plunged to 89,000 tonnes because of the drought.

The effects of low rainfall have been exacerbated by falling water levels on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers as a result of dam-building in neighbouring Turkey and Iran, said Samah Hadid of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). “Iraq is facing its worst drought in modern times. This is due to record low levels of rainfall, reductions in water flow from its neighbours - which has primarily hit the Euphrates and Tigris rivers - and there is no doubt climate change has contributed to this crisis,” she said.

“Far from being a problem in the distant future, climate change is already taking effect in the region and we see this clearly in parts of Iraq.”

This month, a dam near the

northern town of Zawita dried up completely for the first time since its construction in 2009, the head of the local irrigation authority Hega Abdelwahid said.

The dam, which used to contain up to 50,000 cubic metres of water, was fed by melting snow but there was very little rain this year, Abdelwahid said, and all that is left is cracked earth.

The severity of the drought has forced many farming families to leave their land and seek a living in urban areas.

Akram Yassin (28) is one of those considering such a move.

He has already sold some of his 500 sheep and some land just ‘to survive’, he said.

“I might have to change careers, my financial losses are more than my gains,” he added.

AFP

Al Jazeera TV chief in Sudan held after 6 killed in protests

Khartoum, Sudan - Sudanese security forces have arrested the bureau chief of Qatari-based Al Jazeera TV, the network said on Sunday, a day after the latest crackdown on anti-coup protesters left at least six dead.

Among them were two teenagers, according to a medics' union.

It was one of the bloodiest days since Sudan's latest coup took place almost three weeks ago. The putsch has provoked international condemnation and regular protests by Sudanese upset at the derailment of a transition to full civilian rule in a country which has seen very little of it since independence.

'Security forces raided the house of Al-Musalami al Kabbashi, the Al Jazeera bureau chief in Sudan, and detained him,' the network said on Twitter without elaborating.

Al Jazeera has given prominent coverage to demonstrations against the October 25 coup but recently it also aired a detailed interview with top general Abdel Fattah al Burhan, one of only two he has granted.

The protests, including by tens of thousands of people nationwide on Saturday, have continued despite a rigorous Internet outage forcing demonstrators to communicate via graffiti and SMS messages.



People gather with Sudanese national flags as they protest against the military coup in Sudan, in 'Street 60' in the east of capital Khartoum on Saturday (AFP)

Among those killed on Saturday was Alsheikh Yasser Ali (18), who was protesting in Khartoum's twin city of Omdurman to demand civilian rule.

"I attended the body's autopsy which showed that he took a bullet to the shoulder which hit the heart and the lungs," the teen's uncle Zaher Ali told AFP. "It was all very painful. I almost collapsed in the morgue."

An independent union of medics said a 15 year old was also among the six, including Ali,

killed on Saturday. Five were shot dead while one died from 'suffocation by tear gas', said the medics who have recorded a total of 21 killed since the coup.

In a statement, Al Jazeera condemned 'in the strongest terms the reprehensible actions of the military and calls on the authorities to release Kabbashi immediately', and to allow its journalists to operate unhindered without fear or intimidation.

Other media outlets besides Al Jazeera have been targeted

since the putsch, when Burhan declared a state of emergency, detained the civilian leadership and removed the government installed after the April 2019 military ouster of autocratic president Omar al Bashir.

Burhan, de facto head of state since Bashir fell, has sacked the heads of Sudan's state television and the official news agency.

In another change, leadership of the council which grants work licences for local and interna-

tional media reverted to Abdelazim Awad, who led the council during Bashir's rule.

Ahead of the latest rallies the United Nations called on security forces to show restraint, in a country where more than 250 people had already died in mass protests leading to Bashir's ouster.

On Sunday, UK Minister for Africa, Vicky Ford, said on Twitter she was 'deeply concerned at reports of protesters killed in Sudan' where the people 'MUST be able to express their views, free from fear of violence'.

Ford added, "The Sudanese military must listen to the huge numbers calling for restoration of the democratic transition."

Earlier, Washington's embassy in Khartoum said it regretted the loss of life and injuries to 'dozens of Sudanese citizens demonstrating today for freedom and democracy'.

Guns were heard and tear gas fired as security forces tried to break up the protests, witnesses and AFP correspondents said.

Police denied using 'live rounds' and said 39 of their personnel were 'severely wounded' in confrontations with the protesters whom they accused of attacking police stations.

AFP

'Ethiopia talks won't succeed without ceasefire'

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - The African Union's special envoy for the Horn of Africa, Olusegun Obasanjo, remains hopeful that dialogue can end Ethiopia's year-long war, but warned in a statement released on Sunday that 'such talks cannot deliver' without an immediate ceasefire.

The former Nigerian president is leading an international push to end a conflict that has cost thousands of lives and displaced 2mn people, as fears of a rebel march on Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa prompt a flurry of diplomatic activity.

Obasanjo, who left Ethiopia on Thursday after meetings with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the leadership of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) rebel group, said he was 'optimistic that common ground towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict can be secured'.

But with fighting intensifying in recent weeks and the TPLF claiming major territorial gains, he warned that 'such talks cannot deliver in an environment of escalated military hostilities'.

"I, therefore, appeal to the leadership of all sides to halt their military offensives. This will allow an opportunity for dialogue to continue to progress."

His comments came ahead of a three-nation visit to Africa by US Secretary of State Antony



AU envoy Olusegun Obasanjo

Blinken, who has backed Obasanjo's efforts at mediation and threatened to impose sanctions on Abiy's government and the TPLF unless they move forward on talks.

Ethiopia on Thursday laid out conditions for possible talks with the rebels, including a halt to attacks, a TPLF withdrawal from the neighbouring areas of Amhara and Afar, and recognition of the government's legitimacy.

The TPLF in turn is demanding that aid be let into Tigray, the region where the conflict erupted last year. No assistance has arrived by road since October 18, and 364 trucks are stuck in Afar awaiting authorisation, according to the United Nations.

Abiy sent troops into Tigray last November to topple the TPLF, a move he said came in response to rebel attacks on army camps.

AFP

Ecuador prison riot leaves 68 dead

Guayaquil, Ecuador - Prison inmates from rival gangs in Ecuador fought each other with guns, explosives and blades in a bloodbath that left at least 68 dead in the same prison where a riot in September claimed 119 lives, officials said on Saturday.

Authorities said late Saturday they had re-gained control of the prison in Guayaquil for a second time in as many days after President Guillermo Lasso's spokesman said fighting had again broken out earlier in the day between inmates from rival gangs tied to drug trafficking rings.

In the initial riot that began on Friday night prisoners fought with 'savagery', said Pablo Arosemena, governor of the province of Guayas where the prison is located.

The riot began around 7pm on Friday when prisoners tried to enter Block 2 of the jail where their rivals were held, firing gunshots, detonating explosives and swinging machetes, and prompt-



Relatives of inmates cry as they wait for news about their loved ones after a riot at the Guayas 1 prison in Guayaquil, Ecuador, on Saturday (AFP)

ing police to move in.

At least 68 prisoners were killed and another 25 were wounded, according a statement which the Ecuador Prosecutor's Office posted on Twitter.

In the second outbreak of fighting on Saturday, inmates from two other blocks attacked each other, said presidential spokesman Carlos Jijon.

He confirmed a little while later that police had pushed through to the prison's interior

and that the situation was 'under control'.

Officials said the violence started when one of the gangs inside the prison, the Tiguerones, was left without its leader because he was released after serving part of his sentence for stealing auto parts. Other groups, sensing weakness in the Tiguerones with that man gone, went on the attack to try to crush the gang, Arosemena said.

AFP

Five Ugandan African Union troops convicted of killing civilians in Somalia

Nairobi, Kenya - Five Ugandan soldiers serving with the African Union Mission in Somalia have been found guilty of killing seven civilians, with two sentenced to death and the other three given 39-year prison terms each, AMISOM has said.

"After sitting from November 2-12, 2021 and reviewing all the facts including witness statements, the Court Martial on November 12, 2021, found the soldiers guilty of killing the civilians," an AMISOM statement issued late Saturday said.

Kampala instituted legal proceedings in Somalia's capital Mogadishu after the allegations of civilian casualties in the town of Golweyn emerged in August this year. The soldiers will be repatriated to Uganda to serve their sentences.

AMISOM has some 20,000 soldiers in Somalia deployed to fight an insurgency waged by Al



African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) soldiers stand at the scene of a suicide bombing in Mogadishu, Somalia on Thursday (AFP)

Shabaab militants. Although the Al Qaeda linked militants were ousted from Mogadishu a decade ago, they continue to stage deadly attacks in the capital and elsewhere.

