

PRODUCTION OF M-91 FUEL AND LPG INCREASES

The production of refineries and petrochemicals in the Sultanate of Oman recorded an increase by 19.1 percent till the end of May 2023 compared to the corresponding period in 2022. **>B1**



HM THE SULTAN GREETES PRESIDENT OF MONGOLIA

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Ukhnaagin Khurelsukh of Mongolia on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes to President Khurelsukh and the people of his country. **-ONA**



Founded 1975 · Volume 48 No. 93 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

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'DECISION MAKING-10'

Sayyid Shihab visits National Defence College, inspects strategic exercise

MUSCAT: HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs yesterday inspected the implementation of the strategic exercise 'Decision Making-10' at the National Defence College in the Academy for Strategic and Defence Studies. The exercise kicked off on 2 July and will continue till 13 July 2023.

Upon the arrival of HH Sayyid Shihab at the college, he was greeted by Maj.Gen Ali Abdullah Al Shidi, Commandant of the NDC.

HH Sayyid Shihab was briefed on the various stages of the exercise. During his inspection, several participants introduced the exercise and means of responding to simulated international events and national issues, in addition to proposed solutions through various methods in the process of decision making. **-ONA**



TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Ad campaign for Khareef launched

1 The Ministry of Information, represented by the Directorate General of Information in Dhofar Governorate launched an advertising campaign for the Dhofar Khareef Programmes 2023. **>A2**



WORLD

Rains claim several lives in northern India

2 At least 15 people died in the heavy monsoon rains that battered northern India. The torrential rains caused landslides and flash floods in Indian states, leaving dozens stranded. In the northern state of Himachal Pradesh, flash floods brought down a bridge. **>A7**

MARKET

PDO, signs deal for acquisition in Block-11

3 Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) through its subsidiary, and Shell Development Oman (SDO) have signed a contract for Seismic Acquisition in Block 11, signifying a major advancement in Oman's oil and gas industry. **>B1**

PRUDENT POLICIES HELP OMAN POST OMR581 MILLION BUDGET SURPLUS

The State's public revenue at the end of May 2023 amounted to OMR5.46 billion, compared to OMR5.32bn in the same period of 2022

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's State's General Budget registered a surplus of OMR581 million at the end of May 2023, compared to a surplus of OMR631 million achieved over the same period in 2022, on the back of prudent and wise financial management by the government.

Furthermore, the State Budget spending increased by 4 percent to OMR4.88 billion at the end of



May 2023, up by OMR188 million compared to actual spending over the same period in 2022, according to the monthly Fiscal Performance Bulletin issued by the Ministry of Finance.

The current expenditure at the end of May 2023 amounted to OMR3.36 billion, down by OMR320 million, or by 9 per-

cent, compared to an amount of OMR3.68 billion registered over the same period in 2022.

The State's public revenue at the end of May 2023 amounted to OMR5.46 billion, up by 3 percent compared to OMR5.32 billion registered over the same period in 2022, according to the monthly Fiscal Performance Bulletin.

This is mainly due to an increase in net oil revenue and current revenue, representing 52 percent and 30 percent, respectively, of the total public revenue.

Net oil revenue amounted to OMR2.81 billion at the end of May 2023, up by 9 percent compared to OMR2.56 billion registered over the same period in 2022.

This is driven by an increase in average oil price of \$84 per barrel and an increase in average oil production to 1,064,000 barrels per day.

At the end of May 2023, net gas revenue amounted to OMR1.03 billion, down by 26 percent compared to OMR1.35 billion registered over the same period in 2022. This is due to the deduction of gas purchase and transport expenses from total revenue collected from the Integrated Gas Company.

Current revenue at the end of May 2023 increased by 18 percent to OMR1.64 billion compared to OMR1.39 billion collected over the same period in 2022.

Regarding the development expenditure of civil ministries at the end of May 2023, it reached OMR289 million, representing 32 percent of total development spending allocated for 2023.

Further, at the end of May 2023, the total amount of contributions and other expenses amounted to OMR678 million, up by 31 percent compared to an amount of OMR516 million registered over the same period in 2022. **>A3**

Pact inked for 742 free scholarships

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation signed 23 agreements with private higher education institutions to provide 742 free scholarships during the academic year 2023/2024 to the tune of OMR9.104 million.

This came during a seminar on the roles of private higher education institutions in community service and the transition to a knowledge society. The event was organised by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

The seminar aimed at highlighting the role and contributions of these institutions in serving the community and achieving the objectives of Oman Vision 2040. **>A3**



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MUSCAT



BRIBERY, FORGERY CASES

Public Prosecution awards prison terms, fines to guilty employees

Times News Service

MUSCAT: In a strong message to public servants to hold their offices with honesty, the Public Prosecution on Monday awarded sentences ranging from two to five years along with hefty fines to four guilty citizens.

The Oman government has time and again launched campaigns to highlight the pitfalls for misdemeanours in public offices.

In a statement issued on Monday, the Public Prosecution said that four citizens were found guilty of committing a number of felonies and misdemeanours re-

lated to bribery, forgery, and abuse of office.

As a result, the Supreme Court sentenced the guilty to jail terms ranging from two to five years and imposed hefty fines.

A public employee found guilty was handed a sentence of five years and a fine of OMR48,000 for accepting a bribe, in return for carrying out actions contrary to the duties of his position.

Another citizen found guilty was handed two years imprisonment and a fine of OMR48,000 for offering a bribe to a public employee in exchange for doing work contrary to the duties of his

position. The guilty men have also been terminated from their work.

The Supreme Court upheld what the Criminal Court ruled, convicting all the four accused on the following charges.

The first Omani was found guilty of three counts of felony (forgery in an official document, accepting a bribe to do an act contrary to the duties of his position, offering a bribe) and a misdemeanour (misuse of the position).

The second Omani was guilty of two counts of felony (forgery in an official document, accepting a bribe) and a misdemeanour (misuse of the position). **>A5**



Agreement for OMR10mn Taqa Long Beach project

B1



OMAN

PRAYER TIMINGS



Dhuhr.....	12:17pm
Asr.....	3:37pm
Maghrib.....	7:02pm
Isha.....	8:24pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:02am



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Ministry launches ad campaign for Khareef

The forum included the launch of an advertising campaign for radio, television, press and digital programmes of the Ministry of Information for the Dhofar Khareef Season 2023

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Information has launched an advertising campaign for Dhofar Khareef Programmes 2023.

The Ministry of Information, represented by the Directorate General of Information in Dhofar Governorate, launched the advertising campaign for the Dhofar Khareef Programmes 2023, with the aim of improving its role in developing and improving the components of the advertising market through its visual, audio and print channels, along with electronic platforms.

This came during the second



MEETING: The advertising forum was organised by the Ministry of Information under the auspices of Dr. Ahmed bin Mohsen Al Ghassani, Head of Dhofar Municipality. - ONA



advertising forum organised by the Ministry at the Millennium Hotel Salalah, under the auspices of Dr. Ahmed bin Mohsen Al Ghassani, Head of Dhofar Municipality in the presence of Abdullah bin Said Al Shuali, Director General of the Directorate General of Information in Dhofar Governorate, and a number of officials.

The forum included the launch of the advertising campaign for radio, television, press and digital programmes of the Ministry of Information for the Dhofar Khareef Season 2023.

The most prominent of which are:- the television programme "Al-Nas and Al-Khareef" and the radio programme "Atheer Al-Kha-

reef" to deliver advertising messages to all target groups through the "Izdihar" advertising agency that was launched by the Ministry in December 2022.

The forum also included the presentation of various visual programmes that dealt with the role of the Ministry of Information in comprehensive development over five decades of the blessed renaissance, and the media of the governorates, in addition to introducing "Izdihar" agency, which is the first official advertising agency in the Sultanate.

The forum also witnessed the signing of agreements between the General Directorate of Information in Dhofar Governorate and a number of private sector institutions and advertising companies to support the programmes of Dhofar Khareef Season 2023.

MINISTER OF ECONOMY



National Committee monitors progress of Oman's SDGs

MUSCAT: The national committee for following-up the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 held its first meeting on Monday under the chairmanship of Dr. Said Mohammed Al Saqri, Minister of Economy, Chairman of the Committee.

The meeting reviewed the tasks assigned to the committee after its reformation, most importantly supervising the preparation of voluntary national reports to follow up the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals 2030, as well as monitoring the progress achieved in this regard.

During the meeting, the committee discussed the proposed methodology for preparing the second voluntary national report, which is scheduled to be presented next year at the high-level political forum (HLPF) of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, and the time frame for its preparation.

This move reflects the commitment of the Sultanate of Oman to sustainable development as

one of the main pillars of Oman Vision 2040.

The committee also reviewed the preliminary results of the central dashboard for the goals of sustainable development, which represents an information monitoring of the progress made in achieving the goals, objectives and indicators of the seventeen goals at the national and governorate levels until 2022.

The committee also discussed the formation of the national work team and small technical task forces, which include all the main partners from various government and private units, civil society institutions, bodies and the academic sector to ensure cooperation, coordination and concerted efforts among all partners in monitoring efforts in achieving the 17 goals of sustainable development.

It is worth mentioning that an official delegation will represent the Sultanate of Oman in the high-level political forum of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, due to be held in New York City during this month. -ONA

DHOFAR GOVERNORATE

Many activities planned during Khareef season

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Directorate General of Culture, Sports and Youth in Dhofar Governorate announced that more than 65 activities would be organised during the Khareef Dhofar Season 2023.

This came during a press conference organised by the Directorate General of Culture, Sports and Youth in Dhofar Governorate at the Sultan Qaboos Youth Complex for Culture and Entertainment in Salalah on Monday. The details of the events were announced in the presence of Musa bin Abdullah Al Qasabi, Director General of the Directorate General of Culture, Sports and Youth in Dhofar Governorate.

Faisal bin Ali Al Nahdi, Assistant Director General of the Directorate General of Culture, Sports and Youth in Dhofar Governorate, pointed out that the activities of the Khareef Dhofar Cultural and Sports Season for this year include many diverse events and activities that will meet the desires of young people.

He said that the Directorate General of Culture, Sports and Youth in Dhofar Governorate is coordinating with various agencies to make the activities a success within Khareef Dhofar Cultural and Sports Season programme.

