

P10

WORLD CUP COUNTDOWN ENTERS FINAL WEEK



P13

OMAN POSTS 18.2 PER CENT GROWTH IN DOMESTIC REFINERY PRODUCT SALES



P20

THE SPIRIT OF SPORTSMANSHIP NEVER FADED WITH DISABILITY



MUSCAT

REVIEW OF DRAFT STATE BUDGET

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economy reviewed the draft state's general budget for 2023 before the State Council while hosting Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance, and Dr Said bin Mohammed al Saqri, Minister of Economy, in the presence of Shaikh Abdulmalik bin Abdullah al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council. The meeting touched on several topics that covered developments in the global economy, as well as developments in the local economy for 2022. The meeting also reviewed growth indicators for all sectors of economic diversification during 2022 in various development sectors. **DETAILS ON P2**

CRUDE PRICE AT \$91 A BARREL

Oman oil price for January delivery on Monday stood at \$91, stabilising on the price of last on Friday. The average price of Oman oil for November delivery has stabilised at \$90.80 per barrel, thus \$6.20 per barrel lower than October delivery. The firming dollar also dragged down world oil prices, despite the hopes of a demand boost from China's hints at reopening. Brent crude futures were down 74 cents, or 0.75 per cent, to \$95.42 a barrel after settling up 1.1 per cent on Friday.



INSIDE



Dhofar Governorate gears up for National Day celebrations

HM TO PRESIDE OVER MILITARY PARADE AT AL NASR SQUARE IN SALALAH

SALALAH: Dhofar Governorate is prepping to celebrate the 52nd National Day under the patronage of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. His Majesty the Sultan will preside over the military parade at Al Nasr Square in Salalah, on November 18.

HH Sayyid Marwan bin Turki al Said, Governor of Dhofar, said: "This glorious national occasion is considered an opportunity to review the progress and development that took place in various development sectors in Dhofar Governorate in particular and the Sultanate of Oman in general."

In an interview with ONA and Oman TV, HH Sayyid Marwan said that several government departments will be launching development projects over the upcoming period in sectors like healthcare, tourism and logistics aimed at realising comprehensive sustainable development.

Regarding decentralisation and the governorate system,



HH Sayyid Marwan affirmed that the issuance of the new system which seeks to upgrade the decentralisation mechanism and enhance governance and integration between different entities to tap the potential and resources of each governorate.

Dhofar Governorate is teeming with tourism potential and most importantly the Dhofar

khareef season, the governor said underscoring the importance of preparing a document for strategic urban projects in Dhofar Governorate, and the structuring of the Greater Salalah that would enhance decentralisation in the governorate.

Asked about the role of youth and how to benefit from their thoughts, HH Sayyid Marwan said

that the young people now assume a greater role especially since the Oman Vision 2040 was laid down. Omani youth are now taking part in many strategies including the urban strategy in Dhofar. He affirmed the attention accorded to the thoughts and innovations of young people and their contribution to decision-making and decision-taking.

HM issues Royal Decree

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Monday issued Royal Decree No 73/2022 endorsing the organisational structure of the State Audit Institution.

Article (1) endorses the organisational structure of the State Audit Institution as per the annex attached to this Decree.

Article (2) cancels Royal Decree No 6/2012 on the endorsement of the organisational structure of the State Audit Institution, as well as all that contradicts this Decree or contravenes its provisions.

Article (3) says that this Decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from its date of issue.

— ONA

Biden and Xi cool Cold War rhetoric in landmark summit

NUSA DUA, INDONESIA: Presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping tried to take some heat out of their simmering superpower rivalry on Monday, during a three-hour summit that found common ground on Ukraine but left little doubt that stark differences remain.

Biden emerged from the meeting proclaiming there need not be a new Cold War, as both leaders spoke of the desire to prevent high tensions from spilling over into conflict.

Xi told Biden that the two countries "share more, not less, common interests," according to a Chinese account of the meeting, sounding more conciliatory than the last three pandemic-filled years without face-to-face presidential meetings would suggest.

"The world expects that China and the United States will properly handle the relationship," Xi told him.

Trying to scotch the notion that China is bent on usurping the United States and remaking the world in its own image, Xi



US President Joe Biden shakes hands with Chinese President Xi Jinping as they meet on the sidelines of the G20 leaders' summit in Bali, Indonesia, on Monday. — Reuters

fought and cannot be won, according to the White House.

They "underscored their opposition to the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons in Ukraine," the US added.

That common cause is likely to give Putin pause as he weighs how to turn the tide of a war that his regime's survival could hinge on. Xi told Biden that Taiwan is the "first red line that must not be crossed in China-US relations," according to the Chinese foreign ministry statement. — AFP

AIDACOSMA DOCKS AT PORT SULTAN QABOOS



Port Sultan Qaboos today received the Italian cruise ship AIDACosma with 5,800 tourists onboard. During the current season, Port Sultan Qaboos, Salalah Port and Khassab Port are expected to receive 200 ships coming from all over the world. The tourist programme of AIDACosma includes visits to major archaeological, tourism and historic landmarks in the Governorate of Muscat. — ONA

Oman condolences with Turkey over Istanbul blast

MUSCAT/ISTANBUL: The Sultanate of Oman has expressed its condolences to the government and people of the Republic of Turkey, as well as families of the victims of the explosion that targeted Taksim area in Istanbul, wishing the injured a speedy recovery.

In a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry on Monday, Oman reiterated its firm stance in condemning all forms of violence and terrorism.

Meanwhile, Turkey blamed Kurdish militants for the explosion that killed six people in Istanbul and police detained 47 people including a Syrian woman suspected of planting the bomb.

No group has claimed responsibility so far for Sunday's blast on the busy pedestrian Istiklal Avenue, and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) denied involvement in it. The explosion wounded 81 people,

sending debris flying into the air and hundreds of shoppers, tourists and families fleeing from the scene.

Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly said the PKK and the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia were responsible for the blast, an incident that recalled for Turks similar attacks in years past.

Ankara says the YPG is a wing of the PKK. The United States has supported the YPG in the conflict in Syria, stoking friction between Nato allies.

SEE ALSO P7



Oman, Hungary review relations

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, received here on Monday Dr Laszlo Kover, Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary.

The meeting reviewed relations between Oman and Hungary. The two sides also exchanged views on regional and international issues of common interest.

The meeting was attended by Khalid bin Hashil al Musalhi, Head of the Minister's Office Department, Barnabas Fodor, Ambassador of Hungary to the Sultanate of Oman, and a number of officials from both sides. — ONA

5,800 cruise tourists land in Muscat

MUSCAT: Port Sultan Qaboos on Monday received the Italian cruise ship "AIDAcosma" with 5,800 tourists onboard from various nationalities.

The tourist programme of "AIDAcosma" included tours to major archaeological, tourism and historic landmarks in the Governorate of Muscat.

Khalid bin Mohammed al Azri, Director of Tourism Promotion at the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, said that receiving cruise ships in Oman's ports consolidates the country's position as a leading unique destination in the region.

Al Azri pointed out that "AIDAcosma" is visiting the region for the first time.

He added that during the current season, Port Sultan Qaboos, Salalah Port and Khassab Port are expected to receive 200 ships coming from all over the world. — ONA



Review of draft state budget

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economy reviewed the draft state's general budget for 2023 before the State Council while hosting Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance, and Dr Said bin Mohammed al Saqri, Minister of Economy, in the presence of Shaikh Abdulmalik bin Abdullah al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council.

The meeting touched on several topics that covered developments in the global economy, as well as developments in the local economy for 2022. The meeting also reviewed growth indicators for all sectors of economic diversification during 2022 in various development sectors.

The under-secretary of the Ministry of Finance gave a visual presentation during which he reviewed the financial and economic indicators of the



country, the efforts made by the government to improve them, the draft state general budget for 2023 and its details, in addition to the Fiscal Balance Plan.

The meeting concluded that the most important pillars of the state's general budget for 2023 represented in providing support to the recovery of economic activity, continuing to achieve national benefits by cutting down the state's public debt, paying

The meeting reviewed growth indicators for all sectors of economic diversification during 2022 in various development sectors

the importance of the government's continuous commitment to the financial measures that ensure financial sustainability, in addition to channelling part of the surplus to increase the financial liquidity of development projects and accelerate the awarding and implementation of projects during the 10th five-year plan (2021-2025) in various development sectors. — ONA

Dhofar gears up for National Day celebrations



FROM PAGE 1

Regarding the media sector, the governor pointed to the great progress made by the state media and other media channels in activating the partnership and generating executable ideas.

The investment sector overlaps with a number of vital sectors which include tourism, logistics, industry and food security which is based on agriculture, fisheries and water resources as per Oman Vision 2040, the governor said.

HH Sayyid Marwan underscored the role of the citizens in tapping the potentials and executing the strategies through the executive plans, underscoring the importance of system integration in the stage of digital transformation. — ONA



His Highness Sayyid Marwan said several government departments will be launching development projects over the upcoming period spanning the sectors of healthcare, tourism and logistics



Royal Army of Oman celebrates graduation of new recruits



SALALAH: The Royal Army of Oman (RAO) celebrated at the Governorate of Dhofar the passing out of a new batch of recruits in the



Firaq Forces.

The ceremony was held under the auspices of retired Maj Gen Hassan bin Ihsaan al Naseeb. Present at the

event was Maj Gen Matar bin Salim al Balushi, Commander of the Royal Army of Oman.

The ceremony began by

performing the military salute to the chief guest who inspected the first column of the graduates.

The ceremony was attended by



a number of senior officers at the RAO and SAF, as well as Firaq Forces personnel and parents of the recruits.

— ONA



National Day attractions

DRONE, LASER SHOWS AT AL AMERAT, AL KHOUDH



VINOD NAIR
@vinot_nair

MUSCAT: The governorates of Muscat, Dhofar and Musandam will be witness to special events organised by the authorities as part of the 52nd National Day celebrations.

The drone and laser shows will be held in Muscat on November 18 and 19 in two different locations, in Dhofar on November 18 and in Musandam on November 21.

In Muscat, the event will be held on November 18 at Al Amerat Park and November 19 at Al Khoudh Dam.

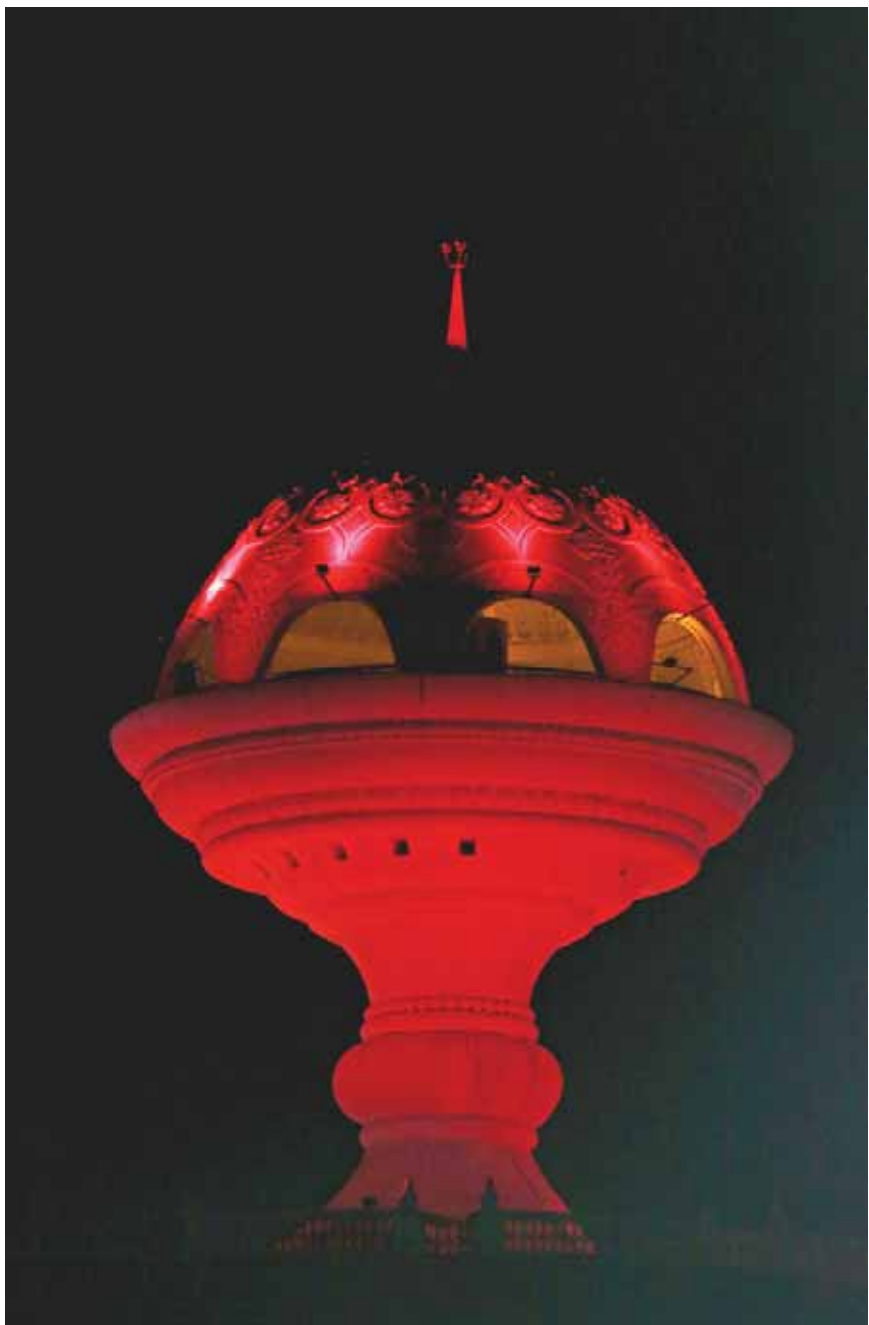
Khasab will host the event on November 21.

Kite shows will also be held starting at 4 pm in Salalah on November 18, Azaiba Beach on November 22, and Al Seeb Beach on November 23.

Muscat Municipality closed the Al Amerat Public Park on November 15-17 to prepare for an event celebrating the 52nd National Day.

The main streets of the Sultanate of Oman are wearing a festive look as they have decked up with colourful lights in different shapes and themes as part of the National Day celebrations.

The Sultanate of Oman's flag has been hoisted in the Governorate of Muscat starting from the Al Bustan roundabout along the main road to the Al Barakah Palace roundabout. At the same time, illuminations were installed on either side of the road. One wilayat from each governorate in Oman has been decorated as part of the celebrations of the glorious occasion, which will see the launch of drones and laser shows.



‘Green Oases’ need attention

TEXT& PHOTOS BY YAHYA AL SALMANI

The scenes of the green oases and aflaj channels surprise many. Traditionally they were built on lands that challenged geographical harshness. The geographical and environmental studies confirm that specialised and accurate studies must be prepared to unveil the formation secrets.

Some oases are still not reachable. They are located at altitudes between 500 and 1,500 metres above sea level.

In the past, Omanis used to dig wells and build water channels on the paths of the mountain slopes to secure water access, which undoubtedly helped them in their daily lives. Today, these oases have become significant tourist destinations, as tourists give them priority during visits.

These oases give the tourists multiple options, where they can practice hiking, mountain climbing, camping, discover archaeo-



logical sites and learn about the types of local crops.

Moreover, they have the choice to experience authentic Omani culture and tradition, which are still in practice.

“It is astonishing to travel in the middle of the dry and barren mountains and then be surprised to see the green terraces and the water flowing in a panoramic view that many who visit these unique sites may not believe”, a French tourist told Observer.

Despite the rugged road to reach some of these places, many Omani families still live in these mountainous areas. “Providing

paved roads and basic services has become urgent because the number of tourists is increasing. It is important to establish safe paths on mountain roads so that it is easier for the tourists of different age groups to reach some sites easily,” a tour guide proposed.