"Our mission in Somalia is to degrade Al Shabaab and other

armed groups. In doing so, we absolutely have every responsibility to protect the civilian population", said Brigadier General Don Nabasa, commander of the Ugandan contingent.

This is not the first time Ugandan soldiers in Somalia

have been implicated in illegal activities. Human rights groups have alleged cases of sexual misconduct and civilian killings, but when investigations have been conducted by AMISOM, the soldiers are routinely exonerated.

In 2016, nine Ugandan soldiers were found guilty of illegally selling fuel meant for AMISOM to civilians - the first time such a case was tried in Somalia since the AU mission deployed in 2007.

In 2013, Uganda recalled 24 officers - among them the contingent commander Brigadier Michael Ondoga - for allegedly selling food rations meant for soldiers. Ondoga was exonerated by a military court in 2015.

Kenyan officers have also been accused or profiting from the illegal trade in charcoal in southern Somalia.

AFP

Harris, French PM lay wreaths six years on from Paris terror attacks

Paris, France - US Vice President Kamala Harris and French Prime Minister Jean Castex laid wreaths at a Paris café and France's national football stadium on Saturday, six years since deadly terror attacks that left 130 people dead.

The attacks by three separate teams of Islamic State group militants on the night of November 13, 2015 were the worst in France since World War II.

Gunmen mowed down 129 people in front of cafés and at a concert hall in the capital, while a bus driver was killed after suicide bombers blew themselves up at the gates of the stadium in its suburbs.

Harris, closing a four-day trip to France, placed a bouquet of white flowers in front of a plaque honouring the victims outside a Paris café.

Castex attended a minute of

silence at the Stade de France football stadium, along with Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo, before laying wreaths at the sites of the other attacks inside Paris.

In front of the Bataclan concert hall, survivors and relatives of the victims listened to someone read out the names of each of the 90 people killed during a concert there six years ago.

Public commemorations of the tragedy were called off last year because of the coronavirus pandemic. "Last year we weren't allowed to come and we all found it really tough," said Bruno Poncet, who survived the Bataclan attack. But he said the start of a trial over the attacks in September meant that those attending the commemoration this year felt more united.

"We've really bonded thanks to the trial," he said.

"During previous commemo-



US Vice President Kamala Harris and Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff lay flowers at Le Carillon bar and Le Petit Cambodge restaurant for the victims of the 2015 terror attacks, in Paris on Saturday (AFP)

rations, we'd spot each other from afar without really daring to speak to each other. We were really shy.

"But standing up in court has

really changed everything."

'Overcome it all'

The marathon trial, the biggest in France's modern legal history, is

expected to last until May 2022.

Twenty defendants are facing sentences of up to life in prison, including the sole attacker who was not gunned down by police,

Salah Abdeslam, a French-Moroccan national who was captured in Brussels. Six of the defendants are being tried in absentia.

Poncet said he felt it was crucial he attend the hearings.

"I can't possibly not. It's our lives that are being discussed in that room, and it's important to come to support the others and to try to overcome it all."

Survivors have taken to the witness stand to recount the horror of the attacks, but also to describe life afterwards.

Several said they had been struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder, grappling with survivor's guilt, or even feeling alienated from the rest of society.

Philippe Duperron, the head of an association of victims of the attacks, said far more people had signed up for a lunch after Saturday's ceremony than in previous

years. "The trial has no doubt reinforced people's need to be together," he said.

The commemorations included a minute of silence at a second football stadium, the Parc des Princes, before the evening kick-off of the France-Kazakhstan match.

Fifteen minutes into the game, a group of supporters unfurled a banner in tribute to the victims of the attacks. It read: 'To our 131 stars of November 13'.

It was 15 minutes into a football match between France and Germany at the Stade de France that three suicide bombers blew themselves up in 2015, launching the attacks.

Then-president Francois Hollande was among the 80,000-strong crowd, before he was discreetly whisked away to avoid triggering mass panic.

AFP

Belarus says EU sanctions ‘counter-productive’

Brussels says it would expand sanctions to include anyone ‘taking part in the trafficking of migrants’

Warsaw, Poland - European Union (EU) sanctions against Belarus over the migrant crisis on the Polish border are ‘hopeless’ and ‘counter-productive’, Minsk said on Sunday.

The comments by Belarus’s Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei to EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell came in the first high-level contact between Brussels and Minsk since the crisis that the West blames on the authoritarian country.

Thousands of migrants, mainly from the Middle East, are camped out on the EU-Belarus border, in a crisis that Brussels blames on the regime of Alexander Lukashenko.

Borrell earlier said that Brussels would expand its sanctions on Monday to include anyone ‘taking part in the trafficking of migrants’ in Belarus, including airlines, travel agencies and officials.

According to the statement, Makei informed Borrell of ‘steps taken by Belarus to reduce the flow of migrants from Asia, Africa and Middle East’.

The pair also discussed working with UN-led organisations on getting aid to the hundreds of migrants stuck in freezing temperatures on the border, Minsk said. In a tweet, Borrell said he had raised the ‘precarious humanitarian situation at the border with the EU’ with Makei.

“People’s lives must be protected and humanitarian agencies allowed access,” Borrell said.



A group of migrants gather to receive humanitarian aid in a camp near the Belarusian-Polish border in the Grodno region on Saturday (AFP)

“The current situation is unacceptable and must stop. People should not be used as weapons,” he added.

Dozens of migrants have been detained after crossing into Poland from Belarus, Warsaw said on Sunday, warning of a possible larger breakthrough ahead of an EU meeting to widen

sanctions on Belarus.

Polish authorities have created an emergency zone at the border.

Western countries accuse Lukashenko’s regime of engineering the crisis by encouraging migrants to come to Belarus and then taking them to the border.

Minsk denies the charges and blames the West.

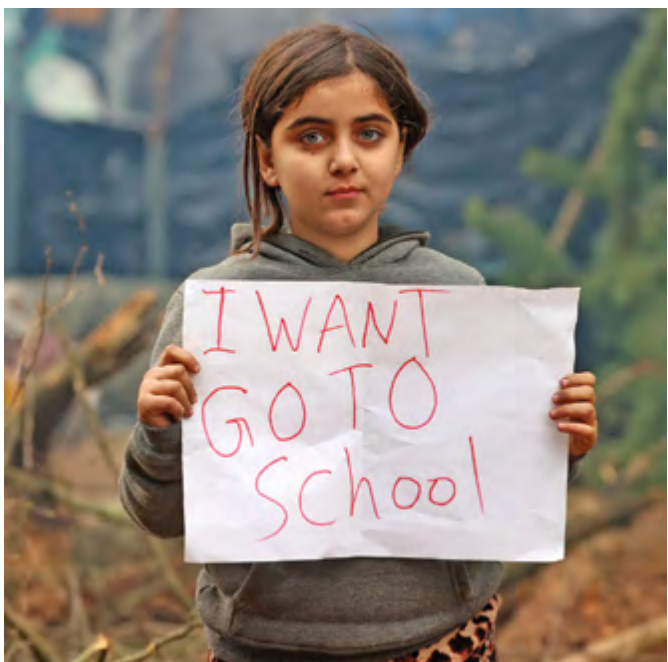
Dozens of migrants have been detained after crossing into Poland from Belarus, Warsaw said on Sunday.

Police said on Twitter that 50 migrants had crossed the heavily guarded EU and NATO border near the village of Starzyna ‘by

force’ on Saturday.

They were all later detained, the border guard said, adding that they could see signs across the barbed wire on the Belarusian side of ‘a bigger attempt at crossing the border today’.

Aid agencies say at least 10 migrants have died so far and have warned of a humanitarian



A migrant child holds a poster in a camp on the Belarusian-Polish border in the Grodno region on Friday (AFP)

crisis unfolding as temperatures drop below freezing, urging a de-escalation to help the migrants.

In the biggest camp, near the village of Bruzgi in Belarus, Belarusian authorities say there are 2,000 people, including pregnant women and children.

Belarusian authorities have delivered aid including tents and heaters - a move that could make the camp a semi-permanent presence on the EU’s eastern border.

Poland has refused to allow the migrants in and has accused Belarus of preventing them from leaving.

Interior Minister Mariusz

Kaminski on Saturday said a rumour was being spread among the migrants that on Monday Poland would allow them through and coaches would come from Germany to pick them up.

“A provocation is being prepared,” Kaminski said.

The government has sent a text message to all foreign mobile phones along the border saying: ‘It’s a total lie and nonsense! Poland will continue to protect its border with Belarus. Those who spread such rumours seek to encourage the migrants to storm the border,’ the text message reads.

