

P7

BAR AL HIKMAN IS A UNIQUE, HIDDEN, AND APPEALING TOURIST DESTINATION



P12

ASYAD GROUP EYES AMBITIONS TO GROW REGIONALLY, GLOBALLY



MUSCAT

KULTHUMIYAT CONCERT AT ROHM

The Royal Opera House Muscat has announced the return of the special 'Kulthumiyat' concert, celebrating the legacy of Umm Kulthum. The concert for 2022 features two exceptional artists, Yosra Mahnouch and Mia Farouk, renowned singers of the Umm Kulthum repertoire. The concert will be accompanied by the Amir Abdul Majid Ensemble, conducted by Amir Abdul Majid. Umm Kulthum was an exceptional artist with a unique voice who dedicated her life to art.

DETAILS ON P4

KHARTOUM

TOP SUDANESE POLITICIAN FREED

A prominent Sudanese politician was released from jail on Sunday, one day before the civilian coalition he belonged to was due to sign an initial deal with the military to end a political standoff triggered by an October 2021 coup. Leftist politician Wagdi Salih, who was freed at a police station in the capital Khartoum, was at the forefront of an anti-corruption committee set up after the ouster of Omar al Bashir in 2019. The committee, tasked with dismantling the earlier regime, came under fire from generals who had been sharing power with the civilian Forces for Freedom and Change before they staged their takeover, halting a transition that was meant to lead to democratic elections.


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500 UKRAINIAN LOCALITIES WITHOUT POWER

P5


THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS ALSO A HEALTH CRISIS

P6

GIROUD, MBAPPE SEND FRANCE INTO QUARTER FINALS



\$3bn green steel cluster in Duqm

MUSCAT: Jindal Shadeed Group has announced that it has selected the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) in the Sultanate of Oman to establish a manufacturing facility. Slated to be the largest of-its-kind within the zone to produce green steel, the factory will also utilise renewable energy sources in its manufacturing operations.

The announcement was made at a ceremony that included the signing of a memorandum of understanding and a land allocation agreement. The event was held under the auspices of Dr Ali bin Masoud al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), and included the presence of a number of high-ranking government and private sector officials. The SEZAD is the largest economic zone in the Middle East, with an area of 2,000 square kilometres. This strategic project is being built over an area estimated at approximately 2 square kilometres in the concession zone at the Port of Duqm with an investment value estimated at \$3 billion.

The MoU was signed by Ahmed bin Hassan al Dheeb, Deputy Chairman of OPAZ, and Harssha Shetty, CEO of Jindal Shadeed Group. The land reservation agreement was signed by the Jindal Shadeed Group and Reggy Vermeulen, Chief Executive Officer of Port of Duqm.

In line with its development efforts, Jindal Shadeed Group also signed an MoU with the centralised utility provider, Marafiq, to provide the plant with the utilities necessary to operate the project such as water services, seawater for cooling purposes, and other Marafiq services. **DETAILS ON P9**

BIG BOOST TO TOURISM SECTOR



Jumeirah Muscat Bay, a luxury beach resort hotel developed as part of the Muscat Bay lifestyle destination, was inaugurated on Sunday at a ceremony held under the auspices of Salim bin Mohammed al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage and Tourism. The 32,000-sqm seafront five-star hotel comprising 206 rooms, suites, multi-purpose halls and a diving centre is built at a cost of RO 60 million. **DETAILS ON P9**

Al Jabal Al Akhdhar records 8 degrees during nights

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
[@lakshmioman](#)

The temperatures are getting lower and sunsets are early. The sun rises much later than before, making nights longer.

People are asking, has winter arrived in the Sultanate of Oman?

“Not yet,” says the weather expert at Oman Met Office. According to the weather forecaster, “Astronomically speaking winter should begin on December 23.”

The maximum temperature was recorded in Fahud, Al Mudhaibi, Adam and Haima, with a high of 32 degrees Celsius

The maximum temperature was recorded in Fahud, Al Mudhaibi, Adam and Haima, with a high of 32 degrees Celsius and a low ranging between 17 to 19

and a low ranging between 17 to 19. On the other hand, in Saiq, Al Jabal Al Akhdhar, the night temperatures have gone down to single digit as it recorded a low of 8.5 degrees Celsius at night and a high of 17 degrees Celsius.

People are enjoying the outdoors more, and in some parts of the country, it has been

cloudy too.

As per current weather indications, clear to partly cloudy skies are expected over the Governorate of Musandam and the coastal areas of the Sea of Oman, with chances of isolated rain and mainly clear skies over the rest of the governorates with advection of high clouds. **TURN TO P2**

National initiative for governorates launched

AIMS TO DEVELOP GOVERNORATES AND ENHANCE COMPETITIVENESS



Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal al Busaidy, Minister of Interior, launching the initiative on Sunday. – ONA

AFRAH AL BALUSHI
[@afrahalbalushia](#)

The Royal Academy of Management (RAM), in partnership with the Ministry of Interior and governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, on Sunday launched the ‘National Initiative for the Development of Local Administration’ (NIDLA).

The initiative seeks to consolidate capacities in areas of governance, administrative and economic decentralisation. It introduces the best practices in local administration, with the aim of developing the governorates and enhancing competitiveness.

Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal al Busaidy, Minister of Interior, who presided over the ceremony, said that the initiative targets harnessing the capabilities necessary for improving the functions of the State’s Administrative Apparatus in line with the requirements of the next phase of development in Oman.

The minister expressed his deepest gratefulness and utmost

gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik for establishing the Royal Academy of Management and for the continued care given towards harnessing the capabilities necessary to upgrade the work system within departments of the state’s managerial apparatus.

“This is in line with the requirements of the next stage of construction and development in all governorates and indicates His Majesty’s interest is embodied in restructuring the state managerial apparatus and Royal Decrees outlining horizons for a future vision for the blessed development process, thereby enabling governorates to manage and invest their resources, and develop human resources, in various sectors as a fundamental pillar upon which the government relies in its development process.”

The minister spoke about measures to restructure the State’s Administrative Apparatus and related Royal Decrees and directives that outlined prospects for the future vision of the Renewed Renaissance process. **TURN TO P2**



■ EMBASSY MARKS 51ST NATIONAL DAY OF UAE



The Embassy of the United Arab Emirates held a reception on the occasion of the 51st National Day of UAE at the Al Bustan Palace Hotel on Sunday. The ceremony was attended by ministers, under-secretaries, members of the Majlis Ash'shura and the State Council, diplomats and officials. – ONA

Al Jabal Al Akhdhar records 8 degrees during nights



FROM PAGE1

The chances of late-night to early-morning low-level clouds or fog patches over parts of the governorates of Al Buraimi, Al Dhahirah, South Al Sharqiyah, Al

Wusta, and Dhofar are expected to continue.

“This is just the pattern of December weather,” the weather forecaster noted.

The weather forecast stated that over most of the governorates,

winds would be northerly to northwesterly light to moderate, becoming variable light at night along the coastal areas of the Sea of Oman and easterly to northeasterly along coastal areas of the Arabian Sea.

The Met Office, however, has warned that fog could affect horizontal visibility.

Earlier on Sunday, low clouds and fog intensified over parts of Al Wusta, South Al Sharqiyah and Dhofar governorates.

National initiative for governorates launched

FROM PAGE1

The overall objective, he observed, is to enable governorates to manage and invest their potentials and train local human resources, being the basic pillars shouldering the government's responsibilities in the development march. Dr Ali bin Qassim al Lawati, President of the Royal Academy of Management, pointed out that the NIDLA constitutes an important milestone in the path of the Royal Academy of Management, which, he said, specialises in grooming local leaders and promoting economic decentralisation.

The NIDLA comprises three components: Executive Programmes, Quality indicators for services in governorates and related studies. The Executive programmes will be implemented in partnership with major local, regional and international establishments. These include the ‘Governors Programme’, which seeks to develop the capabilities of local leaderships, and the ‘Field Interviews Programme’ that explores the expertise and experiences of specialised local and international leaderships.

The ‘Quality indicators for services in governorates’ component aims to set up a quantifying measurement system to help monitor and develop the level of services rendered to beneficiaries in governorates in a manner that enhances competitiveness and gauges customer satisfaction in each governorate.

The ‘Studies’ component focuses on studies of relevance to the future of local administration, with a view to supporting general policy drafting. This segment specialises in conducting studies about the future of local administration and the development of governorates. It involves local think tanks

and the business community. The ceremony included the inauguration of the NIDLA launch platform and two specialised sessions, the first titled “Royal directives and visions for the development of governorates” and the second ‘Governance in local administration in accordance with Oman Vision 2040 and the Governorates System.’ HH Sayyid Marwan bin Turki al Said, Dhofar Governor, said: “It is an important opportunity that has come to assist the governors and wilayats for the local management. To enable local management, we need the tools and competencies provided through this programme to take into account the understanding and analysis of where we stand right now and how we can use the resources we have.”

ELECTRONIC PLATFORM

The event also included the launch of the electronic platform for the National Initiative and specialised sessions titled: ‘Sublime Directives and Future Visions’ for the Development of the Governorates led by Dr Abdullah bin Mohammed al Saeedi, Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs.

Dr Said bin Mohammed al Saqri, Minister of Economy; Dr Khamis bin Saif al Jabri, Head of the Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit, and Mohammed bin Saif al Amri, Director of Governorates Affairs at the Ministry of Interior, also spoke on the occasion.

The second session, ‘Governance in Local Government in accordance with Oman Vision 2040 and the governorate system’ included five papers presented by officials and specialists in local government and development from various government departments.

Japanese calligraphic exhibition begins today

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, DEC 4

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Japan and the Sultanate of Oman, a Japanese calligrapher couple will hold an exhibition in cooperation with the Embassy of Japan and the Omani Society for Arts. The exhibition starts on Monday and ends on December 10 at the Omani Society for Arts.

The Japanese calligraphy, one of the oldest traditional art forms appreciated for many years, uses brush and ink to bring out the beauty of the Japanese alphabets. Students learn calligraphy at school as it is incorporated in school curriculum. Many adults also enjoy it in their pastime. It is said the peace of mind and spiritual concentration are required to finish up the calligraphy art.

Two visiting calligraphers, Kawaguchi Yuho and Kawaguchi Seiren, will display contemporary calligraphy works at an exhibition titled En. People unexpectedly meet and say goodbyes. Nature has always been made up of deep connections between everything that exists. The Japanese people generally express gratitude for these connections with a word ‘En,’ or karma. Joys, sorrows and sufferings are all based on En. The couple’s works with strong brush strokes will resonate with everyone coming to the exhibition.

The exhibition also displays works by Belgian artist, Ingrid Van Heyden. The collaboration of the Japanese and western arts explore new artistic possibilities by combining calligraphic imagery and techniques with modern form of conceptual and performance art.



Kawaguchi Yuho and Kawaguchi Seiren



Ingrid Van Heyden



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Dhofar to host RO 150m data mining and processing centre

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, DEC 4

Green Data City will invest RO 150 million in Dhofar for setting up a large-scale data centre for hosting, processing and mining data for various applications, such as distributed ledger technologies, blockchain, and fin tech. The project will generate 150 jobs.

This investment comes in the wake of efforts of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MoTCIT) to attract local and international companies for investing in data hosting and processing

Said bin Hamoud al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, said the ministry is working on attracting investment in data hosting and processing industry to propel Oman's digital economy.

MoTCIT believes that such advanced technologies have a promising future globally henceforth endeavouring

The ministry is working on attracting investment in data hosting and processing industry to propel Oman's digital economy

SAID BIN HAMOUD AL MAAWALI

Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology

to localise technology and create job opportunities for young Omani IT specialists. The investment opportunity capitalises on the digital investment incentives that Oman offers and more specifically on the abundance of submarine data cables landing in Oman that offers high speed worldwide connectivity, availability and redundancy. Additionally, the governorate of Dhofar enjoys natural competitive advantages to provide alternative sources of energy to power the data centre including wind, solar and deep-sea cooling.

MoTCIT seeks to build partnerships with leading local and international private sector

entities in the various areas of digital innovations including data related projects.

Al Maawali said that Oman is positioned as a test-bed hub for advanced technologies given the competitive advantages that Oman enjoys to attract digital investments. Green Data City is one of the unique digital investments in this domain. He also added that attracting digital investments will accelerate the objectives of the National Digital Economy Program and will help achieve the desired growth in the use of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) technologies, and maximising the use of submarine data cables and renewable energy opportunity to make Oman a

hub for green and sustainable data centres in the region.

Olivier Ohnheiser, CEO Of Green Data City, stated that Dhofar is strategically positioned and has unique advantages to establish sustainable hyperscale data centres such as stable economy, cool weather, unique access to cold deep ocean water, and high renewable energy. Green Data City will develop the facility in two stages; phase one will be powered by the traditional electricity grid while phase two will depend on renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and deep-sea water cooling to operate the 200 MW facility.

Minister Al Maawali visited the new site, while the technical team presented the immersion cooling technology, used to reduce electricity consumption. Ohnheiser thanked the government leadership for making this investment a reality, which in turn will attract other foreign direct investors in data hosting and processing.

Oman tops in ease of settling in

VINOD NAIR
@vinot_nair

An InterNations survey has ranked cities and countries based on a survey conducted among expatriates.

In 2022, a total of 11,970 expatriates took part in the survey, representing 177 nationalities and living in 181 countries or territories across the world, following which the Expat City Ranking 2022 was released.

About the Sultanate of Oman, the survey said housing is easy to find and afford, and expatriates do not struggle to settle in.

Expats find it very easy to find their footing in Oman, as the country ranks 5th out of 52 in the Ease of Settling Index. In fact, nearly four in five expatriates in the Sultanate of Oman (79 per cent) feel welcome there (vs. 66 per cent globally).

The country ranks third in the Local Friendliness Subcategory, with 89 per cent describing the Omanis as generally friendly towards foreign residents (vs. 65 per cent globally).