On the other hand, residents demand the necessity of providing outlets for displaying and marketing local products, as it contributes to stimulating commercial traffic in these exceptional locations. Agricultural oases are a cultural heritage. There must be a plan to develop the places of historical importance.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH ROYAL HOSPITAL

ANNOUCEMENT FOR TENDER

THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF ROYAL HOSPITAL INVITE SPECIALIZED COMPANIES TO SUBMIT TENDER

TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION	LAST DATE FOR COLLECTION OF TENDER DOCUMENT	CLOSING TIME/ DAY/DATE	ELIGIBILITY	TENDER FEE (NON- REFUNDABLE)
2909/2022/ MOH/ DGRHP-136	SUPPLY OF SURGICAL ITEMS (INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY) FOR ROYAL HOSPITAL	27/NOV/2022	BEFORE 10 AM ON TUESDAY 20/DEC/2022	SPECIALIZED COMPANIES REGISTERED WITH TENDER BOARD	25 RIALS

- 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 Finance-Royal Hospital 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: 24166670

Email id etenderhd@ita.gov.om



Dhofar witnesses comprehensive, sustainable development

ZAINAB AL NASSRI

[@zainabalnasseri](#)

Along with different wilayats and governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, Dhofar Governorate is also gearing up to celebrate the 52nd glorious National Day as it will host, this year, the military parade under the high patronage of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. The parade will be held at Al Nasr Square in the Wilayat of Salalah in Dhofar on Friday, November 18.

Dhofar Governorate is known as the “Land of Frankincense” and constitutes one-third of the Sultanate of Oman’s area. It is located in the southern part of the country. This governorate acquires its importance from Omani history, where it was famous for exporting frankincense to the ancient civilisations of the world, such as the Pharaonic, Assyrian, Persian, Roman and Greek civilisations.

The history of Dhofar goes back to ancient times, as it was associated with the economic role it played through the ages. It has been known since the Prophet Sulaiman’s time. It is narrated that Balqeess, the Queen of Sheba, made frankincense as a gift to King Sulaiman in the tenth century BC. The collapse of the Ma’rib Dam in the second century AD, the migration of Arab tribes from the south of the Arabian Peninsula to the Sultanate of Oman and the settlement of part of them in Dhofar had a prominent role in the emergence of states, including the apostolic, the Mangwei, and Kithoori tribes. This had a significant contribution to expanding urban activity through the construction of cities and ports. The city of Al Baleed and the port of Samharam, for example, were built during the reign of the Mangwei.

Tourists from different countries, including neighbouring GCC, come to this governorate in July, August and September. Unlike in other parts of the country, some areas, especially Salalah, witness rain and drop in temperature. The autumn season

(locally called khareef) is special for Salalah -- the most famous among tourists.

The Khareef season starts from mid-June to the end of September when the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula becomes tinted, and the monsoon rains arrive, which brings new life to the regions and parts of this Omani governorate. The city of Salalah, also known as the ‘Green City’, is a popular destination for tourists eager to seize moments in nature.

Al Nasr Square, where the military parade will be held, is located in Salalah, which has a long history that has drawn the cultural and natural features of this famous city in the Arabian Peninsula since ancient times. Archaeological studies indicated that the history of Salalah is as old as the inscriptions and archaeological writings shown on many touristic landmarks.

SUCCESSIVE CIVILISATIONS

Studies reveal the footprints of successive civilisations on Salalah, the evidence of which is still present to this day. The historical eras of the various civilisations that have succeeded them have been identified. This appears clearly in the Al Baleed archaeological town, which dates back to the twelfth and sixteenth centuries. AD.

Al Baleed is one of the oldest and most important ancient commercial cities and ports on the coastal strip of Salalah. This site is one of the sites of the Land of Frankincense inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, in addition to being the largest and most important archaeological site in Oman.

The results of archaeological excavations revealed that the city’s history dates back to periods before BC, and it has represented a major population centre since about 2500 BC. It emerged during the late Iron Age as an active central city, while its port flourished during Islamic times.

The southern coasts of Dhofar are fertile, with abundant springs of water and regular seasonal rains in the fall season. Therefore, agriculture is found on a large scale in these areas. One of the most important crops is coconut palms, or as it is known locally as

“nargil” and tropical fruits such as bananas.

Dhofar is also famous for its pomegranate, sugar cane, watermelon and cantaloupe. In the past, the country cultivated wheat, barley, cotton, sweet potatoes, sorghum, and maize (Mohindo), and some stories refer to the cultivation of rice in the past.

As for the frankincense tree, it grows naturally in many parts of the province, as it is neither planted nor watered. The frankincense is extracted through the wound of the bark of the tree in the stem. After days, the crop that gathers around the wound is harvested. Thus, the harvesting process is renewed several times in more than one season during the year. Frankincense has been the main source of the Dhofar trade for thousands of years.

Dhofar is also rich in the best types of fish required in the markets of the Sultanate of Oman and the neighbouring Gulf countries, not to mention molluscs such as shrimp. Given the vegetation cover and abundance of grass, the area is active in raising livestock, camels and sheep.

In addition, there is the historic port of Samharam in Dhofar, which was famous for the export of frankincense through Khor Rori. There are also the ruins of the city of Wubār, archaeological remnants in the Al Mughail area and Hamran Castle in Salalah. There are rich sites that are preserved as historical evidence of great value, especially historical forts.

Among the most prominent places that constitute a tourist attraction are its beautiful natural landscapes and ancient archaeological and historical sites: “the Frankincense Land Museum”, which opened in July 2007. It provides visitors and researchers with a summary of Oman’s journey through its long history.

In the Governorate of Dhofar, there are about 260 water springs distributed on the mountainous strip and on the edges of the mountains adjacent to the coastal plain. Small numbers of them are spread in the Najd area, most of which are permanently flowing. The most famous springs of Dhofar are Ain Jarzir, Ain Arzat, Ain Sahalnoot, Ain Hamran and Ain Darbat.

THE
HISTORY
OF DHOFAR
GOES BACK
TO
ANCIENT
TIMES,
AS IT WAS
ASSOCIATED
WITH THE
ECONOMIC
ROLE IT
PLAYED
THROUGH
THE
AGES



Oman Sailing Festival captures imagination of all ages

MUSCAT: The Oman Sailing Festival concluded in Salalah after five days of introducing visitors of all ages to Try Sailing, Try Windsurfing and Try Kitesurfing under the expert supervision of an Oman Sail instructor. In total, 288 of people visited the festival to enjoy a free session on the water, food, and entertainment, as well as an impressive array of local SMEs and local craftspeople showcasing their handmade souvenirs and pieces of art.

Ali al Sheheimi, Oman Sailing Festival Manager, said, “Oman Sail began with the mission to rekindle the Sultanate of Oman’s maritime heritage, and in Salalah where this heritage is so prominent it was wonderful to see so many people

taking this opportunity to learn the basics of sailing, windsurfing and kitesurfing. “At every stop along the coastline we have highlighted the importance of caring for the environment. As sailors we rely on clean seas, and so much of our lives is spent in the water, it is therefore essential that we all commit to doing everything we can to keeping our beautiful country clean.” The Oman Sailing Festival returns on 24-26 November at the Barceló Mussanah Resort, during the RS Venture Connect World Championships, Oman’s first exclusively-para sailing event. On offer will be free Try Sailing, Try Windsurfing and Try Kitesurfing sessions, an exhibition of local



SMEs and a beach clean, and using the versatile RS Venture boat designed for people with disabilities. The Oman Sailing Festival

is supported by Office of the Governor of Dhofar Directorate General of Heritage and Tourism in Dhofar, Beach Front, Oman Air, National Mineral Water Company (Tanuf), Environment society of Oman (ESO), and National University Science and Technology (International Maritime College). Operating under Oman Tourism Development Company, Oman Sail is tasked with rekindling the country’s maritime eminence, promote the Sultanate of Oman around the world through sailing, contribute to the sustainable prosperity of the nation and provide long-term learning opportunities for the youth.

Oman Air’s ‘Future Leaders’ launched

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
@lakshmioman



Under the auspices of Shaikh Nasr bin Amer al Hosni, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Labour for Labour, Oman Air officially inaugurated its highly anticipated Future Leaders Commercial Graduate Programme.

At the special induction ceremony, 11 Omani graduates received their certificates at the Crowne Plaza Muscat OCEC.

During the event, the candidates were addressed by Oman Air’s Chief Executive Officer, Abdulaziz al Raisi, and members of senior management. Sumaiya al Siyabi, who recently became the first Arab woman to win the ‘Stars of Science’ programme, spoke words of encouragement highlighting the importance of staying focused on goals.

After a rigorous selection process which began in July, the candidates; Bashair al Busaidy, Firas al Zadjali, Atheer al Mahrouqi, Ibrahim al Hinai, Saqar al Aaraimi, Mohammed al Sarimi, Fatima Al Zahra Shabeer, Usama al Balushi, Fatma al Marhubi, Maryah al Harthy, and Muzdalifa al Husaini, are now gearing up to begin their exciting two-year journey.

Shaikh Nasr bin Amer al Hosni commented, “Oman Air has done a wonderful job designing the Future Leaders Programme, which clearly demonstrates the extent of its interest in empowering

more Omani cadres and nurturing them for various leadership and highly specialised positions in the field. Without a doubt, the 11 new graduates will constitute a new building block in the commercial aviation sector. The programme represents an integrated strategy for human resources management and an example of a constructive partnership between the Ministry of Labour and the private sector. Through such efforts, we aim to create a stimulating work environment that follows world-class standards and ensures the achievement of the aspirations and goals of Oman’s Vision 2040.”

The selected graduates will work in different departments to gain experience.

Abdulaziz al Raisi added, “Oman Air is a huge advocate of developing the next generation, in line with our commitment to Oman’s Vision 2040 and its economic development. The 11 graduates have been carefully selected for their huge potential and talent. Over the next two years, we will nurture that talent and feed it with

tangible, practical skills they can take into their professional and personal lives. The ceremony marks an exciting milestone for them as the first step in building a promising career in aviation.”

Over two years, the candidates will spend time at Oman Air’s hub in Muscat and some of its outstations, gaining experience in all the commercial functions of the airline. They will begin by receiving a formal induction and training for two weeks before starting their employment. Later, the candidates will fly to IATA’s European headquarters in Geneva to undergo world-class formal training and sit an exam for the prestigious IATA Air Transport Management Certificate. The rest of the two-year programme will see them spend three to four months rotating around each commercial function. Throughout this time, they will continue to receive training with a dedicated senior leadership mentor, and at the end, they will receive certificates with internationally recognised qualifications.

Oman Equestrian Federation participates in FEI assembly

CAPE TOWN: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by Oman Equestrian Federation, took part in the General Assembly meeting of the International Federation for Equestrian Sports (FEI), held in South Africa. Oman Equestrian Federation was represented in the meeting by Sayyid Munther bin Saif

al Busaidy, Chairman of the Board of Directors. The meeting discussed several topics, namely amending some regulations regarding endurance and jumping obstacles sports, as well as the matter of moving the Endurance World Championship 2022 from Italy to the UAE, among other topics. — ONA



Al Sahwa Schools, Oman

Al Sahwa Schools wishes to invite for the position of **School Nurse (Female)**

Candidates are required to have the following:

- **Bachelor Degree in Nursing.**
- **At least 2 years of experience (ideally with A & E experience).**
- **Fluent in English, Arabic is an advantage.**

Interested candidates should submit their application through the school’s website www.alsahwa.edu.om under the careers section.

The deadline for applications is **Thursday 24 November 2022**

Looking for job, car, flat and furniture? Check out the Observer classified page. It’s where buyers meet sellers.

Soccer fans from Kerala to use Muscat as a base for Qatar

SAMUEL KUTTY
@samkuttyvp



Thousands of Keralite football fans supporting Argentina cheer at a waterfront in Doha, ahead of the Qatar 2022 Fifa World Cup football tournament. — AFP

With less than a week left for the 2022 edition of the Football World Cup, many fans from the south Indian state of Kerala will be visiting the Sultanate of Oman and shuttle to Qatar to the world’s most-watched sports tournament.

“I will be travelling to the Sultanate of Oman next week using my World Cup fan visa and then fly into Qatar on the match days of my interest”, said Abdul Hameed, a die-hard fan of Brazil.

Hameed, a native of Ernakulam in the central district of Kerala, was buzzing when he said he would be at the World Cup in Qatar beginning November 20.

Kerala happens to be among the few states in India that possess a craze for football, even more than the popularly watched game of cricket.

“I understand Oman is one of the major gateways for the fans to reach Qatar. I can utilise the facilities offered by Oman Air which will ferry spectators from Muscat to Doha every day”, he said.

More than 1.5 million people are set to

flock to Qatar for the biggest sporting event, with its neighbours including are expected to reap the benefits of a sharp increase in visitors to the region.

The Sultanate of Oman is hoping to make Muscat one of the preferred destinations for football fans from across the world, with attractive offers from airlines and hotels.

Football fans who hold a Hayya card that acts as a visa and fan ID for the tournament and their immediate family members will be eligible for a free 60-day multi-entry visa to Oman.

There are short-haul flights to the host country as well as bringing a carnival World Cup atmosphere to the streets of Oman.

“I am very satisfied to have decided on Muscat and the shuttle to Qatar. I explored many places in the region. Oman stood out for its natural landscape and tourism potential”, Naushad Ali, a businessman who is a hard-core fan of Argentina. He said he wants to have a glimpse of Messi as he has a special place in his heart for the player.

With Kerala coming under the grip of the World Cup fever, giant cutouts of Neymar, Lionel Messi, and Cristiano Ronaldo popped up at different locations in the south Indian state.

The fans have used his widely shared image of him preparing for a free kick at the 2018 Fifa World Cup. Fifa tweeted a picture of the cutouts, saying the world cup “fever has hit Kerala.”

Last Friday in Doha, thousands of migrant workers from Kerala wearing the colours of Argentina, Brazil, and England staged a World Cup rally. Interestingly, a fan group of the Indian sub-continent showed their support to Messi’s Argentina in Qatar by playing the drums.



MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No. (45/2022)

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

Tender No.	E- Tender No.	Description of Tender	Tender Fee	Last Date to Collect the Tender	Tender Return Date	Grade
PRE/21/103	2022/MM/ QS-21- Recall -1	Maintenance of Traffic Signal in Muscat Governorate (E- Tender) (RE-Tender)	Rial 50	03/12/2022	25/12/2022	Specialist
PRE/22/071	2022/MM/ HQ-6- Recall -1	Maintenance of Roads in Bousher, A’Seeb and Muttrah 2022 - 2023 (RE-Tender) (E- Tender)	Rial 190	28/11/2022	13/12/2022	Excellent
PRE/22/073	2022/MM/ HQ-7- Recall -1	Maintenance of Roads in AL Amerat and Quriyat 2022 - 2023 (RE-Tender) (E- Tender)	Rial 300	28/11/2022	13/12/2022	Excellent

Tender Conditions :-

1. 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.
2. Tender Bonds shall be E-Bond and to be submitted through E-Tendering system, addressed to Muscat Municipality.
3. For any inquiries regarding tenders, please visit e-tendering website: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>).
4. For technical support of e-tendering system please send an email to (etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om) or call (+968 24402200).
5. For technical support of E-Bond through e-tendering system please send an email to (esnad@gstb.gov.om) or call (+968 24402200/24402330).



CELEBRATING THEIR DAY



School children dressed as India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, gesture during a celebration of Children's Day on the occasion of Nehru's 133rd birth anniversary, at a school in Amritsar on Monday. — AFP

Sri Lanka govt says to take over \$1.7 bn in debt owed to China

COLOMBO: Crisis-hit Sri Lanka said on Monday it would take responsibility for \$1.7 billion owed to China by state enterprises as it seeks to sell them off and restructure its foreign debt to secure an IMF bailout.

The government of President Ranil Wickremesinghe is in talks with the Washington-based lender as it seeks funding to enable the island to recover from its worst-ever financial crisis.

His predecessor Gotabaya Rajapaksa was forced to flee the country and resign after demonstrators overran his house following months of protests over the unprecedented economic hardships faced by the 22 million population. Sri Lanka defaulted on its foreign debt in April and



Sri Lanka's President Ranil Wickremesinghe

the IMF has said its borrowings must be "sustainable" to unlock any new external funding. That will require its creditors to take a haircut on their loans, but China is its biggest lender and Beijing has given no indication it is willing to do so.

Wickremesinghe said \$1.7

billion in loans taken from China's Export-Import Bank by three key loss-making state-owned enterprises (SOE) — the electricity utility, Port Authority, and Airport and Aviation Services — would be considered government debt.