The conference touched on the



in addition to the implementation of an integrated programme for the activities of the public library and the children's library, such as competitions and meetings. educational.

In the sports field, competitions will be held in swimming, bowling, snooker, billiards, tennis, football tournaments in which both private and public sector employees can take part.

Omani Women's Day

The events will also include karate and chess competitions, athletics and table tennis, workshops on sports injuries and club coordinators, in addition to organising a number of women's activities in bowling, chess and electronic sports, an open sports day, a team and individual games tournament for clubs, and the celebration of Omani Women's Day.

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MAISARAH

Salalah students learn skills of programming



The programme includes training in nanotechnology and scientific research

Times News Service

SALALAH: The activities of the Summer Innovation Programme for 2023, organised by the Directorate General of Education in the Dhofar Governorate, began on Monday at the Sultan Qaboos Youth Complex for Culture and Entertainment in Salalah, and the Innovation and Scientific Robot Centre in the governorate

With the participation of 190 male and female students, the ac-

tivities will continue until July 17. Mariam bint Saeed Baawin, Head of the Innovation and Scientific Olympiad Department at the Directorate General of Education in Dhofar Governorate, said: "The programme aims to provide an opportunity to students to learn the basic principles of programming and artificial intelligence. It will enable them to learn how to think creatively and find innovative solutions to achieve sustainable development, through the use of scientific research."

The programme includes training in nanotechnology and scientific research methodology, as well as a courses on designing smartphone applications and cybersecurity.

Additionally, the programme's activities include training on how to use drones, robots, Wido, and robotics engineering, in addition to a course in the renewable energy, and a workshop on scientific research methodology.



NCSI

Oman posts surplus of OMR581mn

<FROM A1 This increase is a result of electricity sector subsidy and oil product subsidy by OMR244 million and OMR143 million, respectively, at the end of May 2023.

Additionally, an amount of OMR166 million was transferred to future debt obligations budget-item.

Meanwhile, the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) indicated in a recent report issued in June 2023 that the gross domestic product (GDP) at fixed prices increased by 4.7 percent at the end of the first quarter of 2023, registering OMR8.7 billion when compared to OMR8.3 billion over the same period in 2022.

During the first quarter of 2023, the value-addition of oil activities increased by 3.5 percent to OMR2.8 billion compared to the figures recorded over the same period in 2022.



HIGHER EDUCATION <FROM A1 'Scholarships through competitions'

Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, said that all private higher education institutions in Oman are working, in cooperation with the Ministry, towards diversifying and enhancing the quality of their programmes to keep pace with international developments and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

Lara Ghassan Obeidat, Director General of Scholarships at the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation said that these scholarships will be offered by competition through the Higher Education Admission Centre. Moreover, the seminar reviewed the experiences of several private higher education institutions in the field of community service. -ONA



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AL ASHKHARAH ATMOSPHERE FORUM ACTIVITIES FASCINATE VISITORS

SHOWS OF INTERACTIVE CHARACTERS (CIRCUS), ENTERTAINMENT GAMES FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS, KITE SHOWS, GAMES CORNER WITH (VR) TECHNOLOGY, HERITAGE CORNER, RESTAURANT CORNERS ARE ALSO PART OF THE ACTIVITIES



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The activities of the Al Ashkharah Atmosphere Forum continue in the Niyabat of Al Ashkharah, in the Wilayat of Jaalan Bani Bu Ali in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate. The events have been organised in cooperation with a number of government and private agencies that will continue until July 24.

Many educational, entertainment and theatrical performances, talent-discovery shows, children's competitions, as well as traditional singing and the presentation of paintings of 'Chopani, Al-Niham, and Al-Madimah' have also been organised as part of the forum.

The forum includes many diverse events and activities that

Many educational, entertainment and theatrical performances, talent-discovery shows, children's competitions, as well as traditional singing and the presentation of paintings of 'Chopani, Al-Niham, and Al-Madimah' have also been organised as part of the forum.

includes entertainment, art, heritage and sports targeting different groups of society, in addition to some interactive corners of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, the third Pioneers Exhibition organised by the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority, and the third marketing art exhibition organised by the Directorate General of Education in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

Shows of interactive characters (circus), entertainment games for children and adults, kite shows, games corner with (VR) technology, heritage corner, restaurant corners are also part of the activities.

One can also watch electronic games, world stage performances, folklore sports competitions and a poetry evening was organised in which Omani poets participated that won the audience's heart.





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GCC hails Russia’s stand towards Palestinian issue, says Sayyid Badr

This review meeting reflects the commitment of the Sultanate of Oman to sustainable development as one of the main pillars of Oman Vision 2040

MOSCOW: The Sultanate of Oman on Monday chaired the 6th Joint Ministerial Meeting of the Strategic Dialogue between the GCC Countries and the Russian Federation, which was held in Moscow.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi.

Renewable energy

In his speech, Sayyid Badr said that the meeting contributes to deepening mutual understanding on many common interests. It also strengthens the cooperation relations in all economic, political, cultural, climate issues, renewable energy and other areas of common interest, pointed Sayyid Badr.

He added that the GCC countries highly appreciate the stances and efforts of the Russian government towards the Palestinian issue. The GCC countries, noted Sayyid Badr, stresses the centrality of this issue and the strategic necessity to solve it and end one of the most important causes of instability in the region.

He affirmed that the GCC countries condemn the Israeli practices and violations that target the Pal-



estinians in their lives, property and presence on their land.

The GCC countries, said Sayyid Badr, stress the importance of intensifying efforts to reach a comprehensive and just settlement of this issue on the basis of the two-state solution and in accordance with the rules of international legitimacy, in a way that guarantees the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, according to the borders of 1967, as stipulated in the resolutions of international legitimacy.

Sayyid Badr affirmed that the GCC countries keep tab of the developments in Sudan, and express their deep concern about the humanitarian and security repercussions of the crisis.

Sudanese people

He underlined the importance of de-escalation and giving priority to dialogue and lifting the suffering of the Sudanese people, as well as preserving state institutions, and preventing any external interference in Sudanese affairs that may fuel the conflict and threaten regional peace and security.

Sayyid Badr also stressed the importance of achieving security and stability in Yemen, and baking international and regional efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive Yemeni political solution to the crisis, with the participation of all Yemeni parties.

In this context, he pointed out that the GCC renews its support for the Presidential Leadership Council in Yemen and the aspirations of the Yemeni people to establish peace.

Conflict in Ukraine

As for the conflict in Ukraine, Sayyid Badr affirmed that this war has repercussions on international peace and security. In this regard, he affirmed that the GCC believes in the importance of moving towards a peaceful solution, via dialogue and the standards of international law and resolving



amples seen in the Gulf region, including the hosting of Expo 2020 Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar, the Formula races in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) besides other important international events, the UAE's preparation to host the "COP 28" conference in Dubai next November, as well as Qatar's readiness to host the Asian Cup in January 2024.

All these events, said Sayyid Badr, reflect the GCC countries' openness to partnership and cooperation with the world, as well as the safety and stability they enjoy, making them an attractive destination for investment, tourism, business, entertainment, sports, culture and other activities.

Diplomatic relations

The Foreign Minister also touched on other important developments, namely the resumption of diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The meeting reviewed relations between the GCC countries and the Russian Federation. It also touched on means of boosting joint cooperation in various areas, particularly in the fields of economy, investment, trade and tourism. The two sides also exchanged views on a set of regional and international issues of common concern.

The meeting emphasised the importance of adhering to the rules of international law in resolving conflicts, adopting dialogue and peaceful means, and respecting the sovereignty and independence of states in order to preserve the policy of good neighborliness and peaceful coexistence to maintain security, stability and peace at the regional and international levels.

The meeting was attended by the GCC foreign ministers, GCC Secretary General, Sergey Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister.

The Omani delegation comprised Sheikh Ahmed Hashil Al Maskari, Head of the GCC and Regional Neighborhood Department, Hamoud Salim Al Tuwaih, Ambassador of Oman to the Russian Federation and a number of officials at the Foreign Ministry. -OHA

MINISTERIAL DECISION

Ban on import of live birds from Iran lifted

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman has lifted the ban on import of live birds from the Islamic Republic of Iran, said the Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries and Water Resources (MAFWR).

Dr. Saud bin Hamoud Al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources issued a ministerial decision to lift the ban on importing live birds



from the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Quarantine Law

This decision came based on the Veterinary Quarantine Law issued by Royal Decree No. 45/2004, and

the executive regulations of the Veterinary Quarantine Law issued by Ministerial Decision No. 107/2008, and Ministerial Decision No. 249/2021 prohibiting the import of live birds from some countries.

The reports issued by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and the competent veterinary authority also ordered to lift the ban on the import of live birds from the Islamic Republic of Iran.

PUBLIC PROSECUTION

Sentences awarded to guilty persons

< FROM A1 The third accused was found guilty of two felonies (forgery in an official document, accepting a bribe) and two misdemeanours (using information technology and the information network to enter electronic data into a government information system with the intention of using them as valid legal data, misuse of the position).

The fourth accused was guilty of two felonies (using a forged official document despite being aware of it, offering a bribe to a public employee to do an act contrary to the duties of his position) and a misdemeanour (seeking to illegally own government land).

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Biden holds talks in London ahead of key NATO summit



Biden met British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak at 10 Downing Street on Monday — his sixth meeting with the UK prime minister, which was believed to have touched on various global issues, including the war in Ukraine



LONDON: US President Joe Biden began his three-nation Europe trip after arriving in London on Sunday. He met British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak at 10 Downing Street on Monday — his sixth meeting with the UK prime minister, which was believed to have touched on various global issues, including the war in Ukraine. The pair have met regularly in recent months, seeking to re-pair ties that were strained under Sunak's predecessors — particularly in connection with the UK's post-Brexit trade arrangements in Northern Ireland. London's relations with Irish-American Biden have since improved, particularly after Sunak struck a deal with the European Union about the movement of goods. Biden told reporters in London that he "couldn't be meeting with a closer friend and greater ally." "Our relationship is rock solid," he added.