AFP



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken (AFP)

US, China trade Taiwan warnings ahead of key meet

Washington, US - The top diplomats from China and the United States have exchanged stern warnings over the flashpoint issue of Taiwan, ahead of today’s hotly awaited summit between their leaders.

The virtual meeting of presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping comes against a backdrop of rising tensions - in part over Taiwan, a self-ruling democracy claimed by Beijing, but also over trade, human rights and other issues.

In a phone call on Friday with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi to discuss preparations for the summit, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken raised concerns over Beijing’s ‘military, diplomatic, and economic pressure’ on Taiwan.

Wang warned of the dangers of US actions that might seem supportive of ‘Taiwan independence’.

Washington switched diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing in 1979, but an act of Congress passed that year requires the United States to provide weapons to Taiwan for self-defence.

The US government is careful not to show it recognises Taiwan but it enjoys broad, bipartisan support in Congress, with a group of lawmakers visiting the island this month -

angering Beijing.

“Any connivance of and support for the ‘Taiwan independence’ forces undermines peace across the Taiwan Strait and would only boomerang in the end,” Wang told Blinken, according to a readout of the call released by China on Saturday.

China has ramped up military activities near Taiwan in recent years, with a record number of planes intruding into the island’s air defence identification zone in early October.

Washington has repeatedly signaled its support for Taiwan in the face of what it has described as Chinese aggression.

Biden has largely kept the tougher approach on Beijing of his predecessor Donald Trump, with both administrations seeing a rising China as the top challenge of the 21st century.

And while the world’s top two emitters of greenhouse gases unveiled a surprise agreement last week to work together on climate change, Washington and Beijing have indicated they will not give ground on flashpoint issues.

US officials have framed Monday’s summit as an opportunity to ‘responsibly manage competition’ while trying to cooperate in areas where the two align.

AFP

Austria to impose lockdown for unjabbed from today: Chancellor

Vienna, Austria - Austrian Chancellor Alexander Schallenberg said on Sunday that a nationwide lockdown would begin on Monday for those not vaccinated against COVID-19 or recently recovered, as the EU member fights a record surge in cases.

Around 65 per cent of Austria’s almost 9mn people are vaccinated, below the EU average of 67 per cent, while daily increases in infections have hit records this week.

“The situation is serious... We don’t take this step with a light heart but unfortunately it is necessary,” Schallenberg said.

The lockdown means people over 12 who are neither vaccinated nor recently recovered will not be allowed to leave the house except for reasons such as buying essential supplies, exercise or seeking medical care.

The lockdowns across the Alpine country are to be enforced with random spot checks



A demonstrator holds a placard reading ‘No to compulsory vaccination’ during an anti-vaccination protest in Vienna, Austria on Sunday (AFP)

for the next ten days. After that it will be reviewed, Health Minister Wolfgang Mueckstein said.

Parliament - controlled by Schallenberg’s conservative-Green coalition - was expected to approve the measure later on Sunday.

Schallenberg and Mueckstein

called again on those who have not yet been vaccinated to get jabbed.

Also from Monday, Vienna is becoming the first region in the EU to offer jabs to children from the age of five to 11 at a vaccination centre in the capital.

AFP

Julian Assange gets permission to marry in British prison

London, UK - British prison authorities have given WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange permission to marry while in custody, his fiancée has said, as he awaits a key court decision over possible US extradition.

Assange, wanted by Washington to face various charges related to the mass leak of classified documents, plans to marry Stella Moris, a former member of his legal team with whom he has two children.

He is being held at Belmarsh high-security jail in London while the High Court prepares to rule on a US appeal against a lower court’s decision to block his extradition.

WikiLeaks said in a statement late on Thursday that the couple had launched legal action after they ‘were essentially being blocked from being able to marry’.



Julian Assange

‘Good news: UK government has backed down 24h before the deadline,’ Moris wrote on Twitter alongside a photo of the pair standing beneath a rainbow.

‘Julian and I now have permission to marry in Belmarsh prison. I am relieved but still angry that legal action was necessary to put a stop to the illegal interference with our basic right to marry,’ she wrote.

AFP

British Queen suffers ‘sprained back’: Palace

London, UK - Queen Elizabeth II has a ‘sprained back’, Buckingham Palace said, and had to miss Sunday’s Remembrance service in London - her first planned public appearance since resting on medical advice.

The ceremony honouring fallen troops is close to the monarch’s heart and her absence will deepen concerns over her health after she stepped back on medical advice at the end of last month and spent a night in hospital undergoing unspecified tests.

She then resumed ‘light duties’, but pulled out of a scheduled attendance at the UN climate change summit in Glasgow after being advised to rest.

‘The Queen, having sprained her back, has decided this morning with great regret that she will



Britain’s Queen Elizabeth II (AFP)

not be able to attend today’s Remembrance Sunday Service at the Cenotaph,’ a palace statement said.

‘Her Majesty is disappointed that she will miss the service.’

Her son Prince Charles placed a wreath on her behalf, as in pre-

vious years.

It is only the seventh time she has missed the service in almost 70 years on the throne, with the previous six due to either pregnancy or foreign visits.

A two-day trip to Northern Ireland was also shelved as was

her appearance on Tuesday at the General Synod, the national assembly of the Church of England which she heads.

The 95 year old was due to view Sunday’s annual service in London from a balcony, as she has done since 2017, when she handed over some duties to younger members of the family.

Royal expert Penny Junor said it was ‘very sad for the Queen because this is the one event in the year that she really, really likes to be at’.

“The public will be very sad and anxious to hear of yet another setback but clearly she must follow the advice and get herself well.”

Queen Elizabeth II succeeded her father, King George VI, in 1952 and next year is her Platinum Jubilee, marking her 70th

year on the throne.

She returned to her Windsor Castle residence, west of London, on Tuesday, after a long-planned weekend away at her Sandringham estate in eastern England.

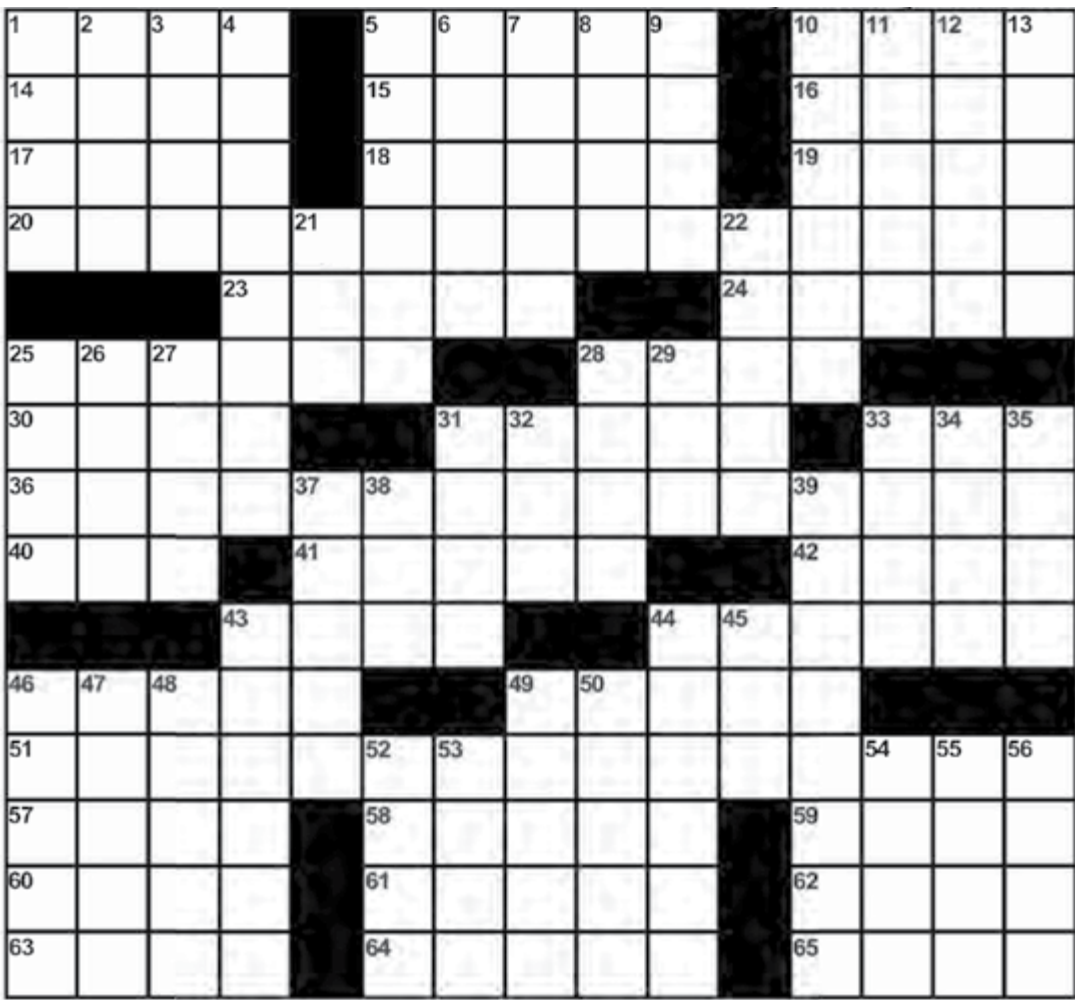
The Queen, who also pulled out of the separate Festival of Remembrance event on Saturday, is head of the Armed Forces and served as a mechanic during World War II.

