

► NEWS BRIEF

ROP TO SUSPEND ID CARD SERVICES TODAY

Muscat - Issuing and renewing identity cards will be temporarily suspended on Tuesday as it coincides with the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry board elections, Royal Oman Police has stated. 'All citizens and residents are informed that the issuance and renewal of identity cards will be temporarily suspended on November 22. However, birth and death certificates will be issued to Omanis and expatriates on the day.'



Shallow earthquake kills 162 in Indonesia

Omani EV to be launched by 2025

60,000sqm
Suwaiq factory
to produce
1,248 cars
annually

Our Correspondent
Muscat

An idea of an electric car that emerged in 1987, and transformed into a working prototype in 2009, may finally see the light of day and be on roads as early as 2025.

Sultan bin Hamad al Amri, Chairman of Nur Majan Automobile Company, who has persistently pursued his dream of manufacturing the first electric vehicle (EV) in the region despite many challenges over the past decades, has entered a joint venture with a Canadian automotive manufacturer Trouvé Victory Inc to produce electric as well as hydrogen fuel cars.

Nur Majan's working prototype of the gull-wing sports EV



The fast lean-green-Omani-machine will drive 600km on a single charge, with very little or no maintenance required

SULTAN AL AMRI

model was licensed by Omani authorities in 2015 and plans were in place to start production in 2018 at a 60,000sqm factory in Suwaiq. But floods that year delayed setting up the factory.

Speaking to Muscat Daily Amri said, "Our dreams are coming true. We will start producing



Prototype of Nur Majan on Muttrah Corniche (Supplied photo)

electric cars in 2025, with an annual capacity of 1,248 cars. We have signed a contract with Trouvé Victory to fund the development of our factory and to produce the 'Sultanah' electric car in Oman."

Elaborating on the name, Amri informed that a ship named Sul-

tanah took Ahmed al Numan al Kaabi to America in 1840. "He was the first Arab emissary to visit the United States. He was sent by the Sultan of Oman, Sayyid Said bin Sultan, and he set sail from Zanzibar in the newly built ship to New York for trade between the two countries."

Amri informed that construction work of the factory will be completed in 2024 and production will begin at the end of 2025.

"The fast lean-green-Omani-machine will drive 600km on a single charge, with very little or no maintenance required up to 21 years," he claimed.

Powered by an 85W Lithium-ion battery, it will be equipped with a device to recharge automatically after the battery is drained. "The body is made of carbon fibre composite, which is ten times stronger than steel but five times lighter, giving the EV longer driving range on a single charge."

Of the hiccups that have delayed the project, Amri said production was set to begin in 2018, but the factory was flooded following heavy rains. "We found that the site was along a wadi. More than RO1mn was invested to fill in earth and raise the land by 2m."

Amri is confident his dream will become a reality soon. "The factory employees 12 Omani and Arab engineers who will be engaged in production in the first phase of the project, besides exchanging expertise with the Canadian side. I have made more than 130 trips around the world to learn and gain insights into the EV industry."

Continued on Page 02

122 usufruct contracts worth RO106mn inked till Q3 of 2022: MHUP

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To attract foreign investment and stimulate the economy, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning (MHUP) signed usufruct agreements worth RO106mn in the first three quarters of 2022.

Speaking to Muscat Daily, an official said, "The ministry signed 122 usufruct contracts for government land valued at more than RO106mn in various sectors, including industry, commerce, education, sports and health, in addition to fuel stations and services, during the period from January to September this year."

The agreements also targeted food security, fish farming and wheat cultivation and production.

MHUP offered more than 100 plots of land for bidding through the Tatweer platform. It offered 22 plots for electronic bidding in several wilayats in the governorates of Muscat, South Batinah and Dhofar, and 20 industrial plots in Misfah in the wilayat of Bausher, Muscat, and seven plots for bidding for fuel stations in the governorates of Buraimi, North Batinah, South Batinah, Dhofar, Dhahirah and Al Wusta.

He informed that for social housing projects, MHUP spent



MHUP offered more than 100 plots of land for bidding through the Tatweer platform

RO35mn on 1,400 families who benefited from a housing assistance programme implemented according to directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik this year.