In fact, Oman ranks second worldwide for general friendliness towards foreign residents, only beaten by Mexico.

With a friendly and welcoming culture, Finding Friends is also a high point. Oman ranks tenth in this subcategory.

Nearly two in three expatriates in Oman (65 per cent) find it easy to make local friends (vs. 42 per cent globally).

Close to two-thirds of expatriates (63 per cent) have a personal support network in Oman (vs. 59 per cent globally), and 73 per cent find it easy to get used to the local culture (vs. 62 per cent globally).

Expats find it very easy to find their footing in Oman, as the country ranks 5th out of 52 in the Ease of Settling Index. In fact, nearly four in five expatriates in Oman (79 per cent) feel welcome there (vs. 66 per cent globally)

More than one-third (34 per cent) even find it very easy, compared to 24 per cent globally.

Additionally, it is easy to live in the Sultanate of Oman without speaking the local language (75 per cent vs. 51 per cent globally).

Oman falls short when it comes to Leisure Options (46th): 15 per cent are not satisfied with the opportunities for recreational sports (vs. 11 expatriates globally).

It also seems hard to get to the activities since the country ranks in the bottom 10 for both the affordability (46th) and the availability (52nd) of public transportation.

While 73 per cent of expatriates find it easy to get around on foot and/or by bicycle vs. 77 per cent globally), they are happiest with the infrastructure for cars (91 per cent vs. 75 per cent globally).

Expats are generally satisfied with the Environment & Climate (20th). Especially concerning air quality, Oman only narrowly misses the top 10 (11th). Respondents find that the government supports policies to protect the environment (70 per cent vs. 61 per cent globally).



هيئة تنظيمية الخدمات العامة
Authority for Public Services Regulation



NOTICE

Article (51) of the law promulgated by Royal Decree 78/ 2004 requires the Authority to publish its budget for each financial year. The Authority's budget for 2023 is summarized below:

Master Budget Summary for 2021 - Rial Omani			
	Revenue Budget	Budget 2023	% of Total Budget
I	Total 2023 Opex and Capex Budget	8,499,811	
	Less: Estimated Surplus in 2022	(2,700,340)	
	Net Revenue Budget	5,799,471	
	Less: Other Revenue	(68,166)	
	Expenditure recovered through licence fees	5,731,304	
II	Capital Expenditure Budget		
	Infrastructure and digital transformation	457,820	5.4%
	Furniture/Office Building	741,325	8.7%
	Motor Vehicle	15,000	0.2%
	Total Capital Expenditure Budget	1,214,145	14.3%
III	Operating Expenditure Budget		
	Staff related expenditure	4,339,847	51.1%
	Consultancy fees*	1,996,500	23.5%
	Administrative expenses	949,320	11.2%
	Total Operating Expenditure Budget	7,285,666	85.7%
	TOTAL BUDGET FOR 2023	8,499,811	100.0%

*Consultancy fees are the estimated costs of undertaking the tasks appointed by the Authority.

The Authority is responsible for the regulation of the electricity sector, water and waste water and activities relating to regulating the natural gas in the Sultanate of Oman. The Authority's costs are funded through licence fees.

Authority for Public Services Regulation, Oman
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Tender



The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) announces the following Tender:

Tender Number	Tender Name	Last date of buying	Date of submission	Type of work	Register Degree	Fee (R.O)
6/2022/PEIE/HQ-6	MADAYN GENERAL INSURANCE FOR 2023-2024	18-12-2022	03-01-2023	INSURANCE AND FINANCE SERVICES	FIRST AND ABOVE	75

Interested Companies registered with Tender Board may obtain the Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document. Tenders should be submitted online on given website. The Tenderer should enclose scan copy of Bank Guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of 1% of the Tender value validity for (90) days, and addressed to The Chairman of Tender Committee mentioned in above tenders.

1. Tender Inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the TENDER Inquiry must be online at eTendering System.
 2. eTendering System Inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the eTendering System technical support must be directed to the following help desk email address and phone number: etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om and +968 24402200.
- Note: Bid Submission will be online only.

No Document can be accepted as Manual except Original Tender Bond. Scan Copy of Tender Bond needs to be attached in system and original needs to be deposited before Bid Opening.

Madayn is not bound to accept the lowest or any other Offer and has the right to cancel these tenders and the tenderers have no right to claim for any compensations.

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in t f y o

Business coach, author to speak in Muscat

KABEER YOUSUF
@kabeeryousef

Business coach and author Sangeeta Shankaran Sumesh (pictured) will speak at the International Seminar of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India's (ICAI) Muscat Chapter on December 10.

Her visit and lecture will benefit the finance and accounts fraternity, as she has a proven track record of being an independent director on corporate boards, besides being the Chief Financial Officer of many corporates.

She is on a global drive to enable, empower and elevate businesses by serving both the leaders and teams. After being in the corporate world for over 25 years, Sangeeta decided to align with her inner purpose of contributing to the growth of businesses as well as individuals. She decided to share her corporate experience and skills as a credential coach from International Coaching Federation (PCC).

She is a Chartered Accountant, Management Accountant and has completed executive education at Harvard Business School. She adds value to her clients through her books, coaching programmes, and speaking engagements. 'What the Finance - Easy and simple finance practices for businesses; 'Get High - How to coach yourself for high performance; and 'Where's the Moolah - Financial growth hacks for business profitability' are among the titles she authored. Sangeeta conducts customised workshops for business leaders based on the theme of her books. Some of her clients include Ford, Cisco, Transunion, Witzmann, RPG Group, Andritzetc.

She is also the recipient of many awards, including the Nightingale Award by The Society of Auditors, Leading Woman Chief Financial Officer; and Innovator in Finance. She is among '100 Inspiring authors of India'; an 'Outstanding Professional' award by the 'Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry' among others.



Sangeeta



Football Fan Festival to attract more crowds

VINOD NAIR
@vinot_nair

The Football Fan Festival continues to attract huge crowds and those numbers are expected to go up as the World Cup in Qatar enters the knockout stage.

With no second chances for the losing teams, fans of teams like Brazil and Morocco will be on edge every time their sides play in this tournament from now.

Speaking to the Observer, organisers said the crowd turnout has been impressive, but it also depends on matches. We expect a maximum crowd during the first matches of the knockouts because they start at 8 pm. Second matches, starting at 11 pm, will be too late for office goers, and fans may prefer to watch from home or hotels,” they said.



“As the top-ranking Arab team in the fray, while Morocco has become the favourites for local



Photos by Mohammed bin Juma al Yazidi

citizens and residents, the general support among the football fans in the Sultanate of Oman is for

Argentina and Brazil,” said Rahim, a volunteer of the festival, said. Among youngsters, Portugal’s

Cristiano Ronaldo has the largest mass following. At the Fan Festival, one match

will be displayed on the main screen and the other match will be displayed on screens at the Food and Beverage Corner.

The festival has dedicated F&B outlets, and activity zones, each with a dedicated five-a-side football pitch, 22 interactive football-themed mini-games, and activities for families and people of all ages to enjoy.

Parallely, the Muscat Food Festival has also been organised near Omantel headquarters in Madinat al Irfan in Muscat.

The fifth season of the Muscat Food Festival, the largest of its kind in the Sultanate of Oman, will see food and entertainment programmes from five regions of the world featuring 80 chefs and institutions. Muscat Food Festival saw a good turnout during the 52nd National Day Holidays.

Initiative to address challenges of start-ups

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion started to implement incubators for resolving challenges facing the start-ups sector.

The five-day programme is undertaken through cooperation with Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit and the Industrial Innovation Academy.

The incubators deal with three main themes: infrastructure and public services; laws and legislation; and investment and



financing.

More than 60 people representing various government and private establishments are taking part in the tasks of the programme.

Sami al Sahib, Director-General of Industry at the Ministry

of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, stressed the role of the incubators in addressing challenges related to projects of the start-ups sector, since government and private establishments concerned are fully represented in the programme and

are capable of forging solutions.

Al Sahib added that the incubators aim at realising a number of objectives. These include reviewing all the results of the projects implemented in various sectors related to the industrial sector; analysing, studying and coding the challenges related to projects and investment opportunities resulting from the previous laboratories; and devising practical solutions in cooperation with the authorities concerned to secure licenses required by the projects. — ONA

Conference on Oman’s present and future today

KABEER YOUSUF
@kabeeryousef

A one-day convergence of experts and brainstorming sessions will focus on the Sultanate of Oman’s Vision 2040 and spread awareness of the ambitious national plans at a conference on Monday at the Intercity Hotel.

The event is happening under the auspices of His Highness Sayyid Kamil bin Fahd al Said, Secretary-General at the Secretariat-General for the Council of Ministers.

Experts and specialists in their chosen fields will participate in the event and interact with Oman’s corporates and private sector representatives to get insights about Oman Vision 2040.

The event organisers said the

event fragmented into various segments, will give a kaleidoscopic view of the Sultanate of Oman’s journey in the next 20 years, and there will be keynote speakers from various sectors of the Sultanate of Oman.

Strategists, policymakers and influencers will interact with the attendees while shedding more light on topics as diverse including economy, health, diplomacy, infrastructure, technology, innovation, and education.

“There will be around eight segments, and the first segment will be ‘Road to 2040 which will be talked about by eight members who are economists, experts in digitalisation, officials from Oman Vision 2040 who will give insights of its goals, benefits, and its

overall importance to the present and future societies,” said the organisers.

Another segment titled ‘Women in leadership and economy’ will look into the exciting achievements made by Omani women and how they are excelling in economy and leadership. Two members of the panel will discuss this.

A segment titled ‘Accelerating Digital Transformation’ is a platform where officials from the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MoTCIT) talk about how Oman is leading the digital transformation at the government level besides a talk by a lineup of corporates such as Huawei and other private members talking

about how we are going to become a digital economy in line with the Oman Vision 2040.

Additionally, some individual segments are set to pep up the whole event, including a talk by Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed al Saeedi, former Minister of Health, who will walk through ‘leadership and crisis management’ and ‘how we dealt with the pandemic’. Oman’s racing champion, Ahmed al Harthy, will be talking about his journey besides discussions by diplomats on building effective relationships with Oman.

“The whole idea of the conclave is to make the people aware of the Oman Vision 2040 and to understand the same to a great extent in the limited timeframe,” the event organisers said.

Omantel and ETCO sign pact for satellite image data analysis services

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, DEC 4

Omantel announced the signing of a partnership agreement with the international emerging technology company ETCO aimed at providing satellite image data analysis services for the Cube Satellite (Aman Sat). The agreement was signed by Dr Ghalib bin Saif al Hosni, Chief People Officer at Omantel, and Abdul Aziz Jaafar, Chief Executive Officer of ETCO.

Omantel will contribute to this project with its technical expertise in information technology and digitalisation as a technology partner to Aman Mission.

Aladdin Baitfadhil, Chief Commercial Officer of Omantel, said, “This strategic partnership with ETCO will enable Omantel to expand its digital services and support pioneering investments in the satellite image data sector, especially as Omantel owns artificial intelligence solutions, Internet of Things and its relevant technologies. Thus, satellite image analysis services come to complement these solutions and will provide a qualitative addition to the

digital services we provide, especially those related to the space field, which allows data analysis and supports scientific research projects in space sciences and much more. We, at Omantel, always support national institutions and vital projects for the benefit of the national economy and society.”

Abdul Aziz Jaafar, CEO of ETCO, said, “We are pleased to sign this agreement with Omantel to complete its technical partnership in Aman mission and to expand our commercial operations in the space sector so as to provide satellite image data to customers in Oman and the region.

“Therefore, we seek from this partnership to transfer knowledge, technologies and involve national competencies by engaging in space-related industries and technologies. It is worth stating that we have started our projects in the space sector with a number of global partners, and today we are proud of this national partnership with Omantel as it is a cornerstone for achieving the national goals of the Sultanate of Oman to create an interactive digital economy.”

Arab icons to enthrall fans at ROHM on Dec 9 and 10

MUSCAT: The Royal Opera House Muscat will resume Umm Kulthum, an historic series paying homage to a legend whose legacy has brought joy to millions around the world, on December 9 and 10. it was presented at ROHM for the first time in 2015.

ROHM used to celebrate authentic Arabic singing, by organising more than one ceremony to revive the symbols of Arab singing, and the audience will get to enjoy timeless artistic masterpieces that still top the sales charts and apps despite the departure of the Egyptian music legend Umm Kulthum in 1975.

The concert, led by Maestro Amir Abdel Majeed, will host



Amir Abdul Majeed,

singers Yousra Mahnouch and Mai Farouk, who will render a selection of immortal songs to the audience of the Arab world. The beauty of



Mai Farouk

the ceremony is complete with the participation of musician Amir Abdul Majeed, a qanun player, composer, arranger and bandleader.



Yousra Mahnouch

He led the Royal Orchestra in a number of national events.

Mai Farouk, born in Cairo in 1982, had an early artistic start.

She started singing at the age of 8 when she joined the Selim Sahab choir in the opera after her parents discovered her talent and helped

her develop it.

The beloved Egyptian brings her striking voice and unique artistry to ROHM. With her famous use of the emotional ‘Tarab’ style, she excelled in singing covers of Umm Kulthum and captured the hearts of listeners with her sweet voice and elegant performance in her own songs.

Tunisian Yousra Mahnouch came to the limelight at the Super Star programme in 2007. Finishing at third place in the contest, she won the admiration of the jury. She also participated in MBC’s first season of ‘The Voice’ where she won the second place. Her rendition of Iraqi song ‘Mayhana’ in 2013 with a new arrangement was very well received in the Arab world.



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5

MACRON SAYS WEST SHOULD CONSIDER RUSSIAN GUARANTEES

More than 500 Ukrainian localities without power



A Ukrainian serviceman sits in a trench on the front line in eastern Ukraine on Sunday amid the Russian war on Ukraine. – AFP

KYIV, Ukraine: More than 500 Ukrainian localities remained without power on Sunday following weeks of Russian airstrikes on the electric grid, an interior ministry official said.