Taking the loans off their books will strengthen their balance sheets, which could make them more attractive to buyers or outside investors. The IMF has said the country should also restructure its loss-making state enterprises.

Wickremesinghe signalled the selling-off of five state-owned companies, including the national carrier SriLankan Airlines to reduce the strain on the national budget. — AFP

SCHOLZ SAYS G20 CONSENSUS ON UKRAINE TO BE 'TOUGH RIDE'

UN chief hopeful Russia to extend grain deal

NUSA DUA, Indonesia: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres voiced hope on Monday that Russia would extend an expiring deal that gives safe passage to Ukrainian grain shipments, saying the arrangement was crucial for food security.

The UN chief, addressing reporters in Bali ahead of a Group of 20 summit, said that talks over the last week had delivered "a lot of progress" on the deal that is set to end on Saturday.

"I am hopeful that the Black Sea grain initiative will be renewed," Guterres said.



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres speaks during a news conference ahead of the G20 leaders' summit in Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia, on Monday. — Reuters

I am hopeful that the Black Sea grain initiative will be renewed. We need urgent action to prevent famine and hunger in the world

ANTONIO GUTERRES
UN Secretary-General

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will head Moscow's delegation at the Bali summit, replacing President Vladimir Putin. On a separate issue to be addressed by the G20, Guterres took aim at global technology firms that he said have allowed their platforms to be used for human rights and privacy abuses.

He called for "global

guardrails" to defend an open and free internet for all.

"Powerful tech companies are running roughshod over human rights and personal privacy and providing platforms for deadly disinformation, in pursuit of profits," he said.

GLOBAL ISSUES

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said leaders of the Group of 20 (G20) major economies would find it difficult agreeing clear statements on global issues and the war in Ukraine when they meet this week for the first time since Russian war on Ukraine.

"We are working very hard to ensure that we not only make clear, important statements on all the issues that affect the world together... but also on the issues of peace and the consequences of the Russian war on Ukraine," Scholz said during a joint news conference with Singapore's prime minister, Lee Hsien Loong, in Singapore. — Agencies

Biggest rainforest nations form triple alliance to save jungle

NUSA DUA, Indonesia: The world's three largest rainforest nations Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo and Indonesia on Monday formally launched a partnership to cooperate on forest preservation after a decade of on-off talks on a trilateral alliance.

Reuters reported in August that Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, elected as Brazil's president at the end of October, would seek a partnership with the two other leading rainforest nations to pressure the rich world to finance forest conservation.

The rapid destruction of

rainforests, which through their dense vegetation serve as carbon sinks, releases planet-warming carbon dioxide, imperiling global climate targets. Regrowing previously deforested jungle has the benefit of removing greenhouse gas already in the atmosphere.

Representatives of the three countries, which represent 52 per cent of the world's tropical rainforest, signed the joint statement at the talks in Indonesia ahead of the G20, or Group of 20 industrialised nations, which begins on Tuesday.

"South-to-south cooperation



Indonesia's youth prepare to welcome leaders arriving for the G20 Bali Summit in Denpasar Bali on Monday. — AFP

— Brazil, Indonesia, DRC — is very natural," the Democratic Republic of Congo's Environment Minister Eve Bazaiba said prior to the signing. "We have the same challenges, the same opportunity to be the solution to climate change." In the agreement, the alliance said that countries should be paid for reducing deforestation and maintaining forests as carbon sinks. The countries will also work to negotiate "a new sustainable funding mechanism" to help developing countries preserve their biodiversity, as well as to increase funding

through the United Nations' REDD+ programme for reducing deforestation.

The G20 talks coincide with the second and final week of the COP27 United Nations climate summit in Egypt, where Lula's environmental adviser Izabella Teixeira said Brazil would seek to get the involvement of other countries in the Amazon basin, which spans nine nations.

"Forests matters, nature matters. And I do believe that without Amazon protection, we cannot have climate security," said Teixeira. — AFP

SHORT TAKES

SINGAPORE

Germany courts Vietnam, Singapore

Germany was looking to "diversify" its trading partners to reduce the risk of over-reliance on individual countries such as China, Chancellor Olaf Scholz said on Monday. "We are looking to diversify our supply chains to look where we can go to get raw materials and industrial products," Scholz said at the end of a three-day trip that took him to Singapore and Vietnam.

"We are against any decoupling of China in the world economy because we are deeply



convinced that globalisation has brought a lot of progress," Scholz said on Monday.

"But we have to be clear that globalisation also means not to just look to one country."

DENPASAR

Lavrov 'in good health' after health checks

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is in good health after two health checks at a hospital in Bali, an Indonesian health ministry official said on Monday, as Moscow denied the top diplomat had been hospitalised.

Russia called reports Lavrov had been hospitalised "the highest level of fake" and Moscow's foreign ministry spokeswoman posted a video of the 72-year-old diplomat in a T-shirt and shorts. An Indonesian official said said Lavrov had been taken



to hospital two days in a row after arriving on the resort island of Bali on Sunday, where he is replacing President Vladimir Putin as the head of Moscow's delegation.

MANILA

Philippines to tax single-use plastics

The Philippines' lower house of Congress approved on Monday a measure that would slap taxes on single-use plastics, in step with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr's commitment to tackle ocean pollution. A tax of 100 pesos (\$1.75) would be levied on firms for every kilogram of single-used plastics that they produce or import, the bill said, and it would rise by 4 per cent annually starting in 2026 to discourage usage and protect the environment. Roughly 80 per cent of global



ocean plastic comes from Asian rivers, and the Philippines alone contributes a third of that total, according to a 2021 report by Oxford University's Our World in Data.



omanobserver.com/podcast

world

OMANDAILYOBSERVER

TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 15 | 2022

7

In brief

■ LONDON



BRITAIN GIVES \$1 BN TO GLOBAL DISEASE FIGHT

The British government said on Monday it would contribute 1 billion pounds (\$1.18 billion) to the Global Fund to fight Aids, tuberculosis and malaria, more than six weeks after other countries made their commitments.

The total, which covers 2023-25, is 30 per cent less than Britain pledged during the previous funding round in 2019, and below the 1.8 billion pounds requested this time. Historically, the country has been a major donor to the fund.

"This fund gives hope and opportunity to millions who would otherwise suffer," Andrew Mitchell, Britain's Minister for Development, said.

■ LONDON



KING CHARLES CELEBRATES 74TH BIRTHDAY

Britain's King Charles celebrated his 74th birthday on Monday, with the occasion marked by him replacing his late father as The Ranger of Great Windsor Park, a position which dates back more than four centuries.

Charles, who became the oldest monarch in British history when he succeeded his mother on the throne in September, will enjoy his first birthday as king in private with no public engagements planned.

However, Buckingham Palace announced that he had officially taken up his new role as Ranger, a job which dates back to 1559 when Queen Elizabeth I appointed Henry Neville, and released a new photograph.

■ TOKYO



JAPAN PM TO MEET CHINA'S XI IN BANGKOK

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida will hold talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday at an APEC gathering in Bangkok, Tokyo's top government spokesman said.

"Prime Minister Kishida is scheduled to hold a Japan-China summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the 17th, on the occasion of the APEC summit," Hirokazu Matsuno told reporters.

The leaders spoke on the phone in October 2021 after Kishida's election, but this will be their first in-person meeting. Xi last held face-to-face talks with a Japanese prime minister in December 2019.

Turkey arrests woman, accuses PKK over Istanbul attack

ISTANBUL: Turkey on Monday accused a Syrian woman of planting a bomb that killed six people in Istanbul, blaming the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) of carrying out the attack.

Two girls, aged nine and 15, were among those killed when the bomb exploded shortly after 4:00 pm on Sunday in Istiklal Avenue, home to smart boutiques and European consulates. More than 80 other people were wounded.

"The person who planted the bomb has been arrested," Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu said in a statement broadcast by the official Anadolu news agency early on Monday.

"According to our findings, the PKK terrorist organisation is responsible," Soylu said.

"Our people and the democratic public know closely that we are not related to this incident, that we will not directly target civilians and that we do not accept actions targeting civilians," the group said in a statement published by the Firt news agency, close to the PKK.

Police, quoted by private NTV television, said the chief suspect is a Syrian woman working for Kurdish militants. Forty-six people were detained in total, police said. Police footage shared with Turkish media showed a young woman in a purple sweatshirt being apprehended in an Istanbul flat.

Police, cited by NTV, named her as Alham Albashir and said she was arrested at 02:50 am in an Istanbul suburb. Local media said she was a trained PKK intelligence operative. There has been no claim of responsibility.

"We believe that the order for the attack was given from Kobane," Soylu said, referring to a city in Syria near the Turkish border.

PKK-affiliated

Kurdish



People lay flowers to pay tribute to the victims of a Sunday's blast that took place on Istiklal Avenue, a popular spot for shoppers and tourists, in Istanbul, Turkey, on Monday. — Reuters

militants control most of northeastern Syria and in 2015, Kurdish fighters drove IS militants out of the city.

Turkey's NTV channel also shared surveillance footage of a young woman dressed in trousers and wearing a loose black scarf who ran away into the crowd on Sunday afternoon.

Justice Minister Bekir Bozdogan told A Haber television that a woman had been sitting on a bench for more than 40 minutes, "then she got up," leaving a bag.

"One or two minutes later, an explosion occurred," he said.

On Monday, all the benches had been removed from Istiklal Avenue, where residents laid red carnations at the scene of the blast, some wiping away tears and others speaking of their fear of further attacks in the run-up to elections next June.

"We need more security!" said Idris Cetinkaya, who works at a nearby hotel and who came to pay

Police, cited by NTV, named the suspect as Alham Albashir and said she was arrested at 02:50 am in an Istanbul suburb. Local media said she was a trained PKK intelligence operative

his respects.

"The police just searched my bag when I got here, but that's the first time in a year. Millions of people come here, anything could happen at any second!"

Istiklal Avenue was previously targeted during a campaign of nationwide bombings in 2015-16 that were blamed mostly on the IS group and outlawed Kurdish militants, killing nearly 500 people and wounding more than 2,000. On Sunday, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

denounced the "vile attack" that had the "smell of terror" shortly leaving for the G20 summit in the Indonesian resort island of Bali.

Kemal Ozturk, a shopkeeper, is among those who fear another explosion ahead of presidential and legislative elections in seven months' time. "In election period it can happen," the 42-year-old said. "We live with fear".

Regularly targeted by Turkish military operations, the PKK has also been at the heart of a tussle between Sweden and Turkey, which has blocked Stockholm's bid to join Nato since May, accusing it of leniency towards the group. International condemnation flooded in from across the world, including from the United States, but on Monday Turkey said it rejected US condolences over the attack. Erdogan's government has often accused US of supplying weapons to Kurdish fighters in northern Syria who Ankara labels as terror group. — AFP

Britain and France agree fresh push on illegal migrants

PARIS/LONDON: Britain and France on Monday signed an agreement worth 72.2 million euros (\$74.5 million) over the coming year to ramp up efforts to stop illegal migrants from making perilous journeys across the Channel.

The multi-year deal includes a 40 per cent increase in the number of British-funded French officers patrolling French beaches in the next five months.

So far this year more than 40,000 people have crossed the Channel to Britain in small boats, up from 28,526 last year, putting pressure on new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and interior minister Suella Braverman to do more to stem the flow.

Last month Braverman said Britain faced an "invasion", as the government was criticised for conditions at an overcrowded migrant processing centre in southern England.

"It is in the interests of both the UK and French governments to work together to solve this complex problem," Braverman said after meeting French interior minister Gerald Darmanin in Paris.

Relations between Britain and France had soured in recent years, first under Boris Johnson who led the United Kingdom out of the European Union, and then further when Sunak's predecessor, Liz Truss, questioned whether French President Emmanuel Macron was a friend or foe.

Sunak has sought to reset this, including meeting with Macron at the COP27 climate summit last week. — AFP

G7 launches climate 'Shield' fund, some are wary

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, Egypt: A G7-led plan dubbed "Global Shield" to provide funding to countries suffering climate disasters was launched at the UN COP27 summit on Monday, although some questioned the effectiveness of the planned scheme.

Coordinated by Group of 7 president Germany and the V20 group of climate-vulnerable countries, it aims to rapidly provide pre-arranged insurance and disaster protection funding after events such as floods, droughts and hurricanes hit.

Backed by 170 million euros (\$175.17 million) in funding from Germany and 40 million euros from other donors including Denmark and Ireland, the Global Shield will in the next few months develop support to be deployed in countries including Pakistan, Ghana, Fiji and Senegal when events occur. Some countries and campaigners were cautious, however, concerned it risked damaging efforts to secure a substantive deal on financial help for so-called "loss and damage" - the UN jargon for irreparable damage wrought by global



Climate activists call upon the G20 conference to adhere to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels, at the Sharm el Sheikh International Convention Centre. — AFP

warming. German Development Minister Svenja Schulze said the Global Shield aimed to complement, not replace, progress on loss and damage.

"It is not a kind of tactic to avoid formal negotiation on loss and

damage funding arrangements here," Schulze said. "Global Shield isn't the one and only solution for loss and damage. Certainly not. We need a broad range of solutions."

Some research suggests that

by 2030, vulnerable countries could face \$580 billion per year in climate-linked "loss and damage".

Ghana's Finance Minister Ken Ofori-Atta, who chairs the V20 group of vulnerable countries, called the creation of the Global

Shield "long overdue".

Yet some vulnerable countries questioned the scheme's focus on insurance, with insurance premiums adding another cost to cash-strapped countries that have low carbon emissions and contributed least to the causes of climate change.

"We are not yet persuaded, especially of the insurance elements," Avinash Persaud, Special Envoy on Climate Finance to Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley, said.

"Using insurance is a method in which the victim pays, just in instalments in the beginning," he said, adding that loss and damage finance should be grant-based.

It was not immediately clear how much of the Global Shield funding announced so far was in grant form.

Michai Robertson, a negotiator for the Alliance of Small Island States — which is championing calls for a new UN loss and damage fund in the talks this week — said even subsidised insurance premiums could enable insurance companies in wealthy countries to profit off poor and vulnerable nations' suffering. — Reuters

The emperor of chaos has no clothes



MAUREEN DOWD

The writer is a columnist and an author

Ding-dong, the Don is dead. Or is he?

An election storm brought the house down on the Mar-a-Lago warlock and devastated Republican hopes for a rout.

Republicans are blaming Donald Trump for anointing wacky candidates and then using campaign rallies to promote his upcoming presidential announcement. Republican lawmakers privately say those self-indulgent rallies cost them Senate and House seats because many normal Republicans and independents have had their fill of Trump and his crazy train.

The third time should be the charm. Since winning in 2016, Trump helped Republicans lose the House in 2018 and lose the White House and the Senate after the

2020 elections. Now he seems to have rescued Democrats from the traditional midterm shellacking — Republicans are barely within reach of a House majority and are watching their chance of controlling the Senate slip away. Trump has been poison for his party.

Polls showed that even many people unhappy with Joe Biden voted Democratic, a sign that Trump fatigue has finally set in. It's so bad, the Murdoch empire has turned on its former fair-haired boy.

Ivanka and Jared are moving on and are not interested in being part of a Trump restoration, according to Kate Bennett at CNN. Even die-hard Laura Ingraham seemed to sour on her former hero. "If the voters conclude that you're

REPUBLICANS ARE BLAMING TRUMP FOR ANOINTING WACKY CANDIDATES AND THEN USING CAMPAIGN RALLIES TO PROMOTE HIS UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

putting your own ego or your own grudges ahead of what's good for the country," she told her viewers, "they're going to look elsewhere, period."

The New York Post ridiculed him on the cover as "Trumpty Dumpty," with a gratuitous shot about how he not only had a great fall, but couldn't build a wall.

Trump responded by calling the paper "the no longer great New York Post," and he blamed

his failure to complete the wall on former speaker Paul Ryan, a Fox Corp board member, and "Broken Old Crow" Mitch McConnell, saying they didn't get him enough money from Congress.

The former president also had a "Heathers"-like hissy-fit against Ron DeSantis. First, he thuggishly threatened the Florida governor after his Ohio rally last Monday, warning him not to think about getting in the presidential race.