The ministry distributed 11 housing units in Suwaiq and signed an agreement to establish 30 housing units in Suwaiq and Khabourah for those affected by Cyclone Shaheen in October 2021.

According to the official, MHUP also provided housing assistance in Quriyat in Muscat and the wilayats of Barka, Nakhal and Wadi al Ma'awil in South Batinah.

Shura to hold closed-door session on state budget

Muscat - Majlis A'Shura will hold a closed-door session with H E Sultan Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance, on Wednesday to discuss the draft of State Budget 2023.

Sheikh Ahmed Mohammed al Nadabi, Secretary-General of Majlis A'Shura, informed that the council's second ordinary session on Wednesday will be a closed-door round of discussions dedicated to terms and financial and economic indices of the draft of next year's State Budget.

According to the provisions of Article 52 of the Council of Oman's Law, the session will be a secret discussion on various topics of the budget, including

estimates of general revenues, public spending, developmental allocations, public debt standing, the State's fiscal position, subsidy policies, government investments, economic diversification programmes, direct foreign investment and privatisation programmes, Nadabi said.

He added that the council's session on Thursday will be dedicated to discussions on the Economic and Financial Committee's report on State Budget 2023, as well as two draft laws forwarded to the government - one on Higher Education and the other on Basic Education.

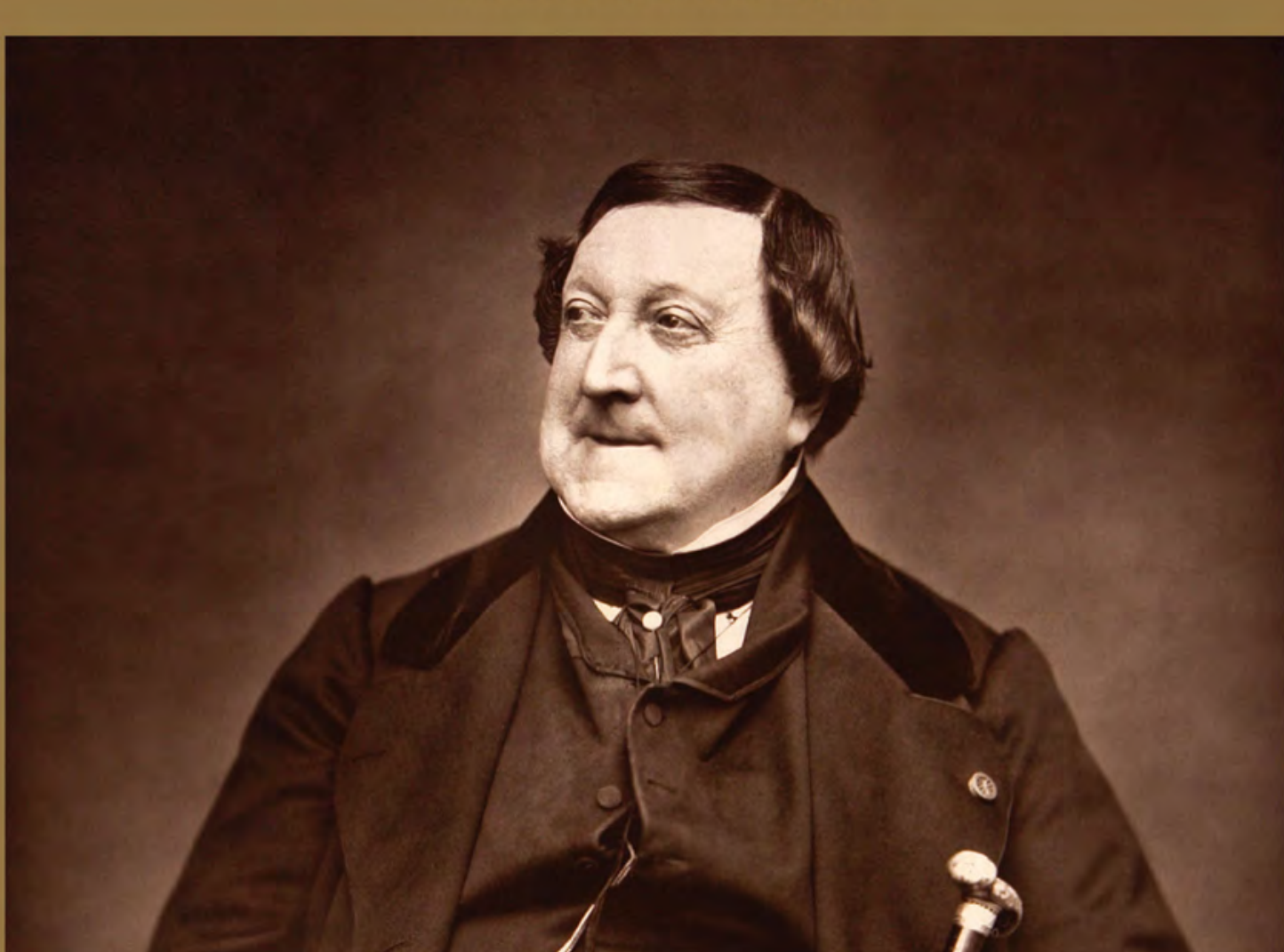
ONA



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with Orchestra Sinfonica G. Rossini
Conducted by Nikolas Nägele



25th November | 7:00 PM

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SEASON 2022-2023



Trabzon a safe haven for Omanis, says governor

Shaddad al Musalmey
Muscat

Trabzon, one of the most popular cities in Turkiye with thousands of years of history and innumerable cultural riches, has become one of the most attractive tourist destinations in the transcontinental country.

"It is a safe haven for Omanis who are looking to enjoy family holidays amid nature in a halal way - making it an ideal destination for the upcoming National Day break," said Trabzon Governor Ismail Ustaoglu during his recent visit to Oman.

Trabzon, located on the ancient Silk Road, is the most important city in the Eastern Black Sea Region of Turkiye.