“The Russian forces continue to attack the country’s essential infrastructure. Currently, 507 localities in eight regions of our country are cut off from electricity supplies,” deputy interior minister Yevgueny Yenin told Ukrainian television. “The Kharkiv region is the worst hit with 112 isolated villages,” Yenin added.

Another 90 villages were cut off in the Donetsk and Kherson regions, he said, with others in the regions of Mykolaiv, Zaporizhzhia and Lugansk.

On Saturday, Ukrainian authorities — including Mykolaiv region governor Vitali Kim — had once again urged civilians to bear up in the face of continually

deteriorating early winter conditions and regular power outages.

Repeated daily power cuts have left millions of people without heat or lighting while outside temperatures have dropped below zero Celsius in recent days.

With further strikes on the network widely expected, Ukrainians fear a difficult prolonged winter as well as a flood of departures by refugees from a war now into a tenth month.

Private Ukrainian energy operator DTEK said last Thursday that nearly half of Ukraine’s electricity grid remains damaged after Russia began targeting Ukrainian energy facilities in October following a series of humiliating military defeats on the ground.

Meanwhile, French President Emmanuel Macron said in remarks broadcast on Sunday, that

the West should consider how to address Russia’s need for security guarantees if President Vladimir Putin agrees to negotiations about ending the war in Ukraine.

WAR SUPPORT

Support from the Russian public for the war in Ukraine” is falling significantly,” Britain’s Defence Ministry said in its daily bulletin on Sunday, citing recent polling in Russia.

“With Russia unlikely to achieve major battlefield successes in the next several months, maintaining even tacit approval of the war among the population is likely to be increasingly difficult for the Kremlin,” it said.

The British ministry pointed to a report by an independent Russian media outlet which claimed access to data collected by Russia’s Federal Protective Service for internal use. — Agencies

ANC executive to decide my fate, says Ramaphosa

JOHANNESBURG: South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said on Sunday it was up to the governing party’s National Executive Committee (NEC) to decide his future in the face of allegations of misconduct against him.

Ramaphosa, who said he would attend an NEC meeting scheduled for Monday, is fighting for his political future after a panel of experts found he may have violated his oath of office in regards to millions of dollars allegedly found at his private game farm.

Ramaphosa has denied any wrongdoing and has not been charged with any crimes.

The president’s allies have rallied around him and on Saturday his spokesman said he would not resign.

The governing African National Congress (ANC) party’s National Working Committee (NWC) was meeting

in Johannesburg on Sunday to discuss the panel’s report. Ramaphosa said he would not take part in those discussions.

“I have been recused from the (NWC) meeting because they’re going to discuss the panel’s report, and... it’s always best when the matter... affects a person personally that it should be discussed in their absence,” Ramaphosa said.

“It is up to the National Executive Committee, to which I am accountable, to take whatever decision (it deems fit).”

Earlier, Ramaphosa’s spokesman said the president has no intention of resigning and will fight both politically and judicially.

“President Ramaphosa is not resigning based on a flawed report, neither is he stepping aside,” his spokesman Vincent Magwenya said.

“The president has taken to heart the unequivocal message

coming from the branches of the governing party who have nominated him to avail himself for a second term of the leadership of the ANC,” Magwenya said.

Ramaphosa understood that “to mean he must continue with both the state and economic reforms”, he added.

“The president has with humility and with great care and commitment accepted that call to continue being of service to his organisation the ANC and to the people of South Africa.”

Magwenya also said the president would challenge the parliamentary report in court.

“It is in the long-term interest... of our constitutional democracy, well beyond the Ramaphosa presidency, that such a clearly flawed report is challenged, especially when it’s being used as a point of reference to remove a sitting head of state,” he said. — Agencies

Indonesia’s Mount Semeru erupts

LUMAJANG:

Indonesia’s Mount Semeru erupted on Sunday spewing hot ash clouds a mile high and rivers of lava down its side while sparking the evacuation of nearly 2,000 people exactly one year after its last major eruption killed dozens.

The burst from the highest mountain on Indonesia’s main island of Java, around 800 km southeast of the capital Jakarta, prompted authorities to raise the alert status for the volcano to the highest level. Villages around Semeru were being battered by a mix of volcanic ash and monsoon rains.

Videos shared with AFP by a local rescue group showed a huge black cloud rising from the volcano, engulfing the sky and blocking the sun. One resident described the panic when the ash clouds descended on their village. “It was dark, I could not see anything. It was raining water and ash,” the person, who did not want to be named, said.

“I didn’t know where to take shelter. I had to flee.” “Hot avalanches” triggered by piles of lava at the top flooded down the 3,676-metre mountain, said Abdul Muhari, a spokesperson for Indonesia’s National Disaster Mitigation Agency (BNPb).

— AFP



SULTANATE OF OMAN

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

ANNOUNCEMENT



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

Tender Ref.	Description	Last date for Collection of tender Document	Bid Submission Closing Date on/ Before 08:00 am Wednesday	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
MOH/HQ-268/2022	Supply & Installation of Medical Equipment for Bahla Hospital and Bahla Extended Health Centre in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate	08/December/2022	21/December/2022	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board	R.O 25.000 Per set
MOH/HQ-269/2022	Supply of Pharmaceuticals		14/December/2022		R.O 50.000 Per set
MOH/HQ-270/2022	Supply of Surgical Items Consumables		28/December/2022		R.O 25.000 Per set
MOH/HQ-271/2022	Supply of Laboratory Items				
MOH/HQ-273/2022	Design and Build for Expansion and Modification of Nizwa Hospital in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate			Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in The Excellent	R.O 180.000 Per set
MOH/HQ-274/2022	Supply and Installation of Medical Equipment for Various Health Facilities		28/December/2022	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board	R.O 100.000 Per set
MOH/HQ-275/2022	Supply and Installation of Medical Equipment at Sultan Qaboos Hospital in Dhofar Governorate				
MOH/HQ-276/2022	Replacement of Automated Coagulation Timer (ACT) at Sultan Qaboos Hospital in Dhofar Governorate				R.O 25.000 Per set
MOH/HQ-277/2022	Provision of Landscaping Services and Maintenance of Irrigation System at Al Masarra Hospital & Half Way Houses in Wilayat Al-Amerat				

Tenders should be submitted online on <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> enclose Electronic Bank Guarantee issued by a Local bank for not less than One percent (1%) for the Tender value validity for (90) days from the Tender Submission date, addressed to The Chairman of the Tender Committee.

Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any tender.

For any Clarification, you may contact via

Telephone: 24402200

Email id: etenderhd@ita.gov.om



Sultanate of Oman

Ministry of Defence

ENGINEERING SERVICES



TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Ministry of Defence invites Contractors/consultant specialized in the under mentioned works and registered with the Govt. Tender Board and Ministry of Defence to participate in the following tender.

Tender No	Tender Name	Contractors Grade	Last Date to Obtain Tender	Tender Submission Date	Tender Price (RO)
35/2022	Building works- Masirah	Excellent	15 th December 2022	16 th January 2023	1,500/- RO

*For more information about the above Tenders please visit gate number (14)

Tender Documents (Electronic Tender Document) can be obtained from the Tender office, Gate No: 14, Muaskar Al Murtafa'a after payment of the tender fee indicated above.

The Payment should be made electronically by using SMART CARD, VISA CARD and VISA ELECTRON. Sunday to Thursday (0900 – 1300 Hours).

The Bid to be accompanied by Tender Bond in the value of (1%) of the bid value in the form of a Bank Guarantee or Certified Cheque issued by a local bank and addressed to HE the Chairman of the Tender Committee.

Bids are to be submitted in sealed envelopes addressed to HE the Chairman of Tender Committee and marked with Tender Number and Name. Name of Bidder or any other marks should not be printed on the envelopes.

Bids to be deposited in the Tender office at Gate No: 14 Muaskar Al Murtafa'a before 1300 hours on the assigned day for submission of the Tender.

We would like to draw your attention to the importance of adherence to the submission date, request and any queries related should not be submitted to MODES fourteen days prior to submission of offer & that queries must be on electronic (Microsoft word).

You are requested to submit the following items within your tender submission, failure to submit the required information may result a disqualification of your offer without any further notification.

1. Percentage of Omanisation within the company supported by an authenticated certificate from the Ministry of Manpower (Updated Copy).

2. Detailed priced breakdown to be specified as per scope of works and drawings.

3. Full set of stamped drawings and documents, Tender Form and Tender Bonds to be submitted as hard copy and others documentation shall be as SOFT COPY (USB) in two separate files:

A. Financial (bill &2 separated file from bill3)

B. Technical files.

4. Confirmation of site visit.

5. All addendums and circulars.

6. List of sub-contractors/suppliers and their acceptance letter to this project.

7. List of current and executed projects for the last Five years.

8. Valid Registration Certificates from Tender Board.

9. Financial Statement for the last Three years.



Sultanate of Oman

Ministry of Defence

ENGINEERING SERVICES



TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Ministry of Defence invites Contractors/consultant specialized in the under mentioned works and registered with the Govt. Tender Board and Ministry of Defence to participate in the following tender.

Tender No.	Tender Name	Contractors Grade	Last Date to Obtain Tender	Tender Submission Date	Tender Price (RO)
36/2022	Fire Fighting System Works - WUDAM	First and above or specialization in Fire Fighting System	15 th December 2022	16 th January 2023	200/- RO

*For more information about the above Tenders please visit gate number (14)

Tender Documents (Electronic Tender Document) can be obtained from the Tender office, Gate No: 14, Muaskar Al Murtafa'a after payment of the tender fee indicated above.

The Payment should be made electronically by using SMART CARD, VISA CARD and VISA ELECTRON. Sunday to Thursday (0900 – 1300 Hours).

The Bid to be accompanied by Tender Bond in the value of (1%) of the bid value in the form of a Bank Guarantee or Certified Cheque issued by a local bank and addressed to HE the Chairman of the Tender Committee.

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We would like to draw your attention to the importance of adherence to the submission date, request and any queries related should not be submitted to MODES fourteen days prior to submission of offer & that queries must be on electronic (Microsoft word).

You are requested to submit the following items within your tender submission, failure to submit the required information may result a disqualification of your offer without any further notification.

1. Percentage of Omanisation within the company supported by an authenticated certificate from the Ministry of Labour (Updated Copy).

2. Detailed priced breakdown to be specified as per scope of works and drawings.

3. Full set of stamped drawings and documents, Tender Form and Tender Bonds to be submitted as hard copy and others documentation shall be as SOFT COPY (USB) in two separate files:

A. financial (bill &2 separated file from bill3)

B. Technical files.

4. Confirmation of site visit.

5. All addendums and circulars.

6. List of sub-contractors/suppliers and their acceptance letter to this project.

7. List of current and executed projects for the last Five years.

8. Valid Registration Certificates from Tender Board.

9. Financial Statement for the last Three years.

Curtains down, but aspirations go up

Events and festivities go beyond just living the moments of celebration; rather they occur to break the boredom and static rhythm of life. Celebrations, overall, bring peace and joy to individuals and communities. Thus, nations worldwide have different special religious, cultural and social events and festivals. Regardless of its scale, any event or festivity serves a certain purpose of course. Therefore, an entertainment event, for instance, means a stage performance, amusement, show, or a similar activity including, but not limited to, a theatrical or musical performance, concert, film, game, ride or sporting action. In fact, memorable events and festivities of any kind will always provide full engagement. They make people forget their cultural, religious, social and personal differences. Instead, they unite them for the only purpose of celebration, enjoyment and entertainment.

That is why great events stand as insightfully entertaining books that people cannot put aside; rather they keep reading such books over and over. Making an environment that will invite guests and visitors of different interests to interestingly live the event experience is what actually separates good events from great and unforgettable ones. They fill people's life with colours and enthusiasm. They bring them closer, disregard any feelings of communal hatred and strengthen their social bonds. Generally, events and festivals are very important thing that people anticipate to have all year-round. They spark joy and give people something to look forward to. They provoke their passion, ambitions and aspirations to have more and achieve more! Case in a point is the recently held youth-centred 'Amad Duqm 22' event. The 9-day event was a distinguished and out of the box event that attracted thousands of youth since the planning, execution



Abdulaziz Al Jahdhami
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An author, columnist, creative writer, translator and a communications professional

EVENTS AND FESTIVALS ARE VERY IMPORTANT THING THAT PEOPLE ANTICIPATE TO HAVE ALL YEAR-ROUND. THEY SPARK JOY AND GIVE PEOPLE SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD

to management phases of the inspiring event. This an abnormal event served as a lab for experimenting youth thoughts, ideas, researches, projects and tryouts in different fields. Technology, artificial intelligence, astronomy, arts, music and sports are just to name a few areas of the presented daily activities and performances. 'Amad Duqm 22' marked a platform on which the participating youth could work on their ideas and projects and showcase them over the past nine days. Such platform offered a real opportunity for youth to get supported, motivated and incubated.

Further, 'Amad Duqm 22' made the dreams of the participating youth come true. A range of unique projects and creative ideas that had been sketched on paper were executed on ground of 'Amad Duqm 22' Village. Various Omani talents were also on display as part of the cultural and other activities. Among these activities were youth talks, theoretical performances, arts and music shows, concerts, video games, food trucks creative dining options and many others.

Thanks to the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth for organising this innovative event in Duqm. Bringing such an event of mixed activities and festivities attracted not only youth, but families and individuals too.

'Amad Duqm 22' festivity let its visitors' imagination and thrill run wild as the event took them on a journey through time and space. In fact, the event took visitors into a world of innovative charm, floating globe where moon demonstration and astronomy sessions were present, dim lights, hilarious times and many other memorable moments of fun and insight.

On the other hand, the event never ignored mirroring the traditional lifestyle of Duqm via the participation of Omani genuine folklore performed by locals.