"If he did run, I will tell you things about him that won't be very flattering," Trump said. "I know more about him than anyone other than perhaps his wife, who is really running his campaign."

After DeSantis had a crushing victory in the once swingy Sunshine State, declaring it the place "woke goes to die," Trump's puerile

jealousy exploded. He posted that he had rescued DeSantis when he was "politically dead."

"And now Ron DeSanctimonious is playing games!" said Trump, angry that DeSantis wouldn't rule out running for president in 2024.

Some in the GOP say attacking a younger generation of Republican stars puts Trump in dangerous territory. But that's how Trump got to the White House, belittling Little Marco Rubio and Lyin' Ted Cruz.

The moment feels reminiscent of Jan 6 and its immediate aftermath. Republicans go crazy on Trump, say "enough is enough," as Lindsey Graham did at that juncture, and act as if they're ready to toss him aside. But it didn't take long for "my Kevin," as Trump called McCarthy, to make a groveling pilgrimage to Mar-a-Lago. — *The New York Times*

Sharks, turtles, disease under scrutiny at wildlife summit

FRANCISCO JARA

The trade in shark fins, turtles, and other threatened species will come under scrutiny at a global wildlife summit that will also focus on the spread of diseases such as Covid-19.

Conservation experts and representatives of more than 180 nations gathered in Panama yesterday to study 52 proposals aimed at modifying protection levels set by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The CITES delegates will also take stock of the fight against fraud, and vote on new resolutions, such as the increased risk of diseases spreading from animals to humans, which is linked to trafficking and became a major concern after the 2020 outbreak of Covid-19.

CITES, in force since 1975, regulates trade in some 36,000 species of plants and animals and provides mechanisms to help crack down on illegal trade. It sanctions countries that break the rules. The meeting of the parties to the convention takes place every two or three years.

This year it is happening in the shadow of two major United Nations conferences with high stakes for the future of the planet and all of its inhabitants: the COP27 climate meeting currently underway in Egypt, and the COP15 conference on biodiversity in Montreal in December.

During its last meeting in Geneva, 2019, CITES boosted the protection of giraffes, and came close to imposing a total ban on sending African elephants caught in the wild to zoos.

Delegates also maintained a ban on the sale of ivory in southern Africa, and decided to list 18 species of rays and sharks in CITES Appendix II, which requires the tracking and regulation of trade.

SHARK EXTINCTION CRISIS

This year delegates will weigh a proposal to regulate the trade in requiem sharks, hammerhead sharks, and guitarfish rays.

"It would be a historic moment if these three proposals are passed: We would go from controlling around 25 per cent of the shark fin trade to more than 90 per cent," said Ilaria Di Silvestre, the head of European Union campaigns for the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). Meanwhile, Luke Warwick of the Wildlife Conservation Society warned that "we are in the middle of a very large shark extinction crisis."

He said that sharks, which are vital to the ocean's ecosystem, are "the second most threatened vertebrate group on the planet." — **AFP**

The cost of going cashless



PAMELA PAUL

The writers is an American columnist, journalist, editor, and author

Six dollars and 50 cents is a lot to pay for a scoop of ice cream, no matter how artisanal. But that's the cost at Van Leeuwen's 20 ice cream shops in New York City. It's especially egregious when you consider that a full pint of Van Leeuwen, which contains 2 1/2 servings of ice cream, depending on your self-discipline, costs only a few dollars more.

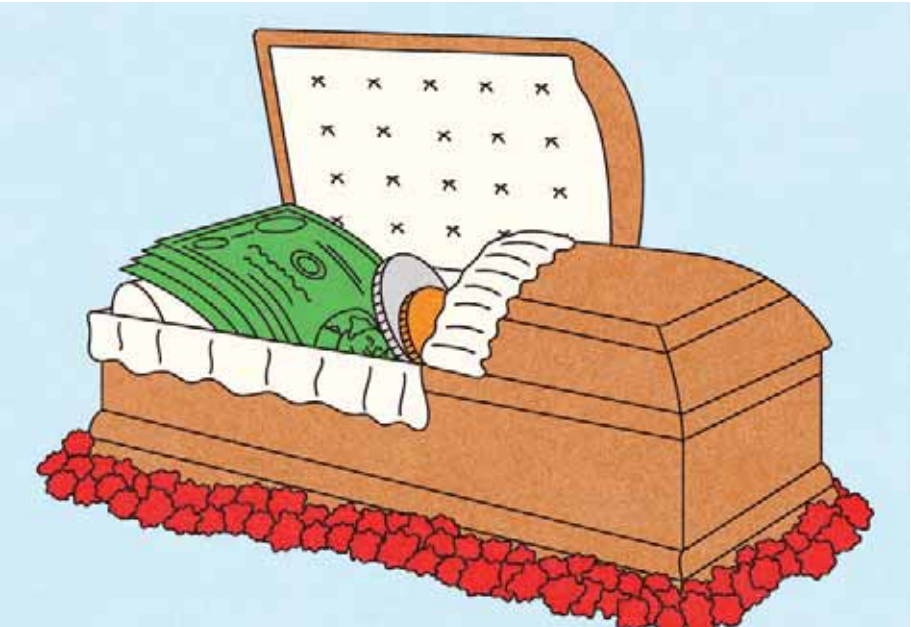
But some people haven't been allowed to pay for Van Leeuwen's ice cream, be it vegan or French, at all. For nearly two years after New York City banned retail stores from being cashless, Van Leeuwen shops in New York refused to comply. The company bore down on this defiance with a brazenness that felt almost ideological. Not only did signs warn customers that its stores did not take cash — until last month, when it finally acquiesced after threat of legal action — it violated the law at least 90 times and declined to show up for administrative hearings. The company also declined to respond to repeated requests for comment.

"Nobody should be discriminated against because they only want to or can pay with cash," Vilda Vera Mayuga, commissioner of New York City's Department of Consumer and Worker Protection, told me after Van Leeuwen finally conceded defeat. "It's not for the business to decide who they want to serve."

Maybe you didn't need that serving of Royal Wedding Cake ice cream with elderflower and lemon anyway. Lots of people like to avoid scrounging for pennies at the bottom of their bags or standing behind someone in line who does. Many businesses prefer cashless transactions too. What's the problem?

Clearly a cash-free economy has its beneficiaries, foremost banks and credit card companies: Visa and Mastercard reap \$138 billion from participating merchants in service fees a year. According to a recent report in The Economist, Visa and Mastercard are two of the most profitable companies in the world, with net margins of 51% and 46% last year.

It's also easy to pick up the rich scent of Silicon Valley. In the rose-metallic vision of libertarians like Peter Thiel — who of course, co-founded PayPal — operating in a cash-free world is easier and more convenient than handling grubby lucre. Amazon has also been a notable opponent to cashless bans in



While cash-free means profits for credit card industries and efficiencies for merchants in terms of training workers and managing their time, it isn't cost-free for everyone.

states like New Jersey; in the company's original vision for its Go stores, paper money was not an option.

Many people believe cashless is the wave of the future, citing Sweden as an example. Countries such as India and South Korea have also made a strong push towards a cash-free future. According to an analysis of sales data by payment platform Square, the share of cashless businesses nearly doubled in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and

MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE CASHLESS IS THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE, CITING SWEDEN AS AN EXAMPLE. COUNTRIES SUCH AS INDIA AND SOUTH KOREA HAVE ALSO MADE A STRONG PUSH TOWARDS A CASH-FREE FUTURE

Canada between February 2020 and February 2021; in the United States, cash payments dropped more than 8 percentage points in that period. And while the United States is far from the vanguard on going cash-free, here consumers use either credit or debit cards for 57% of transactions. As of 2022, 41% of Americans say they go cashless in a typical week, up from 24% in 2015.

So who's paying for all this? While cash-free means profits for credit card industries and efficiencies for

merchants in terms of training workers and managing their time, it isn't cost-free for everyone. One recent study found that merchants increase their prices by approximately 1.4% to offset the interchange fees they pay to credit card companies; for those earning miles, that may not matter — but those who pay cash pay the price. Moreover, many cashless venues use tablet payment systems that automatically ask consumers to tip for a retail service that was long standard. If you're like me, that screen may leave you flummoxed: Are the workers being paid less than minimum wage because these are now tipped jobs? Will this barista think I'm a jerk for not tacking on 20% percent or 30% for a muffin?

Consumers also pay in terms of privacy. Do you want your payment app or credit card company to share exactly how many drinks or Big Macs you've bought in the past week with its data partners or to know every item you picked up at the pharmacy? And while a cash system is subject to crime, like employee theft and robbery, digital payments aren't without their own risks, including double charges and identity theft.

But the most significant objection to a cashless system is whom it shuts out. Whereas cash enables everyone, no matter their age, credit history, immigration status or income, to pay directly for goods or services rather than use an intermediary, credit cards generally require a bank account.

— *The New York Times*

It is lovely that nature could speak?

LOOKING at the tree bark, touching it and listening to the rustling of the leaves in the breeze, being a host for numerous birds, would it not be fascinating to hear what the trees have to say? There are some ancient trees in Oman that could explain the geological history too to a great extent. From frankincense trees, the baobab and coconut trees of Dhofar to millions of date palms in addition to the indigenous trees and wild olive trees over Al Jabal Al Akhdhar there is history linked with them and even folk stories. Trees enjoy special status in Oman as you can see at a road leading to City Amphitheatre, Qurum Nature Park. On the middle is a tree which now has become a mini round about.

The marvellous rock garden of Duqm created by the wind erosion is also an example of how fascinating ‘Time’ is leaving its mark while wind continues to sculpt.

It is not just ancient man-made structures that depict history, the landscapes reveal its journey from underneath the water to surface with its fossils and shells. The seashores of Oman have been witness to ancient trade seeing off dhows leave to coasts across the oceans to reach lands. The layers of the mountains in Oman and the dramatic Al Hajar can tells us stories going back millions of years ago and one of them could be the tectonic evolution, which is why Oman is such a fascinating geological park for the world audience. It is all out there from the mark of avalanche in Jiddat Al Harasis to the highest point in Oman on Jabal Shams.

The ancestors left behind clues through their artefacts that are being unearthed by archaeologists helping us understand human history and life. They created rock art for us to decipher through which we can take a peek to those years. Drawings of hunting and lifestyle of the ancient era can be seen engraved on rocks in Al Amerat, Muscat to other parts and from the rocks of Dhofar all the way to the rocks of Musandam. In Khasab, Musandam what can be found on rocks are even poetic verses etched on rocks forever probably



Lakshmi Kothaneth @lakshmioman

The writer is a senior journalist and a radio anchor

IT IS NOT JUST ANCIENT MAN-MADE STRUCTURES THAT DEPICT HISTORY, THE LANDSCAPES REVEAL ITS JOURNEY FROM UNDERNEATH THE WATER TO SURFACE WITH ITS FOSSILS AND SHELLS

by even the travelling poets. Now we love numbers from mobile numbers, to zip codes to computer codes as numbers also have significant importance for memory to security. We would save our precious memories and it would have to be in the digital space and cloud technology. The Sultanate of Oman is celebrating this week its 52nd anniversary of the National Day marking the modern Renaissance. On this day and age where digital is the space to be, there continues to be ways that keep traditions alive. We often think why is it necessary to hold on to traditions? But it is only when we realise how important identity is and that is when we reflect on what makes us who we are.

At a time when traditional souqs are questioned about survival while online global markets thrive, the traditions spoke again by becoming a tourist attraction. The reason is there is a world of seekers looking for unique experiences and cultural experience tops it. The ancient souqs are being renovated and old houses are being made to heritage inns. An interesting element completing the whole experience is the Omani cuisine. Throughout the governorates the youth have come up with projects inspired by traditions and the global experience.

While it is natural for some people to wonder what is the big deal in speaking about the olden days, it is important for us to understand the power of oral history. In the past people sang songs and recited poetries and kept the historical stories alive passing from one generation to the other. History is also an important part of our identity.

In this world today it is not the people of the land alone who have a story to tell and find joy on this day but thousands of expatriates too who could work shoulder to shoulder and experience the beginning of the modern renaissance of the Sultanate of Oman.

History of a land is also the story of the people and stories have emotions and we as people stay attracted to emotions and that is why it feels good to collectively experience a reflection and celebration of a nation.

A DRY RIVER BED



A man walks along a dry river bed on the banks of the river Ganges, in Prayagraj, India, on Monday. – AFP

US House control hinges on tight races after Democrats take Senate

RAMI AYYUB

Control of the US House of Representatives hinged on Monday on several tight races that could secure a majority for Republicans following midterm elections that saw President Joe Biden's Democrats beat expectations and retain the Senate.

Republicans were closer to taking the House, having won 211 seats compared to Democrats' 206, with 218 needed for a majority. But the final outcome might not be known for days as officials continue counting ballots nearly a week after Americans went to the polls.

After clinching the Senate over the weekend and dispelling Republican hopes for a “red wave” of gains, Democrats portrayed their performance as vindication of their agenda and a rebuke of Republican efforts to undermine the validity of election results. Other high-profile uncalled races include the Arizona governor contest, in which Republican Kari Lake, who promoted former President Donald Trump's baseless 2020 election fraud claims, was trailing her Democratic opponent.

There are still some 18 outstanding House races, including 13 considered

THERE ARE STILL SOME 18 OUTSTANDING HOUSE RACES, INCLUDING 13 CONSIDERED CLOSELY COMPETITIVE, ACCORDING TO A COMPILATION OF THE LEADING NONPARTISAN FORECASTERS

closely competitive, according to a Reuters compilation of the leading non-partisan forecasters. Ten of the remaining contests were in liberal-leaning California.

A Republican victory in the House would set the stage for two years of divided government while giving Biden's opponents the power to limit his political agenda and launch potentially damaging probes into his administration and family.

Jim Banks, a Republican congressman from Indiana, said he expects his party to win a slim majority in the 435-seat chamber and serve as “the last line of defence to block the Biden agenda,” while launching probes into the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, the origin of Covid and pandemic lockdowns.

“That has to be a focal point of every single committee in the Congress, especially in the House under Republican control,” Banks told Fox News on Sunday.

The Democratic speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi, said on Sunday she would not make any announcements about whether she planned to remain in leadership until after control of the chamber was decided.

There had been speculation Pelosi would resign if Democrats lost their majority, especially after her husband was

attacked by an intruder at their San Francisco home last month.

“It's very close,” Pelosi, 82, told ABC News on Sunday of the House race. “We haven't given up.”

Democrats, having secured Senate control with a win by Nevada Senator Catherine Cortez Masto on Saturday, are shifting focus to a Georgia run-off contest

that could strengthen their hand in Congress.

A Democratic victory in the December 6 run-off between Senator Raphael Warnock and Republican challenger Herschel Walker would give the party outright majority control, bolstering its sway over committees, bills, and judicial picks. The Nevada win put Democrats in charge of a 50-50 Senate, with Vice President Kamala Harris holding the tie-breaking vote.



Republican candidate for Arizona Governor Kari Lake arrives for a campaign stop on the Arizona First GOTV Bus Tour, ahead of the midterm elections, in Phoenix, Arizona. – Reuters

Even if Republicans win a narrow majority in the House, Democrats' performance suggests they had success in portraying their opponents as extremists, pointing in part to the Supreme Court's decision to eliminate a nationwide right to abortion following conservative appointments to the bench.

But the results have also have led to increased scrutiny on Trump, who used his popularity among hard-right conservatives to influence the candidates Republicans nominated for congressional, gubernatorial and local races.

A Republican loss in Georgia could further dampen Trump's popularity as advisers say he considers announcing this week a third run for the presidency in 2024. He has been blamed for boosting candidates unable to appeal to a wide enough audience.

One candidate Trump has staunchly backed is Kari Lake, who is trailing Democrat Katie Hobbs in the race for Arizona governor by 1.1 percentage points with an estimated 93 per cent of votes counted, according to Edison Research. — Reuters

sport

Follow us on
omanobserver.om/sports



Members of the German national football team pose on the stairs before boarding a Lufthansa plane decorated with the lettering 'Diversity Wins' prior to the team's departure at the airport in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany, on Sunday. Players, coaches and support staff of the German team are leaving to their training camp in Oman capital of Muscat ahead of the Fifa 2022 World Cup tournament in Qatar. – AFP

World Cup countdown enters final week

DOHA: The week-long countdown to the World Cup in Qatar began on Monday as the world's leading footballers focused their attention on one of the most controversial tournaments in history. After a last weekend of action, domestic leagues paused for six weeks to allow the tournament to take place, but preparation time is short for the teams.