"Oman and Turkiye have historical relations and in the recent past, Trabzon has become one of the most preferred destinations for Omanis," Ustaoglu said, adding, "We feel happy to see Omanis in Trabzon."

As a governor of Trabzon for four years now, Ustaoglu met many Omanis. "(Following this) I have had meetings with different travel agencies to work on ways to attract more Omanis. We value the needs of Omanis and even the people of Trabzon are happy with Omani tourists. During the course of time, we have made it easy for Omanis to



Oman and Turkiye have historical relations and in the recent past, Trabzon has become one of the most preferred destinations for Omani tourists

ISMAIL USTAAGLU

travel to Trabzon."

Trabzon, the capital of the Trabzon Province, is the largest seaport on the eastern coast and is quite a destination for it being a city with immense historical importance due to its location on the ancient Silk Road.

Today, Trabzon is a modern city that retains its historic appeal and importance. There are several Muslim-friendly facilities in Trabzon that help make holidaying in Trabzon comfortable for Muslim travellers.

"What makes Trabzon stand

out is the blend of religions, cuisines, cultures and languages that one can witness there. The comfort of our tourists is important for us and the people there love tourists. Moreover, Omanis and the people of Trabzon are brothers in Islam. In all places, we serve halal food and we also have many mosques," Ustaoglu, whose Oman visit is the first among the GCC, said.

"My visit to Oman was meant to improve relations. I met H E Salim bin Mohammed al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage

and Tourism and we have requested the opening of Oman's tourism office in Trabzon to look after issues related to Omanis there."

Trabzon's history dates back to the early days of the Christian Era. Mehmet the Conqueror conquered Trabzon, which has survived the Roman and Byzantine periods, and Suleiman the Magnificent was raised in this city. Trabzon shelters countless tones of green and is rich in terms of vegetation with 2,500 plant species discovered in the city, 440 of which are unique to the area.

"What makes Trabzon unique is its nature," Ustaoglu said.

Visitors to Trabzon can visit City Museum, the newest and most spectacular museum in the city that makes a great contribution to publicity and sustenance of social life and culture in Trabzon. Another attraction is the Gülbahar Hatun Mosque built in 1514 in memory of Yavuz Sultan Selim's mother Gülbahar Hatun.