DARE DEVIL ACT



Border Security Force (BSF) personnel perform bike stunt during the 58th BSF Raising Day at Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar, India, on Sunday. – AFP

The climate crisis is also a health crisis

The latest Lancet Countdown report, which monitors the health consequences of climate change, highlights the need to prepare for future calamities. Even as Covid-19 continues to spread, a recent study suggests that the likelihood of another pandemic increases by 2 per cent each year. In the coming decades, the interplay between the climate crisis and public health could create a perfect storm of global devastation and disruption.

The good news is that if we take immediate steps to transform our health systems, we can avert another Covid-style catastrophe. As with the current pandemic, the obstacles to mitigating climate change are not just scientific or technological, but also rooted in geopolitics and market forces. Self-interest can undermine public health, particularly when it comes to equitable access to resources. Even so, the international community came together to introduce innovative mechanisms like the Covid-19 Vaccine Global Access facility (COVAX), which was designed to remove the financial barriers that prevented lower-income countries from obtaining vaccines.

We must launch similar



Seth Berkley

The writer is CEO of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance



Werner Hoyer

The writer is President of the European Investment Bank

mechanisms for addressing the global public-health impact of climate change. While we already know many of the likely solutions, their effectiveness requires that we put them in place before disaster strikes. This is not just a moral imperative; it is also a smart economic choice that would likely reduce the overall cost of outbreaks and other climate-related catastrophes.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt this past November underscored the fact that sustainability is not just about decarbonisation, electric vehicles, or climate-adaptation measures such as flood defenses. It is also about pandemic preparedness. More broadly, climate change is expected to shift the habitat range of deadly pathogens, causing infectious, mosquito-borne diseases like malaria, yellow fever, and dengue fever to spread as far as northern Europe and Canada. At the same time, the climate crisis threatens to increase the prevalence of malaria, cholera, and schistosomiasis across the developing world.

The world's poorest countries remain the most vulnerable to climate change, despite contributing the least to creating the problem. That is why the international community must take immediate steps to ensure that impoverished, marginalised communities have access to vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics. Given the devastating impact that a single virus has had on billions of lives, livelihoods, and the global economy over the past three years, it is abundantly clear that we must urgently take steps to



The global effort to ensure equitable distribution of Covid-19 vaccines provides a useful model.

counter climate-related health threats. The global effort to ensure equitable distribution of Covid-19 vaccines provides a useful model. The Gavi Covax Advance Market Commitment, a financial mechanism funded by donors and accelerated by the European Investment Bank, enabled people in the world's 92 poorest countries to obtain free vaccines. These lower-income countries, representing roughly half of the world's population, would have struggled to secure access otherwise.

So far, more than 1.6 billion

Covax doses have been delivered to developing countries, helping to ensure that 52 per cent of their citizens are fully vaccinated, compared to a global average of 64 per cent. This is a remarkable achievement, particularly in the context of intense vaccine hoarding by developed countries, the export restrictions that some countries placed on vaccines and the components needed to produce them, and the actions of some manufacturers that have seemingly prioritised profit over fairness. The Covax model's success shows that there is scope for similar innovative financing solutions to climate-related health risks. For example, several private-sector actors are currently exploring a Climate Advance Market Commitment to stimulate innovation and investment in climate solutions. Similarly, there is great potential for mechanisms based on the model of the International Finance Facility for Immunization, which uses dedicated "vaccine bonds" to frontload long-term donor commitments so that funds can be made available immediately.

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Bar Al Hikman is a unique, hidden, and appealing tourist destination

BY ZUWAINA AL SULIMANI

BAR AL HIKMAN IS a wetland pearl that, sadly, few people in and outside of Oman are aware of. Furthermore, it is a rich site of mudflats and breathtaking landscapes. It is a vital and diverse habitat for fish, whales, turtles, and birds both locally and globally. It is a one-of-a-kind area with a diverse range of marshes, islands, mangroves, and marine habitats for turtles and other marine mammals such as the endangered humpback whale. It is extremely rich in diverse bird species that live in a healthy ecosystem. It is the most important stopover for shorebirds flying from Western Asia to

East Africa. It serves as a nesting and feeding ground for over 500,000 waterbirds. From September to February, a spectacular island appears on Oman's eastern coast. It's called "the Solar Island," in Bar Al Hikman. It has the largest coral reefs in Oman as well as a diverse range of sea creatures and fish. This island is well-known for its sea diving activities. During the summer, the island is almost non-existent due to the strong winds. Sea diving is not recommended due to the risk of not being able to see through the sea. Kitesurfing on the other hand, is a highly recommended summer activity in Bar Al Hikman. Shorebirds and migratory birds such as pink Grater flamingos,

grey-brown sandpipers, sand plovers, Godwit, and Curlew can be found on the island. According to recent surveys, Bar Al-Hikman is an internationally important site for more than 500,000 different shorebirds. Muntasar al Hinai, a solo traveller, visits Bar Al Hikman three times a month to enjoy the place and take amazing pictures and videos to share on social media to encourage people in Oman and beyond to visit the place. The journey from Muscat to Bar Al Hikman takes nearly four hours and thirty minutes. There are two entrances; the visitor can take the Mahout to Bar Al Hikman route or the Film route to Bar Al Hikman route. "The road is difficult to navigate because the land is wet and strewn with mud.

The tides and the moon also have an impact on the site. It is difficult to be reached ", he explains. He recommends, "People who want to visit Bar Al Hikman for the first time should hire a tour guide or use an offline GPS because the connection is nearly cut off". He claims that hundreds of tourists from gulf countries such as Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, as well as foreigners from all over the world, visit Bar Al Hikman to enjoy the beautiful islands and birds. He encourages tourists to visit the place to enjoy the astonishing landscapes, the diverse ecosystem and the untouched nature. He is amazed by the diversity of both land and animals and he wants people to enjoy that.





INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



AROUND THE WORLD

MUSIC

"Music is their language": school gives autistic Chinese youth a voice



ALMOST THREE YEARS of pandemic restrictions have been hard for 23-year-old Chinese villager Zu Wenbao, but thanks to Beijing-based Chen's Studio, music has become his saving grace.

Zu is one of the 14 million people in China who have autism spectrum disorder, a developmental disability caused by differences in the brain. Despite laws to ensure the integration of people with autism, many in China know little about the disorder and support remains lacking, experts say.

Autism has meant Zu was unable to fit in at school or among other young people in his home village of Bei'an in northeast China's Heilongjiang Province. All that changed when he started learning music free of charge at Chen's Studio, which started lessons for people with autism just as the pandemic began.

Zu, who is non-verbal, joined the five-studio Beijing school in 2020. He has since learned to play the keyboard, and sings along with the four other members of the "Star Kids" band their teacher, Chen Shensi, set up last year for people with autism.

Please click here for a photo package.

"Without music, without these lessons, he wouldn't have anything," said Zu's mother, Zhao Guorong, who travels with her son every Sunday for two hours on three different buses from their current home on the outskirts of Beijing so that he can attend class.

"The village youngsters all go to work or school, so without music and the band, he wouldn't have any peers to socialise with," she added. "Even though the kids taking music classes are younger than him and half his size, they all take care of him like he's their brother."

China has passed several laws to ensure inclusion of people with autism, most recently in September to standardise autism screening, diagnosis and intervention for young children.

While support has improved over the past 20 years, millions of children still lack the behavioural therapy and educational support they need, experts say.

People with autism tend to find it difficult to get jobs, and the music school's founder Chen hopes he can change that by giving his students a way to earn a living: the Star Kids band has already performed several concerts at events held at camp sites on the outskirts of Beijing.

Chen says he knew very little about autism before he started teaching a bass player with the disorder in 2020.

When Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions on movement curtailed his regular music lessons, Chen started the free-of-charge lessons for people with autism. "Covid has been hard, and I wanted to do as much as I can to give them joy through music," he said.

LIFESTYLE

Art of noise: UK project aims to save lost sounds



THE MOSTLY DEFUNCT red phone boxes no longer attract much attention in London except from tourists. But Stuart Fowkes is thrilled to stumble upon one still in working order.

Its ring is one of the world's disappearing noises that his pioneering "obsolete sounds" project is dedicated to preserving.

He whips out a hand-held recording device and swings into action, explaining, "I've always had sonic curiosity. 'New sounds are appearing faster than at any time in history but they are also changing and disappearing faster than ever before.'"

Over the past five years Fowkes' Cities and Memories website has collected and remixed more than 5,000 sounds from 100 countries which are being archived by the British Library.

Now, his latest project aims to preserve sounds that are "just on the edge of memory".

These sounds that we are "just about forgetting" are the ones that have the "greatest emotional resonance", he told.

"What I have been struck by is how people have responded emotionally to some of the recordings.

"You've got people who heard the sound of a Super 8 film camera and this reminded them of being in their living room in 1978 with their dad showing them home movies for the first time."

The "obsolete sounds" project features more than

150 recordings collected from around the world, and also includes remixes of those sounds by musicians and sound artists.

Billed as the biggest collection of its kind, it includes everything from Walkman personal stereo cassette players and old video game consoles, to steam trains and vintage racing cars, as well as sounds that evoke the rapidly changing natural environment, such as crumbling glaciers.

"Before the industrial revolution, our sound environment — bells and horses' hooves and manual industry — would not have changed much for hundreds of years," says Fowkes.

"Today, the pace of change is ridiculous. Things that are only a few years old, like ring tones on mobile phones, already sound dated."

Sound of the Underground

Moving below street level down into London's Underground train network, Fowkes gets to work again.

A bit like the "trainspotters" who were once a familiar sight on the platforms of UK railway stations, Fowkes is a dedicated "soundspotter".

But to him, there is nothing dull or uninteresting about the screeching of the train's wheels scraping against the curves in the metal tracks or the clunk of the doors opening and closing.

"I've always been someone who listens to the world. As soon as I have a

recording device in my hand I start to listen to the world kind of differently and hear things that other people wouldn't necessarily notice or listen to," he says.

The digital consultant launched Cities and Memories in 2015 and has drawn in some 1,000 collaborators across the globe.

"Every morning I wake up to emails with recordings from somewhere completely unexpected, like a beach in Bali or even the metro in Pyongyang," he says.

Field recordings are "having a moment", he adds, with artists such as ethereal Icelandic singer Bjork using them in their music.

"It used to be seen as very niche, even trainspotter-like behaviour, but now anyone can make a decent recording on their phone and it's becoming increasingly mainstream."

Fowkes has been thrilled by the response to his project — but is keen to receive more, especially from African cities.

Anyone can contribute, he says, just by "sticking their mobile phone out of the window" and then visiting citiesandmemories.com.

In the meantime, he'll keep on adding his own recordings, while admitting his dedication can sometimes be a source of mild irritation for his wife.

"Whenever we go to a new holiday destination... I am going 'have you heard that pedestrian crossing? I have to go and record it!' — AFP

A LOOK AT THE ACADEME



By: Dr. Zainab Al-Ajmi
zeinbf@moe.om

Effective Study Skills of Successful Students

STUDENTS DIFFER IN the way they study; some students fail as they lack adequate study habits.

Scientifically, students aren't joined to schools with good skills but have made them by constant and deliberate practice of good study habits. In a study by Okesina (2019), it has been observed in high school students, who schedule their study time have positive study skills. In the process of learning, educational research proves the study habits of the students play an important role in their academic performance. The results show both study habits and academic achievement are interrelated and dependent on each other (Lucky& Fehintoluwa, 2020).

An effective study habit is defined as "a habitual dedication to targeted studying, they determine how well a study will progress academically beyond the areas of strength and weakness, it is pertinent that students observe to keep studying on time. Human beings have varied personalities, motivations, ability; when discussing study habits, all of these must be considered" (Okesina, 2019). Referring to the views of (Meneghetti, Beni& Cesare Cornoldi, 2007), during adolescence, students typically meet new study requirements. However, some students fail in study performance. Usually, teachers attribute school failures to the fact that students are not prepared and do not study enough. In light of this, a number of studies have analysed to what degree cognitive and metacognitive aspects, and their relationship, influence school achievement and improve effective study habits, cognitive processing includes skills that help learners carry out a specific study task (such as attention, language, memory, etc.) For example, in reading comprehension, high achievers showed greater organisational abilities, and a greater tendency to use previous knowledge to understand the text. In addition, High achievers memorised the content by using schema-driven strategies involving schemas, diagrams, tables, and note-making.

Some factors that could lead to poor study habits are (1) Economy Factor: the inability to provide necessary materials to meet the needs of students could culminate into poor study. Similarly, when there is no food, shelter, clothes, etc., it may serve as obstacles to studying.

(2) Environment: an individual/student who lives in a morally decayed environment and observes people who do not study getting rich, those who do not study, but successfully pass their examinations may lose interest in studying and shift to anti-social behaviours.

(3) Lack of learning materials or facilities: many schools do not have adequate learning facilities, such as libraries, and relevant books, and they are also not allotted time for reading in schools.

(4) Improper time management: when students have difficulty scheduling their study time over other tasks. Many students spend their time on activities that may not add up to their academic and personal development. For instance, a student spends the whole day on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or playing games.

These activities do not have any relationship with good academic performance of students. Conversely, they erode away students' precious time that ought to be used for studying, whereas students need to be responsible for time management to handle their studies (Okesina, 2019).

To sum up, it is an exception that some students can breeze through school with minimal effort; the vast majority of successful students achieve their success by applying effective study habits, what's more, the Quality of education is reflected through academic achievement which is a function of the study habits and studies attitudes of the students. To enhance the student's learning gain, it is important to improve their study skills for them (Lucky& Fehintoluwa, 2020).

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To know more



Jindal Shadeed Group to invest \$3 billion in green steel cluster in Duqm SEZ

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, DEC 4

Jindal Shadeed Group, a pioneer in the steel industry, has announced that it has selected the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) in the Sultanate of Oman to establish a manufacturing facility. Slated to be the largest of its kind within the zone to produce green steel, the factory will also utilise renewable energy sources in its manufacturing operations.