The first World Cup to be held in the Arab world will kick off on Sunday when the host nation face Ecuador. Holding football's showpiece event in a desert state has necessitated an unprecedented reorganisation of the international football calendar, shifting the World Cup from its normal slot in the northern hemisphere summer to avoid the Gulf's scorching heat.

Three players expected to be the tournament's biggest names -- Lionel Messi, Neymar and Kylian Mbappe -- emerged unscathed from Paris Saint-Germain's 5-0 victory against Auxerre in Ligue 1 on Sunday. Mbappe, who will spearhead France's defence of their title in Qatar, signed off in style by scoring PSG's opening goal. Teams must submit their final squad lists on Monday. Iran named Sardar Azmoun, their star player who has expressed support for the demonstrations in his homeland, in their final 25-man squad.

Azmoun, who plays for German club Bayer Leverkusen, has posted several social media messages of support for the protests that were sparked by the death of 22-year-old Mahsa



Japan's head coach Hajime Moriyasu signs an autograph on a jersey for schoolchildren during a training session in Al Sadd SC in Doha. – AFP

Amini. Hundreds have died in the unrest. Activists have called on fans attending Iran's matches in Qatar to chant Amini's name.

ACRIMONIUS DISPUTE Sunday's kickoff marks the culmination of Qatar's extraordinary campaign to first win the vote to land the tournament and then embark on a spending spree of tens of billions of dollars to build stadiums and infrastructure. Fifa's pleas to "focus on the football" have struggled to be heard as the countdown to kick-off has only increased scrutiny of the Gulf state's

treatment of migrant workers, women and the LGBTQ community. The country of barely three million people, one of the world's biggest producers of natural gas, has spent lavishly. New stadiums cost more than \$6.5 billion and a driverless metro system with a price tag of \$36 billion serves five of the eight venues. Some estimates put total infrastructure spending over the past decade at \$200 billion. Organisers have predicted more than one million fans will travel to Qatar and they have responded to concerns about a lack of accommodation by using three cruise ships as floating hotels. They are fully booked for the first two weeks of the tournament. Organisers say that 2.9 million of the 3.1 million tickets have been sold and fans have been waiting outside the Fifa ticketing centre hoping scarce tickets become available for top games. Qatar announced its first arrests of World Cup ticket touts on Monday, with three foreign men detained outside official ticketing centres in Doha. No details were given of their nationality. — AFP

Saham retain national senior table tennis title



ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 14

Northern Batinah team, Saham, retained the Oman National Senior Table Tennis Championship title after they thumped their rivals Bahla 3-1 in the concluding fixture on Sunday night. At the indoor hall of the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, Saham

paddlers managed to lift the title for the second consecutive time after they won the title in the last edition in 2019 beating Seeb in the final match. Bahla, who finished third in the last edition, ended this edition of the tournament as runners-up while Seeb paddlers beat Masirah Club 3-1 in the third/fourth play-off match. Post the final match, chief

guest Mohammed bin Khamis al Sunaidi, Chief Finance officer at the Oman Fiber Optic Company, presented the award, medals and trophies to the top three winners in presence of Abdullah bin Mohamed Bamakhalif, Oman Table Tennis Association (OTTA) Chairman, and other dignitaries. Saham team comprised of Iranian paddler Afshin Norowzi,

Muhannad al Balushi, Nasser al Balushi, Haitham al Mandhari and Mashal al Shahi. Saham topped the group stage matches as they got full mark from three matches. They beat Salalah 3-1, Suwaiq and Qurayat with a 3-0 margins. In the knockout stage, Saham defeated Ahli Sidab 3-0 in the quarterfinals while they beat Masirah 3-1 in the semifinal before stunning Bahla in

the concluding game 3-1. Abdullah Bamakhalif, OTTA chairman, said that the technical performance of the senior TT event is getting better every year. "Congratulations to all the winning teams and thanks to all the teams which took part in the event." "We are looking forward for more attendance of the domestic clubs in the upcoming

edition," he said. "There are many international events which will be hosted by the OTTA in the next period including: 2023 ITTF World Veteran Championship. As many as 64 teams confirmed their attendance in this event and more players from different countries will be present in the world class event," he concluded.





USA's Taylor Fritz reacts after defeating Spain's Rafael Nadal during their first round-robin match at the ATP Finals tournament in Turin. — AFP

Nadal fails to keep up with Fritz in ATP Finals opener

TURIN, Italy: Rafael Nadal said he was slow and rusty as he suffered a disastrous start to his bid to win the ATP Finals for the first time after crashing to a 7-6 (7/3), 6-1 defeat to Taylor Fritz on Sunday.

"It's about time," the 36-year-old said. "I have less time than him to do what I want to do on the ball. I felt that everything was going so fast."

The year-ending Finals is the only major trophy missing from tennis icon Nadal's list of honours but his straight-sets loss means he will struggle to escape the round-robin stage.

He probably needs to win both his remaining matches against Green Group opponents Casper Ruud and Felix Auger-Aliassime if he is to make the semifinals.

Nadal, who had not played on the tour since the US Open in September, said he is struggling to rediscover his best form after recent injuries.

"Normally I try to come back in lower events," Nadal said. "Normally you don't need to play at your top to win a couple of matches. Then if you made that happen, when you face the top players, you are more ready."

Nadal said he struggled with

the aggression of Fritz and the pace of the surface.

"On most of the points of the match, I was in a defensive position and he was in an offensive position. That's what happened. That's something that was difficult to avoid for me because you need to be quicker on your legs, quicker in your mind."

"That's what's happening when you are coming back," he said. "On this kind of surface, you need to play very well. You don't have time to think."

Fritz, who is at the Finals for the first time in his career after replacing injured world number one Carlos Alcaraz, gave Nadal a torrid time with some aggressive tennis.

Ruud was also a straight-sets winner over Auger-Aliassime, 7-6 (7/4), 6-4, in the day's other singles contest. The Norwegian sits behind Fritz in the standings with the top two from each group progressing to the semis.

The world number four came through an uninspiring encounter in one hour and 51 minutes after claiming his one and only chance to break Canadian Auger-Aliassime's serve in game seven of the second set. — AFP

Indian Social Club to hold volleyball tourney

MUSCAT: The Indian Social Club (ISC) Oman in association with Purshottam Kanji Exchange Co. LLC will hold Volleyball championship 2022 on November 18.

ISC holds various sports tournaments throughout the year and this is the first time a tournament being organised for volleyball enthusiasts.

The event will be for both men's and women's teams and the registration is still open.

Those who wish to register their teams can contact ISC reception at 24701347.

The volleyball championship is open for all nationalities and cash prizes will be given to winners and runners-up according to Saji Abraham, ISC Sports Secretary.

This tournament mainly focuses on amateur players to given an opportunity for the talented players to showcase their performance.



HAMILTON
SECOND,
SAINZ
THIRD FOR
FERRARI

RED BULL'S
RUN OF
NINE WINS
IN A ROW
ENDS

EMOTIONAL RUSSELL CRUISES TO MAIDEN GP WIN

SAO PAULO: George Russell paid emotional tribute to the generosity and support of his family, the Mercedes team and team-mate Lewis Hamilton on Sunday after a flawless drive to his maiden full victory at the Brazilian Grand Prix.

The 24-year-old Briton, who had won Saturday's sprint race to secure pole position for Sunday's classic contest, dominated from lights to flag to finish 1.5 seconds clear of seven-time world champion Hamilton.

It was the first one-two of the season for the 'silver arrows' and a great triumph for the team after a challenging and disappointing start to the year when they struggled to cope with the new 'ground effect' era in Formula One.

Mercedes are now just 19 points behind Ferrari in their bid to finish second in the constructors' championship, a position they felt was unlikely after struggling so badly in the first half of the season.

A tearful Russell admitted he had been through an emotional rollercoaster as he and the



Mercedes' British driver George Russell celebrates on the podium after winning the Formula One Brazil Grand Prix in Sao Paulo. — AFP

team battled to recover their competitive form, having been team champions for the previous eight seasons.

"That was a really tough race," he said. "I felt in control, but Lewis was super-fast and, when I saw the Safety Car towards the end of the race, I thought 'Oh, Jesus - this is going to be a really difficult end."

"He put me under so much pressure and I am so happy now to have come away from that with the victory."

Asked to reflect on his journey to the top and his first win at his 81st Grand Prix, he thanked his parents, his family, his girlfriend and members of Mercedes, the team he joined as a junior driver

in 2017. "I'm speechless," he said. "On the in-lap all of these memories came flooding back. Starting off with my mum and dad in go-karts and going through all the support I've had from the rest of my family, my girlfriend, my trainer, my manager..."

"Then obviously the likes of Gwen Lagrue who gave me the opportunity to get on the programme with Mercedes and James Vowles and Toto Wolff.

"Having Lewis Hamilton as a team-mate is something exceptional too. He is on it every day, he works so hard and he never misses anything. And he has been so great to work with - I have learned so much."

Hamilton, who was hoping for a win himself to extend his record of winning at least once in every season since he entered Formula One in 2007, was delighted for Russell and the team. "Firstly, huge congratulations to George. What an amazing drive today — he truly deserves it. We have all worked so hard for a win, but a 1-2 is incredible. Hugely deserved. A big thank you." — AFP



MUSCAT: Oman Cricket's picturesque grounds welcomes international cricket yet again with the Desert Cup T20I series to be played between Oman, Canada, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

The series is set to start from November 14 until November 21, which will be played in a double round-robin format

between the sides followed by a third place play-off and a final. Duleep Mendis, Oman

Cricket's Chief Development Officer and Oman's head coach said, "It's great to have the three visiting countries in Oman. We are expecting good competitive cricket being played throughout the tournament in the coming week. Our boys look fresh and ready to express themselves on the field."

These matches certainly help the armers in red to get going and back on the field after a long break and in lead up to the

T20 World Cup 2024 Qualifiers to express themselves and their part to fit in the jigsaw.

The matches can be watched live at the Oman Cricket Academy — free entry to all and broadcasted across the globe on FanCode, Atrangi, Ullu, Ultra, VI, Jio TV, Geo Super, Willow TV, sportseye and CricTracker.

Oman Squad for the Desert Cup T20I Series: Zeeshan Maqsood (captain), Jatinder Singh (vice-captain), Kashyap Prajapati, Shoaib

Khan, Mohammad Nadeem, Mohammad Naseem (wk), Ayaan Khan, Samay Shrivastav, Rafiullah, Fayyaz Butt, Kaleemullah, Sufyan Mahmood, Bilal Khan, Sandeep Goud; Support Staff: Duleep Mendis (head coach), Evert Laubscher (assistant coach), Mazher Khan (assistant coach), Zeeshan Siddiqui (analyst), Sean Nowak (physio).

Oman's matches: Oman vs Saudi Arabia — Nov 14 (4pm); Oman vs Bahrain — Nov 15 (8pm); Oman vs Canada — Nov 16 (8pm); Oman vs Saudi Arabia — Nov 17 (4pm); Oman vs Bahrain — Nov 19 (8pm); Oman vs Canada — Nov 20 (4pm).

Oman back to action with Desert Cup



MATCH SCHEDULE
FIFA WORLD CUP QATAR 2022



GROUP A									
		won	draw	lost	+:-	points	place		
	Qatar				:				
	Ecuador				:				
	Senegal				:				
	Netherlands				:				
21 nov 2022	Senegal				:			Netherlands	
21 nov 2022	Qatar				:			Ecuador	
25 nov 2022	Qatar				:			Senegal	
25 nov 2022	Netherlands				:			Ecuador	
29 nov 2022	Ecuador				:			Senegal	
29 nov 2022	Netherlands				:			Qatar	

GROUP B									
		won	draw	lost	+:-	points	place		
	England				:				
	Iran				:				
	USA				:				
	Wales				:				
21 nov 2022	England				:			Iran	
21 nov 2022	USA				:			Wales	
25 nov 2022	Wales				:			Iran	
25 nov 2022	England				:			USA	
29 nov 2022	Wales				:			England	
29 nov 2022	Iran				:			USA	

GROUP C									
		won	draw	lost	+:-	points	place		
	Argentina				:				
	Mexico				:				
	Saudi Arabia				:				
	Poland				:				
22 nov 2022	Argentina				:			Saudi Arabia	
22 nov 2022	Mexico				:			Poland	
26 nov 2022	Poland				:			Saudi Arabia	
26 nov 2022	Argentina				:			Mexico	
30 nov 2022	Poland				:			Argentina	
30 nov 2022	Saudi Arabia				:			Mexico	

GROUP D									
		won	draw	lost	+:-	points	place		
	France				:				
	Australia				:				
	Denmark				:				
	Tunisia				:				
22 nov 2022	Denmark				:			Tunisia	
22 nov 2022	France				:			Australia	
26 nov 2022	Tunisia				:			Australia	
26 nov 2022	France				:			Denmark	
30 nov 2022	Australia				:			Denmark	
30 nov 2022	Tunisia				:			France	

LAST 16

3 DEC	A1		
	B2		

QUARTERFINALS

9 DEC		
-------	--	--

3 DEC	C1		
	D2		

5 DEC	E1		
	F2		

9 DEC		
-------	--	--

5 DEC	G1		
	H2		



OPENING MATCH
AL BAYT STADIUM
20 NOV, 2022



FINAL
18 DEC

1ST SEMIFINAL
13 DEC

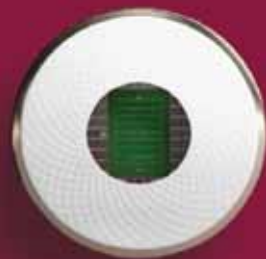
--	--

2ND SEMIFINAL
14 DEC

--	--

3RD PLACE PLAY-OFF
17 DEC

--	--



FINAL MATCH
LUSAIL STADIUM
18 DEC, 2022

LAST 16

4 DEC	B1		
	A2		

QUARTERFINALS

11 DEC		
--------	--	--

4 DEC	D1		
	C2		

6 DEC	F1		
	E2		

11 DEC		
--------	--	--

6 DEC	H1		
	G2		

GROUP E									
		won	draw	lost	+:-	points	place		
	Spain				:				
	Costa Rica				:				
	Germany				:				
	Japan				:				
23 nov 2022	Germany				:			Japan	
23 nov 2022	Spain				:			Costa Rica	
27 nov 2022	Japan				:			Costa Rica	
27 nov 2022	Spain				:			Germany	
1 dec 2022	Japan				:			Spain	
1 dec 2022	Costa Rica				:			Germany	

GROUP F									
		won	draw	lost	+:-	points	place		
	Belgium				:				
	Canada				:				
	Morocco				:				
	Croatia				:				
23 nov 2022	Morocco				:			Croatia	
23 nov 2022	Belgium				:			Canada	
27 nov 2022	Belgium				:			Morocco	
27 nov 2022	Croatia				:			Canada	
1 dec 2022	Croatia				:			Belgium	
1 dec 2022	Canada				:			Morocco	

GROUP G									
		won	draw	lost	+:-	points	place		
	Brazil				:				
	Serbia				:				
	Switzerland				:				
	Cameroon				:				
24 nov 2022	Switzerland				:			Cameroon	
24 nov 2022	Brazil				:			Serbia	
28 nov 2022	Cameroon				:			Serbia	
28 nov 2022	Brazil				:			Switzerland	
2 dec 2022	Serbia				:			Switzerland	
2 dec 2022	Cameroon				:			Brazil	

GROUP H									
		won	draw	lost	+:-	points	place		
	Portugal				:				
	Ghana				:				
	Uruguay				:				
	South Korea				:				
24 nov 2022	Uruguay				:			South Korea	
24 nov 2022	Portugal				:			Ghana	
28 nov 2022	South Korea				:			Ghana	
28 nov 2022	Portugal				:			Uruguay	
2 dec 2022	Ghana				:			Uruguay	
2 dec 2022	South Korea				:			Portugal	

business

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE
4,460.593



CRUDE
OIL PRICE
Oman Crude \$91.00
Brent Crude \$94.98
Light Crude \$87.85



Follow us on
omanobserver.om/business

Competitive profit rates starting from **4.95%**

DRIVE THE CAR OF YOUR DREAMS with Maisarah Auto Finance

Offer is valid till 31 December 2022 and is applicable for new, additional finances. Not valid for takeover of auto finance from other banks.