Uzungöl - located in Çaykara - is one of the most important tourism centres of Trabzon and Turkiye because of its dazzling view as well as highlands and plateaus which are considered among Trabzon's special travel destinations enjoying global attention.

@shaddadm

Korea, Oman promote partnership in ICT

Muscat - A business-to-business (B2B) partnership between Korean and Omani SMEs in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and content development sector was held at the InterContinental Hotel, Muscat on Monday.

Nineteen Korean SMEs showcased their technological expertise in state-of-the-art technology fields such as cyber security, e-commerce platform, digital and metaverse contents, and healthcare products. The platform helped facilitate cooperation and capacity building of SMEs in Korea and Oman, which is in line with the Oman Vision 2040.

"B2B matching was conducted where over 150 Korean and Omani businessmen met and interacted. Two MoUs (memorandum of understanding) were concluded between the Korean and Omani SMEs concerned," a press release said.

This B2B platform is supported by the National IT Industry Promotion Agency (NIPA) of Korea, the representative office of the Korea Internet & Security Agency (KISA) in Muscat and the office of the Korea Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) in Muscat.

Halima al Zarie, Chairperson of the Authority for SMEs, Hon Hatim al Taie, Member of the State Council, Pankaj Khimji,



The SMEs of Korea and Oman can build a strong and reliable bridge between our two industrial and economic sectors

H E KIM KIEJOO

Advisor to the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, Sheikh Saad Suhail Bahwan, Chairman of the Oman-Korea Friendship Asso-

ciation, and Korean Ambassador H E Kim Kiejoo graced the event, while senior officials from the Ministry of Transport, Communications and IT, and other Omani partners also attended it.

H E Kim underscored in his remarks the importance of the meeting saying, "The SMEs of Korea and Oman can build a strong and reliable bridge between our two industrial and economic sectors."

"The Oman Vision 2040 envisions digital transformation, and Korea will align with the Oman Vision 2040 in pursuing partnership with the Omani stakeholders," he asserted.



New species of wetland fish found in Oman

Our Correspondent
Muscat

A new species of fish living in the mudflat environment has been discovered in the Omani waters, informed Sultan Qaboos University after a detailed study.

"A joint research team from the Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) and Shiraz University in Iran has documented a new species from a mudflat/estuary (wetland) habitat in Khor Yiti in the wilayat of Muscat," SQU said in a statement.

The research team has christened it as Oman's Eyebrow

Goby, with a scientific name - Oxyurichthys omanensis.

Oxyurichthys omanensis was part of different fish samples collected from the shallow and muddy waters of Khor Yiti creek in the wilayat of Muscat. By studying the qualities, external traits and the DNA of the fish, the team concluded that it was a new find. The Omani team was headed by Dr Saud Musallam al Jufaili, while Dr Humaid Ismaili led the Iranian side.

The joint team plans to launch a first-of-its-kind book on Omani fresh water fish, with funding from the Environment Authority.

Oman's first EV to launch by 2025

Continued from Page 01

Amri thanked H E Qais al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, for visiting the factory in 2021 to lend support to the project.

"I urge everyone to support Omani youth to achieve their

dreams," said Amri.

Trouvé Victory and Nur Majan plan to produce four EV models - sports, pickup trucks, sedans and SUVs. Hydrogen powered cars will be marketed in Canada and the United States, while electric cars are planned for the Middle East market.

Oman condoles as quake kills 162 in Indonesia

Muscat - Oman has expressed its sympathy with Republic of Indonesia for the earthquake that struck the city of Cianjur in West Java, killing 162 people.

In a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry, Oman also expressed sincere condolences to the Indonesian government and people, as well as families of the victims, wishing the injured a speedy recovery.

The earthquake shook Indonesia's main island of Java, damaging dozens of buildings and sending residents into the capital's streets for safety.

The US Geological Survey said the magnitude 5.6 quake was centered in the Cianjur region in West Java province at a depth of 10km.