The announcement was made at a ceremony that included the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding and a land allocation agreement. The event was held under the auspices of Dr Ali bin Masoud al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) and included the presence of a number of high-ranking government and private sector officials.

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) is the largest economic zone in the Middle East, with an area of 2,000 square kilometres. This strategic project is being built over an area estimated at approximately 2 square kilometres in the concession zone at the Port of Duqm with an investment value estimated at \$3 billion.

The MoU was signed by Eng Ahmed bin Hassan al Dheeb, Deputy Chairman of OPAZ, and Harssha Shetty, CEO of Jindal Shadeed Group. The



land reservation agreement was signed by the Jindal Shadeed Group and Reggy Vermeulen, Chief Executive Officer of Port of Duqm.

In line with its development efforts, Jindal Shadeed Group also signed an MoU with the centralised utility provider, Marafiq, to provide the plant with the utilities necessary to operate the project such as water services, seawater for cooling purposes, and other Marafiq services. The agreement was signed by Talal al Lawati, Vice-President of Commercial Operations, Marafiq.

Commenting on the series of agreements, Eng Ahmed bin Hassan al Dheeb, said: “The signing of the MoU and agreement is a testament to the importance of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and further reinstates

its position as a leading and attractive destination for large strategic projects that will benefit from renewable energy and green hydrogen.

The availability of solar energy and wind resources throughout the year will encourage more investments in green industries and renewable energy projects in the Sultanate of Oman in general, and Duqm in particular.

The Sultanate of Oman is making commendable efforts toward using cleaner sources of energy to meet industrial requirements. The efforts are in line with the priorities of Oman Vision 2040 to use alternative energy and sustainable natural resources. The project also serves the comprehensive national strategy which focuses on reducing emissions and achieving

carbon neutrality.”

Harssha Shetty added: “Jindal Shadeed Group is investing more than \$3 billion to develop this mega steel project in Duqm, and we have already obtained the necessary approvals to secure the land for our Green Hydrogen ready steel project. Our goal is to produce 5 million metric tonnes of green steel on an annual basis that will create over \$800 million per annum in country value addition.

The plant will supply high quality steel products to automobile, wind energy and consumer durables sector amongst others. There is a booming demand for green steel from ESG conscious customers around the world especially in Europe and Asia, who have already committed significant

reduction in Scope 3 emissions by 2030.”

Reggy Vermeulen stated, “This is a great step for all of us, and we are thrilled to see such a project happen in Port of Duqm — a successful pairing of Jindal Shadeed Group’s expertise in steel production and Port of Duqm’s logistical prowess.

This green steel project aligns very well with Port of Duqm’s vision to be a green port operating on sustainable and renewable energy sources in line with the Oman Vision 2040 to support economic diversification and reduce reliance on the oil and gas sector.

This huge project will not only attract foreign investment but also provide work opportunities for local talent.

TURN TO PAGE 12

FDO takes part in leading aquaculture expo

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, DEC 4

Fisheries Development Oman (FDO), the fisheries investment subsidiary of Oman Investment Authority (OIA), took part in the World Aquaculture Society (WAS) annual conference and exhibition, which concluded in Singapore earlier this week.

Organised by Singapore Food Agency (SFA), the event showcased opportunities in the blue economy industrial sector. Through its participation, FDO aimed to introduce the fisheries in the Sultanate of Oman and their competitive advantage in the international markets and the encouragement of investments in associated industries.

The Singapore event provided an appropriate venue for exchanging international experience and experiments and getting updated with the most important scientific developments and the latest technologies.

The conference brings together international institutions and organisations specialised in fisheries under one roof to discuss challenges and solutions to the international issues of the aquaculture industries.

Jumeirah Group’s first luxury resort launched in Oman

BALQEES AL ORAIMI
MUSCAT, DEC 4

Jumeirah Muscat Bay, a luxury beach resort hotel developed as part of the Muscat Bay lifestyle destination, was inaugurated on Sunday, December 4, 2022 at a grand ceremony held under the auspices of Salim bin Mohammed al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage and Tourism.

The 5-star resort sets a benchmark for tourism development in Muscat Governorate and offers local tourism a new concept of hospitality to support the government’s effort towards making the Sultanate of Oman a remarkable tourism destination. Built with an investment of RO 60 million and a built-up area of 32,000 square meters.

Jumeirah Muscat Bay is a unique tourism destination that provides more than 206 rooms



with breathtaking views and an extraordinary offering with its hospitality and extensive range of hotel facilities including three swimming pools, a kids club, spas, and sports facilities.

It will continue to expand its rich portfolio of hospitality assets and facilities and provide guests with a new experience of leisure and relaxation.

Salim al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage and Tourism, said: “The opening of Jumeirah Muscat Bay is a culmination of the efforts exerted by all stakeholders to enhance the tourism sector with various products that delivers unique aesthetics of this scenic area, which contributes to developing and growing the industry, boosting the efficiency



of tourism sector in line with the National Tourism Strategy and to enhance its role in achieving the goals of economic diversification.”

Shaikh Hamood bin Sultan al Hosni, CEO of Muscat Bay, the company that owns Jumeirah Muscat Bay hotel added: “I would like to give my special thanks to our Board for their continuing

leadership and assistance, as well as the Ministry of Heritage & Tourism and Ministry of Housing & Urban Planning for their consistent support to develop and flourish Oman’s tourism sector which in recent years, has grown by leaps and bounds.

It is during this exciting time that we open the doors of Jumeirah Muscat Bay resort

which plays a key role towards Muscat Bay journey and the tourism sector in general. It is certainly another milestone to the achievements of tourism sector. The hotel will provide exceptional concepts, service and experiences to visitors and residents. Through launching this resort, together we aim to attract a growing number of global visitors and investors who can consider Oman as a luxury tourism destination.”

Thomas B Meier, Chief Operating Officer and Interim CEO of Jumeirah Group commented: “Jumeirah Muscat Bay is a resort that captures the very best of Oman’s distinctive heritage and natural beauty and its recent accolade of ‘The World’s Leading New Resort’ at the World Travel Awards this year, reflects the uniqueness of our resort experience.

TURN TO PAGE 12

ahli islamic receives
excellence in Islamic
retail banking award



MUSCAT: With a keen focus on promoting ethical banking practices, and financial inclusivity, ahli islamic has been at the forefront of setting new benchmarks in the Islamic banking industry in Oman.

In recognition of the bank's continued efforts, ahli islamic was recently conferred the prestigious title of Excellence in Islamic Retail Banking at the recently held Alam Al-Iktisaad Wa Al Ama'al Islamic Banking and Finance Awards 2022.

The award ceremony was co-located at the Alam Al-Iktisaad Wa Al Ama'al Islamic Banking and Finance Summit, which celebrated its 10th anniversary this year. The event was held under the auspices of HH Sayyid Fahrb bin Fatik al Said as its chief guest, and was attended by Tahir al Amri, Executive President of the Central Bank of Oman as a keynote speaker sharing his invaluable industry insights, and Malik bin Abdullah al Mahrouqi, Adviser to the Executive President Office, Central Bank of Oman, as the summit's Guest of Honour.

The summit, which felicitated select banks and FinTech companies for their exceptional performance and achievements during the year, was attended by a cross-section of experts from the Islamic banking and finance industry, top officials from different sectors, and

key delegates from various government bodies.

Commenting on the award, Noora Sabah Sultan, AGM — Head of Retail Banking ahli islamic added, "At ahli islamic, we are driven by our relentless pursuit of excellence to provide a comprehensive suite of Sharia-compliant solutions to our customers which deliver a superior banking experience. We are indeed pleased to have received this award which is a testament to our innate zeal that inspires us to go the extra mile and our steadfast commitment to achieving outstanding results in every area of operation."

"ahli islamic will continue to spearhead innovation, uphold industry best practices, and remain at the forefront of advocating the benefits of modern Sharia-compliant banking solutions in the country. This will go beyond strengthening our brand in the industry — it will also cement the Sultanate of Oman's position and increase its contribution to the Islamic economy.

As the Associate Partner at the event, ahli islamic also played a proactive role in the panel discussions that highlighted the strong growth of Islamic finance in the country, its impact on sustainable progress to meet Oman Vision 2040, and the potential opportunities that are expected to arise in the future.

Bank Muscat continues to
develop Omani human resources

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, continues to provide comprehensive learning and development programmes for its employees in line with its pioneering role in the development of Omani human resources.

The bank announced recently that several batches of its flagship High Potential Graduate Development programme, continue to be conducted in 2022, with a view to chalk out a clear career growth path for the large pool of talented youth working at Bank Muscat.

Explaining the bank's strategy to further develop the competencies of the national cadre, Said bin Salim al Aufi, General Manager — Human Resources & Administration, Bank Muscat, stated: "Bank Muscat, which is celebrating its 40th Anniversary this year, has always played a key role in the training and development of Omani human resources as part of its overall strategy.

The bank firmly believes that its diligent and highly-competent employees are the main reason for its sustained growth and position as the leading financial services



provider in Oman. Hence, we ensure a world-class working environment for our employees, which automatically makes Bank Muscat a dream employer for Omani youth looking for career opportunities in the financial services sector."

In particular the High Potential Graduate Development programme has become the premier graduate development programme in the country as it develops the capabilities to have sound know-how of the banking business and self-leadership skills. This programme ensures a steady flow of talented Omanis

to the bank's leadership pipeline. It enables growing and nurturing of internal talent to take up additional responsibilities in preparation for managerial roles in the future.

The programme emphasises on gaining critical knowledge and skills such as corporate credit, investment banking, corporate finance, treasury and capital markets, retail banking, Islamic Banking, finance, human resources management, and assurance functions. The two-year programme comprises vast range of online modules that are blended ten workshops with case

studies, simulations and technical and leadership assessments.

Graduates who are able to apply the newfound knowledge to better their "on the job performance" can look forward to growing in their careers with the support of other programmes like the Jadara First Time Line Manager programme and the Branch Manager Development programme. Other Jadara programmes include the Middle Management Development Programme, which ensures a steady flow of talented, well-developed managers to senior and middle-management roles.

AVOD's non-hydrogenated products
fortify health and well-being

MUSCAT: Areej Vegetable Oils and Derivatives SAOC (AVOD)'s transformation strategy has always put health and customers' well-being at the forefront, and this has gained it the distinction of being Oman's Most Trusted Brand year after year.

The brand's Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is its consistent delivery of products, which offer the ideal balance of nutrition, health and wellness and taste, and encourage consumers to adopt healthier lifestyles for themselves and their families.

'Eat Right, Live Well' philosophy is the epicentre of the company's product development process and has made AVOD a trustworthy specialist in refining, processing, packaging and distribution of high-quality trans fat free cooking oils, non-hydrogenated margarines, vegetable ghee, fats and mayonnaise.

The company's continuous transformation takes a multi-pronged approach to create health-focused



products. The modern factory is constantly upgraded to meet stringent quality controls.

Packing materials such as tins, cans, plastic bottles, etc are manufactured in-house and filled immediately using automatic packing machines to ensure highest standards of hygiene. The company's commitment to safeguarding health and safety has earned it the ISO 9001 certificate for Quality Management System, ISO 14001 certificate for Environmental Management System and ISO 22000 certificates for Food Safety Management.

UES signs
MoU with
BAE Systems



MUSCAT: United Engineering Services (UES), the Engineering Services Arm of Mohammed al Barwani Group of Companies, has signed an MoU with BAE Systems in the UK. The agreement aims to combine BAE Systems' maritime surface autonomy solutions and UES' fast interceptor and patrol craft for marine operations.

BAE Systems will initially focus on the development of an autonomous variant of the popular P38 fast patrol boat. Mike Woods, Head of Strategy & Campaigns for Autonomous Systems said: "This is great news for BAE Systems as it opens up a new route to market for our latest autonomy solutions."

UES aims to leverage the autonomous variant to bring new value to its clients. Tariq al Barwani, Managing Director of UES said: "We are in the business of providing the ideal solutions to maximise the results of our clients across industries. After looking at the capabilities of BAE Systems in maritime autonomy, I am confident that the variant P38 will be a great option for those seeking to maximise the benefits that autonomy brings."

David Lindsay-White, Deputy CEO — UES added: "The P38 is already an exceptional patrol craft which has proven its high-speed and manoeuvrability for multiple clients across the GCC and SE Asia."

All-new Ford Territory launched in Oman

MUSCAT: Ford's first-ever all-new introduction in Oman — the all-new Ford Territory SUV is now available with exclusive year-end benefits. On offer is service 3 years / 60,000 kms and registration 1 year. Conditions apply. For details visit a Ford showroom. The campaign will last until December 31, 2022.

The all-new Territory SUV combines a modern and striking look, ample cabin space, and confident driving with smart, safe technologies and empowering experiences for young professionals and small, busy families.

The all-new Ford Territory was envisioned through Ford's new 'Progressive Energy in Strength' design philosophy, which is based on the rich heritage of the brand and its



iconic aesthetics. It embodies three fundamental design principles: commanding, agile, and responsive.

On the all-new Ford Territory's exterior, the Ford DNA is visible through coast-to-coast upper graphics — comprising an integrated grille and signature light — balanced with lower graphics, with full

LED lighting, which drives the focal point higher and communicates purpose, stability, and capability.

The headlamps show off a unique design, with daytime running LED lights incorporated with a strong horizontal grille bar, which adds to the eye-catching appearance.

The form also has function,

with the headlamps lowered towards the ground for an expanded lighting areas that also creates a more powerful front look. The bold grille bar is manufactured with high quality materials that help to reflect Ford's global design DNA on the car.

The all-new Ford Territory's interior provides a convenient and sophisticated experience space that caters to a wide range of customer needs, whether for work, play, or family. The horizontal coast-to-coast design evokes a connecting space in an embracing gesture, creating openness and spaciousness. Comfort and function are maximised through Premium Leather seats, with a 10-way adjustable ergonomic driver's seat.