The president then went on to visit King Charles III at Windsor Castle, flying from central London to the royal residence in his Marine One helicopter. Having declined to attend Charles's coronation, instead being represented by his wife Jill Biden, the US president had promised the monarch that he would visit soon. The talks with King Charles were expected to include climate initiatives. **Biden's agenda at the NATO summit** On Monday night, Biden will travel to Lithuanian capital Vilnius ahead of talks with NATO leaders slated for June 11 and 12. Expected to be on the agenda are NATO's support for Kyiv, as well as Sweden's bid to join the alliance, which has so far been blocked by Turkey. The Vilnius summit also comes after the Biden administration greenlit the delivery of cluster munitions to Ukraine, with some NATO allies such as the UK and Spain expressing concern about the move. Sunak's spokesperson said the pair had discussed the issue while Biden was in London, acknowledging that providing the weapons "was a difficult choice for the US." It had been "forced on them by Russia's war of aggression," he

added. After his trip to Lithuania, Biden will head to Finland, which is the newest member of the NATO alliance. **What Biden said about Ukraine and NATO membership** The US president had cast doubt on the likelihood of Ukraine being offered NATO membership in comments to CNN. "I don't think it's ready for membership in NATO," Biden told the US broadcaster in an interview aired Sunday. Biden said that he hoped that NATO leaders would "lay out a rational path for Ukraine to be able to qualify to be able to get into NATO." In order to join the military alliance, countries must "meet all the qualifications, from democratization to a whole range of other issues," Biden emphasized. He added that bringing Ukraine into the alliance now would mean "war with Russia." "I don't think there is unanimity in NATO about whether or not to bring Ukraine into the NATO family now, at this moment, in the middle of a war," he said. Biden added that it will "take a while" for Ukraine to become a member of NATO. However, Biden said that Washington could provide Kyiv with support similar to that it gives to

Israel until Ukraine joins NATO. "The United States would be ready to provide...security a la the security we provide for Israel." He said this involves "providing the weaponry they need, the capacity to defend themselves." According to a recent report by the US Congressional Research Service, no other country in the world has received more US support than Israel since World War II. **Biden calls for Sweden in NATO during Erdogan call** Also on Sunday, the White House said that Biden expressed a desire for Sweden to join NATO "as soon as possible" in a phone call with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan. Sweden's NATO bid requires unanimous approval from all member states, including Turkey. On Thursday, Stockholm failed to convince Ankara to ratify Swedish accession to NATO in a foreign minister-level meeting. Erdogan told Biden that Sweden had taken steps in the right direction for Turkey to support the bid, the Turkish presidency's communications directorate said in a separate statement on Sunday. However, it said that the steps were not useful as Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) supporters continued to hold demonstrations in Sweden. — **bw**



Printed and published by:
Muscat Media Group
Post Box 770,
Postal Code: 112

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BRIEFS

Hundreds of migrants feared missing at sea

CANARY ISLANDS: Three boats with at least 300 migrants on board have disappeared off Spain's Canary islands, migrant aid group Walking Borders said on Sunday. It is reported that the boats carrying African migrants, which took off from Senegal to reach Spain, have been missing for 15 days. All three boats sailed from Kafountine in the south of Senegal, which is about 1,700 kilometres (1,057 miles) from Tenerife, one of the Canary islands. Helena Maleno from Walking Borders said that one boat was carrying about 65 people and the other between 50 and 60.

Mirziyoyev reelected as Uzbekistan president

TASHKENT: Preliminary election results on Monday show Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev winning a third term in power with 87.1% of the vote. The result should see the 65-year-old leader consolidate power until at least 2030 after changes to the constitution that extend his term of office. Mirziyoyev, a trained engineer, has positioned himself as a reformer creating a "New Uzbekistan." He has said he wants to double gross domestic product to \$160 billion (€146 billion) and centered his reelection campaign on the economy and education.

Dutch Prime Minister not running for fifth term

AMSTERDAM: Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte has announced he will not seek a fifth term in office during the November elections sparked by his government's resignation. Rutte, the Netherlands' longest-serving leader, said on Monday he will retire from Dutch politics following the November election. "In recent days there's been a lot of speculation about what motivated me. — **Agencies**





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Deadly monsoon rains ravage northern India leaving 15 dead

Footage from local media shows authorities using helicopters to rescue people who were stuck on roads and bridges because of the torrential rain

NEW DELHI: At least 15 people died in the heavy monsoon rains that battered northern India, authorities and local media said on Monday.

The torrential rains caused landslides and flash floods in various Indian states, leaving dozens stranded. In the northern state of Himachal Pradesh, flash floods over the weekend brought down a bridge and swept away several hutments.

Footage from local media shows authorities using helicopters to rescue people who were stuck on roads and bridges because of the rain.

This was also a situation in neighbouring Uttarakhand, a tourist hill state in the Himalayas, where landslides disrupted traffic on key highways.

In the capital, New Delhi, schools were closed after the city was entirely flooded by the weekend rains.

Extremely heavy downpours expected in Himachal Pradesh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks with officials and ministers and took stock of the situation in the wake of excessive rainfall, news agency ANI reported.

“Local administrations and disaster response teams are working to ensure the well-being of those affected,” the prime minister’s office tweeted.

Meanwhile, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) gave a red alert to Himachal Pradesh and warned the state might experience extremely heavy downpours. A senior weather department



official said that many districts in Himachal Pradesh received a month’s rainfall in a day during the weekend.

Indian monsoons becoming more erratic

Heavy rains are also expected in other northern regions such as Uttarakhand, Punjab and Haryana.

Authorities have asked people not to venture out of their homes unless necessary.

The weather agency said monsoon rains across the country have

already brought about 2% more rainfall than normal.

India regularly witnesses severe floods during the monsoon season, which runs between June and September.

But experts say that monsoons are becoming more erratic due to climate change, and the intensity of rains has increased, leading to frequent landslides and flash floods.

Heavy rains trigger floods

A total of 38 National Disaster Re-

sponse Force (NDRF) teams are deployed in Punjab, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh as relentless rain continued to lash these states for the third straight day in a row, putting normal life out of gear.

As the rain across the northern parts of the country has killed over 20 people, as well as caused landslides and flash floods in the region, the NDRF’s 15 teams are deployed in Punjab, 12 in Uttarakhand and 11 in Himachal Pradesh. Some reserve teams of the NDRF are also ready to meet any challenge in

an emergency situation in Delhi where the Yamuna river is flowing at 203.58 meters and is expected to reach 205.5 meters by tomorrow morning.

Speaking to ANI, NDRF DIG Mohsen Shahedi said that the reason behind heavy rains for the last three days is due to Western Disturbances.

“This situation often comes in monsoon. This caused heavy rains. Early warning and IMD (India Meteorological Department) prediction was given in ad-

vance regarding it,” Shahedi said. Asked about the deployment of the NDRF, Shahedi said, a total of 15 teams are deployed in Punjab, 12 in Uttarakhand and 11 in Himachal Pradesh presently. “Some more places may face problems as a few reservoirs will be opened tomorrow. NDRF will be deployed accordingly to deal with any challenge,” the DIG added.

Rescue operations

As per the officer, some rescue operations have also been undertaken by the NDRF personnel in each of these three states-- Punjab, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. “Rescue operations were conducted in almost each state, and it continued the whole night.”

“Relief materials have also been provided at many places. The relief materials have been provided to people stranded at some safe locations. These materials were provided to these people with the help of state administration and state agencies,” Shahedi told ANI.

The officer further said that the NDRF had received information from Central Water Commission (CWC) that the danger level of water in Delhi will touch by this noon. “If there is any emergency situation in Delhi, the NDRF teams in Delhi’s Dwarka and Ghaziabad are ready.

As per SSP Mandi, Soumya Sambasivan, there is a state of complete disaster in the Mandi district in Himachal Pradesh as many buildings, bridges and parking lots have been washed away.

Similar conditions are in Punjab and Uttarakhand as heavy rains triggered landslides and have left hundreds stranded as several roads -- including National Highways-- have been damaged due to landslides, adversely impacting vehicular movement in Himachal Pradesh.

As per IMD, it had given a warning for extremely heavy rainfall and issued red alerts in Himachal Pradesh. “Tomorrow onwards, rain is likely to decrease in Himachal Pradesh but in Uttarakhand, for the next 3 days, similar kind or a little lower intensity rain is likely to continue...Today, heavy rain expected in eastern Punjab, Haryana, West Uttar Pradesh and south Rajasthan...,” said the IMD.

— Agencies

REPEATED PROVOCATION

North Korea threatens to shoot alleged US spy planes

PYONGYANG: North Korea on Monday accused the United States of flying spy aircrafts into its airspace.

Alleging repeated provocation by the US, North Korea warned that, although exercising restraint, it will shoot down such surveillance flights. Pyongyang also slammed what it said was a US move to deploy a nuclear missile submarine close to the Korean peninsula.

A spokesperson for the North’s Ministry of National Defense said “provocative” military actions conducted by the US “several times” were bringing the Korean peninsula closer to a nuclear conflict. “There is no guarantee that such a shocking accident as the downing of the US Air Force strategic reconnaissance planes will not happen in the East Sea of Korea,” the spokesperson said. — nw

SPORTS

Djokovic, Swiatek in quarters

Defending champion completes victory over Poland's Hubert Hurkacz

LONDON: Defending champion Novak Djokovic marched into the Wimbledon quarter-finals by completing victory over Poland's Hubert Hurkacz when the pair returned to finish on Monday. Djokovic was leading by two sets when they were forced off court on Sunday night because of the 11pm curfew.

The Serb, going for a record-equalling eighth men's title, dropped the third but won 7-6 (8-6), 7-6 (8-6), 4-6, 6-4.

Third seed Daniil Medvedev also reached the last eight for the first time as Czech opponent Jiri Lehecka retired. Medvedev will face Greek fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas - a player with who he has developed a spicy rivalry - or unseeded American Christopher Eubanks in the last eight.

Djokovic advanced to the quarterfinals at Wimbledon for the 14th time. He recorded his 90th career match wins at Wimbledon and is the second most by any man in the Open Era after Roger Federer's 105.

Also women's singles defending champion Elena Rybakina reached the quarter-finals after 13th seed Beatriz Haddad Maia retired with an injury on Monday.