"There are 46 dead people at the Cianjur regional hospital and around 700 injured people. Many were hurt because they were hit by collapsed buildings," Indonesian National Disaster Mitigation Agency said.

Several landslides were reported around Cianjur. Dozens of buildings were damaged, including an Islamic boarding school and a hospital, the agency said.

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4 missing fishermen rescued after 3 days at sea off Suwaiq

Authorities call for adherence to safety measures when venturing out

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Four Omani fishermen, including three brothers, who went missing from Suwaiq, North Batinah, returned home after three days on Sunday night.

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Mohammed al Salihi, head of the fisheries department at the Directorate of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources in Suwaiq, said, "The four fishermen, Adam bin Abdullah al Shayadi, Abdul-Majid bin Abdullah al Shayadi, Hani bin Abdullah al Shayadi and Essam bin Ali al Souli set off on a fishing trip from Suwaiq on November 18. Unfortunately, their boat engine failed. Without any satellite device to contact home, and not enough fuel, they rowed aimlessly for almost three days."

He informed that an Omani fishing boat passing by rescued them and alerted the authorities and the fishermen's relatives. "They were found off Musannah, 50 nautical miles away."

Addressing the issue of frequent reports of missing fisher-



(Supplied photo)

Unfortunately, some fishermen do not follow the marine safety instructions and go to the high seas without studying the area and safety equipment

MOHAMMED AL SALIHI

navigation device and tools for maintenance."

About the ministry's efforts to ensure fishermen's safety, Salihi said, "The ministry's specialists hold workshops throughout the year for fishermen to raise awareness on the importance of following safety instructions."

According to Salihi, specialists also conduct campaigns among fishermen to choose the appropriate safety equipment, and hold training programmes to help ensure fish quality by proper storage of catch.

"The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources calls on fishermen to install tracking devices in their boats. If possible, fishermen should install a second engine in their boats for backup in any emergency. I urge them to use Thuraya phones that connect to satellites, and to adhere to marine safety instructions to avoid any unfortunate accidents."

According to Salihi, 2,279 fishermen and 1,028 boats from Suwaiq are registered with the ministry.

men in recent times, he said, "Unfortunately, some fishermen do not follow the marine safety instructions. Some fishermen go to the high seas without studying the area and safety equipment, such as first aid kit, life jackets, a paddle in the event of an engine failure, fireproof blanket, lamps,



Photo, film contest to spread culture of occupational safety

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The General Federation of Oman Workers (GFW) has announced two competitions to spread the culture of commitment to safety rules in the work environment through short films and photography.

A statement issued by GFW said, "The federation, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, invites photographers and short filmmakers to participate in the photography and short film competitions."

The two competitions aim to spread the culture of occupational safety and health, training and rehabilitation in the workplace, equality between men and women, and adherence to safety rules at work, it added.

The winner will receive RO750, while the runner up will win RO600. The last date

The competition aims to spread the culture of occupational safety and health, and adherence to safety rules at work

GFW

for submission is December 15.

The competition is part of one of the sustainable development goals that aims to provide decent work for all. The sultanate seeks to achieve a decent work environment and encourage workers to form unions, develop a labour control system, detect violations, promote dialogue between workers and employers, and provide job opportunities for all.

534 wildlife violations, 39 cases of marine pollution reported in Q3 2022

Our Correspondent
Muscat

As many as 534 wildlife violations were registered in the sultanate in the third quarter of 2022, according to the Environment Authority (EA).

An EA official said specialists of the authority registered 534 wildlife violations by the end of September this year, while 12,534 environmental permits were issued to individuals in this period. EA's specialist also received 405 environmental complaints and 39 reports of marine pollution in this period.

"EA's specialists conducted 29,525 field visits to nature reserves to spread awareness of the importance of preserving wildlife and curb violations against wildlife," the official said.

The authority is also working on establishing green spaces in the governorates to convert these into investment opportuni-



(Supplied photo)

ties in partnership with the community and the public and private sectors. This plan is part of an ongoing national initiative to plant 10mn wild tree in ten years that started in January 2020.

According to the official, the authority has distributed 320,103 wild seedlings and planted 40,000 mangrove trees in various parts of the sultanate

so far.