Royal Navy officer Ben Shread said, “It would be nice if the boss was here. If there is a reason she is not here it must be a very serious one. We all wish her well.”

Royal aides have blamed a busy recent schedule that had left her ‘exhausted’ but she was recently seen driving in the grounds of Windsor.

AFP

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1) Stock reducer
- 5) Political plot
- 10) Pork serving
- 14) Long, extended film
- 15) Sorrowful song
- 16) Greek liqueur
- 17) Fishing pole attachment
- 18) Metric liquid measure
- 19) German wife
- 20) It produces poor results
- 23) State flower of Indiana
- 24) Chain units
- 25) Heavy burdens
- 28) _ Mawr College
- 30) It usually smells
- 31) Song of joy
- 33) Fish for fish sticks
- 36) What workout fanatics desire
- 40) Wee toymaker
- 41) Two sizes too small
- 42) Undercooked, as steak
- 43) Females of the species
- 44) Mirror reflections
- 46) Main blood vessel
- 49) Actor's memoriza-

tions

- 51) Airborne bit of gossip?
- 57) Historic Icelandic writings
- 58) Backwoods weapon
- 59) Extra layer in winter?
- 60) "... and_ the twain shall meet"
- 61) Two quartets
- 62) Barely gets by, with "out"
- 63) Quick gait
- 64) Kitchen ants and gnats
- 65) On its way, as an email

DOWN

- 1) Peasant
- 2) Imitative one
- 3) In_ of (instead of)
- 4) Lunar and solar events
- 5) Instruments in string quartets
- 6) Sci-fi visitor
- 7) Flagmaker Ross
- 8) Consent and Reason, for two
- 9) Old stringed instrument
- 10) Dracula's resting

place

- 11) One of the Great Lakes
- 12) _ Mountains (Arkansas range)
- 13) Looks sullen
- 21) Simple shirt
- 22) Swashbuckler Errol of old Hollywood
- 25) At an earlier date
- 26) Christmas song
- 27) American mil. branch
- 28) Oscar title starter
- 29) Charlotte of sitcom TV
- 31) Guitar string tighteners
- 32) Barbecue leftover
- 33) Ragged part of a mountain
- 34) Beast of fairy tales
- 35) Changes color, in a way
- 37) "... Frome"
- 38) More than an exaggeration
- 39) Evidence of changes
- 43) "Little" literary mouse
- 44) Atlas features
- 45) French "sea"
- 46) Hollywood rep

- 47) Community of nuns
- 48) Calf-catching contest
- 49) Some boxing blows
- 50) Spot of land
- 52) Bit of blood

- 53) Some parasites
- 54) Studio singer's need
- 55) Bad sign
- 56) Relax

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

After days of worrying that the tension in your shoulders was never going away, you wake up this morning feeling like a brand-new person. And it just keeps getting better. By evening, whatever stress you're still feeling from recent events will be nothing more than a distant memory. Help the process along. Refuse to discuss anything more serious than what to have for dinner.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

For once, the rest of the world just so happens to be on the same page as you. Everyone you talk with is eager to hear what you have to say. That includes your political ideas, your unconventional solutions to world problems, and your nontraditional thoughts about topics that aren't ever discussed around the dinner table. Nice, huh? Enjoy it because it won't last forever, but you'll get a taste of what heaven will be like.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

You might have thought you were ready for this, but there's something about the current astral energy that forces even the most freedom-oriented, privacy-loving people on the planet to ask silly questions like "when can we be together alone?" and "are you really sure you love me?" With that in mind, you'll be so much more understanding of your sweetheart, who probably needs some extra assurance right now.



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

You're prepared for romance and you're not alone! The lucky person who'll be spending at least part of the day with you can hardly wait. If you're not attached, that doesn't mean you still can't enjoy the day and flirt madly. Who was it that said "Love the one you're with?" If your sweetie isn't exactly next door, you can still be sweet to someone, someone who might also be missing their own loved one.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Too much focus on celebrities and trivial gossip could keep you distracted from what really needs to be done today. This is a busy time for you right now, and it will only get busier as the day progresses. And is all this chitchat about some movie star dating some pop star really getting you closer to the people in your life? Go deeper with your conversations and talk about the things that really affect you.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Here's a news flash: your boss isn't any smarter than you are! Don't let yourself get too intimidated by titles or official ranking. Everyone is on the same team, and the leadership role isn't being totally fulfilled by the person who's supposed to be in charge. There is no need to blindly do what you're told. You know what needs to be done. As long as you work within the established rules, you can feel free to go it on your own.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

Are you ready to have them laughing in the aisles again and rejuvenate your reputation as a party animal? If you're not, someone else will be only too happy to do it for you, someone who has seen you in action entertaining the entire room with just one ridiculous facial expression. Oh, stop acting like it's an inconvenience. You know you want to come out and play.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

You're not feeling anything less than confident now in your emotions, your actions, and most importantly, your words. If you have something to get across to someone you care about, there's definitely no time like the present to go for it. Besides, when you get that charm going, who could possibly resist you? And why would they want to anyway?



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

As usual, you're secretly competing for the Most Romantic Sign award and doing a fine job of it. Still, someone is trying to move you out of your spot, so it's prime time to dig in your heels and give them some competition. The heavens are on your side, however, so what's the worst that could happen? Your lucky companion will only be the second most spoiled person on the planet. How awful.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

There's really no time like the present to say what's on your mind. Luckily, you're really in the mood to do just that today. You're feeling pretty romantic. And it's time to spoil your sweetie with some old-fashioned woo: flowers, candlelight, soft music, whatever will set the tone for the deep emotions you're about to share.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Despite what you think is expected, you don't have to always be with other people. Does your internal social butterfly need to alight on a pretty perch and rest for a while? If so, take a break from the din of the social scene and enjoy some quiet alone time. Do something you enjoy just for the sake of doing it. Things are about to get even more hectic in your daily life, and you might want to store up all the calm energy you can.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Be wary of any proposed compromises today. Everything might look reasonable and logical at first, but you could end up getting burned. No one is intentionally trying to cheat you, though. Any problems will be the result of circumstances beyond anyone's control. There's no need to put up your defenses. If you just keep your eyes open and avoid signing on any dotted lines, you'll do fine. But leave the renegotiating for another time.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. The buoyancy depends on

- a. the shape of the body
- b. the mass of the body
- c. the mass of the liquid displaced
- d. the depth to which the body is immersed