Rybakina broke in the fourth game but the Brazilian looked immediately uncomfortable with her lower back. After leaving the court in tears for a medical timeout, Haddad Maia came back to play one more game before conceding.

Serbia's Djokovic, 36, has been unbeatable at the All England Club in recent years, winning the men's title at the past four Championships and not losing a completed match here since 2016.

The 23-time Grand Slam champion's progress this year had been smooth until facing Hurkacz, not dropping a set in his opening three matches. A below-par start from the Serb on Monday changed that.

Both players had again dominated serve in a third set which looked likely to go to another tie-break - until 17th seed Hurkacz, who famously beat Roger Federer in the Swiss great's final match at Wimbledon in 2021, broke to reduce the deficit.

Djokovic looked slightly rattled



Andreeva loses to Keys after racquet throw

LONDON: Russian 16-year-old Mirra Andreeva's Wimbledon run ended in controversy after she was docked a point for throwing her racquet on Monday.

The qualifier, who had already been warned for hurling her racquet after losing the second set, received a point penalty that gave Madison Keys match point in their fourth-round encounter.

Andreeva saved that point but went on to lose 3-6 7-6 (7-4) 6-2.

"I didn't throw the racquet, I slid," she protested to the umpire.

She did not shake hands with umpire Louise Azemar Engzell as she left court two in a hurry having previously enthralled fans with her brilliant displays on the big stage.

She told a news confer-



ence the official had made the wrong decision on the second warning, which came at deuce at 5-2 in the third set after she ran to retrieve a deep ball to her right and appeared to lose her footing.

She touched the grass with her left hand before her right arm came over the top and the racquet hit the ground

with force. It earned her a second warning and an automatic point penalty, which gave her American opponent match point.

The Russian walked over to the umpire's chair to plead her case, saying: "Do you understand what you are doing? I didn't throw the racquet. I slid. It's the wrong decision. I slid

and then I fell."

But the decision stood and Andreeva could not exit the court fast enough, giving a quick handshake to Keys before heading straight off.

"For me, it's a controversial point," she said. "Honestly, I didn't have any intention to throw the racquet. I slid. Honestly, I thought that I would fall forward.

"Maybe it did look like I threw the racquet. I don't know. I haven't seen any videos yet."

Last month, Andreeva received a code violation in her French Open third-round loss to Coco Gauff when she thumped a ball into the crowd and it hit a spectator.

Keys, meanwhile, is into her second Wimbledon quarter-final, having made the same stage in 2015.

bags and departing Wimbledon in her fourth-round match against Olympic champion Belinda Bencic on Sunday, but saved two match points to come back and claim a nail-biting victory.

The four-time major winner came from 6-5 and 40-15 down in the second set, bouncing back to save two match points before winning the tie-break and the third set to reach the quarterfinals at the All England Club for the first time, after a three-hour battle with the scores at 6-7, 7-6, 6-3.

Next up for Swiatek is Ukrainian wildcard Elina Svitolina, who put together a heroic effort to come back from a set and 2-0 down, and wipe a 7-4 deficit in the deciding super-tiebreak to overcome two-time major champion Victoria Azarenka 2-6, 6-4, 7-6 (11-9).

Later, second seed Aryna Sabalenka sealed a 6-4, 6-0 victory over Ekaterina Alexandrova to reach the last eight.

On the men's side, world No.7 Andrey Rublev escaped from a five-set thriller against Alexander Bublik in the opening match on centre court, overcoming the 23rd seed 7-5, 6-3, 6-7(6), 6-7(5), 6-4 to book his first Wimbledon quarter-final appearance. Roman Safiullin, a debutant at Wimbledon main draw, continued his fairytale run by upsetting No.26 seed Denis Shapovalov 3-6, 6-3, 6-1, 6-3 to reach the last-eight stage at a Grand Slam for the first time. - Agencies

PAN ARAB GAMES



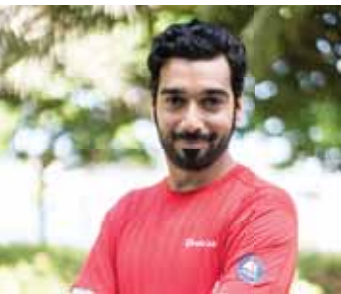
Oman sailors eye podium finishes in three classes

MUSCAT: Following two days of racing on Saturday and Sunday, five of the seven Oman sailors in action were among the top-three places across three classes, raising medal hopes at the 2023 Pan Arab Games in Algeria.

Amid a hotly-contested fleet, Oman's Hassan Al Wahaibi led the Optimist class, making the most of the ideal conditions and wind speeds of between 8-12 knots. His teammates, Tamim Al Balushi and Feras Al Nabhabi, are in second and third place respectively. Just three points separates the top three at the top of the leaderboard.

Soud Al Shaqsi is currently in fifth place, just two points behind fourth.

In the ILCA 4 class, Oman's Hatim Al Oreimi is currently third, just five points behind the leader.



Sultan Al Zadjali

Teammate Abdullatif Al Qasmi is in fifth place, just six points from top.

In the ILCA7, Abdulla Janahi of Bahrain led the way with a perfect score from the six races so far. Oman's Ahmed Al Balushi is currently in third place, just behind

Adil Khaled of the United Arab Emirates.

The team is being trained by coaches Sultan Al Zadjali and Munther Al Kindi.

Commenting after the opening two days of action, coach Al Zadjali said, "We are pleased with our performance so far. The team has started well and remains in contention for medals, which will be decided by the end of the week. We still have a lot of work to do, and the fleet is strong. I am confident that our sailors will do their best."

Ahmed Al Balushi, who is competing in the ILCA7 class, said, "Despite my setback on the second day, I am learning a lot and I hope to finish on the podium. It is a great honour to represent Oman and I want to do my best."

FIA WEC FIFTH ROUND

Oman Racing trio finishes 7th at 6 Hours of Monza

MUSCAT: Oman Racing with TF Sport's trio of Ahmad al Harthy, Michael Dinan and Charlie Eastwood had to settle for a seventh place finish in GTE Am class during round five of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) at the 6 Hours of Monza on Sunday.

It was a frustrating race for Oman Racing with TF Sport as they were hampered by a top speed performance disparity.

Al Harthy produced a competitive and well-judged first couple of hours behind the wheel of the No.25 Aston Martin Vantage but the 'balance of performance' difference against rivals Porsche and Ferrari entries proved too big to overcome.

Having qualified as P2, Al Harthy, backed by Oman Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, OQ, Omantel and MHD-ITICS made a good start to maintain second in GTE Am.

Around a quarter of an hour into the encounter, Al Harthy slipped to third before taking the pit-stop at the 30-minute mark.

Al Harthy was sixth on the road and the first of those to have made a pit-stop and moved back through to fourth around one hour into the race.

He climbed into the lead in hour two and then made his second stop with 90 minutes gone - holding a 16 second cushion prior to the pit visit.

After a quick turnaround he threaded back into the race in fifth and then moved into fourth.



A few minutes later after the second hour, the Safety Car was required and Al Harthy moved up to second place before completing his 70-lap stint.

Dinan moved into second in hour three before being edged back to fourth. At the halfway point, Dinan remained in fourth, but the heat of battle increased as the speed advantage of the other front-runners began to tell.

Over the course of a long and thankless final three hours, Dinan and then Eastwood did all they could through their respective stints but the Oman Racing with TF Sport car took the chequered flag in eighth position. However, post-race, a penalty for a rival entry elevated them into seventh place.

Al Harthy said: "During my stint I really had a good few opening laps, but when the race started to neutralise slightly we saw the difference in performance with

the others. My main goal was to keep us in the hunt, we were off-sync with our strategy and it was actually looking good at that point. As soon as we went into the third hour and the second half of the race, the pace was stronger from the others.

"Unfortunately, we weren't able to be competitive with that kind of speed difference. Top speed is critical at Monza, and we just weren't on a level playing field. Hopefully, the organisers will look at this issue before the next round in Japan. When we were able to be closer with the speed performance, at Spa and Le Mans, we had some great results. We're still positive as long as we have a car that can be competitive."

Round six, the penultimate event of the 2023 season, will take place at Fuji Speedway in Japan on September 9-10.

It will mark Al Harthy's first ever visit to a track in Japan.

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES
The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by September 2023 reaching \$78.29, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by 40 cents from the price of Friday, which was \$77.89. - **ONA**

MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER
The MSX index closed at 4,776.15 points, down by 0.26 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.43 per cent at 478.62 points. National Finance, up 10.00 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Fisheries, down 3.23 per cent, was the top loser.

NCSI MAY DATA

Production of M-91 fuel, LPG increases significantly



MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman's production of refineries and petrochemicals recorded an increase of 19.1 per cent till the end of May 2023 compared to the corresponding period in 2022. Products of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and M-91 automobile fuel lead the increase by recording a surge of 1212.3 per cent and 232.1 per cent, respectively, according to preliminary data issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI). Exports of M-95 automobile fuel

until the end of May 2023 declined by 91.8 per cent compared to the same period in 2022 to stand at 226,400 barrels, while gas oil (diesel) exports went up by 50 per cent to reach 8,912,200 barrels. Aviation fuel oil also increased by 57.6 per cent to reach 2,540,200 barrels. Production of standard grade petrol (M-91) stood at 7,046,300 barrels comprising a rise of 46.6 per cent till the end of May 2023. Sales of M-91 reached 5,843,100 barrels. Production of M-95 automobile fuel dropped by 29.6 per

cent to stand at 4,815,600 barrels. Sales of M-95 also went down to stand at 4,831,000 barrels. Meanwhile, gas oil (diesel) output increased by 22.5 per cent to 14,566,700 barrels. Sales of diesel stood at 5,799,000 barrels. Aviation fuel oil production recorded a rise of 57.6 per cent to 4,193,600 barrels. Its sales stood at 1,678,500 barrels. Moreover, production of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) increased by 43 per cent to 3,433,300 barrels. As far as petrochemicals are

concerned, benzene production increased by 270.6 per cent to reach 63,000 metric tonnes. The output of paraxylene stood at 211,800 metric tonnes, constituting a surge of 1168.3 per cent. Production of polypropylene went up by 28 per cent to stand at 111,200 metric tonnes. Further, exports of paraxylene reached 210,200 metric tonnes and exports of polypropylene went up by 41.3 per cent to record 102,900 metric tonnes. Exports of benzene reached 66,900 metric tonnes. - **ONA**