On its official Twitter handle, the EA cautioned that it will not tolerate violation of the Wildlife Law. 'We call on all visitors to nature reserves to report any violation in the hotline 80071999. The authority also calls on citizens, residents and tourists to preserve the environment and not violate the Wildlife Law.'

33% of industrial computers in Oman were targeted in 2022

Our Correspondent
Muscat

From January to September 2022, various types of malicious objects were blocked on 33.1 per cent of industrial control system (ICS) computers in Oman, according to Kaspersky ICS CERT statistics.

Of these, most attacks on ICS infrastructure came from the Internet (19.4 per cent), seven per cent of the attacks were made through email clients, and 4.8 per cent of attacks were conducted through removable media.

Globally, the share of ICS computers with blocked malicious objects stands at 31.8 per cent. Advanced persistent threat (APT) attacks on industrial systems are expected to get even more sophisticated in the coming months.

ICS computers are used in oil & gas, energy, automotive manufacturing, building automation infrastructures and other spheres to perform a range of operational



technology functions - from the workstations of engineers and operators to supervisory control and data acquisition servers and human machine interface.

Cyberattacks on industrial computers are considered to be extremely dangerous as they may cause material losses and production downtime for the controlled production line and even the facility as the whole. Moreover, industrial enterprises put out of service can seriously undermine a region's social welfare, ecology and macroeconomics.

During the first three quarters of 2022 in the META region, ICS

computers in the oil & gas sector faced attacks most often (39.3 per cent of them were attacked). Attacks on building automation systems were in the second place - 38.8 per cent of ICS computers in this sector were targeted. The energy sector was also among the top-three environments that were attacked (36.8 per cent of computers there were affected).

APT attacks on industrial systems are expected to get even more sophisticated in the coming months. The targets will be organisations in agriculture, logistics & transportation, energy (mining, chemical and machine tool industry), as well as the sectors of renewable energy and hi-tech.

Another trend seen by Kaspersky for the remainder of 2022 and the next year is the rise of ransomware in ICS environments. Ransomware groups have come a long way: scattered gangs become organised businesses and form a full-fledged industry.

WEATHER WATCH			PRAYER TIMINGS	
	Max	Min		
Muscat	29	20	Fajr	5.07am
Abu Dhabi	31	21	Sunrise	6.26am
Doha	28	19	Duhr	11.58am
Kuwait City	26	16	Asr	3.04pm
Manama	27	21	Maghrib	5.25pm
Riyadh	25	11	Isha	6.39pm

Tender Announcement

Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Company SAOG invites Bidders to submit their proposal for the below detailed tenders:

Tender No.	Description	Tender Fee (Nonrefundable)	Tender Purchase deadline	Clarification deadline	Tender Submission Date
TENDER/2022/11/ENG/003	Construction of a Commercial Building at Somrah Sumail Existing Filling Station In Al Dhakhiliyah Governorate.	100.000 OMR	28.11.2022	4.12.2022	11.12.2022

Bank Name & Account Number Bank Muscat (0423005687760617)

The Conditions:

- Collection of Tenders:** Interested, specialized companies and establishments registered under grade 3 and above (in C.R) with a minimum of 3 years' experience in the same field. Bidders can collect the tender documents from the procurement department by sending a copy of the payment slip to procurement@almaha.com.om The tender may be collected on any working day between 08:00 AM - 03:00 PM.
- Bank Guarantee:** The bidder should enclose a bank guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for an amount equivalent to (1%) of the tender value, with a validity of (90) days from the last date of submission and addressed to Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Company SAOG.
- Offer Submission:** The tender bid should be submitted in a sealed envelope and addressed to the **Chairman of the Tender Committee**, Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing SAOG marked with tender number and subject. Other marks or any reference must not be printed outside the envelope. The exterior of the envelope containing the tender document must not reveal the identity of the bidder.
- Submission Location:** The bid should be deposited in the tender box at Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing SAOG head office located in Ghala before 01:00 PM on the submission date.
- Any bid received after the specified date or if it does not meet the conditions will not be considered.
- Each bid shall be signed and stamped with the signature of the authorized person.
- Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Co SAOG reserves the right to accept, reject or cancel the tender without giving any reasons.
- Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Co SAOG reserves the right to add or cancel some of the works mentioned in the tender if necessary.
- Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Co SAOG is not bound to accept the lowest bid or any other bid without giving any reasons.
- For any enquiry email us at (procurement@almaha.com.om) or by calling **24610289/24610287/24610355**