2. The first women to climb Mt. Everest was

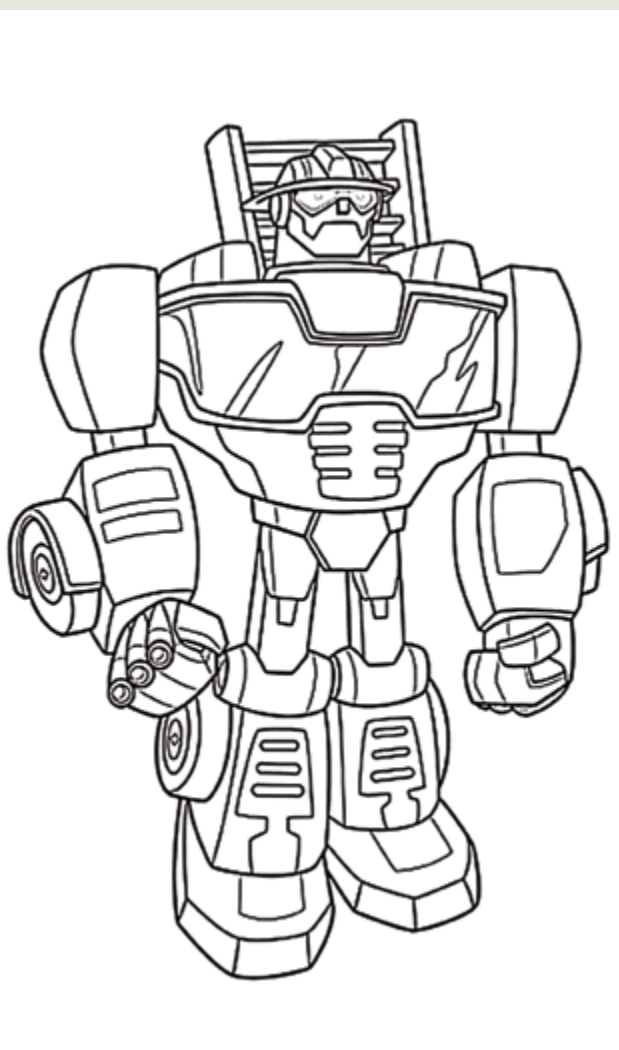
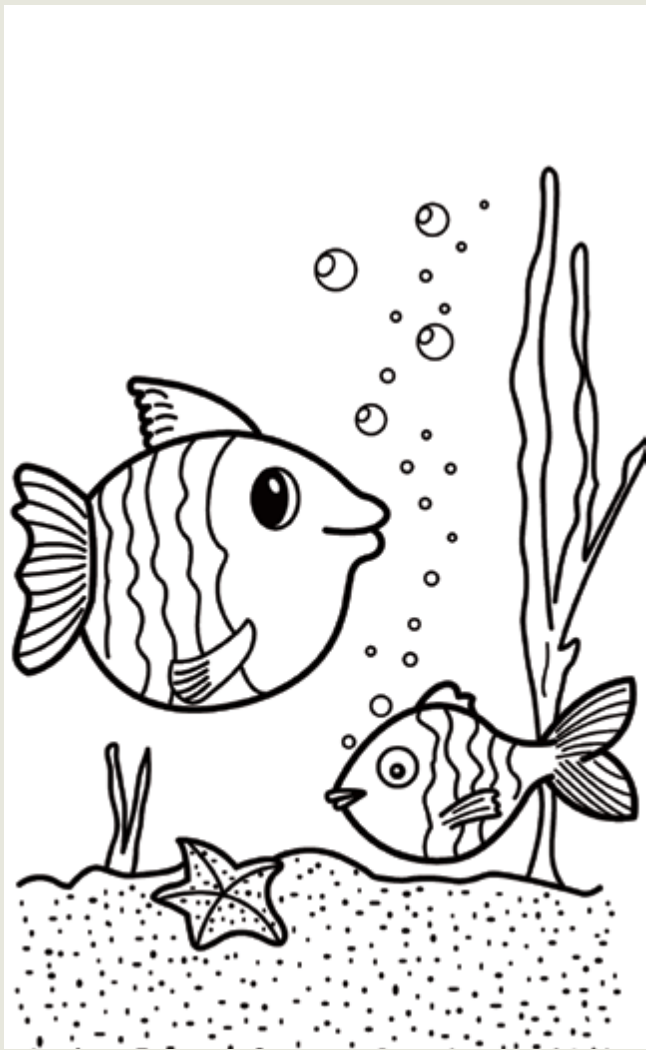
- a. Junko Taibei
- b. Karoline Mikkelson
- c. Valentina Tereshkova
- d. None of the above

3. The company that has acquired interest in different industries by taking over or merging with other companies, is called

- a. collateral
- b. coalition
- c. conglomerate
- d. None of the above

Answers: 1. c 2. a 3. c

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

C	P	A	R
K	N	E	S
G	S	L	A
O	P	I	P

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

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

DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

WORD BUILDER



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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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



OMAN PAVILION

OMAN'S 'VISION OF IDENTITY'

Oman Pavilion at Expo 2020 highlights its 'Vision of Identity' based on its glorious civilisation and bright future. Visitors considered Oman's pavilion as one of the most important pavilions showcasing ambitious Omani youth projects while maintaining a balance between the past and the present, and looking forward to future opportunities

Oman's civilisation is embodied in portraits throughout the ages highlighting its visions and realities. This civilisation advances from the interaction that has shaped the vision of Omanis throughout history represented in preserving their cultural and social identity.

The observer of this civilisation will find that it is the product of collective thinking of a society that has established solid foundations from which it presses ahead in all directions, to be actively present and astonishing to the tracker of its path.

Within the framework of partnership, understanding, and exchange at all spheres, the Oman pavilion participates in Expo 2020 Dubai. It sheds light on diverse stories of sustainability starting from connecting minds to creating opportunities for the future, which are identical to the key themes of the Expo 2020 Dubai.

The striking design of the Omani pavilion is inspired by the frankincense tree (boswellia sacra tree). It was designed by

two Omani young women - Rehab al Zakwani and Alyaa al Batashi - who developed touches representing an addition to the achievements made by the Omani youth in Oman. The external spaces surrounding the pavilion host ten Omani frankincense trees, which were protected by the Oman Botanic Garden in 2013 after being threatened by one of the road extensions in Hasik, in the southern part of Oman. These natural trees are planted in a panoramic landscape view, and they will be returned to the garden after the expo.

The Omani pavilion begins with narrating to the visitors the life of frankincense tree as the story of the pavilion. It seeks to highlight four key themes - sustainability, fostering talents, communication and knowledge.

The pavilion consists of two floors: the ground floor (the mother tree), where the visitor is at a real-life meeting with the electromechanical design of the tree, which is centered in the middle of the hall, mimicking the exact details of the natural tree and symbolising many physical, emotional and spiritual meanings, as well as its various practical uses.

On the perimeter wall, a panoramic screen shows the story of Omani frankincense from Wadi Dawkah and its journey via the world's various civilisations through time (trade in the Arabian Peninsula, mummification in ancient Egypt, Christian

The pavilion consists of two floors: the ground floor has an electromechanical design of the Frankincense tree. The first floor hosts the Harvest Hall and the Hall of Trade. The second and final floor hosts the Use Hall (The Future).

prayers in the Old Testament and traditional Chinese medicine), in line with the key theme of Expo 2020 Dubai - Connecting Minds.

On the first floor, in the Growth Hall 'The Forest of Sustainability', visitors walk

through a virtual forest of frankincense trees made from transparent display screens used to showcase eight different sustainability stories in Oman.

The stories are about projects of sustainable dimensions, namely the Million Date Palm Plantation Project, the use of drone techniques for pollination and fish farming, the use of Internet of Things (IoT) technology to feed fish, renewable energy and wind energy project in Dhofar, sustainable cities, environmental conservation, waste management, the Oman Botanic Garden, and the unique diversity of terrain in the Sultanate of Oman.

The first floor themed the Harvest Hall, displays the methods adopted by the Sultanate of Oman in fostering talents and resources, the transfer of skills and knowledge between generations and disciplines. It also highlights new ideas and opportunities to create a vibrant society.

The first floor of the pavilion is a modern and active area with a focus laid on people through the use of display screens that resemble frankincense crystals telling stories about Oman's knowledge-based economy, such as An Omani scholar specialising in

antiquity who talks about frankincense, music, creative industries, women in the higher fields, nascent Omani companies and Sultan Qaboos academic chairs.

The first floor also hosts the Hall of Trade, which is about a journey through time and space, starting from a display on the wall of an ancient port (Al Baleed site) for the export of frankincense till reaching Oman's future vision. The hall shows activities of transporting humans, goods and information and highlighting land, sea, air transport initiatives and the ambitious large-scale infrastructure in Oman.

The second and final floor hosts the Use Hall (The Future). It houses a future interactive library of expertise and represents a spiritual and futuristic space, where visitors are treated with multi-sensory experiences, starting with the future garden and conducting a live experiment on frankincense seedlings during the expo.

Visitors to the Omani Pavilion also enjoy aromatic capsules dedicated to sniffing different types of frankincense blends from Oman under a bright light passing through frankincense crystals.





A JEWEL HIDDEN FROM THE WORLD

*(continued from page 12)

A visitor from the United States said that the Sultanate of Oman pavilion was "great and unique." Although I have visited many international fairs, the Oman pavilion is characterised by organisation and the utilisation of modern technologies to present inspiring solutions for the future.

He added that the pavilion showcases Omani projects and modern ideas of a sustainable nature for the future. It also highlights the major focus of Expo 2020 Dubai, namely sustainability.

He expressed his admiration over the symbol of the mother tree (frankincense tree) in the pavilion and its role in demonstrating the key theme of this global event - Connecting Minds, in a manner that this symbolic tree communicates with ancient civilisations in the East and West.