Pact inked for seismic acquisition in Block 11

Based on this agreement, Shell Development Oman is purchasing fully-processed seismic data on Block 11 in line with the Exploration and Production Sharing Agreement

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Petroleum Development Oman (PDO), through its subsidiary and Shell Development Oman (SDO) has signed a contract for seismic acquisition in Block 11, signifying a major advancement in Oman's oil and gas industry. Based on this agreement, SDO is purchasing fully-processed seismic data on Block 11 in line with the Exploration and Production Sharing Agreement (EPSA). The agreement, which is set to run until October 2024, was signed by PDO Managing Director Steve



Phimister and SDO's Walid Hadi, SVP Oman and Country Chair. **Significant step** PDO Managing Director Steve Phimister said: "We are delighted to sign this new contract with Shell Development Oman, a valued partner in Oman's oil and gas industry. This collaboration is a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to unlock Oman's full hydrocarbon reserve potential. Indeed, the collaboration with SDO will enable us to build on our previous regional

successes and continue delivering value to our stakeholders." Spanning 2,900 square kilometres in the central region of Oman, Block 11 is an area that could hold significant hydrocarbon potential. To identify and evaluate prospective hydrocarbon reserves, the seismic survey employs sophisticated technologies, including high-resolution imaging and advanced data processing techniques. Commenting on this signing, Walid Hadi Shell's Senior VP and Country Chairman in Oman said,

"We are delighted to partner with PDO on this project, which is a reflection of our shared commitment to the sustainable development of Oman's oil and gas resources. We hope that the seismic acquisition and processing project will provide crucial data to better understand the geology and hydrocarbon potential of the block and we are confident that, along with our partners TotalEnergies and OQ, we will be able to leverage our collective expertise and capabilities to deliver value for Oman."

REAL ESTATE PROJECT



Agreement inked for Taqa Long Beach project worth OMR10mn

MUSCAT: An agreement was inked to implement the Taqa Long Beach project worth OMR10 million in the Wilayat of Taqa, Governorate of Dhofar. The project is set on an area of 33,000 square metres, while the construction area is 6,500 square metres. It consists of a complex

comprising seven floors that include 200 housing units, a sports club, a meeting room, a five-star restaurant and several commercial activities. The signing of the agreement was attended by Sheikh Tarik bin Khalid Al Hinai, Governor of Taqah. - **ONA**

CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN



CBO issues treasury bills worth OMR65 million

MUSCAT: The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) raised OMR65 million by way of allotting treasury bills. The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR37 million, for a maturity period of 28 days. The average accepted price reached OMR99.665 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR99.665 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.36696 per cent and 4.38164 per cent, respectively. The value of the allotted Treasury bills amounted to OMR28 million, for a maturity period of

91 days. The average accepted price reached OMR98.766 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR98.765 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.94999 per cent and 5.01184 per cent, respectively. The treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds. The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) acts as the Issue Manager and provides the added advantage

of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities (Repo). The interest rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 5.75 per cent while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 6.25 per cent. Furthermore, the treasury bills promote the local money market by creating a benchmark yield curve for short-term interest rates. Additionally, the government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures. - **ONA**

FOREX TRANSACTION

India is most attractive investment destination in emerging markets

NEW DELHI: India has emerged as the most attractive investment destination among emerging markets in 2023 amid a host of global economic headwinds, including high inflation and interest rates, global investment management firm Invesco said in a report. According to the Invesco Global Sovereign Asset Management Study, 2023, sovereign wealth funds favour emerging markets, particularly India, given its solid demographics, political stability, and proactive regulation. "We observe an increased affinity for fixed income assets, including private debt, and heightened interest in Emerging Markets, believed to offer potential benefits in a higher-rate environment. Among the Emerging Markets, India has piqued sovereign investors' interest, overtaking China," the Invesco report said. This was its eleventh annual study on sovereign investors. Initiated in 2013, it captures the viewpoints and opinions of chief investment officers, heads of asset classes, and senior portfolio strategists from 85 sovereign wealth funds and 57 central banks. Collectively, Invesco noted these institutions manage approximately \$21 trillion in assets. Emerging markets, it said, offer a range of attractive investment opportunities in both public and private markets. "Investors are focused on economies that offer favourable demographics, political stability, and



positive regulatory initiatives, with India a priority," the report said. It noted India exemplifies the attributes sought by sovereign investors. "Viewed increasingly positively for its improved business and political stability, favourable demographics, regulatory initiatives, and a friendly environment for sovereign investors, India has now overtaken China as the most attractive Emerging Market for investing in Emerging Market debt." "We don't have enough exposure to India or China. However, India is a better story now in terms of business and political stability. Demographics are growing fast, and they also have interesting companies, good regulation initiatives, and a very

friendly environment for sovereign investors," a development sovereign based in the Middle East was quoted in the report. India is among a number of countries, including Mexico and Brazil, that are benefitting from increased foreign corporate investment aimed at both domestic and international demand through "friend-shoring" and "near-shoring". Besides India, it noted important commodity-producing countries including Brazil and Indonesia, which are seen as well placed for the green transition and electric vehicle revolution, have the potential to become destinations for diversification for sovereigns with more "concentrated commodity revenue streams". - **ANI**

MARKET

MSX index ends lower



National Finance, up 10.00 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Fisheries, down 3.23 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,776.15 points, down by 0.26 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.43 per cent at 478.62 points. National Finance, up 10.00 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Fisheries, down 3.23 per cent, was the top loser.

Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded while GDB 52 was the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 599 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR2.79 million, with more than 9.67 million shares changing hands. Out of 52 traded securities, 15 advanced, 19 declined, and 18 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net sellers for OMR378,000 while GCC and Arab investors were net buyers for OMR301,000, followed by foreign investors for OMR77,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,843.94 points, down 0.1 per cent. Prices of National Finance, Al Madina Investments, Oman Arab Bank, Al Anwar Investment, and Oman United Insurance were up by 10.00 per cent, 4.00 per cent, 2.76 per cent, 2.47 per

cent, and 1.52 per cent respectively. Prices of Muscat Finance, United Finance, Global Financial Investments, Al Sharqia Investment, Oman & Emirates Investment were up by 1.72 per cent, 1.59 per cent, 1.59 per cent, 1.33 per cent, and 1.32 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,247.02 points, up 1.27 per cent. Prices of A'Saffa Foods, Oman Refreshment, and Jazeera Steel Products were up by 7.37 per cent, 6.25 per cent, and 4.29 per cent respectively. Prices of Oman Fisheries, Raysut Cement, and Al Maha Ceramics were up by 3.23 per cent, 2.11 per cent, and 1.84 per cent respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.43 per cent before closing at 1,688.94 points. Prices of Barka Water & Power Company, Dhofar Generating, Oman National Engineering, Barka Desalination, and Abraj Energy were up by 8.16 per cent, 1.85 per cent, 1.85 per cent, 0.75 per cent, 0.65 per cent respectively. Prices of Phoenix Power, Ooredoo, SMN Power Holding, Renaissance Services, and Oman Telecom were up by 1.52 per cent, 1.34 per cent, 1.16 per cent, 0.79 per cent, and 0.20 per cent respectively.

— United Securities

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES						
Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,794.77	4,774.65	4,776.15	4,788.72	-12.57	-0.26
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,865.55	7,837.60	7,843.94	7,852.09	-8.15	-0.10
Industry Index	6,247.02	6,162.40	6,247.02	6,168.54	78.49	1.27
Services Index	1,696.18	1,688.33	1,688.94	1,696.18	-7.24	-0.43
MSX Shariah Index	480.69	478.62	478.62	480.69	-2.08	-0.43
MSX TR INDEX	6,305.76	6,279.30	6,281.27	6,297.81	-16.54	-0.26
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,582.76	8,552.26	8,559.18	8,568.07	-8.89	-0.10
SERVICES TR IDX	1,864.64	1,856.02	1,856.69	1,864.64	-7.96	-0.43
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,673.37	6,582.97	6,673.37	6,589.53	83.84	1.27

Trading Summary						
Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap.	Up	Down	Equal
9,670,285	2,788,246	599	23,869,081,847	15	19	18

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, JULY 10

SN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV CLOSE	DIFF	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BD	LAST OFFR	PR VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM00000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	38,644	11,115	9	0.280	0.292	0.280	0.292	0.280	0.012	4.286	0.292	0.270	0.292	0.100	36,470,204
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	8,821	970	1	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.108	0.002	1.852	0.110	0.107	0.110	0.100	16,500,000
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	100	27	1	0.268	0.268	0.268	0.268	0.264	0.004	1.515	0.268	0.250	0.268	0.100	26,800,000
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	9,970	2,767	11	0.286	0.286	0.286	0.286	0.286	0.000	0.000	0.286	0.286	0.286	0.100	463,025,550
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	6,000	1,554	1	0.259	0.259	0.259	0.259	0.259	0.000	0.000	0.259	0.256	0.284	0.100	56,980,000
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	24,754	6,189	5	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.000	0.000	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.100	15,301,068
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	32,200	5,571	1	0.173	0.173	0.173	0.173	0.173	0.000	0.000	0.173	0.173	0.180	0.100	518,368,798
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	138,953	137,537	31	0.980	0.986	0.980	0.986	0.980	-0.002	-0.202	0.986	0.988	0.988	0.100	741,000,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	1,090,261	305,872	59	0.279	0.282	0.277	0.278	0.279	-0.001	-0.358	0.278	0.278	0.278	0.100	2,086,778,383
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	7,032	2,673	4	0.382	0.382	0.380	0.380	0.382	-0.002	-0.524	0.380	0.374	0.420	0.100	253,978,862
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	4,986	1,870	4	0.375	0.375	0.375	0.375	0.378	-0.003	-0.794	0.375	0.375	0.379	0.100	88,653,760
OM0000003396	SOHAB INTERNATIONAL BANK	59,206	6,029	6	0.108	0.108	0.107	0.107	0.108	-0.001	-0.928	0.107	0.107	0.108	0.100	491,136,665
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	92,000	7,835	12	0.086	0.086	0.085	0.085	0.086	-0.001	-1.163	0.085	0.085	0.087	0.100	16,968,026
OM0000004788	MADINA TAKAFUL	1,000	85	1	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.086	-0.001	-1.163	0.085	0.085	0.091	0.100	14,875,000
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO	50,000	3,750	2	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.076	-0.001	-1.316	0.075	0.075	0.077	0.100	3,440,625
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INVESTMENT HO	10,000	740	1	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.075	-0.001	-1.333	0.074	0.073	0.074	0.100	6,660,000
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	501,724	185,474	39	0.370	0.372	0.367	0.367	0.372	-0.005	-1.344	0.367	0.367	0.368	0.100	238,896,532
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	90,385	5,634	6	0.063	0.063	0.062	0.063	0.063	-0.001	-1.587	0.062	0.062	0.063	0.100	22,079,892
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO	57,000	3,532	4	0.061	0.062	0.061	0.062	0.063	-0.001	-1.587	0.062	0.061	0.064	0.100	12,400,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	542	173	1	0.320	0.320	0.320	0.320	0.326	-0.006	-1.840	0.320	0.318	0.340	0.100	17,600,000
Total		20	2,220,286	689,396	201											