2477 5777 | www.maisarahfi.com

[/MaisarahOman](#) [@MaisarahIslamic](#) [@MaisarahIslamic](#)

To know more

Stage set for OCCI elections on November 22

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, NOV 14

The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) Elections Committee met here on Monday, November 14, 2022, to approve the final list of candidates for membership of the Chamber's board of directors as well as the boards of its branches in the governorates. They include candidates for seats earmarked for public shareholding companies and foreign investors. The meeting was held under the



auspices of Dr Saleh bin Said al Masan, Commerce and Industry Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion, who is also Chairman of the OCCI

Elections Committee. Committee members were present as well.

The panel also approved the various venues to serve as voting centres on Tuesday, November 22. Voting will take place from 8am until 6pm. Key venues include Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre in the Governorate of Muscat, the Sultan Qaboos Complex for Culture and Entertainment in the Governorate of Dhofar, and the Chamber's headquarters in the wilayats of Khasab and Dibba in the Musandam Governorate, while the branches of the Chamber's administrations will be the

centres to vote in other wilayats. Speaking at the meeting, Dr Al Masan said: "The reformed Chamber will contribute to streamlining the elections, while also opening the way for foreign investors and public sector companies to be part of this electoral process — an exercise that meets the goals of Oman Vision 2040. This is also a platform for everyone to be able to participate in the electoral process, while candidates get to showcase their competencies and qualifications."

Oman posts 18.2 per cent growth in domestic refinery product sales

JOMAR MENDOZA
@JmObserver

The Sultanate of Oman saw a growth of 18.2 per cent in total domestic sales in refineries until end of September 2022 compared to the same period last year. According to figures released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI), the production of premium M95 increased by 8.8 per cent with



11.41 million barrels compared to the same period last year while its sales fell slightly by 0.1 per cent to reach 9.49 million barrels. Its

exports however, increased by 93.1 per cent to reach 2.74 million barrels. The production of M91 — the more popular of Oman's two main motor fuel grades — decreased by 0.6 per cent to 9.87 million barrels as of September-end 2022, compared to 9.90 million barrels in 2021, while sales reached 9.62 million barrels, an increase of 50.8 per cent.

TURN TO PAGE 15

The Pearl REIF lists on MSX



QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, NOV 14

Following the remarkable success of its Initial Public Offering (IPO), which had attracted strong participation from all segments of investors, The Pearl REIF was successfully listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) on Monday, November 14, 2022 under the ticker PRFD. Speaking at the listing ceremony, Chairman of The Pearl REIF, Wahbi al Riyami said, "The Pearl REIF offered a compelling

and rare opportunity which was well appreciated by the investor community and members of the public. We are extremely pleased with the overwhelming response. I would like to take this opportunity to extend our thanks to the Promoters, IPO partners, collecting agents, brokerages, analysts and all those who subscribed to the IPO. Our sincere thanks to CMA, MCD and MSX for their continued support." Aown Abbas al Bahrani, Deputy Chairman of the Pearl REIF and Director of Public

Markets at OIA, said, "This is a proud moment for the promoters OIA and its subsidiary Omantel as it marks an important milestone in the successful journey of The Pearl REIF. We welcome all new shareholders into The Pearl REIF family." The units opened strongly at Bzs 115. Oman Investment Authority (OIA) and its subsidiary, Omantel are the promoters of The Pearl REIF. Sohar International is the Investment Manager and also the Issue Manager for the IPO.

Philex Pharmaceutical Industries Obtains Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) Certification for its Main Factory



Philex Pharmaceutical Industries announced the successful completion of the first phase of its strategic industrial project, with its main factory obtaining the Good Manufacturing Practice Certificate (GMP) from the Ministry of Health for its factory located in Salalah - Free Zone on November 8, 2022. The CEO (Waseem Hamad) has expressed the happiness of the company's family and



the board of directors for this achievement coincided with the Sultanate's celebrations of its 52nd National Day. He also has expressed thanks and appreciation to all authorities concerned, whose supportive role had a significant impact on achieving this important

health achievement in the pharmaceutical security system. He has said the company's preparing to complete the launch of the second phase of industrial investment, which will focus on localizing advanced technologies in the field of biotechnology and biology, in continuation of the company's commitment to its strategy of supporting pharmaceutical security for the Sultanate and the countries of the region.

www.omanchamber.om | # اصنع - قرارك

لجنة الانتخابات غرفة
تجارة وصناعة عُمان
(2022 - 2026)

Are you ready to vote?

easy steps to guarantee an effective participation on the day of elections:

عزيزي الناخب

خطوات سهلة وميسرة تضمن لك مشاركة فاعلة في يوم التصويت لانتخابات غرفة تجارة وصناعة عُمان:

تفعيل خاصية
التصديق الإلكتروني
في البطاقة
الشخصية.
-Activate the PKI
feature on your
ID card.

احرص على
إحضار البطاقة
الشخصية
-Present your ID
card.

يوم التصويت: ٢٢ نوفمبر ٢٠٢٢
Voting Day: 22 November 2022

للاستفسار تواصل مع
91980252
91410746
واتساب الانتخابات الغرفة:

Alizz Islamic Bank, OPAL hold knowledge sharing session for SMEs in energy sector

MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank, in cooperation with the Omani Society for Petroleum Services (OPAL), organised a knowledge awareness on financial inclusion & literacy for small & medium enterprises in the energy sector.

They were educated on the provisions and principles of Islamic Shariah and the correct methods & sequence of procedures starting from opening a corporate account to how to obtain financing.

The objective of the knowledge sharing session was to enhance the knowledge of the small and medium enterprises in this critical sector and raise awareness about the services provided by banks to this sector and the companies operating in it, and teach them skills that enable small and medium enterprises to grow, raise their competitive capabilities through innovative and sustainable programmes with the aim of developing the individual and society, diversifying their sources of income and raising their contribution to the GDP.



The presentations also included how to prepare financial budgets and plan ahead, improve the cash cycle and cashflow, issuing invoices to customers on time, active follow-up, maintaining the appropriate credit limit, as well as the importance of developing

emergency plans in the event of any defaults and how to avoid them.

They were taught how to enter new markets, access resources, innovation, and provide permanent job opportunities in line with Oman's Vision 2040 on

the importance of supporting small and medium enterprises to be the main engine of the national economy.

Alizz Islamic Bank provides SME banking solutions that help local entrepreneurs and Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

achieve their business goals through an array of innovative Shariah-compliant solutions.

As a local bank it believes in the importance of building the economy from the bottom up and SMEs play a significant role in shaping the future of Oman.

The banks team of SME banking experts have developed a comprehensive suite of Shariah-compliant products & services that are designed to cater to the needs of every SME and SMEs are provided with a state of the art e-banking platform that enable them to conduct their various business transactions from the comfort of their offices.

Alizz Islamic Bank offers banking solutions that are compatible with the provisions of Islamic Shariah using Islamic contracts such as Ijarah, Forward ijarah, Murabaha, Diminishing musharaka, Wakalah and Qard Hassan to provide working capital financing, asset financing, raw material financing, equipment financing & commercial financing.

Renaissance appoints Head of Government Services



MUSCAT: Renaissance Services has appointed Khamis bin Juma al Balushi (pictured) as its Head of Government Services. A goal-oriented professional with in-depth knowledge of policy, legislation, key strategic frameworks, and the pivotal role of public-private partnerships in Oman's economic diversification goals, Khamis brings a wealth of experience and expertise.

He has made significant contributions to government initiatives in higher education, social affairs, labour market, free and industrial zone development and governance in various capacities in key ministries. He has represented Oman in regional summits, gained extensive experience at the State Council and is a former Board member of the Oman Drydock Company.

Welcoming Khamis to the organisation, Stephen R Thomas, CEO, Renaissance said, "Khamis brings immense value to the company through his knowledge of government affairs and regulations. Renaissance will greatly benefit from his ethics, his attitude of seeing potential in challenges and the shared belief of working hand in hand with communities."

Khamis said, "It gives me immense pride to be part of this company, which is committed to its values, proud of its diverse mix of employees and is a model for other players in the field to emulate."

MUC holds meeting of industry advisory panel



MUSCAT: Majan University College (MUC) held the first meeting of the industry advisory panel on September 21. The aims of the meeting are to strengthening the bridge between academic and the industry through the academia-industry collaboration and to shrink the gap and amend the academic input to sync with contemporary requirements in the job market, with strive to benefit of society and to achieve the outcomes of Oman Vision 2040.

The panel consists a various representative from several industries in Oman, along with academic staff from MUC's faculties.

The meeting started by a welcome speech by Dr Maha Kobeil the Dean and CEO of MUC, followed by presentations of the Head of Faculties of Business management, Information Technology and English Language Studies. The meeting consisted of focused sessions to discuss the gap between the industries on the job market and the curriculum of MUC's programmes.

In addition, to advise the faculties in the college on curriculum planning and development and suggest measures to enhance the employability skills of its graduates.

National Finance renews partnership with Injaz Oman

MUSCAT: National Finance — the leading finance company in the Sultanate of Oman — through the company's independent wing for sustainable initiatives — 'Imtidad, renewed its ongoing partnership with Injaz Oman after its impressive success of empowering 1,000 participants from the "Company Programme".

This initiative aims to provide participants with entrepreneurial skills and prepare them to enter the labour market with their own business concepts.

The agreement was signed by Tariq bin Sulaiman al Farsi, Chief Executive Officer of National Finance and Khaula al Harthi, Chief Executive Officer of Injaz Oman, in a ceremony held at National Finance's head office in the presence of a number of officials from both companies.

Commenting on the partnership, Tariq al Farsi said, "We are delighted to renew our partnership with Injaz Oman. The tangible benefits they bring to society and the nation encourages



us to support such sustainable ventures. In this collaboration, we aim to continue supporting the young people and developing their entrepreneurial skills."

Khaula al Harthi stated, "Injaz Oman believes that these strategic alliances play a pivotal role in achieving the desired goals of the country, as the Foundation always seeks to support the national agenda aimed at knowledge-sharing, continuous development and employment."

National Finance remains committed to its corporate social responsibility by delivering

various initiatives. Therefore, the company launched 'Imtidad', an expression of the company's dedication to positively impact crucial sectors, including education, community, health and environment.

National Finance, established in 1987, has built a reputation as the market leader trusted by thousands of customers across the Sultanate of Oman. National Finance offers a wide range of products targeting both individual customers, corporates and small and medium enterprises through its 21 branches across the country.

Toyota's inspiring Hilux with Toyota Oubess benefits

MUSCAT: Toyota Hilux enthusiasts looking forward to making the most of the powerful and dependable workhorse can now benefit with service 2 year/20,000 kms (Whichever is earlier) and 1 year insurance or cash gift in lieu of insurance from RO 200 up to RO 250.

Customers owning any Toyota during the campaign get a chance to Scratch & Win prizes like iPhone13, Dell Laptop and Fuel Cards. Apart from this walk-in to any Toyota showroom and get a chance to win prizes like JBL Sound Bar and Samsung Galaxy Watch 5. Social Media fans who follow Toyota Oman on Instagram can get a chance to win one out of

5 Apple AirPods. The campaign is valid until December 21, 2022. (Prospective buyers may be advised that the benefits vary between model variants, model year and manufacturing year. Terms & Conditions apply. Visit the showroom for exact details.)

In Oman, customers have a choice of two versions of the Hilux. The rugged Hilux with J-Deck and the sporty 4.0 Litre V6 Hilux Adventure with the A Deck. The 4.0 Litre V6 Toyota Hilux Adventure is a truly exciting mean machine that's been developed by Toyota to get your pulse racing.

The powerful Hilux Adventure is equipped with a mighty 4.0 Litre V6 Engine packing a mighty



punch with 235 HP & 38.3 Kg-m Torque. It has an Auto Disconnect Differential to keep the tempo going.

Similarly the Hilux 4X4 is equipped with a 2.7 Litre Petrol

Engine that is available in 5-speed Manual Transmission and 6 Speed Automatic Transmission, outputting 164 HP.

The Hilux is not only a tough vehicle but also an advanced pick-

up with stylish cues hitherto found only on SUVs. The front of the Hilux gives a sense that the vehicle is wider than it is. This is achieved by the horizontal Bars that make up the Grille and Sleek Headlamps that wrap around the front of the Fenders.

The Hilux sports a thick, chunky Front Bumper sculpted like an SUV, Front Fog lamps, Alloy Wheels, apart from Side Stripes that adorn the vehicle.

If you are looking for some of the finest moments on the road or off-road then the Hilux rises above expectations in all aspects.

The Hilux really is two vehicles in one: a work truck through the week and a family vehicle on weekends,

thanks to added comforts and safety features. Indeed the Hilux models are stunning in design and features. Their performance & safety parameters are amongst the best and the strong frame and suspension impart toughness for any demanding task.

Pictures and colours shown may differ from actual specifications. For the latest press releases, test drive requests and more, please visit www.toyotaoman.com, www.youtube.com/toyotaoman, www.facebook.com/toyotaoman, and instagram.com/toyotaomanofficial/. For any further details & to ascertain availability of stocks, please visit your nearest Toyota Showroom.



Oman-Korea B2B event set for Nov 21

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 14

A B2B (Business to Business) partnership between Korean and Omani SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) in ICT (Information and Communications Technology) and content development sectors will be held on Monday, November 21, 2022 at 10 am at Jabrin Grand Ballroom, InterContinental Hotel, Muscat.

Around 20 Korean SMEs will showcase their technological expertise in such state-of-the-art technology fields as cyber security, e-commerce platform, digital and metaverse contents, and healthcare products. B2B matching will also be conducted between the Korean and Omani SMEs.

Three Memoranda of Understanding will be signed between the Korean and Omani SMEs concerned, respectively.

The platform is supported by the National IT Industry Promotion Agency (NIPA) of Korea and the Representative Office of the Korea Internet & Security Agency (KISA) in Muscat.

The interactive event will help facilitate capacity building and cooperation of SMEs in Korea and Oman, which is in line with the Oman Vision 2040.

For further inquiry about participation, the following contacts are available: Yuna at yuna@miceleech.com, WhatsApp +84-9322-33330 or +968-9334-0017.

OQ's inclusion in decarbonisation alliance to boost Oman's green energy outlook

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, NOV 14

The Sultanate of Oman's inclusion in the Alliance for Industry Decarbonisation, a global grouping of some of the world's biggest industrial conglomerates, bodes well for its positioning as a major player in the future green hydrogen economy, say experts.

Wholly government-owned OQ Group, by far the biggest investor in Oman's petrochemicals and industrial sector, formally joined the alliance on the sidelines of the COP27 UN Conference on Climate Change underway at Sharm el Sheikh in Egypt last week.

"A big step towards green industrialisation! OQ is proud to join the Alliance for Industry Decarbonisation, a global initiative by IRENA and Siemens Energy, which met at #COP27 to accelerate #NetZero targets in the industry sector," OQ Group noted in a social media post on Sunday, November 13, 2022.

The Alliance, with its secretariat located in the Abu Dhabi headquarters of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), is set to play a major role in the decarbonisation of heavy industries currently accounting for a sizable share of emissions of planet-warming greenhouse gases.

The sector is the second largest emitter of greenhouses gases after power generation, with a share of over 30 per cent, while accounting for 40 per cent of global energy consumption.

"Without increased emission reduction efforts within the



industrial sector, the goal of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5° Celsius stays unreachable," the

Alliance warned in a statement. The Alliance was launched on September 1, 2022 against the backdrop of the G20 Investment Forum on Energy Transition, which took place in Bali, Indonesia.

Headed by IRENA with Siemens Energy as co-founding partner, the Alliance signed up global heavyweights Enel Green Power, TAQA Arabia, Eni, Technip Energies, EDF Renewables, JSW, Tata Steel, Sable Chemicals,

Tatanga Energy, Repsol, Equinor and TAQA as the other founding members.