Another visitor to the Oman pavilion from Barbados described the Sultanate of Oman as "a jewel hidden from the world". He noted that

during his tour to the pavilion, he familiarised himself with various tourist landmarks and Omani archaeological sites registered with the UNESCO World Heritage List. He added that those in charge of the pavilion welcome visitors and are always keen to highlight contents of the Oman pavilion, as well as the themes presented in line with Expo 2020 Dubai.

A female visitor from the United States expressed her delight at visiting the Oman pavilion in Expo 2020 Dubai, saying, "I know the Sultanate of Oman. I visited your country and I worked in Oman, so I wanted to keep my friends closely informed of the sultanate, its cultural features and themes exhibited in the pavilion."

She added that the themes of Expo 2020 Dubai are closely linked to international efforts to preserve the planet, which many pavilions participating in this global event are seeking to highlight. She also pointed out that Oman is a country of civilisation that maintains communication and interaction with various civilisations through trade and expressed her admiration over the unique products of the frankincense tree and its various medical uses.

A balance between the past and present

Meanwhile, Egyptian journalist Ahmed Morsi considered the pavilion of Oman as one of the most important pavilions in Expo 2020 Dubai. He explained that Oman is presenting itself in this global event in a fantastic form by showcasing ambitious Omani youth projects and employing high-tech facilities while maintaining a balance between the past and the present and looking forward to future opportunities.

A youth from the United States expressed the wish to visit Oman after visiting the Oman pavilion. He noted that his tour at the pavilion gave him an opportunity to learn about the features of Oman's civilisation and the contents that highlight the theme of mobility within the Oman pavilion, in particular, and in Expo 2020 Dubai, in general.

He said, "We, as individuals, would like to explore the exhibits at the pavilion and expand our knowledge of sustainable solutions and projects showcased via technologies that cope with the technological progress taking place worldwide".

Expo 2020 Dubai, which began in October, will continue till March 31, 2022.

ONA



CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

Indian male graduate Executive Secretary with stenography/ Oman driving License and 30 years experience in Muscat

available with NOC for immediate joining. Call: 79256679

Send your request for Birthday/Anniversary wishes to wish@apexmedia.co.om with your resident card copy (It's free of cost)

WJ Towell Group Company



Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

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

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



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

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

Mbappe fires France to finals, Belgium too qualify

Paris, France - World champions France booked their place at next year's World Cup in Qatar in style as Kylian Mbappe fired in four goals in an 8-0 thrashing of Kazakhstan at the Parc des Princes on Saturday.

Karim Benzema scored twice and there were further goals for Adrien Rabiot and Antoine Griezmann whose penalty marked his 42nd goal for France, taking him ahead of Michel Platini.

Only Thierry Henry (51) and Olivier Giroud (46) have scored more for France.

The French will be joined at the finals by neighbours Belgium as the world's top-ranked team saw off Estonia 3-1 in Brussels to ensure top spot in Group E ahead of Gareth Bale's Wales who beat Belarus 5-1 in Cardiff.

The Netherlands, who missed out on the 2018 World Cup, looked on course to join them as they led Montenegro 2-0 going into the last ten minutes of their encounter in Podgorica.

However, the Dutch conceded two goals in the last ten minutes to draw 2-2. They still top Group G but are just two points ahead of Turkey and Norway.

On the sixth anniversary of the 2015 attacks in Paris which claimed the lives of 130 people, France put on a spectacular show for their supporters.

Mbappe set the ball rolling when he put the world champions ahead after just six minutes.

The Paris Saint-Germain star, playing on his home ground, added a second six minutes later and completed his first hat-trick

for France with a thundering header just after the half-hour.

Leading 3-0 at the break, France turned up the heat even more in the second half as Benzema struck twice before Rabiot and Griezmann had their moments in the spotlight.

It was fitting that Mbappe had the final say, stroking home his fourth to complete the rout three minutes from time.

France top Group D, leaving Finland and Ukraine to scrap over second place.

"A World Cup is a dream, an aim, it's everything and it's a unique chance to play in a team that can win it. We're going over there to win it," Mbappe said.

The Finns have a two-point advantage going into the final round of matches after seeing off Bosnia-Herzegovina 3-1.

The Finns had Jukka Raitala sent off before half-time but goals from Brentford forward Marcus Forss, Robin Lod and Daniel O'Shaughnessy sealed the win.

Belgium comfortable
Belgium had dropped just a single point in qualifying up to this point and knew that victory over Estonia would guarantee them top spot in Group E.

Manager Roberto Martinez, however, was without first-choice strikers Romelu Lukaku, Mitchy Batshuayi and Touri Tielemans who were all injured.

That meant a call-up for Christian Benteke and the Crystal Palace forward did not disappoint, taking his chance to press



Kylian Mbappe during the match against Kazakhstan at the Parc des Princes stadium, in Paris on Saturday (AFP)

his claims by netting the opener after just 11 minutes.

"I know I'm only the third choice in the hierarchy of the forwards but I'm not giving up," said Benteke. "The place in the squad for Qatar will be earned on the pitch."

Yannick Carrasco doubled the lead eight minutes into the second half and although Erik Sorga pulled one back for the visitors, Thorgan Hazard put the game to bed shortly after.

That win meant that Wales,



Axel Witsel fights for the ball with Estonian players in Brussels (AFP)

who had already secured a place in the play-offs, would not be able to catch them.

The Welsh, however, boosted by the presence of Bale making his 100th appearance, produced their own impressive show with Aaron Ramsay scoring twice on a noisy night in Cardiff.

The Dutch, who would have qualified with a win over Montenegro, will rue careless defending after Memphis Depay had scored twice to give them a 2-0 lead. The Dutch host Norway in Rotterdam on Tuesday in the final round of matches while Turkey travel to Montenegro.

France and Belgium join Denmark and Germany as confirmed qualifiers from Europe with the other six automatic places to be settled over the course of the final matchday.

Germany have long qualified but showed no mercy to hammer the 10 men of Liechtenstein 9-0 as Hansi Flick became the first coach to win his first six games in charge of the national side.

Ilkay Gundogan opened the floodgates from the penalty spot after Jens Hofer saw red for a high boot on Leon Goretzka.

Daniel Kaufmann's own goal, Leroy Sane and Marco Reus made it 4-0 inside 23 minutes.

Sane added his second in the second half before a double from Thomas Mueller, Ridle Baku and another own goal from Max Goppel completed the rout.

Denmark beat the Faroe Islands 3-1 to maintain their 100 per cent record.

AFP

QUICK RUN

Gallagher gets first England call

London, UK - Crystal Palace midfielder Conor Gallagher has been drafted into the England squad for Monday's World Cup qualifier in San Marino after Jordan Henderson, Jack Grealish, Raheem Sterling, Mason Mount and Luke Shaw withdrew on Sunday. The Three Lions only need to avoid defeat against the minnows in Serravalle to secure their place in next year's tournament in Qatar. Liverpool captain Henderson and Manchester City's Grealish have returned to their clubs for further assessment on injuries. City forward Sterling is unavailable due to a personal matter, while Chelsea midfielder Mount requires dental surgery and Manchester United left-back Shaw is following a concussion protocol. Gallagher steps up from the Under-21s for his first senior call-up. The 21-year-old has impressed for Palace this term, scoring four goals for Patrick Vieira's side.



Van Dijk blasts 'awful' performance

The Hague, Netherlands - Netherlands captain Virgil van Dijk blasted his team's second-half performance in Saturday's 2-2 draw at Montenegro as 'awful' and 'outrageous' as their World Cup hopes were left in the balance. The Dutch would have qualified for the finals in Qatar next year with a win in Podgorica and they were well set after a Memphis Depay double gave them a 2-0 lead. However, Ilija Vukotic marked his international debut with a goal in the 82nd minute to set the home side hope and four minutes later Nikola Vujnovic looped in a header to grab the draw. "The way we played in the second half was just outrageous," Liverpool star Van Dijk told Dutch broadcaster NOS. "We always want to have the ball, we all want to play football, attack and score. But football is also knowing how to defend. That's what we haven't done tonight. Our organisation was just awful. We should have qualified here." The Dutch still head Group G but are just two points ahead of Turkey, who put six past Gibraltar. They host Norway in Rotterdam on Tuesday in the final round of matches while Turkey travel to Montenegro.

AFP

Osimhen scores as Nigeria move closer to topping World Cup group

Johannesburg, South Africa - Napoli forward Victor Osimhen scored to set up Nigeria for a 2-0 win over Liberia on Saturday that moved them closer to a fourth consecutive World Cup appearance.

The Super Eagles host Cape Verde in a top-of-the-table Group C clash on Tuesday and will win the section provided they avoid defeat in Lagos.