Built to optimise loading capacity, all-new Territory is also equipped with more than 20 spacious storage compartments — as well as an extensible trunk with a 448-litre volume — allowing passengers to flexibly use storage spaces throughout the car.

Those interested in experiencing the all-new Ford territory SUV can visit their nearest Ford showroom. In Oman, Ford vehicles are brought to you by Arabian Car Marketing Co LLC. Please log on to www.fordoman.com, or www.facebook.com/FordOman or www.youtube.com/FordOmanChannel or www.instagram.com/ford_oman for the latest news, test drive requests and the latest press releases.

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UN HALLS OMAN'S SUPPORT FOR PEACE IN YEMEN

STAY APART AND BREAK THE CHAIN

Jindal Shadeed Group to invest \$3 billion in green steel cluster in Duqm SEZ

FROM PAGE 9

I would also extend my gratitude to the board of directors for their unending support, and for paving the path for us to attract projects of this scale and implications to Port of Duqm. We are confident that we will benefit from the continuous support of all parties who are committed to making this project a success.”

Talal al Lawati of Marafiq noted: “We, at Marafiq Company, are pleased to provide the necessary water services for this vital and important project which will undoubtedly enhance the use of clean energy and green hydrogen in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm. We will ensure that all processes are in place to meet the evolving needs of the project while reinstating our commitment to contributing to other new developmental ventures as well.”

Marketing in the New World: Tejarah Talks tackles next marketing frontiers

BUSINESS REPORTER

MUSCAT, DEC 4

Taking a fresh look at new trends, customer behaviour and technologies that are transforming the marketing industry at top speed, the final Tejarah Talks of 2022 has been designed specifically to provide CMOs and other senior marketing leaders with the insights they need to build strategies, grow revenue and drive customer engagement.

‘Marketing in the New World’, 7:30pm Wednesday, December 14, Zain Auditorium, Omantel’s Headquarters in Airports Heights, will bring together a carefully curated group of thought-provoking leaders from Oman’s marketing, media and advertising community to share experiences and perspectives on the issues shaping the future of marketing.

Organised by Oman Business Forum in association with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Investment Promotion

(MoCIIP) and supported by the Ministry of Culture, Sports & Youth, HSBC, SOHAR Port & Freezone, Omantel and Oman FM, ‘Marketing in the New World’ will be moderated by His Highness Sayyid Dr Adham al Said, Managing Partner, The Firm, while the panel includes Luma al Saleh, Partner & Chief Transformation Officer, Identity; Paul Ross (pictured), Senior Consultant, former CMO, Mindberry; Maria Saif, Head of Marketing & Digital, Wealth & Personal Banking, HSBC; and Ahmed Sharkawy, Marketing Manager, Diamond Developers.

Speaking ahead of the event, MoCIIP’s Oman Business Forum & P3 Director, Maymuna al Adawi said: “Marketing has been around for as long as trade and commerce have existed. The nature, form and content may have altered over the years, but the objective has remained unchanged - promote and sell a service or product.

This is becoming ever more



complex in today’s crowded marketing space, and it is clear that exceptional execution is going to be required for businesses to stand out.

Captivating audiences and the stories Omani companies are going to have to tell across multiple platforms is very much going to be at the heart of this edition of Tejarah Talks as our panellists look at how brand awareness will be created and all-important sales generated in the years to come.”

Agreeing with Al Adawi and

setting the scene for the evening’s conversation, Tejarah Talks panellist, Paul Ross added, “If I can share one lesson with Omani companies on how to tell their story, it is to think about their narrative as both an origin and a destination story, true to who you are and where you are going. Creating and articulating a bold story is critical to success.

Products are part of contributing to that story. And, if you are clear about your foundational narrative you do narrative-led strategy. Strategy is led by your story – not the other way around. Follow the narrative arc of your story and don’t get distracted. But it is also important to demonstrate the other side of visionary storytelling - consistently demonstrating progress against that compelling story.”

With its informed and insightful panels, Tejarah Talks 2022 has enjoyed considerable success attracting capacity audiences

with online participants joining from around the world. The live events complimented by a series of publications and podcasts.

Commenting on the Tejarah Talks season, Al Adawi shared: “We could not be more proud of the number of people that have attended Tejarah Talks, the quality of the programme and calibre of panellists. It has been a fantastic platform that has allowed us to showcase the dynamism and vibrancy of Oman’s business landscape and investment environment.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported us over the past 12 months and made Tejarah Talks the grand success it is, in particular our supporters HSBC and SOHAR Port & Freezone.”

Tejarah Talks is free-of-charge and open to everyone. To reserve your seat at ‘Marketing in the New World’ email your name and mobile number to: TT@tejarah.gov.om

IEA, top energy sector bigwigs to attend Oman conclave today

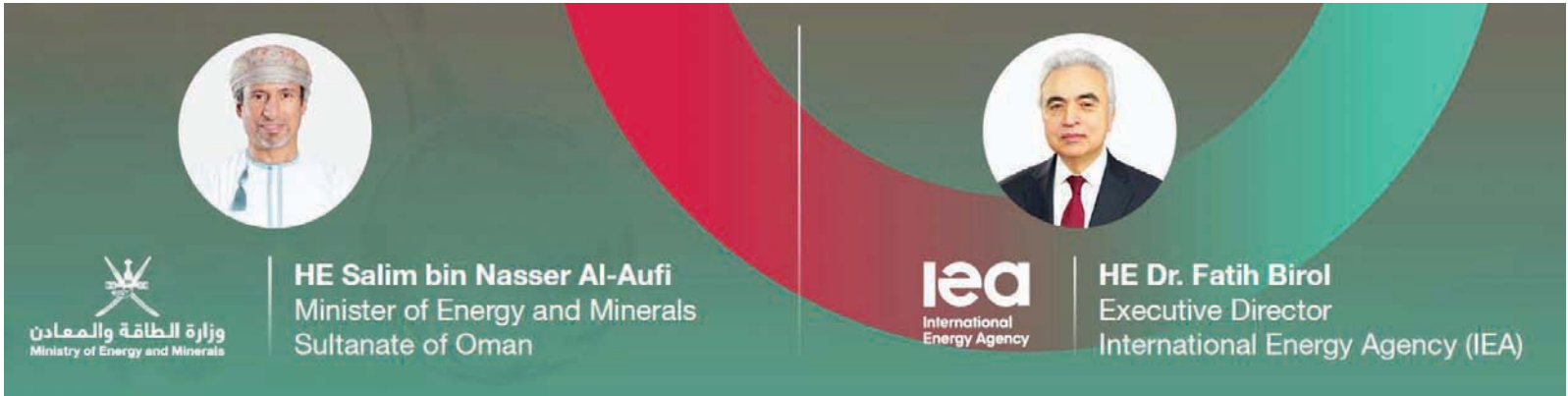
CONRAD PRABHU

MUSCAT, DEC 4

Oman’s Ministry of Energy and Minerals, in partnership with the International Energy Agency (IEA), are jointly hosting here today (Monday, December 5, 2022) a conclave for top energy sector officials and CEOs from around the world on the role of green hydrogen in enhancing global energy security.

Dubbed ‘Energy Executives Circle’, the conclave is a ‘by-invitation-only’ event that takes place at the Kempinski Hotel Muscat this evening. It forms the prelude to the Green Hydrogen Summit Oman (GHSO) Conference and Exhibition, which formally opens at the Oman Convention & Exhibition tomorrow, December 6.

Eng Salim bin Nasser al Auqi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, as well as Dr Fatih Birol, Executive Director – IEA, will address the exclusive gathering, featuring a number of energy ministers representing countries



that have voiced ambitions to either venture into large-scale green hydrogen or are seeking offtake arrangements with producers.

João Galamba, Secretary of State for Environment and Energy – Portugal, will deliver the keynote address. Also in attendance will be CEOs and heads of a number of major energy corporations from Oman and abroad, key figures from international energy think-tanks and energy experts.

Al Auqi will also join his counterparts from a number of

countries at a panel discussion focusing on the evening’s main theme: ‘Green Hydrogen and Global Energy Security’.

Also taking part are: Dr M G Michel Heijdra, Deputy Vice Minister for Climate and Energy at the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, Netherlands; Hirohide Hirai, Vice Minister for International Affairs at the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Japan; and a representative from the Federal Republic of Germany.

The panel discussion, moderated by Dr Manal Shehabi,

Oxford University researcher and IEA Consultant, will elicit the views of the panelists on a key question: Balancing short-term energy security goals with long-term sustainable energy transition and decarbonisation pathways.

Deliberations will also focus on the importance of enabling greater access to affordable and less volatile energy sources, and the importance of international collaboration to ensure global energy security as a key prerequisite for economic and political stability.

Potential challenges and

opportunities facing Oman and its hydrogen partners in developing and sustaining green hydrogen production will be explored as well.

Today’s high-level conclave aims to strengthen Oman’s positioning as a potential regional heavyweight in the emerging green hydrogen industry.

Oman is targeting investments of around \$140 billion in a future clean energy sector, the outputs of which will support the decarbonisation goals of not only the Sultanate of Oman, but other economies as well.

Jumeirah Group’s first luxury resort launched in Oman

FROM PAGE 9

We have an exceptional team here with a strong representation from Oman itself, so guests staying with us can expect a truly authentic experience, with real Omani hospitality combined with ‘Jumeirah’ brand standards.”

Muscat Bay has contributed since the start of the first phase by providing thousands of direct and indirect jobs. It has provided tourism, residential, commercial and recreational facilities on total area of about 300 thousand square metre and total building area of about 140 thousand square metres at a total cost of RO 185 million.

The second phase which Muscat Bay intends to start developing next year, will contain tourist and residential facilities of modern nature that are compatible with the requirements of the current phase.

It will be spread over an area of 150,000 square metres and a total building area estimated at 100,000 square metres. The total cost is expected to be around RO 65 million.

Asyad Group eyes ambitions to grow regionally, globally

JOMAR MENDOZA

@JmObserver

Asyad, the national logistics group of the Sultanate of Oman, has outlined plans to expand in the logistics sector, both regionally and globally.

Abdulrahman al Hatmi, Asyad Group CEO, said in an interview with Reuters Event that the company benefitted during the Covid period. Investors saw the high potential of Oman, being situated strategically between Europe, Africa, India and other established economies.

Salalah, as one of the biggest and most efficient ports in the world, also saw big volume of cargoes during Covid, the CEO stated.

“With what is happening right

now, the ‘Perfect Storm’ — Covid, geopolitical tensions, inflation and interest rates — the Middle East is probably the only growing economy at the moment that has the potential to grow faster.

The Middle East presents a very good growth story. We are located two weeks away from China, two weeks away from the US and very near to India and the surrounding economies, which is more than 2 billion market,” the CEO added.

In particular, Africa represents a potential growth market for Asyad. “We are very interested in Africa because its logistics sector is not yet mature. Not only in financial and economic but also in social aspirations, we wanted to serve them better in terms of logistics solutions. We can help them grow in different sectors,



whether it is distribution, retailers, manufacturing, mining and more importantly, food security. All these sectors require sophisticated logistic solutions, which I believe we can provide and therefore we can have a competitive advantage to go to these countries and economies and support them.”

Al Hatmi stressed that Oman has the enough capacity to handle demands in the logistics sector. “We have enough capacity to handle demand. In terms of infrastructure, Oman is very blessed. We have three major ports, deep-water ports, which have enough capacity

to bigger volumes. Our inland infrastructure is very robust and so is our airports, roads, warehousing capacity and free zones. The government has made a lot of investments in infrastructure,” he said.

As for the neighbouring countries, particularly the UAE and Saudi Arabia, the CEO said that Covid made these countries move away from competition to cooperation.

“During Covid, we moved away from looking at the sector as a competition between the GCC countries in terms of infrastructure. We are now looking on how we can complement each other and how to integrate solutions. We have constant dialogue with our partners in the UAE, Saudi Arabia and other

countries and discuss how we can complement each other and how we can play a stronger role and join hands to serve our customers better.”

With the recent announcement of Saudi Arabia that it was looking to generate \$20 billion of investment in its national supply chain infrastructure, the CEO said that Asyad is interested and will join in the project.

“We are both interested and will join as well. Saudi Arabia is open to regional and foreign investors when it comes to logistics industry and other industries. We already have strong collaboration with our counterparts in Saudi Arabia. We are actually bidding for projects together. We are even bidding for solutions together. This was not happening five years ago,” he said.



MONDAY | DECEMBER 5 | 2022 | JUMADA AL ULA 11 | 1444 AH



DOHA: Kylian Mbappe set up a history-making goal for Olivier Giroud and then scored two himself as holders France eased into the quarterfinals of the World Cup with a 3-1 win over Poland on Sunday.

Giroud's opening goal a minute before half-time was his 52nd for his country, allowing him to pass Thierry Henry and become France's all-time record marksman.

Mbappe's lethal strike in the 74th minute killed off any prospect of a Poland comeback and he netted again at the death to move to nine goals in just 11 World Cup appearances, the second-most for a French player at the tournament.

At the other end the threat of Robert Lewandowski was snuffed out by the French defence although the 34-year-old Poland captain did get the consolation of scoring a

stoppage-time penalty.

France, though, march on to the quarterfinals and remain on course to become the first team to successfully defend the World Cup since Brazil 60 years ago.

France were overwhelming favourites against a Poland side who had limped through the group stage, but the memory of their exit from Euro 2020 served as a warning.

France had been 3-1 up and cruising in that last-16 tie against Switzerland only to concede two late goals and end up losing on penalties, with Mbappe missing the crucial spot-kick.

Mbappe returned on Sunday as one of nine changes following their inconsequential defeat by Tunisia, with goalkeeper and captain Hugo Lloris also returning to win his 142nd cap. That saw

him equal the record for most France appearances held by Lilian Thuram, whose son Marcus came off the bench here.