They adopted the 'Bali Declaration' to accelerate net-zero ambitions and the decarbonisation of industrial value chains in pursuit of the Paris Agreement climate goals.

At the Alliance's maiden meeting, held on the margins of COP27, 13 new leading international firms were coopted as members. Besides OQ Group, the list included the KIS Group, VALE, ATC Development, Subsea7, Elsewedy Electric,

FLSmith, Petronas, Ecopetrol, Unilever, Envision, Alfanar Global Development and Alzahid Group, with State of Green as a new knowledge partner.

Deliberations during the first meeting focused on six pillars and enablers: renewables, green hydrogen, bioenergy with Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS), heat process optimisation, human capital, and finance.

As a member of this formidable grouping, OQ Group – and the Sultanate of Oman in general – has the potential to leverage the

country's ambitious plans for a green hydrogen industry to attract investments in low-carbon heavy industries across aluminium, steel, cement, minerals and other hard-to-abate sectors.

The availability of an abundance of green hydrogen in the not-too-distant future, coupled with the presence of well-established grid, pipeline and transport infrastructures, and business-friendly industrial parks, is seen as a major plus in Oman's favour in attracting international investments in low-carbon heavy industries.

Oman posts 18.2% growth in domestic refinery product sales

FROM PAGE 13

Meanwhile, its exports decreased by 71.2 per cent to reach 1.1 million barrels. Output for diesel—the dominant fuel source for heavy vehicles, construction machinery and diesel-powered gensets in remote parts of the country — witnessed a decline of 14.8 per cent compared to the same period in 2021 to reach 23.2 million barrels, while

its sales increased by 11.2 per cent to reach 11.67 million barrels.

Its exports, however, decreased by 32.9 per cent with 11.66 million barrels compared to 17.3 million barrels during the same period last year.

As for petrochemicals, polypropylene exports and production witnessed a remarkable increase by 30.4 per cent and 5.3 per cent, respectively, while its sales

decreased by 47 per cent.

Paraxylene production and exports by also fell by 93.2 per cent and 91.4 per cent, respectively, until the end of September 2022.

Jet fuel production stood at 5.7 million barrels, up 32.6 per cent by the end of September compared to 4.3 million barrels for the same period last year, and sales rose 106.2 per cent to 2.2 million barrels,

compared with 1 million barrels for the same period last year.

LPG (cooking gas) production also fell 14.9 per cent to 4.7 million barrels down from 5.5 million barrels for the same period last year, while sales rose by 7.5 per cent to 5.9 million barrels compared to the same period, which recorded 5.5 million barrels, while exports fell by 90.6 per cent to 36,900 barrels.

MENA region records 524 M&A deals worth \$55.2bn

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 14

The MENA region witnessed 524 deals worth \$55.2 billion during the first nine months of the year, according to the latest EY MENA M&A Insights report.

Rising inflationary pressures, dampening economic demand and global market disruptions resulted in moderate growth in deal activity of 6 per cent year-on-year (YoY) while deal value slipped by 23 per cent over the same period last year.

According to the report, domestic deals were the main driver of activity in the region, contributing 51 per cent and 33 per cent of the total M&A deal volume and value respectively over the nine-month period.

M&A activity involving private equity (PE) or sovereign wealth funds (SWF) accounted for 35 per



cent and 38 per cent of the total deal volume and value respectively across the nine months. The report revealed that cross-border deals made up 49 per cent and 67 per cent of total volume and value respectively over the period.

While government-related entity (GRE)-involved deals

totalled \$21.0 billion in 9M 2022, accounting for 38 per cent of the total disclosed deal value.

Brad Watson, EY MENA Strategy and Transactions Leader, says: "Although we are living in uncertain economic times, the MENA region continues to record higher M&A activity, fuelled

THE UAE REMAINED AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE MENA REGION, WITH 155 DEALS SIGNED WORTH \$17.2 BILLION 9M 2022, FOLLOWED BY EGYPT WITH 99 DEALS WORTH \$3.9 BILLION, SAUDI ARABIA WITH 58 DEALS WORTH \$3.4 BILLION, MOROCCO WITH 22 DEALS WORTH \$1.9 BILLION AND OMAN, WHERE 10 DEALS HAVE BEEN INKED WITH A TOTAL VALUE OF \$0.7 BILLION.

by expected economic growth through higher oil prices and an acceleration in business-friendly reforms.

Technology is driving a large number of deals, reflecting the rising digital transformation across industries in the region."

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) remained at the forefront of

the MENA region, with 155 deals signed worth \$17.2 billion in the first nine months of 2022.

This was followed by Egypt with 99 deals worth \$3.9 billion, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with 58 deals worth \$3.4 billion, Morocco with 22 deals worth \$1.9 billion and Oman, where 10 deals have been inked with a total value of \$0.7 billion.

Overall top five subsectors in the MENA region, by deal value, include transportation, real estate, consumer products, technology, and banking and capital markets.

Anil Menon, Head of MENA M&A and ECM Leader, EY, says: "What is interesting from these latest results is the increasing M&A activity, not just emanating from traditional markets such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia, but also from other countries across the MENA region, namely Egypt,

Morocco, Qatar and Oman.

Higher crude oil prices, combined with favourable regional government initiatives in attracting investments to the region and MENA investors looking for futuristic investment opportunities in foreign markets will be the major drivers of M&A activity in the region going forward."

Domestic M&A activity saw a slight dip of 3 per cent in 9M 2022, with 268 deals signed, compared to 275 deals for the corresponding period last year. The value of deals also dropped, by 48 per cent, amounting to \$18 billion, compared to \$34.6 billion in the opening nine months of 2021.

Excluding the deal involving the acquisition of utilities and power assets of Aramco by Air Products and Chemicals Inc (\$12.0 billion) in 9M 2021, deal value went down by 20 per cent in 9M 2022.

WJ Towell Group Company

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

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

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

أوربت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

Classifieds

شوبين جفت Shoppinggift

GET FREE SHOPPING VOUCHER with every purchase of TallyPrime single user

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

ASIA SOLUTIONS
TALLY GOLD PARTNER
TALLY FOR VAT

TUESDAY

NOVEMBER 15, 2022

RABEE AL THANI 20, 1444 AH

Observer Classified Section

Mohammed al Rashdi: 99841230
m.alrashdi86@yahoo.com

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

Saada al Rashdi
95919344

94501166
24649593
24649595

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

APPLY NOW **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

UI/UX Designer (WEB)

REQUIREMENTS

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

TO APPLY
Send latest CV at
career@gulfcybertech.com

GULFCYBERTECH & Solutions

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

APPLY NOW **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

Application Development Projects Lead

REQUIREMENTS

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

TO APPLY
Send latest CV at
career@gulfcybertech.com

GULFCYBERTECH & Solutions

مجموعة شركات الشفاري
SHANFARI GROUP OF COMPANIES
ESTABLISHED 1960

National Day OFFER

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

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

Interested may please contact **99317836**
Email : estimation@shanfari.com
© **Shanfari _ Aluminium**

SITUATION WANTED

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

GSM : +968 95392251

Driving School

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

Contact No: 99074072

SIT. WANTED

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

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

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

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

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

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

URGENTLY REQUIRED SALES ENGINEER

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

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

SIT. WANTED

QUANTITY surveyor/ civil engineer, Sri Lankan, bachelor degree in civil, diploma in QS and AutoCAD with 5 years experience. Certificate in design of electrical installation. Contact: 77045881, email: aazam5181@gmail.com

INDIAN Male, 17 years of Oman Marketing experience in Multiple Industry (FMCG Trading, Media, Digital Printing, Events, & Hospital) with own car is looking for suitable placement with/without visa; Call/whatsapp +968 99803006.

GRADUATE Engineer (B.E. Civil, Indian) with over 20 years of experience (13 years in Oman). Previously served as Project Manager, Manager - Operations and Dy. GM. Looking for suitable placement Contact: 92850419 Email: jojykyk@gmail.com

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

WORLD WIDE DOOR TO DOOR CARGO

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

TOLL FREE NUMBER
80066766
www.alnamanicargo.com

FREE PICK UP 24/7

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

HAVE A PROPERTY FOR RENT?

Advertise with us.

Contact us on: 99639264

SIT. WANTED

URBAN planner and senior architect, 15 years experience in tendering, urban and regional planning and management, mega projects, green buildings, design and supervision. moharch2000@gmail.com, 97164063.

LAMASAT BUSINESS CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Accounting Services, VAT and Consultancy Services

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

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

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

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

AUDIT, ACCOUNTING, VAT, TAXATION

Contact: **97239696 95355638**

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

سماء الخضراء للتجارة
SAMA AL KHADRA TRADING SERVICES:

PIPING SYSTEMS VALVES
DRAINS INTERCEPTORS

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

PEST CONTROL OMAN CO. L.L.C.

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

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

Tel: **24787606, 24787503**
Direct Line: **24786077**
GSM: **99382355, 99172309**

pcomctom@omantel.net.om
P.O. Box 565, Al Wadi Al Kabir 117, Sultanate of Oman

SERVICES

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

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

FOR RENT

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

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

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

DAWOOD

JOB VACANCY

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

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

Required: Oman Driving license holder.

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

Please Contact our Team

95210257

OMAN OBSERVER
www.omanobserver.om

@omanobserver

Now get news on the go

To receive news updates from OMAN OBSERVER,

WhatsApp <your name> to 96473232



The spirit of sportsmanship never faded with disability

At 18, Sultan bin Mohammed al Wuhaibi has been wheel-chair-bound and has been plagued with a plethora of challenges including mobility impairment, inability to walk without assistance and difficulty in speaking. Despite these limitations, he was able to do wonders becoming an ambassador of sorts to the community... **P20**

Taylor Swift wins most prizes at MTV Europe Music Awards

TAYLOR SWIFT WALKED away with four prizes at MTV's Europe Music Awards on Sunday, including best video for her 10-minute "All Too Well".

Double-award winners included Nicki Minaj for best song and best hip-hop, and the French DJ and record producer David Guetta won the best electronic award and best collaboration.

The event, broadcast on MTV from

Duesseldorf in western Germany, honoured musicians from Brazil to South Korea.

It featured an appearance by Ukraine's Kalush Orchestra, the winner of this year's Eurovision Song Contest, which performed "Stefania" in an arena glowing with Ukraine's national colours of blue and yellow.

The US pop singer Swift, wearing a



dress of bejewelled mesh, won best artist, best pop, best video and best long form video.

"I felt like I learned so much about how making film can be a natural extension of my storytelling," Swift said as she accepted the long form video award.

In "All Too Well", Swift draws inspiration from 1970s Hollywood and recounts a fraying romantic relationship that dis-

integrates, leaving behind only a scarf and memories.

"It was rare, I was there, I remember it all too well", Swift sings.

Minaj's winning song "Super Freaky Girl" incorporates the 1981 hit "Super Freak" with lyrics "I can lick it, I can ride it while you slippin' and slidin'".

British pop star Harry Styles won in the "best live" category and the Thai-

born Lalisa 'Lisa' Manoban won best K-pop. South Korea's BTS, the global K-pop sensation, won the biggest fans category.

The hosts for the show were British pop star Rita Ora and the film director Taika Waititi, who married this year. Ora herself won for "best look".

Duesseldorf has a musical heritage as home to the pioneering German electronic band Kraftwerk, which influenced generations of pop and dance musicians with mesmerising tracks such as "Autobahn".

The city also hosted the Eurovision Song Contest in 2011.

Screaming teens watched the stars walk down a red carpet before the event was broadcast from the PSD Bank Dome.

Julian Lennon, the son of the Beatles' John Lennon, said as he entered that he had not seen a concert in years and was looking forward to it.

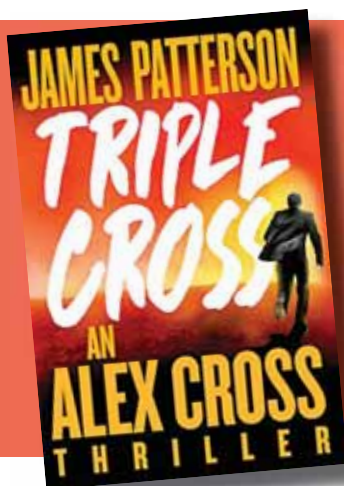
The rock band Muse, which won the best rock award, said it was dedicating its victory to the people of Ukraine and Iran. Kalush Orchestra's frontman Oleh Psiuk, donning a pink hat, said before the performance that he hoped more Ukrainian bands would be present next year. — Reuters

READ

TRIPLE CROSS

BY JAMES PATTERSON

Detective Alex Cross and the true-crime author Thomas Tull search for a serial killer known as the Family Man.



FASHION

Models wait in backstage before taking the catwalk along a railway track illuminated by welding flash from a propped artisanal operation and motorcycle headlights during an evening open-air fashion show at the Kibera Fashion Week where several local start-up artists featured a variety of their designs at Nairobi's largest slum, Kibera. — AFP



TRAVEL TALES

A woman walks inside the National Museum of Qatar complex ahead of the Qatar 2022 World Cup football tournament. — AFP





In Canada's boreal forest, one man works to save caribou

EVEN THOUGH HE lives in the middle of Canada's boreal forest, Jean-Luc Kanape can sometimes go weeks without seeing a single caribou. But for as long as he can remember, the animals have been part of his life.

For centuries, "our ancestors survived thanks to the caribou —

industry, which is crucial in some areas, providing 60,000 jobs, but which also contributes to mass deforestation.

Governments "are supposed to protect all living beings in their territory" but "do nothing" for the caribou, says Kanape, who helps the community identify and tag the



using its meat, pelts and tools made from its bones," says Kanape, a member of the Innu Indigenous group.

"Now, it's our turn to help them."

The caribou is a symbol of the power of the subarctic boreal forest, but also the beating heart of Canada's Indigenous culture.

But the broad-snouted deer is "at risk," Kanape says, notably because of the loss of its natural habitat.

In Quebec province, the animal's future is threatened by the lumber

remaining herds.

All around the 47-year-old's cabin, located not far from the St Lawrence River but a two-hour drive from the nearest village, there is evidence of deforestation — the once lush mass of spruces and poplars has been hacked up.

As seen from above, the woods look like a jigsaw puzzle that has been taken apart. In some areas, trees line the ground — they will be chopped up and taken away, for the most part, they are pulped to make

paper or used in construction.

PREDATORS

Recent data suggests that caribou, which are called reindeer in Europe, have a better chance of survival if at least 65 per cent of their living habitat is preserved.

But in this part of Canada, roughly 80 per cent of their habitat has been disturbed in some way. Tree harvesting helps renew the forest, but that also brings about changes in the native flora and fauna.

Moose have arrived en masse — which also means the animals that prey on them have arrived too, notably wolves, whose migration has been facilitated by paths cut in the wilderness by the lumber companies.

When new trees sprout up, the tiny fruit bushes that crop up alongside them also bring bears — another hunter of caribou — to the area.

When Kanape heads out to track caribou herds, he uses both ancestral teachings and surveillance data collected by drones.

Whether travelling by boat along the river, in his pick-up truck or on foot, he scours the ground for hoof prints. Each autumn, those hoofs adapt, their edges sharpening to allow the caribou to break through the ice to get at a major food source: lichen.

In recent weeks, Kanape was tracking a female caribou and her calf, who were living in a partially deforested area — putting them at risk.

"How can I make them under-

GROWTH

From the Canadian Rockies in the west to Quebec's forests in the east, the caribou has seen its territory dwindle over the last 150 years, and the population has declined — a shift that nothing seems to reverse.

Since 2003, the caribou has been listed as a species at risk of extinction, and is one of the most studied animals in North America.

In Canada, its survival will depend on the expansion of the oil, lumber and mining industries. The country has struggled to implement viable plans to protect the species, researchers say.

Overall, experts are concerned that the fate of the caribou is a "tipping point" — and thus that the animal should be considered an "umbrella species" worthy of protecting, so that other animals in their habitat are indirectly saved.

"Dozens of species that don't get the same attention also need ancestral forests — it's a natural habitat that is vital for many," explains Martin-Hugues Saint-Laurent, a biologist at the University of Quebec in Rimouski.

Canada's boreal forest is home to 85 species of mammals, 130 species of fish and 300 different bird species, many of them migratory.