Nigeria have 12 points and Cape Verde 10 after five rounds while the Central African Republic (four) and Liberia (three) are out of the running.

Should the six-time World Cup qualifiers top the table, they join nine other section winners in a draw that will create five two-leg ties with the winners going to the 2022 finals in Qatar.

Osimhen converted a 15th-minute penalty after Kelechi Iheanacho was fouled and substitute Ahmed Musa added the second goal, also from a spot kick, in added time.

The qualifier was staged in the



Nigerian forward Victor Osimhen during a match on November 7 (AFP)

Moroccan coastal city of Tangiers because no stadium in Liberia meets international standards.

Cape Verde, an island nation of 560,000 people that has never competed at the World Cup, kept their hopes alive by coming from behind to beat the Central African Republic 2-1 in Mindelo. Julio Tavares netted early in the second half to cancel the lead Isaac Ngoma gave the visitors after 11 minutes, and Ianique 'Stopira' Tavares notched

the 75th-minute winner.

Ivory Coast will take a one-point lead over Cameroon to Douala on Tuesday for a showdown that will decide who progresses from Group D.

Cameroon outplay 10-man Malawi

Goals from Max-Alain Gradel, Burnley forward Maxwell Cornet and Jean-Michael Seri gave the Ivorians a 3-0 win over Mozambique in Cotonou a few hours

after Cameroon had outplayed 10-man Malawi 4-0 in Soweto.

Malawian John Banda was red-carded in the opening half for handball and captain Vincent Aboubakar converted the resultant penalty for Cameroon, whose seven World Cup appearances in an African record.

Andre-Frank Zambo Anguissa added a second before half-time and a late brace from substitute Christian Bassogog completed the rout.

Cameroon are the only country in the section able to play at home with the other three teams using neutral venues due to inadequate stadiums.

Group B was thrown open after a close-range thunderbolt from Pablo Ganet gave Equatorial Guinea a 1-0 victory over previously unbeaten Tunisia in Malabo. Tunisia host Zambia, who are three points behind the leaders, and Equatorial Guinea visit Mauritania on Tuesday in the final round.

AFP

Topfruit

CELEBRATING OMAN 51st NATIONAL DAY

Topfruit

ESSENTIALS

Mango Drink

كاي يافوت

كاي يافوت

51

Topfruit

ESSENTIALS

Red Fruit Mix Drink

كاي يافوت

كاي يافوت

51

Topfruit

ESSENTIALS

Orange Drink

كاي يافوت

كاي يافوت

51

العيد الوطني العماني 51

CELEBRATING OMAN 51st NATIONAL DAY

Topfruit

ESSENTIALS

Mango Drink

كاي يافوت

كاي يافوت

51

Topfruit

ESSENTIALS

Red Fruit Mix Drink

كاي يافوت

كاي يافوت

51

Topfruit

ESSENTIALS

Orange Drink

كاي يافوت

كاي يافوت

51

العيد الوطني العماني 51



Oman Sail readies for 49er, 49erFX, Nacra 17 events

Muscat - A 148-strong fleet representing 29 countries are arriving in Oman for the 49er, 49erFX and Nacra World Championships getting underway in Mussanah on Tuesday.

Being held in Asia for the first time in the history of the event, host Oman Sail pointed out that 'the regatta is the first global sailing event after the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and the start of the campaign to qualify for the Paris 2024 Games'.

The championship, which will run till November 21 at the Barcelo Mussanah Resort, will further heighten Oman's reputation as a world class host and premier sailing nation, said Oman Sail in a press statement on Sunday.

The 148-member fleet includes Olympians, promising

young sailors, high-performance doubles sailors and members of the sultanate's national team, all looking to start their campaign for the 2024 Olympics in good form.

Amongst the Nacra 17 fleet, Oman Sail said, 'are 2019 world

champions Maelle Frascari and Vittorio Bissaro (ITA) and 2021 silver medallists John Gimson and Anna Burnet (GBR)'.

Hosting the 2021 49er, 49erFX, and Nacra 17 World Championships is a great honour for Oman Sail and the Sultanate of Oman

DR KHAMIS AL JABRI

champions Maelle Frascari and Vittorio Bissaro (ITA) and 2021 silver medallists John Gimson and Anna Burnet (GBR)'.

The 49erFX class will see gold medallists Martine Grae and Ka-

hena Kunze (BRA) and European champions Emma Siewers and Odile van Aanholt (NED) taking part, whereas in 49er class, Olympians Łukasz Przybytek and Paweł Kolodźinski (POL), Benjamin Bildstein and David Hussl (AUT) and former world number

Remocker, 49er Class Manager.

"With such a strong and varied fleet, the competition should be fierce throughout the week," he added.

Talking about Oman as the venue, Remocker projected the sultanate as "a great choice for the first 49er, 49erFX and Nacra World Championships to be held within Asia".

"On behalf of the Class, I wish all of the competitors the very best of luck as they take the first steps on the road to Paris 2024."

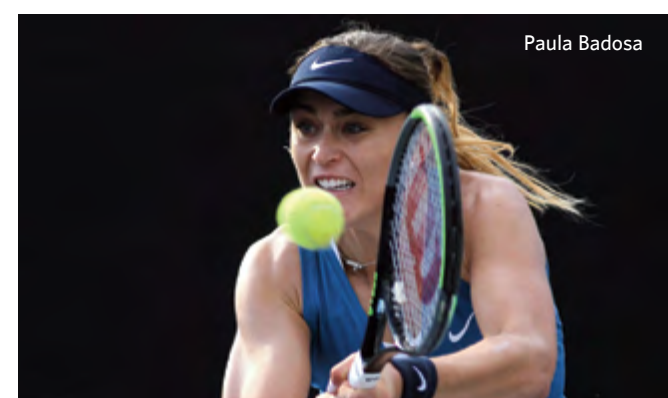
Dr Khamis al Jabri, Oman Sail CEO, said, "Hosting the 2021 49er, 49erFX, and Nacra 17 World Championships is a great honour for Oman Sail and the Sultanate of Oman.

"We look forward to welcoming the sailors, coaches and supporters to Mussanah for what

promises to be an excellent display of competitive sailing across all classes."

Oman has become the focus of sailing during the winter season. Competitors can look forward to ideal conditions, gentle breezes and the world class facilities that have become synonymous with sports in this country.

"Hosting high profile events such as this improves our standing within international sailing and provides an opportunity for local businesses to offer an authentic experience to visiting sailors while also delivering positive economic benefits to the community," the Oman Sail official added, hoping that "the visiting sailors take this opportunity to explore the Sultanate of Oman and get to know this wonderful country".



Badosa secures WTA semi-final berth

Guadalajara, Mexico - Spain's Paula Badosa fired 10 aces in a 7-6 (7/4), 6-4 round-robin victory over Maria Sakkari on Saturday and secured a semi-final spot at the season-ending WTA Finals.

With one round-robin match remaining, Badosa was assured of top spot in her group when top-seeded Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus defeated Iga Swiatek 2-6, 6-2, 7-5.

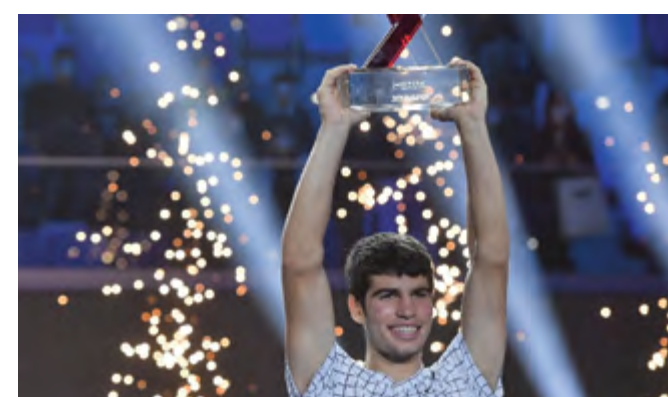
Poland's Swiatek was eliminated from semi-final contention, and Monday's match between Sabalenka and Sakkari

will determine the second semi-finalist from the group.

Badosa, whose late season run of form included her biggest title to date at the pandemic-delayed hardcourt tournament in Indian Wells in October, had already posted a convincing victory over Sabalenka to open group play.

Saturday's clash between Badosa and Sakkari, the first Greek to qualify for the finals, was the first meeting between the two.

Badosa needed just over two hours to stretch her current WTA winning streak to eight matches.



Young gun Alcaraz cruises to NextGen triumph

Milan, Italy - Carlos Alcaraz eased to the ATP NextGen Finals title on Saturday with a straight-sets 4-3 (7/5), 4-2, 4-2 win over Sebastian Korda.