MARKET WATCH

MSX304,500.54

Sensex61,144.84

FOREX RATES

(RO1 equals)

Indian	212.31
Pakistan	583.32
Bangladesh	267.70
Philippines	149.07
Sri Lanka	954.88

*Rates as on November 21
Source: xe.com

BRIEFS

China's natural gas output up 12.3% in October

China's natural gas output logged robust growth last month, data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed.

According to Xinhua news agency, the country produced 18.5bn cubic metres of natural gas in October, up 12.3 per cent from a year ago and the growth pace was 7.7 percentage points faster than that in September.

In the first 10 months of this year, China's natural gas output rose 6 per cent year-on-year to 178.5bn cubic metres. The country imported 88.74mn tonnes of natural gas in the same period, down 10.4 per cent. China can generally guarantee natural gas supply for winter heating demands this year despite a complex international market situation, a spokesperson from the National Development and Reform Commission told a press conference on Wednesday.

Sultanate's annual inflation inches up to 2.4% in October

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman's annual inflation marginally increased for the first time in four months in October after a sharp rise in the prices of some food items.

Inflation rate - which is based on the consumer price index (CPI) - slightly increased to 2.39 per cent in October from September's 13-month low of 2.36 per cent, the CPI data released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) showed.

Sharp price increases for meat, cooking oil and fats, and fruits largely contributed to the overall slight increase in October inflation, the NCSI data showed.

The annual inflation rate in food and non-alcoholic beverages group - which has nearly 24 per cent weight in Oman's CPI - increased to 4.64 per cent in October this year which is more than a percentage point higher compared to September reading.

Within the food items, prices of cooking oils and fats jumped



more than 20 per cent in October 2022 compared to the same month a year ago, while meat price rose 9.6 per cent on year-on-year basis. Consumer price index for bread and cereals increased by 4.9 per cent in October against the same month of the last year.

Fish and seafood products, however, recorded a 5.3 per cent year-on-year decline in October prices. While fruits and vegetables prices remained almost stable in October, non-alcoholic

beverages witnessed a 5.3 per cent rise in October prices compared to the same month of 2021.

On the other hand, prices in transport group - which has more than 19 per cent weight in the CPI - increased 2.16 per cent in October compared to the same month a year ago. Furnishing, household equipment and household maintenance group also witnessed an year-on-year price increase of 2.0 per cent in October.

Prices for the group of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuel items remained only 1.08 per cent higher in October compared to the same month of

Sharp increase in cooking oils, fats and meat prices largely contributed to marginal increase in October inflation

2021.

Despite the pressure from higher global commodities prices, Oman's annual inflation this year has averaged less than three per cent, thanks to the price caps introduced by the government on selected fuel and food commodities.

The average inflation rate during January-October period of 2022 stood at 2.95 per cent, according to NCSI data.

In contrast with global inflationary trend, Oman's inflation

has been decreasing since the beginning of this year, thanks to the stability in prices of fuel, rent, water, and electricity.

Inflation in Oman has been significantly lower than most of the advanced and emerging market countries. Global inflation sharply increased this year driven mainly by the Russia-Ukraine conflict and supply problems due to COVID-19 related restrictions implemented in 2020 and 2021.

Despite the growing global inflationary pressures, inflation outlook in Oman remains moderate and does not pose any imminent concern for financial stability in the sultanate, the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) recently said in its Financial Stability Report 2022.

Last week, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in a report said that inflationary pressures have been contained in Oman thus far, reflecting the price caps on selected fuel and food items. The IMF expects Oman's inflation to average 3.0 per cent for 2022, which is way below the global and regional averages.