It was a history-making occasion for France but what coach Didier Deschamps wanted above all was a routine victory and progression to the quarter-finals.

The sky should be the limit for a French side led by Mbappe, but it is not just him. Ousmane Dembele and Antoine Griezmann were lively in a strong start amid a hushed atmosphere at Al Thumama Stadium.

EMPHATIC

The fans were happy to sit back and be thrilled as the big screen at one point showed that Mbappe had reached a top speed of 35 kilometres per hour.

France's pace and pressing was too much for Poland as Przemyslaw Frankowski gave possession away, leading to Dembele crossing to the back post for Giroud to somehow put the ball wide.

Poland, who have not won a World Cup knockout match since 1982, recovered from a tentative start to almost go ahead in the 38th minute as Lloris blocked a shot by Piotr Zielinski and Jakub Kaminski's follow-up was stopped on the line by Raphael Varane.

Those misses proved crucial as France seized the lead a minute before half-time. Patient build-up play ended with Mbappe having a glance as he received the ball just outside the box before playing in Giroud who took a touch and finished into the far corner.

Poland were left to chase the



France's
OLIVIER GIROUD
celebrates scoring their first goal against Poland during the Round of 16 match at Al Thumama Stadium in Doha

game in the second half and they sent on Juventus striker Arkadiusz Milik to support Lewandowski for the final half hour.

However, their attack was simply no match for France, who picked off Poland to make it 2-0.

A Griezmann clearance was brought down by Giroud and he released Dembele whose ball into the middle was controlled before being blasted home by Mbappe.

It was an emphatic finish and was followed by another of a similar calibre from a Thuram assist in stoppage time. Only Just Fontaine, who scored 13 in 1958, has scored more World Cup goals for France.

Lewandowski then pulled one back right at the end, converting a retaken penalty that was awarded for a handball by Dayot Upamecano. — AFP

AL RAYYAN: Lionel Messi scored his first goal in a World Cup knockout round in his 1,000th match to beat Diego Maradona's tournament tally, as Argentina beat off a frenzied Australia fightback to win 2-1 on Saturday and reach the quarterfinals.

Messi his side ahead after 35 minutes with a coolly taken low strike for his 94th international goal, passing the great Maradona's eight World Cup goals, in a match where he was instrumental in almost every Argentine attack.

Julian Alvarez made it two near the hour mark after pouncing on a howler by keeper Mat Ryan to set up a mouth-watering last-eight clash next Friday with the Netherlands, who beat the United States 3-1 earlier in the day.

With nothing to lose, the Socceroos, chasing a first World Cup quarterfinal berth, pulled a goal back 13 minutes from time when Craig Goodwin's wayward shot took a huge deflection off Enzo Fernandez and flew into the net for an own goal.

Messi spurned two clear chances late on but it was Australia's teenaged substitute Garang Kuol who set hearts racing in the stadium when deep into stoppage time his close-range shot on the turn was brilliantly saved by Emi Martinez.

The Australia bench had their heads in their hands as the final whistle blew moments later, sparking fervent celebrations from the Argentina squad and roars around the packed Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium.

Man of the match Messi admitted the final moments were tense.

"Things got complicated in the end with their goal but it's a World Cup and it's never easy," Messi said.

"Now we have a really tough clash with Holland, who play very well. They have great players and a great coach, it's going to be hard-fought. If a World Cup has been tough from the start, it gets even tougher at this stage."

MESSI MAGIC

Argentina took a while to find their stride in a physical match that started off scrappy, with Alejandro Gomez, Fernandez and Alvarez combining well but unable to break down a resolute defence as Messi struggled to make his mark. Australia had a chance from a corner when towering defender Harry Souttar leapt high in the area but headed tamely.

Lifted throughout by the overwhelmingly Argentine support, which cheered, sang and bounced in unison from all sides of the stadium, Argentina finally made the breakthrough after 35 minutes with Messi the creator and finisher of a superbly worked goal delivered at breathtaking speed. — Reuters

MESSI SCORES AS ARGENTINA BEAT AUSTRALIA 2-1

ARGENTINES TO MEET NETHERLANDS IN LAST EIGHT

MESSI BEATS MARADONA'S WORLD CUP GOALS TALLY

MESSI

TAKES ARGENTINA
INTO QUARTERS



JAPAN PRIMED TO SHOW ‘SAMURAI SPIRIT’ AGAINST CROATIA

COACH HAJIME MORIYASU WANTS HIS PLAYERS TO HAVE MORE OF THE BALL AGAINST CROATIA BUT URGED THEM TO SHOW “RESILIENCE” WHATEVER THE SITUATION

DOHA: Japan will “fight like samurai” in Monday’s World Cup last-16 clash with Croatia as they battle to reach the quarter-finals for the first time, defender Yuto Nagatomo said.

Japan reached the knockout round after stunning Germany and Spain to top Group E but they are not satisfied with what they have achieved so far in Qatar.

Veteran Nagatomo is appearing at his fourth World Cup and he urged his teammates to “show the samurai spirit to the world” against Croatia.

“Before battle, the samurai would polish their weapons and refine their technique, but if they were scared in battle, all that would count for nothing,” the former Inter Milan left-back said on Sunday.

“It’s the same as football. Of course tactics and technique are important, but if we’re scared, it doesn’t matter how much we’ve trained over the past four years because our technique will be no use.

“The most important thing is to have courage,” the 36-year-old added.

Japan have reached the last 16 at three previous World Cups but they have yet to make it as far as the quarterfinals.

They were eliminated at the first knock-out round four years ago in Russia when they threw away a two-goal lead to lose 3-2 to Belgium with the last kick of the game.

Nogatomo said the defeat had been on his mind for the past four years and he is ready to wipe away the memory against Croatia.

“The past four years have been tough for me but I think we have all overcome that and improved as players,” he said.

“I have been playing for Japan for almost 15 years and as far as I can see, this is the strongest team we’ve ever had at the World Cup.”

Japan had to come from behind to beat both Germany and Spain, and were forced to defend for long periods against opponents who dominated possession.

Coach Hajime Moriyasu wants his players to have more of the ball against Croatia but urged them to show “resilience” whatever the situation.

“The players showed their ability against Germany and Spain, they were united as a team and dug in and fought until the end,” he said.

“They have proved that when they play like that, it brings results.

“Of course it’s important to think about our opponents but first of all I want our players to show what they can do.” — AFP



FAN



France fans in Souq Waqif, Doha, before the France v Poland match. – Reuters



A France fan waits for the start of the match between France and Poland at the Al Thumama Stadium in Doha. – AFP



An England fan is seen ahead of the England v Senegal match. – Reuters



Argentina fans inside the Ahmad bin Ali Stadium in Al Rayyan. – Reuters



France fans pose for a photograph outside the stadium. – Reuters



Z O N E



Poland supporters at the stands. – AFP



France supporters at the Al Thumama Stadium in Doha. – AFP



A France supporters takes pictures. – AFP



Argentina fan watch the live broadcast of the Argentina-Australia match at Francisco Seeber square in Buenos Aires. – AFP

Poland supporters wait for the start of the match. – AFP

Argentina supporters celebrate their team's win in the Qatar 2022 World Cup round of 16 match against Australia at the Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium in Al Rayyan. – AFP





Oman U-19 team gears up for Asian Cup

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, DEC 4

The head coach of Oman U-19 football team, David Gordo, opted 24 players for the domestic camp which began in Muscat on Sunday. The ten days warm-up gathering is being held at Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex as part of team's preparation for the top assignment of AFC U20 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2023. The Asian finals is scheduled to take place in Tashkent from March 1 to 18, 2023.

The team had concluded their abroad camp in Dubai on November 20 on a bright note. Coach David Gordo's boys had played two friendly games against the UAE team. The opening warm-up game ended in favour of Oman by 2-1 as Al Mutaism Ghanim and Abdullah al Rajhi netted the winning goals.

In the following match, Oman boys repeated their victory against the hosts 1-0 after Abdul Majeed al Balushi scored all the important goal in the 22nd minute. Dubai camp was within the team's technical plan for gearing up for the Asian event.

Oman are grouped with Korea

Republic, Tajikistan and Jordan in Group C of AFC U20 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2023. Hosts Uzbekistan will vie for the title as they will face Indonesia, Iraq and Syria in Group A while Qatar will try to secure a berth in quarterfinals as they will meet Australia, Vietnam and Islamic Republic of Iran in Group B. Defending champions Saudi Arabia, Japan, China PR and Kyrgyz Republic will compete in Group D. The top four teams in the Asian finals will confirm their presence in the Fifa U20 World Cup 2023, which will return to Asia in Indonesia from May 20 to June 11.

Oman Squad: Turki Abdullah, Al Muhatadi al Abri, Mohammed al Oufi, Abdullah al Rajhi, Al Muntasir al Mawali, Salim al Shamakhi, Momin al Souli, Mulhim al Hadharami, Osama al Rawahi, Salim al Abdali, Abdullah al Anbouri, Said al Ghanbousi, Al Harith al Mukhaini, Mosab al Shamsi, Abdul Aleem al Rawahi, Ahed al Mashakhei, Mazin Saleh, Al Muhannad al Habsi, Abdulmajeed al Balushi, Ali al Balushi, Salah al Jadeedi, Ayman al Nabhani and Mohammed Abdulhakim.



WARRIORS SHOOT DOWN ROCKETS

M A V S B E A T K N I C K S I N N E W Y O R K

LOS ANGELES: Andrew Wiggins scored a season-high 36 points on Saturday as the NBA champion Golden State Warriors got off to a hot start and made it hold up on Saturday in a 120-101 victory over the Houston Rockets.

Wiggins drained a career-high eight three-pointers, five of them in the third quarter when he scored 17 points.

Warriors superstar Stephen Curry also had eight treys on the way to 30 points and Jordan Poole added 21 points as the Warriors notched a 10th straight home win.

But Warriors coach Steve Kerr said the defending champions still have room for improvement after letting a 25-point lead midway through the second quarter slip.

The Rockets, led by 20 points from Kevin Porter Jr, had sliced the deficit to four points with 6:59 left in the game.

The Warriors pulled away again, but Kerr said they need to find a way to keep teams from making a run.

"It was a phenomenal first 18 minutes," Kerr said. "I thought that was maybe the best stretch we've had all year to start the game.

"We were defending, rebounding, doing everything right, and then we just lost our focus.

"That's our biggest challenge right now, trying to maintain our focus long enough not to give up leads and allow teams back in," Kerr added.

Elsewhere, Dallas star Luka Doncic and Tim Hardaway Jr took it to the New York Knicks in the third quarter on the way to a 121-100 NBA victory at Madison Square Garden.

Doncic scored 30 points and Hardaway added 28 against his former team, the two combining for 36 points in the third quarter alone when the Mavs outscored the Knicks 41-15 to take control of the contest.

Doncic, the league's leading scorer, had a lackluster 11 points in the first quarter but turned up the heat after the interval.

"It was a challenge to come out of the locker room (in the second half) with more energy and better everything," Doncic said. "The way we played the third quarter, you saw that we can really play basketball."



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) drives to the basket against Houston Rockets forward Kenyon Martin Jr (6) during the second half at Chase Center. — USA Today Sports

Jalen Brunson, who departed Dallas for the Knicks in free agency after last season, finished with just 13 points.

BUCKS BOUNCE BACK

The Milwaukee Bucks earned a bounce-back win despite the absence of two-time NBA Most Valuable Player Giannis Antetokounmpo, beating the Hornets 105-96 in Charlotte.

A day after a hard-fought 133-129 home loss to the Los Angeles Lakers, Antetokounmpo and Jrue Holiday were inactive, as was Khris Middleton — whose return from off-season wrist surgery is

still being carefully managed.

Antetokounmpo, who scored 40 points against the Lakers, sat out with a sore left knee. Holiday was listed as out with a left knee contusion.

Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said he held them out considering "the quick turnaround and with the back-to-back, a little bit of an early game, and just taking into account the big picture."

Bobby Portis stepped up to lead the Bucks with 20 points. Jordan Nwora added 17 points and Brook Lopez and Jevon Carter scored 14 apiece.

Oklahoma City's Shai Gilgeous-

Alexander scored 33 points to lead seven Thunder players in double figures in a 135-128 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves in Minneapolis.

Josh Giddey added 21 points and 12 rebounds for the Thunder, who trailed by four going into the fourth quarter after the Timberwolves erupted for 44 points in the third period.

In Los Angeles, Sacramento centre Domantas Sabonis connected on 10 of his 11 shots from the field on the way to a game-high 24 points, as the Kings whipped the Clippers 123-96.

— AFP

Oman Stallions stun AER, Yalla Shabab prevail

MUSCAT: Oman Stallions beat AER Bin Ali by 5 wickets convincingly and Yalla Shabab outsmarted Muscat CT by 6 wickets in the Premier Division of the Oman Cricket League Season 2022-23 powered by Muscat Pharmacy fixtures played this week.

On Friday, Oman Stallions called right at the toss and put AER Bin Ali to bat first. AER started at a good pace with both openers Zeeshan Siddiqui and Azam Ali looking in good shape and tandem. Oman Stallions' pacer Hemal

Tandel picked the first wicket getting Azam Ali trapped in front

of the wickets in his fifth over.

Off with a reasonable powerplay, AER Bin Ali were looking to set a big total but the Oman Stallions' turners had bigger plans. Jay Odedra and Mohit Patel operated in partnership claiming wickets in quick succession with both bagging 3 wickets respectively leaving AER bundled down for just 144.

In return, AER started on a high with Muzahir Raza claiming wickets of both openers in his first and third over. Although being 3 down in the powerplay, skipper Karan Sonavale and Rafiullah ensured Oman Stallions recovered



Hannan Rizwan, Mohammed Nadeem and Nester Dhamba of Yalla Shabab.

well and were on for the chase with Vinayak Shukla coming in and notching some quick runs to get the Stallions past AER.