Parallel Market																
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	119,119	15,717	12	0.130	0.132	0.130	0.132	0.130	0.002	10.000	0.132	0.132	0.132	0.100	75,728,965
OM0000003141	BARKA WATER AND POWER	731,372	39,825	45	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.049	0.004	8.163	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.100	8,480,000
OM0000002804	ASAFA FOODS	644,992	213,136	69	0.312	0.335	0.312	0.335	0.312	0.023	7.372	0.335	0.335	0.335	0.100	40,200,000
OM0000001426	OMAN REFRESHMENT	200	340	1	1.700	1.700	1.700	1.700	1.600	0.100	6.250	1.700	1.600	1.700	0.100	85,000,000
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	12,063	603	3	0.050	0.052	0.049	0.052	0.050	0.002	4.000	0.052	0.049	0.051	0.100	4,420,000
OM0000005280	OMAN ARAB BANK	100	15	1	0.149	0.149	0.149	0.149	0.145	0.004	2.759	0.149	0.133	0.149	0.100	248,742,999
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	938,571	77,451	29	0.081	0.083	0.081	0.083	0.081	0.002	2.469	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.100	17,098,000
OM0000007047	DHOOFAR GENERATING	8,100	446	3	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.054	0.001	1.852	0.055	0.050	0.055	0.100	12,223,200
OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	10,000	1,340	1	0.134	0.134	0.134	0.134	0.133	0.001	0.752	0.134	0.122	0.134	0.100	10,119,948
OM0000008634	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	2,327,824	729,920	101	0.310	0.314	0.309	0.312	0.310	0.002	0.645	0.312	0.310	0.313	0.100	240,302,400
OM0000001020	OMAN CHROMITE	119	417	1	3.500	3.500	3.500	3.500	3.500	0.000	0.000	3.500	3.500	3.500	1.000	10,500,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	34,289	3,395	6	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.000	0.000	0.099	0.099	0.100	0.100	8,415,000
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	410	215	1	0.524	0.524	0.524	0.524	0.524	0.000	0.000	0.524	0.524	0.572	0.100	82,530,000
OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	1,050	121	1	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.000	0.000	0.115	0.105	0.115	0.100	10,350,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	124,270	22,303	10	0.180	0.180	0.179	0.180	0.180	0.000	0.000	0.180	0.180	0.180	0.100	36,537,560
OM0000003681	VOLITAMP ENERGY	19,891	2,188	7	0.105	0.110	0.105	0.110	0.110	0.000	0.000	0.110	0.110	0.115	0.100	8,954,303
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	153,000	14,698	6	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.000	0.000	0.096	0.094	0.096	0.100	214,747,491
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	543,058	15,206	3	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.000	0.000	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.100	18,896,848
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	10,511	305	2	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.000	0.000	0.029	0.028	0.030	0.100	20,717,784
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	21,347	1,985	6	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.000	0.000	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.100	14,498,197
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	274,081	25,490	7	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.000	0.000	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.100	43,820,334
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	3,300	399	2	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.000	0.000	0.121	0.121	0.125	0.100	51,397,196
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	129,543	25,131	5	0.194	0.194	0.194	0.194	0.195	-0.001	-0.513	0.194	0.194	0.194	0.100	378,233,548
OM0000005962	PHOENIX POWER	212,450	13,869	10	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.066	-0.001	-1.315	0.065	0.064	0.065	0.100	95,080,995
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	50,913	2,948	3	0.058	0.058	0.057	0.057	0.058	-0.001	-1.724	0.057	0.057	0.058	0.100	17,507,341
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	191,794	35,988	23	0.192	0.192	0.186	0.186	0.190	-0.004	-2.105	0.186	0.185	0.186	0.100	37,200,000
OM0000004735	SEMBORP SALALAH	188,410	17,646	18	0.094	0.094	0.093	0.093	0.095	-0.002	-2.105	0.093	0.093	0.096	0.100	88,775,191
Total		27	4,770,177	1,261,025	376											

GOLD PRICES

Gold awaits fresh cues as focus turns to US inflation print

LONDON: Gold prices were flat on Monday as investors traded cautiously ahead of US inflation data expected later this week to gauge the impact of interest rate hikes and if more policy tightening was on the cards.

Spot gold was little changed at \$1,923.49 per ounce by 1011 GMT. US gold futures fell 0.2 per cent to \$1,929.00.

“Friday has been swiftly tapered by the notion that this latest US jobs report won’t yet allow the Fed to halt its rate hikes,” Exinity Chief Market Analyst Han Tan said.

According to Reuters, last week’s employment report showed the US economy added the fewest jobs in 2-1/2 years in June, but persistently strong wage growth pointed to still-tight labour market conditions.

“If the incoming core US CPI print (on Wednesday) lays bare still-stubborn inflationary pressure, that may prompt bullion bears



to push the precious metal into sub-\$1,900 waters, provided markets ramp up bets for yet another Fed rate hike after July,” Tan added.

Bullion prices have dropped over 7 per cent since reaching near-record levels in early May as investors scaled back expectations of an end to the Fed’s rate-hiking cycle.

Gold prices are highly sensitive to higher interest rates as

they dampen the appeal of bullion, which pays no interest, while a stronger dollar also makes it less attractive for overseas investors.

“Gold prices seem to be in a range for now between \$1,900 and \$1,940 an ounce, with the potential for further upside likely to be dictated by US CPI numbers,” Michael Hewson, chief market analyst at CMC Markets said. -BNA

STOCKS



Asian share markets turn mixed, China disinflation a drag

SYDNEY: Asian share markets turned mixed on Monday as a surprisingly low reading on Chinese inflation highlighted the troubles in its economy, ahead of data on US inflation and corporate earnings later in the week.

Chinese consumer price figures showed

Jogging

TOWARDS

Wellness

If you feel you're seeing more joggers on the roads lately, it's for good reason! Jogging has become increasingly popular over the years, with more people in Muscat and around the world embracing it as a form of exercise and a way to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Its ease and accessibility alongside numerous health benefits has inspired many of us to implement it into our routines. It is an exhilarating breath of fresh air and a chance to explore and appreciate your surroundings while maintaining your physical health, well-being and peace of mind. It is also a great way to start the day and feel confident, capable and focused to face anything that comes your way.

Oman, despite the challenges of summer heat, is still blessed with many parks, coastlines, walking paths and mountain trails to choose from, so you are spoiled for choice if you want to join the jogging trend.

WHY THE HYPE?

'I run to feel empowered and resilient. To disconnect from the world and connect with myself. It is the best form of self-care, feeling my muscles contracting, heart pumping, lungs working,'

Anas Balushi, an avid jogger who runs often and has explored many trails around Oman explains, 'I basically run today so I can run tomorrow'.

Alongside the benefits of being outdoors, jogging pro-

vides a convenient way to stay active, improve cardiovascular fitness, manage weight, reduce stress, and enhance your overall well-being. It is the easiest and most well rounded activity to maintain. You can jog anywhere you are and you don't need any extra facilities. Just bring your shoes and you are ready!

'What I like the most about running is the runner's high and feel of achievement. The journey to a race event, on the day of the race you remember the hard work you put in over the last couple of months, and it feels great!' Anas explains.

WHAT JOGGING METHOD DO YOU CHOOSE?

• **The continuous jogger**

There are various methods of jogging to suit different needs. While most joggers out there maintain a steady pace throughout their session in a method known as the 'continuous jogger' that helps build endurance and cardiovascular fitness.

• **The long distance jogger**

you may choose to maintain a slower pace for longer distances and focus on improving aerobic endurance instead (a practice

commonly used for preparing for long-distance races).

• **Interval training**

Another highly beneficial technique is known as 'interval training' which involves alternating between periods of high-intensity running and slower, recovery periods of jogging or walking.

This method is helpful in improving speed, endurance, and burning calories in the long run, and that break between running allows you to catch your breath for a minute before starting again!

• **Fartlek training**

Translating into 'speed play' in Swedish, this is similar to interval training but in a less structured way. It's a great way to mix up your routine and basically, find a method in the madness while still reaping the amazing benefits of jogging.

• **Hill repeats**

This method which suits Oman's mountains and, as the name suggests, involves uphill sprints followed by recovery jogs downhill. This technique is helpful in building leg strength alongside improving overall fitness.

• **Tempo runs**

For the advanced joggers out there, 'tempo runs' involve running at a faster (but still comfortable) pace for an extended period of time. This method improves overall running speed.

Your body is a machine, but you need to look after it. Remember to warm up before jogging, it is recommended to gradually increase the intensity or distance you are jogging to avoid injuries and, especially during this summer heat, remember to stay hydrated!

Jogging at night is a great way to escape the heat. If you are smart about it! Remember that drivers cannot always see you: wear reflective clothing, choose well lit areas, and be aware of your surroundings (do not put your favorite song up unaware of that car speeding up behind you!) personal safety should always be a priority.

'With trail running you get to experience nature and places in a different way, exploring it with adrenaline,' Anas explains.