"The forest is not just about the trees," says Louis De Grandpre, a scientist who has been researching the issue for 30 years.

"We are just barely starting to understand the scope of what's happening under our feet in the forest subsoil, where bacteria, mushrooms

and a myriad of microorganisms are all at work."

The Innu people, who believe they are just as much a part of the forest ecosystem as all other living creatures, advocate for the creation of a protected forest zone.

Kanape has a far-reaching philosophical outlook — the animal kingdom will ultimately triumph.

"When humans disappear from the Earth, the planet will be even more beautiful — it will reclaim itself," he says. — **AFP**

ENTERTAINMENT

Breakdancing holds firm to its roots but readies for Paris Olympic stage



BREAKDANCING IS ready to embrace the Olympic spotlight with its Games debut less than two years away, as the pillar of hip-hop culture returned to its roots in New York this weekend.

The Netherlands' India Sardjoe and United States' Victor Montalvo were crowned the Red Bull BC One World Final champions on Saturday in a celebration of breaking — as participants prefer to call it — in its New York home, as competitors turn their focus towards Olympic qualifying in 2023.

Paris will mark the culmination of breaking's long journey from hip-hop's birthplace at a rec room party in the Bronx 49 years ago to an international phenomenon on sport's biggest stage.

South Korea's Jeon Ji-ye, known on stage as

world how breaking has flourished in his native Kazakhstan.

"I have plans to win it, of course," he said. "Because I want to show my breaking for a new generation ... we have a real special scene of breaking in my country."

Breaking's inclusion in the Paris Games prompted soul searching among dancers and early pioneers, who questioned whether the art form with deep cultural significance should even be called a sport, when organisers announced it had been added to the Olympic programme two years ago.

In the days leading up to the BC One World Final, title sponsor Red Bull made efforts to emphasise breaking's history, piling reporters and enthusiasts onto a hip-hop history tour through the Bronx.



"Freshbella," told Reuters via a translator that she pored over footage of hip-hop's early years, becoming a scholar of breaking's humble roots even as she embraces the Olympic platform.

"I just love the breaking culture itself but honestly when it comes to persuading others to really join into the breaking scene, I still don't really have a concrete answer," she said.

"I'm of course looking forward to participating in the Paris Olympics."

Amir Zakirov, one of the world's top B-Boys, said the Olympic stage offers the chance to show the rest of the

Tour guides educated the international crowd on the basics of breaking before leading them to the unassuming, linoleum-tiled Sedgwick Avenue room where experts agree hip-hop first sprang onto the scene at a birthday party in 1973.

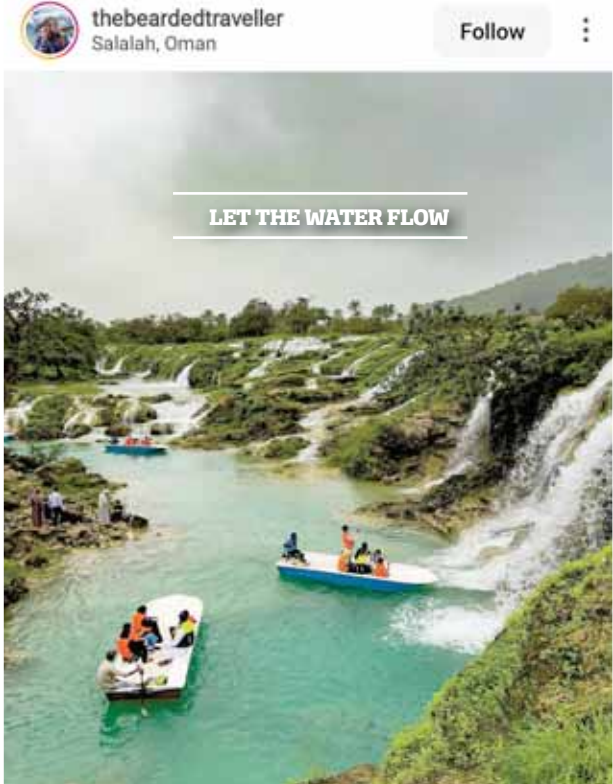
"People think that this was some big concert or something — no! It's a little rec room. This place holds about 100 people," said Grandmaster Caz, a hip-hop pioneer who helped guide the group for Hush Hip Hop Tours.

"That kind of energy can't be contained in a small place like this forever." — **Reuters**



find us on
TWITTER
Scan the QR Code or follow us on
www.twitter.com/omanobserver

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



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

AROUND THE WORLD

ART

New
Giacometti
museum
set for Paris
in 2026



A NEW MUSEUM and school dedicated to artist Alberto Giacometti will open in Paris in 2026, bringing together the world's largest collection of his work, his foundation announced on Monday.

The new museum will take over a 6,000-square-metre (64,600-square-foot)



space at the former Invalides train station and its underground annexes.

It will have a permanent collection and feature a rotation from the 10,000 works created by Giacometti (1901-1966), who was born in Switzerland but moved to Paris in the 1920s.

He is best known for his spindly bronze figures but also created a huge number of paintings, drawings and decorative objects, "most of which are currently not accessible to the public", Catherine Grenier, director of the Giacometti Foundation, told AFP.

The foundation was formed in 2003 by the artist's widow, Annette Giacometti.

The new museum will also show "exhibitions of modern and contemporary art connected with the spirit of Giacometti", Grenier said, as well as providing a learning centre "aimed at everyone — children and adults, the experienced or novices".

Paris is already home to the Giacometti Institute that houses his tiny former studio, which will be moved to the new museum.

The institute will remain but be used for different activities.

The Invalides station and the vast spaces beneath the neighbouring esplanade were built for the 1900 Paris Exposition and are currently undergoing a major renovation by the city authorities. — **AFP**

ENTERTAINMENT

‘Black Panther’
sequel scores huge
opening, at home
and abroad



DISNEY AND MARVEL'S highly anticipated "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" had a huge opening this weekend, taking in an estimated \$180 million in North American theaters, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations reported on Sunday.

That domestic opening — the 13th highest all-time, according to BoxOfficePro.com — came as the film was raking in an impressive \$330 million worldwide, a major boost for Hollywood after a lackluster October.

"This is a sensational opening," said David A. Gross of Franchise Entertainment Research. "Reviews and audience scores are excellent — Wakanda should dominate moviegoing... into December."

The film pays heartfelt tribute to the star of the original "Black Panther," Chadwick Boseman, who died from cancer in 2020 at age 43. He makes several flashback appearances as the fictional Wakanda fights against an underwater kingdom after the death of Boseman's character, King T'Challa.

Letitia Wright, as T'Challa's sister Shuri, and Angela Bassett, as Queen Ramonda, struggle to fill the king's shoes. Also starring are Lupita Nyong'o,

Danai Gurira and Winston Duke. The original "Black Panther," the first major black superhero movie, became a cultural phenomenon, with a \$202 million opening and a best-picture Oscar nomination.

Far, far behind in second place this weekend

was Warner Bros.' "Black Adam," at \$8.6 million —not even one-twentieth the "Wakanda" total. The Dwayne Johnson vehicle, a spinoff from 2019's "Shazam!," has now taken in \$141.1 million domestically.

Universal's rom-com "Ticket to Paradise," powered by mega-stars Julia Roberts and George Clooney, managed to defy the superhero trend to place third, taking in \$6.1 million in its fourth week out.

A family-friendly film, Sony's live-action/computer animated musical comedy "Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile," placed fourth at \$3.2 million.

And Paramount's horror movie "Smile" continued to find viewers in its seventh week out, coming in fifth. With an estimated take of \$2.3 million for the Friday-through-Sunday period, its domestic total bumped up to \$102 million.

Rounding out the top 10 were:
"Prey for the Devil" (\$2.0 million)
"The Banshees of Inisherin" (\$1.7 million)
"One Piece Film: Red" (\$1.4 million)
"Till" (\$618,000)
"Armageddon Time" (\$352,000) — **AFP**

A WINDOW INTO CONTEMPORARY
OMANI LITERATURE



Dr Khalid Mohammed al Balushi
khalidalbalushi@hotmail.com

My Treatment
Journey Continues

THE FOLLOWING is my English translation of excerpts from "A Soldier from Oman, Memory's Nectar" by (ret.) Inspector-General Said bin Rashid Al Kalbani.

It was decided at the Bait al Falaj hospital that I should be flown to Bahrain by a British aircraft for further treatment. I was first taken to the British base in Sharjah, and the following day to the clinic of the British base in Moharraq, and subsequently to Naeem Hospital in Manama.

There I knew nobody, nobody at all.

At dusk, the doctor came introducing himself as Dr Ali Fakhro, saying that he would operate on me. (That doctor later became the minister of health in Bahrain). After the operation, I was shifted to a ward with many patients. When I came round, I found my legs in plaster. I remember I had 200 Bahraini Dinar given to me by Maj. Denson. When looking for it, I found it safe, hidden beneath the plaster!

At that time, a number of Omanis were working in the Bahraini police. Upon hearing about me, they came to visit me. Amongst the ones I remember were Saud al Jahwari from the Mabrah town and Sultan al Rabiai from Falaj Bani Rabiaa. Their visit had a positive impact upon me, and I have always remained grateful to them.

After the plaster was removed, I began to exercise walking with nurses' help.

One day I saw a demonstration. I was told it was held against the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem in the 1967 war.

Through persistent exercises, my situation improved. I remained in Naeem Hospital for about four months, after

which I was shifted to Qala, the Bahraini police headquarters, awaiting an aircraft to take me to Oman. During my stay in Qala, I made the acquaintance of many Omanis working in the Bahraini police force. Some of them came back later to Oman and joined the Omani police force.

I stayed there for fifteen days, and subsequently moved back to Bait al Falaj. Our regiment was then in Salalah. I joined the office of Brig. Gen. Maxwell, who informed me of my promotion to the rank of sergeant and awarded me the Dhofar Medal, which was given to anyone participating in the war in Dhofar. The Brigadier General told me in the presence of Capt. Ali al Balushi, "You can sit in my office now, but you should perhaps go on leave till your regiment comes back from Salalah".

I did take leave and went straight to my hometown. Walking on crutches, I felt people looked at me as if I were handicapped. They thought I would always remain like that. I also felt I was powerless amongst my own family after I had been a man brimming with vitality and energy, participating in all the major events. However, on further reflection, I became all the more determined to take my condition as a catalyst for holding fast and overcoming all the difficulties I was facing. Putting my trust in Allah I persisted, with more energy than before, with attempts at walking. To avoid being noticed, I would go out daily to the plain, carrying with me bread, dates and water in a pot and would sometimes harvest honey. My condition improved as the days passed by, and, after about a month, I began to walk using just a single crutch.

art & life

Local Scene

f t i y v @omanobserver

TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 15 | 2022



The spirit of sportsmanship never faded with disability

By Kabeer Yousuf

While this young Omani is unable to move his body from the waist down, that doesn't stop him from creating ripples of positivity in the community and inspiring schools across Oman to be more productive with their time and life.

At 18, Sultan bin Mohammed al Wuhaibi has been in a wheelchair bound and has been plagued with a plethora of challenges including mobility impairment, inability to walk without assistance and difficulty in speaking. Despite this limitation, he was able to do wonders becoming an ambassador of sorts engaging with children and motivating them to become their better selves while also pursuing his passions for sailing, paragliding, swimming, horse riding and other adventures.

One of his life's highlights, in fact, was the time he was able to salute the late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos from the horse he was riding.

Sultan loves singing and recently he shared the stage with singer Rahma Riad; he is a passionate actor and has acted in a play and an episode on YouTube. He is an ardent fan of FC Barcelona and Seeb Club. He dreams of becoming a champion in sailing to complete his studies abroad in the United States to appear in a television series, and get a gym chair so that he can do workouts in a gym.

"I have dreams to fulfil. Play football, become a globally renowned sailor and be the pride of my country, the Sultanate of Oman," a joyful Sultan spoke to the Observer during his training at the Oman Sail.

Sultan was born to a family as the third child of four siblings and grew up as a normal child in good health and was pampered because he was the first boy after

two girls for his parents. His sisters vied with each other in playing with him as he started more active and moving.

But things changed when he was about nine months old and during a family gathering, Sultan walked using a baby walker towards the outer stairs but lost his grip and fell from the stairs. Although it was a light fall and he was not injured, he was taken to the hospital immediately and medical examinations were conducted for him. He was discharged on the same night after the doctor reassured him that his condition was good and there was no problem. Sultan did not show any symptoms during the following days. But after a week, Sultan began to be lazy and his activities diminished and showed signs of being lacklustre and unwilling to stand, and started to make moaning sounds from time to time.

The journey of his long treatment process began after reviews and examinations in the hospitals inside the Sultanate of Oman, which confirmed that Sultan did not have an apparent problem and as all the tests were normal, the family decided to take him outside the Sultanate of Oman.

The first destination was a hospital in Mumbai, India where the doctors' diagnosed that it was perhaps the fear psychosis due to Sultan's fear of falling again and that he will get over it in some time.

His grandfather loved him very much and he decided to take him to Thailand where Sultan's parents were told that there was no apparent problem in the examinations that could be treated, and in such cases, his life may be short and his condition may become worse. The family returned from Thailand, with a heavy heart, sadness, despair

and fear, and the family looked at Sultan who was by then, unable to get up and remained in a state of extreme laziness.

After a while, Sultan was taken to a hospital in Germany, a hospital specialised for children in cases like Sultan, and after conducting the tests, the doctors reported that Sultan might have hit his head in the fall and some brain functions might have been affected which did not appear in the x-rays. They also assured the family that there is a possibility that Sultan would return to his activity after a while, or perhaps his condition might also get worse, but the doctor expected that Sultan would be better, as he said after a period of observing Sultan, "I am sure that Sultan will defeat this disease in one way or another. I see him as a fighting child who loves life."

Sultan was one year old then, and his family started a physiotherapy journey and at the same time did not stop looking for treatment. His mother made every effort to find the best place for physiotherapy within the Sultanate of Oman, and his father was interested in searching for treatment outside the Sultanate of Oman.

At the age of four, Sultan joined the Early Intervention Society school which provided everyone with great support. However, this society accepts students up to the age of 6 years, and after Sultan reached 6 his parents faced the problem of moving him to another school.

They were unable to find a suitable school for him that is available for study and treatment and most public or private schools did not have services for people with special needs. After he was registered in a private school, which accepted him on many conditions, includ-



ing the provision of a special worker who would be with him while he was at the school, the family accepted that despite the family's financial situation.

His family began researching and communicating with other hospitals outside the Sultanate of Oman, and most of them responded with the same opinion. Finally, they got positive feedback from St. Louis Children's Hospital in America that his condition can be corrected with 'Selective Root Seperation' and that it will benefit him very much.

For this, he would need to be in the hospital for two weeks, then physical therapy for two months. The family decided to take Sultan to this hospital, and his grandfather, who always took care of him, provided him with all possible support and took care of this trip.

After Sultan's return from the US, his condition improved and he was able to stand and walk with the help of a crutch. The biggest advice to him from the doctor was to continue physical therapy and to continue moving, walking, and practising any sport. He advised him to ride a horse and engage more in sports activities. That was the beginning of the sportsman in Sultan who began to participate in sports, and the first sport was horse riding where the horse riding therapy programme was launched and Sultan was one of the first to participate in it and the rest is history. In 2022, Sultan was enrolled to study at Suhail bin Omar School, which provided him with great support, especially from the school director, who was always encouraging and motivating Sultan. The school welcomed him at the airport as a hero in a group of recipients headed by Hajjiya al Said. Sultan became a part of the 'Sail Free' programme with Oman Sail, which opened new horizons for him and helped him to acquire new knowledge, especially if he found himself free to sail freely, getting rid of his restrictions to move his sail to reach his goals. Today, Sultan's ambitions see no limits. He wants to be a leading motivational speaker in the region, a hero for other young people, whether ordinary or people with disabilities to challenge all difficulties. Sultan loves to follow successful and famous people on social media, and this matter brought him wide fame, and this helped him to gain new friends in various countries of the world. His followers on his Instagram page requested him to continue his treatment and study and acquire new skills. Sultan receives messages on his account from people who follow him for Sultan has helped them with his spirit and determination to succeed by overcoming many difficulties.