Jay Odedra and Mohit Patel shined for Oman Stallions.

HANNAN, NADEEM SHINE

On Saturday, Yalla Shabab won the toss and elected to bowl first. Muscat CT started off scoring 28

in the powerplay losing Kashyap Prajapati to Mehran Khan.

Skipper Jatinder Singh held the Muscat CT batting by scoring a sublime half-century and holding one end but none of his counterparts could go long. Off-Spinner Nester Dhamba playing his first match of the Premier Division this season claimed 4 wickets in his spell of 10 overs well supported by Mohammed Zahid claiming 2 wickets. Muscat CT could pile up just 169 with a closing contribution by Samay Shrivastav remaining not out scoring 19 off 25 balls.

In return, Yalla Shabab went

all guns blazing at the Muscat CT armers with only Ayaan Khan being able to cause interruptions to their plans. Hannan Rizwan's and Mohammed Nadeem's sublime half centuries ensured Yalla Shabab got over the line to claim its second win of the season and continue their undefeated run.

BRIEF SCORES
AER Bin Ali 144 all out in 26.2 overs (Zeeshan Siddiqui 32 (41b, 6x4); Mohit Patel 3-17, Jay Odedra 3-33) **lost to Oman Stallions 147-5 in 26.2 overs** (Rafiullah 34 (28b, 5x4, 1x6); Muzahir Raza 2-29, Sean Nowak 2-38) by 5 wickets.
Muscat CT 169 all out in 48 overs (Jatinder Singh 64 (105b, 5x4); Nester Dhamba 4-29) **lost to Yalla Shabab 170-4 in 38.3 overs** (Hannan Rizwan 80 (83b, 8x4, 2x6), Mohammed Nadeem 51 (85b, 3x4); Ayaan Khan 4-26) by 6 wickets.



Lyon takes six wickets as Australia outclass Windies in first Test

PERTH, Australia: Spin king Nathan Lyon bagged six wickets, including century-maker Kraigg Brathwaite, as Australia ground down a gutsy West Indies to win the first Test in Perth by 164 runs on Sunday.

Skipper Brathwaite, who took the match into a final day with a defiant overnight 101 after Australia declared their second innings at 182-2 on day four, couldn't keep the momentum going against Lyon and was bowled for 110. The Caribbean team resumed on 192-3, needing to bat through 90 overs for a draw after gamely rebuffing an attack missing the injured Pat Cummins for two sessions on Saturday.

But they were all out for 333 after some plucky late resistance.

Lyon ended with 6-128, in the process surpassing India's Ravichandran Ashwin to become the eighth-highest wicket-taker in Test history with 446.

"The batters did their job, the quicks stood up, it was a fantastic all-round performance," said Australian skipper Pat Cummins.

"Lyon is the most important bowler in our team, he keeps taking wickets. There wasn't much on offer for the spinners, but he found out a way and kept picking wickets."

MOST TESTS WICKETS (MEN'S)		
1	M. MURALIDARAN	800
2	S. WARNE	708
3	J. ANDERSON	667
4	A. KUMBLE	619
5	S. BROAD	566
6	G. MCGRATH	563
7	C. WALSH	519
8	R. ASHWIN	442
9	N. LYON	440
10	D. STEYN	439



It extended the West Indies' 25-year run of failing to win a Test on Australian soil, with the hosts retaining the Frank Worrell Trophy ahead of the second, and final, Test in Adelaide starting on Thursday.

"Obviously disappointed with the loss. We gave away the wickets in the first innings, but it was a good fight as a team and as a bowling unit," said Brathwaite.

"It's good to see the fight from the batters, but still a lot of

SCOREBOARD	
Australia 1st innings 598-4 decd	
West Indies 1st innings 283	
Australia 2nd innings 182-2 decd	
West Indies 2nd innings	
K Brathwaite b Lyon	110
T Chanderpaul b Starc	45
S Brooks c Smith b Lyon	11
J Blackwood c Labuschagne b Lyon	24
K Mayers c Smith b Lyon	10
J Holder c Smith b Head	3
J Da Silva c Khawaja b Hazlewood	12
R Chase c Starc b Lyon	55
A Joseph b Head	43
J Seales not out	5
K Roach b Lyon	0
Extras (lb7, b2, nb6)	15
Total (all out, 110.5 overs) ... 333	
Fall of wickets: 1-116, 2-133, 3-191, 4-207, 5-212, 6-216, 7-233, 8-315, 9-333	
Bowling: Starc 23-4-65-1, Hazlewood 22-8-52-1, Lyon 42-5-10-128-6, Green 13-2-45-0, Labuschagne 2-0-9-0, Head 8-1-25-2	

improvement to be done."

Brathwaite said after his day four exploits that the opening overs would be "very, very crucial", and in front of a spartan crowd, it was Australia who prevailed.

Kyle Mayers, who has been ruled out of any further bowling in the two-Test series with a shoulder strain, added just 10 runs to his overnight nought.

Lyon made the breakthrough, with Mayers getting a thick edge to Steve Smith at slip.

Brathwaite was almost chanceless in making his 100, but Lyon, in his 111th Test, finally beat the bat and he was bowled. — AFP

England scent victory after bold declaration

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan: England made a bold declaration and used short-ball bowling tactics to great effect to stay on course for a comprehensive victory in the opening Test against Pakistan on Sunday.

Having taken a 78-run lead in the runfest, England declared their second innings on 264-7 to set Pakistan an improbable victory target of 343 with four sessions to go.

On a docile pitch where seven batsmen smashed hundreds, England's pace attack bent their backs and diligently pursued a short-ball strategy to dent Pakistan's top order.

The home side finished the penultimate day on 80-2, still 263 behind their target, with number three batsman Azhar Ali unlikely to bat again after retiring hurt with a damaged finger.

Opener Imam-ul-Haq (43) and debutant Saud Shakeel (24) were resisting England's victory march when bad light stopped play.

England's Joe Root surprised all by batting left-handed against leg spinner Zahid Mahmood for a couple of deliveries before returning to his usual stance.

"In the dressing-room we've got strong aggressive leaders who



are willing to risk things, dangle a carrot and in the bigger picture of things make things really exciting," England assistant coach Paul Collingwood told Sky Sports.

"Chasing down targets on the last day isn't easy and the scoreboard pressure is always looking over your shoulder."

"We're not scared of losing Test matches. We've had a great day and we'll keep pushing."

Earlier, Pakistan were bowled out for 579 in reply to England's first-innings 657.

Agha Salman's breezy 53 frustrated England who had to toil for about 75 minutes to claim the last three Pakistan wickets.

Off-spinner Will Jacks claimed 6-161 in his debut Test on a flat track where the spinners also had to toil for success.

England were rattled early in their second innings with Naseem Shah in the thick of things.

Naseem dismissed Ben Duckett, one of four century-makers in England's first innings, for a first-ball duck with the second delivery of the innings.

The fast bowler spilled a return catch from Zak Crawley, then on 18, but took a neat catch at deep backward square when Mohammad Ali bounced out Ollie Pope for 15.

— Reuters

SCOREBOARD	
ENGLAND 1ST INNINGS 657	
PAKISTAN 1ST INNINGS	
Abdullah Shafique c Pope b Jacks	114
Imam-ul-Haq c Robinson b Leach	121
Azhar Ali lbw Leach	27
Babar Azam c Leach b Jacks	136
Saud Shakeel c Pope b Robinson	37
Mohammad Rizwan c Stokes b Anderson	29
Agha Salman c Crawley b Jacks	53
Naseem Shah c Leach b Jacks	15
Zahid Mahmood st Pope b Jacks	17
Haris Rauf c Root b Jacks	12
Mohammad Ali not out	0
Extras (lb15, nb3)	18
Total (all out, 155.3 overs) ... 579	
Fall of wickets: 1-225, 2-245, 3-290, 4-413, 5-473, 6-475, 7-497, 8-554, 9-576	
Bowling: Anderson 22-4-52-1, Robinson 21-2-72-1, Leach 49-7-190-2, Jacks 40-3-5-161-6, Root 16-3-54-0, Stokes 7-0-35-0	
ENGLAND 2ND INNINGS	
Z Crawley c Rizwan b Ali	50
B Duckett c Salman b Naseem	0
O Pope c Naseem b Ali	15
J Root c Haq b Mahmood	73
H Brook b Naseem	87
B Stokes c Shakeel b Mahmood	0
W Jacks c Haq b Salman	24
L Livingstone not out	7
Extras (lb3, nb5)	8
Total (for 7 wks dec, 35.5 overs) ... 264	
Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-36, 3-96, 4-192, 5-192, 6-248, 7-264	
Bowling: Naseem 9-5-0-66-2, Ali 10-0-64-2, Mahmood 11-1-84-2, Agha 5-0-47-1	
PAKISTAN 2ND INNINGS	
Abdullah Shafique c Brook b Robinson	6
Imam-ul-Haq not out	43
Azhar Ali retired hurt	0
Babar Azam c Pope b Stokes	4
Saud Shakeel not out	24
Extras (nb3)	3
Total (for two wks, 20 overs) 80	
Fall of wickets: 1-20, 2-25	
Bowling: Robinson 5-0-22-1, Stokes 4-0-20-1, Anderson 2-1-4-0, Leach 5-1-19-0, Jacks 2-0-12-0, Root 2-0-3-0	
Note: Azhar Ali was retired hurt with the score on 20-1.	

MEHIDY POWERS BANGLADESH TO THRILLING ODI WIN OVER INDIA

DHAKA: Mehidy Hasan Miraz hit an unbeaten 38 and put on a record tenth-wicket stand as Bangladesh edged out India by one wicket in a thrilling opening one-day international on Sunday.

Chasing 187 for victory, the hosts fell to 136-9 before Mehidy and Mustafizur Rahman put together a 51 run partnership — Bangladesh's best ever for the final wicket — to achieve their target with 24 balls to spare in Dhaka.

Bangladesh lead the three-match series 1-0 with the second match on Wednesday at the same venue.

Mehidy, coming in to bat at number eight, hit four fours and two sixes and survived a dropped catch by wicketkeeper KL Rahul on 17 to turn the match on its head.

Mehidy hit the winning runs in his 39-ball knock to trigger wild celebrations as the players came running onto the field and the home crowd erupted.

Mustafizur scored 10 off 11 balls as he and Mehidy stood firm to record a memorable win.

Shakib Al Hasan set up victory after his impressive

bowling figures of 5-36 helped bowl out India for 186 in 41.2 overs despite Rahul's 73 after Bangladesh elected to field first.

Bangladesh collapsed after a few good partnerships including a 48-run stand between skipper Liton Das and Shakib, who made 29.

Spinner Washington Sundar got Das out for 41 and then Shakib to a stunning one-handed catch at extra cover by Virat Kohli.

Bangladesh suffered a double blow in successive balls when Mahmudullah Riyad and Mushfiqur Rahim fell after a 33-run stand for the fifth wicket.

Bangladesh looked to be cruising at 128-4 in the 35th over, but lost their way after Mahmudullah fell lbw to Shardul Thakur and then Mohammed Siraj bowled Mushfiqur.

Debutant fast bowler Kuldeep Sen came back to pick up two wickets in the first over of his second spell to send back Afif Hossain and Ebadot Hossain.

Siraj snapped up Hasan Mahmud for his third wicket but Mehidy, who also got one wicket with his off spin, did the unthinkable with Mustafizur for company.

— AFP

Bangladesh's Mahidy Hassan Miraz celebrates after his team's victory in the first ODI against India at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Dhaka on Sunday. — AFP





BRAZIL'S TITE HOPEFUL ON NEYMAR RETURN

DOHA: Neymar is in line to return from injury for Brazil's last-16 World Cup clash with South Korea on Monday but will need to prove his fitness first, coach Tite said.

The 30-year-old superstar forward suffered an ankle injury in Brazil's opening win in Qatar over Serbia and then missed the last two group matches.

"Regarding Neymar, he's going to train this afternoon and if he's OK, he will play tomorrow," said Tite on Sunday.

It is not the news Korea's Portuguese coach Paulo Bento was hoping for.

"We would be hypocrites if we said we prefer playing against Neymar," said Bento.

"That would be a lie, we prefer him not to play but honestly speaking, I always prefer the best players to play."

Bento complained about the quick turnaround between the last group stage match on Friday and Monday's last 16 clash.

Unlike Brazil who rested most of their first choice players having already qualified after two games, Korea had to fight to the last minute of their 2-1 win over Portugal to make it into the knockouts.

"After the physical tiredness from the previous games there is also the emotional fatigue after the Portugal game," said

the South Korea coach.

"I decided to let the players rest yesterday and we only trained this morning.

"Of course that's a burden for teams. It's an additional burden compared to Brazil... who changed the line-up for their last game: they did something we couldn't do in the last game."

Meanwhile, Tite had harsh criticism for those that accused him of taking an unnecessary risk with Arsenal forward Gabriel Jesus, who was injured against Cameroon and will miss the rest of the tournament.

Some local media said that Jesus arrived at the World Cup carrying a knock which Tite knew about when picking him from the start to face the African side on Friday.

Brazil had already qualified for the knockout rounds and lost 1-0.

"I don't like hearing lies, evil lies from people who want to do bad things to others," fumed Tite.

"At no time do we play for victory at the risk of a player. The liars, the haters who keep giving hate should go and do something else and stop giving fake news.

"Arsenal have a great medical department, we have a great medical department.

"This never happened and I would never let it happen."

— AFP

LAST 16

BRAZIL

Tite

Richarlison

FIFA RANKING

1 - Top-ranked team
BRAZIL 1

20 - SOUTH KOREA 28
Lowest-ranked team

TEAM'S AVERAGE AGE

25 -

26 -

27 -

28 -

29 -

BEST WORLD CUP PERFORMANCE

Winner

1/2

1/4

Last 16

Group stage

1st participation

SOUTH KOREA

Paulo Bento

Cho Gue-sung

Source: FIFA AFP Photos