If you are ready to explore Oman's landscapes across different trails. You can choose from routes around Birkat al Maoz, Saal Loop, Jebel Jaid, Jebel Akhdhar or Jebel Shams, which offer different elevations and difficulty levels, or simply start with a jog around your neighborhood.

What are you waiting for? Put your running shoes on and begin your steps towards your best self and better health!



LIFESTYLE

SPORTS

Verstappen wins British GP

McLaren driver Lando Norris came in second followed by Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton in third place

LONDON: Red Bull's Max Verstappen saw off the threat from the resurgent McLaren team to take victory in Sunday's Formula 1 British Grand Prix.

Starting from his now-customary pole position, Verstappen lost the lead to Lando Norris at the start, with the Briton taking full advantage of a raft of updates that have vaulted his McLaren up the order.

However, Verstappen's imperious form so far this season made it difficult to believe Norris could remain ahead of the Dutchman for long, and on lap 5 Verstappen breezed past Norris to take a lead he would keep to the flag.

"We had a terrible start, so we need to look into that why it was," said Verstappen, who also took home the bonus point for fastest lap.

"Even after that, both McLarens were super quick. It took a few laps to pass him but then I could ease out a gap.

"Very happy we won again, but it wasn't straightforward today.

"The [bad start] made it a bit more exciting having to push for it. Lando was very nice to me but he came back at me with the DRS. He did very well today."

Behind Verstappen, Norris took his and McLaren's first podium



finish of the season with an excellent drive to second place, with the Briton withstanding intense pressure late in the race from Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton, who settled for third.

Norris' teammate Oscar Piastri had been running third, but lost time by making a pit stop just before the Virtual Safety Car was deployed to clear Kevin Magnussen's stricken Haas. The Australian ultimately

took fourth place for his best F1 finish yet.

Hamilton's teammate George Russell finished fifth, ahead of Sergio Perez in the second Red Bull, once again having to fight his way through the field after a disappointing qualifying session.

Fernando Alonso took seventh in a low-key race for Aston Martin, with Alex Albon scoring points again for Williams with a fine drive to eighth place.

On a disappointing day for Ferrari, Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz rounded out the top ten.

Verstappen's win extends his already huge lead in the Drivers' Championship, with the Dutchman now on 255 points. Perez is second on 156, with Alonso third on 137 points.

In the Constructors' Championship, Red Bull are way out in front with 411 points. Mercedes are second with 203, and Aston Martin are third with 181 points.

The next round of the 2023 F1 World Championship is the Hungarian Grand Prix at the Hungaroring near Budapest on July 23. - **Xinhua**

McLaren's Norris shows progress

LONDON: Lando Norris first fell in love with Formula 1 watching Lewis Hamilton and Fernando Alonso battling at the front in silver McLarens at Silverstone back in 2007.

On Sunday, he found himself in the same position on that same track, and he said he felt "very proud".

Like Hamilton had so many times before him, now - for the first time - Norris stood on the podium at his home grand prix, soaking up the cheers and chants of the crowd.

"It's pretty special to be in that position," he said.

A record 160,000 spectators were cheering Norris from the very first seconds of the race, as he catapulted away from his second place on the grid past Max Verstappen's Red Bull and into the lead.

"My heart was racing a bit more than normal," he said, "and I was watching the crowd."

The moment he led his home race was never going to last. Norris knew that, and so did everyone watching. Verstappen and his car are just too strong this year, and the Dutchman was always going to get past and win the race, barring some kind of problem.



But once Verstappen was gone, Norris stayed in second all race, holding off a charge from Hamilton in the closing laps.

Afterwards, the beauty of the moment and the road he had travelled was not lost on him.

"I was seven," Norris said, recalling those times years ago. "It is what made me want to be a racing driver. Little did I know Lewis would still be here 15 years later and still going strong. It's an honour to be able to race with these drivers who have created history and be some of the best drivers ever to come through F1."

"I want to be someone who can join in and create some of my own history. It's an honour and a privilege and exciting at the same time."

BWF WORLD TOUR



India's Lakshya lifts Canada Open title

CALGARY: Indian badminton player Lakshya Sen defeated reigning All England champion and China's Li Shi Feng in straight sets 21-18 and 22-20 to clinch the men's singles title at the Canada Open 2023 early Monday.

The 21-year-old Lakshya Sen, a Commonwealth Games gold medallist, secured his second BWF World Tour after winning the Indian Open in 2022.

Lakshya began his campaign in the Canada Open with a 21-18, 21-15 win over Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn.

In the round of 16, Lakshya beat Brazil's Ygor Coelho de Oliveira 21-15, 21-11.

Lakshya continued his winning run as he defeated Germany's Ju-

lien Carraggi 21-8, 17-21, 21-10 to advance to the semi-finals.

The 21-year-old Indian then raced past Japan's Kenta Nishimoto 21-17, 21-14 to enter the summit clash.

After the title win, Lakshya said, "I played a good tactical game."

"It was a great tournament for me. I kept on getting better as I advanced in the tournament."

"In the final, the key thing for me was to remain patient in the crucial moment and play the right tactical game."

Meanwhile, double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu failed to book a ticket in the final after losing 14-21, 15-21 to world No. 1 Akane Yamaguchi of Japan in the women's singles semifinal. - **ANI**

ASHES SERIES

Headingley victory is 'just the start' for England, says Stokes

LONDON: England skipper Ben Stokes hailed the performance of his England side in "another down-to-the-wire" Ashes Test at Headingley on Sunday, but insisted that their dramatic three-wicket victory is "just the start" of their bid to come back from 2-0 down and win the series. **ESPNCricinfo** reported.

Unlike four years ago, Stokes was not the protagonist of an England run chase at Headingley, scoring only 13 before being strangled down the leg side by Mitchell Starc. But contributions from Harry Brook - who top-scored with 75 - as well as Zak Crawley, Chris Woakes and Mark Wood were enough for them to hunt down a target of 254 inside 50 overs.

"It's obviously really big in the context of the series," Stokes said. "We knew we needed to win this one to keep alive our hopes of winning the Ashes, so it's a good win. If you look at the first two games in terms of how tight they were, getting over the line in another tight game can mentally help, knowing that it's another close game but we've got over the line in this one."

"The first two didn't go our way. If you sort of flip it round and we didn't win this one and it's tight again, you would think, 'It's just not meant to be'. We're obviously over the moon that we won this



one but it's just the start of what we know we need to do."

England made three changes to their side ahead of the Headingley Test, in part due to Stokes' own fitness issues. All three of the men who came into the side - Woakes, Wood and Moeen Ali - played important roles, taking 15 wickets between them and producing cameos with the bat.

"Woakesy, being out of the team for such a long period of time, and to come back in and perform the way that he did both with ball and with bat... seeing Woody running in like he does, big smile on his face and enjoying every moment out there was great," Stokes said.

"[And] I said before the series started that we decided to go with Mo back into the squad because of the impact he can have on games. I've played a lot of games with him and I know the impact he can have on his best days."

"You look at that little spell yesterday with 15 minutes when he took the wickets of Marnus [Labuschagne] and Steve [Smith] and that was a huge point in the game."

There is a nine-day break in the series, which resumes at Old Trafford on July 19 - one which Stokes said "will do quite a few bodies the world of good" after three exhilarating, exhausting Tests to start the series.

AUSTRALIAN TEAM

Warner's spot could come under scrutiny

LONDON: Opener David Warner's position could come under scrutiny for the Old Trafford Test with Australia facing a selection squeeze after the impressive return to the side of Mitchell Marsh. **ESPNCricinfo** reported.

Cameron Green, who sat out the Headingley match opening the door for Marsh's comeback, is on track to be fit for the fourth Test after a minor hamstring strain. He bowled and did sprints ahead of the final day's play in Leeds as well as briefly acting as a substitute fielder.

But Marsh's stunning century on the opening day, in his first Test for four years, has made him very tough to leave out which means someone else will have to make way unless they opt not to bring Green straight back in.

The spotlight has again returned to Warner after his twin failures at Headingley where he twice edged Stuart Broad to slip from around the wicket, making it 17 times he has now fallen to Broad. However, that followed some useful contributions earlier in the series, led by the 66 on the opening day at Lord's in tricky batting conditions, although he was dropped in the slips on 20. His overall Test average since 2021 remains 28.17.

U15 AND U19 SQUADS

Oman Cricket Academy youngsters depart for SA tour

MUSCAT: Oman Cricket's consistent efforts to groom and nurture youngsters have paved the way for cricketers like Gary Kirsten of South Africa to hold training camps in the Sultanate of Oman.

While domestic training camps and clinics at the Oman Cricket Academy (OCA) premises have been welcomed by the young cricketers and their parents, Oman Cricket has also been working on providing OCA boys international exposure and experience.

The efforts to arrange an overseas trip finally materialised and a group of 20 promising OCA U15 and U19 boys departed on Sunday for an international tour to South Africa.

During their ten-day trip to South Africa, both the squads will

compete against local teams as part of the Nelspruit High School (NHS) 2023 Mozzie week.

The popular sports week is organised by the NHS and this year marks the 11th edition of the Mozzie week.

More than 100 cricketers from ten teams are scheduled to take part during the Mozzie week activities, highlighted by Tockie Fourie Super Over competition on July 12 for the U19 boys.

The U15 squad will play five 50-over-a-side games while the U19 side will also play three 50-over-a-side games before rounding off the trip with a T20 game.

Oman Cricket Chief Development Officer Duleep Mendis said: "The trip will give lot of experience to our youngsters. It is a very good

opportunity for our boys to play against different teams in South Africa on different wickets. It is a step forward in the development programme for these youngsters. We hope they come back with good experience and exposure."

U15 squad: Arjun Swamy, Aryan Joshi, Atharv Yadav, Himesh Raj Ravindra, KanishqBasu, Nimish Dhuri, Shravan Kurup, Vignesh Karthikeyan, Samrudh Shankar, Krish Pawani, Mohammed Punnnaki.

U19 squad: Jayesh Mal, Jeet Shah, Kavish Shah, OmiduMedagoda, ThinethSumanasekara, Varshieth Dinesh, Aditya Gurumukhi, Aryan Bisht, Siddarth Shankar.

Officials: Parviz Al Balushi, Syed Aamir Kaleem, Amir Ali (all coaches), Vinod Mathews (manager).