Top seed Alcaraz (18) showed why he is one of the most highly-rated young players in men's tennis by dominating American Korda, who was seeded second, in one hour and 22 minutes on the hard court in Milan.

"It feels amazing, to be able to win this tournament means a lot of me... I'm so excited right now," Alcaraz said on court. "I've surprised myself with the level that I'm playing on indoor courts."

Korda is three years Alcaraz's senior and also came into the final unbeaten in the tournament for the year's best young players but was no match for the Spaniard.

Oman team leave for cricket series in Namibia

Muscat - Oman Cricket on Sunday announced the squad for the Namibia tour, with Zeeshan Maqsood leading the team.

The team for the 9th Round of the Cricket World Cup (CWC) League 2 Championships - to be hosted in Namibia from November 26 to December 6 - left on Sunday, said Oman Cricket in a press statement on Sunday.

The league is the qualification pathway tournament towards ICC Cricket World Cup to be held in India in 2023.

Oman, the UAE and Namibia will play a 50-over tri-series - in a round-robin group stage format, each pitted against the other twice. Oman is currently at the top of the points table.

The Oman squad for the CWC League 2 series includes: Zeeshan Maqsood (Captain), Jatinder Singh, Khawar Ali, Aqib Ilyas, Mohammad Nadeem, Ayaan Khan, Suraj Kumar, Sandeep Goud, Nester Dhamba, Kaleemullah, Bilal Khan, Naseem Khushi, Fayyaz Butt and Kashyap Prajapati with Duleep Mendis as the head coach and India's bowling legend Venkatpathy Raju as the expert coach.

Oman will play against Namibia on November 26 and 27; and against the UAE on November 29 and December 2, besides one each against Namibia and the UAE for the matches postponed in the last series.

PURSHOTTAM KANJI EXCHANGE

Transfer US Dollar to China
for your Trade & Personal Transaction

Commission OMR 3.5/-

99101314, 99849289 91787829
customersupport@pkexchange.net
www.pkexchange.com

FREE CLASSIFIED LISTING

Muscat Daily now offers free classified listings for individuals in the following categories:
Situations Wanted/Accommodation Wanted or Available/Sale of Household Items/ Car for Sale or Wanted/Matrimonial Alliances (Word limit is 35)
Please email your listing to dailyclassifieds@apexmedia.co.om or call 99104346

The way you live will be the way we innovate

MUSCAT
97693496, 96742452
Available at
Major Hypermarkets & Electronics Retailers

SALALAH
79011363



QUOTE OF THE DAY
This is huge, to be the first Australian team to do it. I am so proud of how the guys went about the campaign

Aaron Finch
Australian skipper, after clinching their maiden Twenty20 World Cup title in Dubai



ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP 2021

Marsh powers Australia to maiden T20 World Cup title



Australian cricketers celebrate with their winning trophy after the T20 World Cup final, in Dubai on Sunday (AFP)

Dubai, UAE - Mitchell Marsh smashed an unbeaten 77 as Australia hammered New Zealand by eight wickets to clinch their maiden Twenty20 World Cup title on Sunday.

Chasing 173 for victory, Australia depended on a 92-run second-wicket stand between David Warner, who made 53, and Marsh to achieve their target with seven balls to spare in Dubai.

Warner became Trent Boult's second wicket but Marsh kept up the charge to power Australia home to their long-awaited T20 crown and add to their five 50-over World Cup trophies.

Glenn Maxwell, who made 28, joined Marsh, who hit six fours and four sixes in his 50-ball knock, to put on 66 runs and hit the winning boundary as the Aussies came charging in to celebrate the triumph.

Skipper Kane Williamson hit a valiant 85 in New Zealand's 172-4 after being invited to bat first in a crucial toss won by Aaron Finch as teams chasing have won all but one game at the venue.

Australia, whose previous best was a runners-up finish in 2010, came into this edition's semi-final with one loss to England and beat Pakistan in the final-four clash with a chase of 177.

Australia fast bowler Josh Hazlewood returned figures of 3-16 and leg-spinner Adam Zampa had 1-26.

Australia suffered an early blow in their chase when Finch departed for five off Boult as a

largely neutral but not packed-to-capacity crowd roared.

But the left-right batting pair of Warner and Marsh combined to take apart the bowling with fours and sixes galore.

Marsh hit Adam Milne for one six and two fours on his first three balls of the knock to signal his ruthless intent.

Warner also kept up his punishing act as he hammered leg-spinner Ish Sodhi for 17 runs in one over with just a single to Marsh.

He smoked Jimmy Neesham for a six to raise his third half-century of the tournament but soon fell to Boult.

Warner, with 289 runs in total, ended second behind Pakistan's Babar Azam (303) in the tournament's batting chart.

Earlier Williamson, who was dropped on 21, started cautiously but once settled took on the opposition bowling to reach his first half-century of the tournament.

He finished with 10 fours and three sixes in his 48-ball blitz to lift New Zealand from 57-1 in 10.

The Kiwis initially struggled and lost Daryl Mitchell caught behind for 11 off Hazlewood.

Opening batsman Martin Guptill failed to get quick runs despite his three boundaries and a 48-run second-wicket stand with Williamson.

Williamson survived a spill by Hazlewood in the deep with the ball popping out of the fielder's hand to find the boundary. Pace spearhead Mitchell Starc was the bowler. The captain hit back

with two more fours off left-arm quick Starc who was taken for 60 runs from his four overs, to get some momentum into the innings.

Zampa sent Guptill trudging back to the dugout after the opener's 35-ball 28 but Williamson kept up the charge with two sixes off Maxwell.

Williamson again picked out Starc to smash four fours and one six in a 22-run 16th over and put on 68 with Glenn Phillips, who made 18.

Hazlewood returned in his final over to break the stand with Phillips' wicket and then got Williamson out with a leg-cutter.

SCOREBOARD	
NEW ZEALAND	
M Guptill	c Stoinis b Zampa 28 (35)
Daryl Mitchell	c Wade b Hazlewood 11 (8)
K Williamson	c Smith b Hazlewood 85 (48)
G Phillips	c Maxwell
	b Hazlewood 18 (17)
J Neesham	not out 13 (7)
T Seifert	not out 8 (6)
Extras:	(b 1, lb 3, nb 1, w 4) 9
TOTAL:	172/4 in 20 overs
Fall of wickets:	1-28, 2-76, 3-144, 4-148
Bowling:	M Starc 4-0-60-0, J Hazlewood 4-0-16-3, G Maxwell 3-0-28-0, P Cummins 4-0-27-0, A Zampa 4-0-26-1, M Marsh 1-0-11-0
AUSTRALIA	
D Warner	b Boult 53 (38)
A Finch	c Mitchell b Boult 5 (7)
M Marsh	not out 77 (50)
G Maxwell	not out 28 (18)
Extras:	(lb 4, w 6) 10
TOTAL:	(18.5 Ov, RR: 9.18)
Extras:	(lb 1) 1
TOTAL:	173/2 in 18.5 overs
Fall of wickets:	1-15, 2-107
Bowling:	T Boult 4-0-18-2, T Southee 3.5-0-43-0, A Milne 4-0-30-0, Ish Sodhi 3-0-40-0, Mitchell Santner 3-0-23-0, J Neesham 1-0-15-0



Glenn Maxwell (left) and Mitchell Marsh celebrate their win in the ICC men's T20 World Cup final against New Zealand, in Dubai on Sunday (AFP)



REIGNITE YOUR LOVE FOR BARBEQUE WITH A'SAFFA



A name you can trust!



51ST NATIONAL DAY OFFERS



WRANGLER SPORT 2 DOOR
STARTING FROM RO 196
PER MONTH

WRANGLER UNLIMITED SPORT 4 DOOR
STARTING FROM RO 218
PER MONTH

ADDITIONAL CASH GIFT OF RO 501 FOR THE FIRST 51 CUSTOMERS IN NOVEMBER & DECEMBER!

FIRST YEAR
INSURANCE & REGISTRATION

5YRS
WARRANTY & ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

FREE
FUEL WORTH **501** LITRES

3YRS
/60,000 KMS SERVICE PACKAGE

*Offer valid from 1st November to 31st December. Vehicle image shown is for illustrative purposes only and accessories shown might not be part of the standard model.
Offer on selected models of Wrangler Only.

BOOK NOW

Vehicle image shown is for illustrative purposes only and accessories shown might not be part of the standard model.
©2021 FCA US LLC. All Rights Reserved. Jeep® is a registered trademark of FCA US LLC.

Jeep®
THERE'S ONLY ONE

dhofar ظفار
AUTOMOTIVE للسيارات

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