AMID GLOBAL FLASH FLOODING, WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Record rainfall is wreaking havoc in northern India and New York state as flash floods inundate communities. Experts have called for better resilience through ‘weatherproofing.’

UNPRECEDENTED RAIN-FALL has triggered flash flooding in countries from the US to India, China, the UK and Spain in the past days.

22 people were killed as floods collapsed a bridge and destroyed numerous dwellings in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh on Sunday.

Over the weekend, an extremely heavy start to the monsoon meant many districts in the northern state received a month’s rainfall in a day. The deluge was also responsible for landslides in Pakistan — a senior weather department official told Reuters.

More heavy rain is also predicted says the department, with flooded roads, traffic jams and power cuts expected across the region.

‘Record heat brings record rains’

Strong rainfall also sparked floods that swamped and closed roads in New York’s Hudson Valley on Sunday night. At least one person was killed.

Bryan Jackson, a meteorologist with the US National Weather Service’s Weather Prediction Center, told Reuters that a weather pattern more typical of cooler months had built to the north and was interacting with regular summer moisture.

Pennsylvania and southern New York state were most impacted by the rain on Sunday, but the weather service was predicting widespread and extreme flash flooding in parts of the state of New England on Monday.

“We expect considerable to locally catastrophic impacts,” Jackson said. The weather service

has urged people in vulnerable areas to immediately seek higher ground.

Days before, flash floods in the northeastern Spanish city of Zaragoza led to cars being swept down deluged streets. The footage went viral.

“Warmer air can carry more water vapor. Record heat brings record rains brings record floods,” tweeted Eric Holthaus, a US-based meteorologist and climate journalist, who also noted that temperatures could top 47 degrees Celsius (116.6 Fahrenheit) in Spain this week.

Heavy summer storms also sparked flash floods in the northern UK city of Sheffield on July 9.

Building resilience to floods

With record floods in countries from Germany to Pakistan linked to a worsening climate crisis, how can communities better adapt to limit the damage?

Speaking to DW following the 2021 flooding that claimed at least 200 lives in western Europe, Lamia Messari-Becker, a civil engineering professor focused on sustainable building and design at Germany’s University of Siegen, said in adapting buildings to withstand floodwaters, it is worth looking at earthquake-resistant architecture.

In such buildings, the depth of the foundation, structural design and construction materials are specifically chosen to be able to handle extreme flooding.

“We need to reinforce basements so that they can also fill up with water and people can quickly get to safety,” Messari-Becker said. “It’s also about the reinforcing



“We need to reinforce basements so that they can also fill up with water and people can quickly get to safety, Messari-Becker said, adding It’s also about the reinforcing measures needed for outer walls, for roofs

ing measures needed for outer walls, for roofs.”

Other measures highlighted by experts include retention valves on sewage connections, which prevent floodwaters from backing up into homes, and waterproofing

windows and doors on the lower levels of buildings.

“Our damage evaluations show that private precautionary measures can significantly reduce flood damage,” Annegret Thieken, a professor who focuses on natural hazards research at the University of Potsdam told DW in light of the 2021 floods. She also pointed out the need to secure potentially destructive elements like fuel tanks used to heat homes.

“Fuel oil can penetrate deep into the masonry and also damage neighboring buildings,” she said. “In severe cases, oil damage can make buildings uninhabitable. Flood proofing can prevent oil tanks from heaving up, reducing damage to buildings and the natural environment.”

Weatherproofing cities

It’s not enough to just focus on buildings. Cities and other urban areas need to think about controlling the water before it has a chance to flood basements in the first place, by reinforcing reservoirs and dams that can help absorb sudden surges.

ing in Germany and Belgium, Lehmann said we can’t expect better building measures to solve all our problems.

“From a technical, economic and practical point of view, it’s not possible to completely reassess, reconstruct and thus protect all elements of our built environment and infrastructure due to such extreme weather events.”

Working with nature, not against it

That’s where planners and engineers will have to find ways to work with the natural world, rather than trying to control it. Wherever possible waterways should be allowed to flow as nature intended, and not be altered or straightened. Doing so concentrates and further accelerates the volumes of water during a flood event, she said.

Instead of confining rivers, levees should be moved back to make space for flood plains — wide open green spaces which can serve as overflow reservoirs during floods. Such places were expanded along the Elbe River in eastern Germany, following several destructive flooding events in the early 2000s. Another approach is to make urban areas more permeable, so that water is more easily absorbed over a wider area and not concentrated in specific spots.

The German town of Leichlingen, southeast of Düsseldorf, has been hit by severe flooding several times in recent years. To ease the stress on their water management, they have been experimenting with a new planning model known as a “sponge city.”

Grass-covered ditches

The idea is to channel rainwater from roofs, squares and streets into grass-covered ditches at the side of the road. Excess water would then be allowed to drain away naturally and add to the local groundwater, reducing the load on water management infrastructure. Backup cisterns would also be installed to collect overflow and could be used to water the city’s green spaces. — DW

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In Oman, Lexus has some of the finest vehicles in its range, including hybrid electric vehicles. The range includes the UX, NX, RX, GX, IS, ES, LS and LX

MUSCAT: Lexus enthusiasts now have a fantastic reason to own a Lexus and enjoy some of finest luxury experiences on the road. Customers can look forward to Service 5 Years / 50,000km (Whichever is earlier) and 1 Year Free Registration (Conditions apply. For details visit any Saud Bahwan Automotive showroom). In Oman, Lexus has some of the finest vehicles in its range, includ-

ing hybrid electric vehicles. The range includes the UX, NX, RX, GX, IS, ES, LS and LX. The UX reflects the “Yet Philosophy,” in many ways, but especially in terms of design, performance and utility. The front wheel drive Lexus UX is powered by a high-efficiency 2.0 litre, four-cylinder engine, which is coupled with a Direct Shift Continuously Variable Transmission (DCVT).

The sleek and stylish NX SUV is equipped with two powertrain options. An inline 4-cylinder, 2.4 L turbocharged engine that produces 275 hp and 6000 RPM and is paired to an 8-speed Direct-Shift automatic transmission (8AT). The NX is also available with hybrid-electric system that combines two power sources consisting of a 2.5-liter petrol engine and two electric motors producing 240 hp. The hybrid-electric system is paired to a Direct Shift Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT). The stunning all-new RX has been completely reimagined to deliver greater style, comfort, and performance than ever before and comes with a choice of three powertrains, two of which are electrified. A newly developed inline 4-cylinder, 2.4-liter turbocharged engine that produces 275 hp and 430 nm

of torque is paired to a new 8-speed Direct-Shift automatic transmission (8AT). Meanwhile, the new hybrid-electric system combines a 2.5-liter petrol engine and electric motor to produce a total of 247 hp, which is paired to an electronically-controlled continuously variable transmission (E-CVT) to provide excellent fuel efficiencies. A hybrid-electric system pairing a 2.4-liter turbocharged engine with an electric motor is also available, which provides a combined power of 366 hp mated to a 6-speed automatic transmission. The powerful Lexus GX460 is perfect for families who seek no-holds-barred adventure on their days off, yet also desire an easy-driving, comfortable and versatile luxury SUV for the work week. The Lexus GX460 features a 4.6L engine that provides outstanding power and responsive performance.

The flagship LX is available with a choice of two powertrain options, including two newly developed V6 twin-turbo engines. The V6 twin-turbo 3.5-liter petrol engine achieves class-leading performance that surpasses that of a conventional V8, producing 409 hp and up to 66.28 Kg.m torque. Meanwhile, the V6 twin-turbo engine 3.3-liter diesel variant is capable of 302 hp and up to 71.38 Kg.m torque. Both versions are mated to a 10-speed automatic transmission. In sedans, the range includes the IS350. This sleek and stylish powerful sedan is equipped with a 3.5-litre engine that's paired to an 8-speed automatic transmission. The turbocharged IS300 features a 2.0-liter twin-scroll turbocharged inline four-cylinder engine with intercooler that generates 241 Hp. The flagship LS which is an in-

spiring luxury sedan, is available in 3.5-liter V6 Multi Stage Hybrid System producing 354 hp, a 3.5-liter V6 naturally aspirated Atkinson-cycle producing 311 hp and 38.7 Kg.M Torque, and a 3.5-liter twin-turbo V6 engine producing 415 hp and 61.2 Kg.M of Torque. Lexus ES emotional design elevated by the new design front grille is a thrilling drive personality imbued by two powertrain options. ES350 is powered by a 3.5 litre, 24 valve, V6 engine that produces 298 hp and 36.3 kg.m. of torque. While the ES250 is powered by high efficiency 2.5 litre, 16-valve DOHC engine that produces 204 hp and 24.8 kg.m of torque. In Oman, every Lexus vehicle comes with special benefits and privileges such as Manufacturer's Warranty of 4 years/100,000km (whichever is earlier) and 24 hours on-road assistance from AAA.

EXTENSIVE PASSENGER CAR RANGE

Mercedes-Benz Oman announces limited-time summer 2023 offers

MUSCAT: Mercedes-Benz Oman announces a collection of exclusive service packages for a selection of vehicles from its extensive passenger car range. The limited-time offer is valid from July 1 to September 30, 2023, and includes a five-year/105,000 kilometres service package. The comprehensive service ensures vehicle value retention thanks to Mercedes-Benz Genuine Parts, made of the finest quality materials – offering unrivalled reliability. The service package offer applies to customers purchasing a CLA Coupe, E-Class Sedan, GLE SUV, and Mercedes-AMG GLE 53 Coupé range. It covers the cost of parts, labour, and operational fluids needed for the scheduled maintenance operations. The package supports customers with

fixed maintenance costs, giving them peace of mind knowing that there will be no unexpected increase in costs. Scott Shears, General Manager – Passenger Cars at Mercedes-Benz Oman, said, “We are committed to adding value to the overall driving experience by providing our customers with regular and meticulous inspections and maintenance. Our qualified technical specialists at authorised service centres offer the best-in-class service, ensuring that our customers retain optimal value in their vehicles.” To find out more about the Summer Campaign Offer, the unrivalled Mercedes-Benz lineup, or to book a test drive, visit www.mercedes-benz-mena.com/oman/en.







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