Renaissance subsidiary wins RO57mn contract

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Renaissance Services announced that its 100 per cent subsidiary, Tawoos Industrial Services Company (TISCO), has been awarded a RO57.28mn contract by the Ministry of Health.

'The Tender Board has confirmed the contract award to 100 per cent Renaissance subsidiary TISCO by the Ministry of Health, for the catering, cleaning, laundry and pest control services for three years - from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025,' Renaissance said in a disclosure submitted to the Muscat Stock Exchange on Sunday.

The contract will provide catering services for 31 hospitals and cleaning, laundry and pest control services for 25 hospitals and 11 polyclinics, the company said.

Renaissance Services added that it expects reasonable returns from this contract.

Khazaen Dry Port joins AP Moller-Maersk network

Muscat - Khazaen Dry Port, which was established in partnership between Asyad and the private sector, announced that it has joined AP Moller - Maersk's extensive 'Ports of Call' network.

By joining the global shipping lines, Khazaen Dry Port will further bolster its global position as an import, re-export and transshipment centre as the sultanate presses ahead to become one of the leading logistics hubs in the region.

Juma al Maskari, executive director of Khazaen Dry Port, said, "By integrating Khazaen Dry Port within global shipping lines, including Maersk's network, we are able to improve international market accessibility, facilitate trade and increase the flow of products and services to and from Oman at the touch of a



button."

Mads Skov-Hansen, head of Ocean Customer Logistics at Maersk West and Central Asia, said, "Oman has been a key logistics destination for Maersk, especially when it comes to the accessibility to global markets. We have worked closely with Asyad Group over the years to foster our relationship to offer best-in-class integrated logistics

solutions supporting Oman Vision 2040."

Khazaen Dry Port is strategically located within easy reach of booming economies in the region, with close proximity to the Saudi-Omani border, UAE-Oman border and Oman's main ports. It is purposely designed and built over an area of 100,000 square meters.

ONA

COMMENTARY

Why do property managers overlook the property itself

Many property management firms overlook the importance of the property life and focus more on the occupancy levels and related paperwork that comes with it. We cannot generalise, but most property management firms' general mindset relaxes after achieving their desired occupancy levels.

Although it is important to have an occupied building with a steady long-term income to the landlord as to meet the financial goals or obligations, most of the property managers do not focus on increasing the asset life and maintaining the property in a manner that allows a stable rent and a well-maintained asset that does not consume the income generated over the long-term.

The companies attending maintenance calls as a reactive measure to an incident do not actually keep a maintained building for a long period.

both owners and tenants.

Lastly, property managers should ensure that rents remain steady/competitive between other competing buildings while managing the cost of maintenance and improving the expenditure frequency and severity.

Facilities operations managers are responsible for ensuring periodic planned maintenance and repairs on equipment within a facility, and that the facility is always clean and orderly. They also oversee renovation or remodeling efforts and, in some positions, the maintenance of yards, gardens, walkways, and other outdoor spaces.

Facility managers in most companies focus more on routine work of maintenance i.e care or upkeep of a property and all its

tem or electrical equipment fail, tenants will not be happy. Your facility should allow tenants to stay longer and encourage them to have long-term relation being in your asset i.e., their homes. Poor management of facilities will lead to malfunctioning, forcing the clients out of their door and into their competitors' arms.

Either new or existing tenants are attracted by their experience in facilities. Managers must understand why the customer experience affects the management of properties and how customer interactions may be used to enhance these properties.

Poor service and cleanliness and inefficiency are associated with the greatest levels of customer dissatisfaction. In addition,

firms, as well as budget limitations on maintenance expenditures, lack of information on the maintenance of a property by the facility manager and delayed maintenance by the facility owners or managers.

Building performance is a behavior of a product in use. Cost performance is one of the key principles that reflects the overall performance of the property or construction project.

The expense factor

The life cycle of a property is like the human life cycle. Affected by age, properties may suffer physical deterioration, leading to functional and external obsolescence which then affect a building's usability. Therefore, long-term planning and maintenance management are quite important.

The more systems and planning programmes are in place, the less expenses will be incurred throughout each year. Maintenance plans are not in place to get things fixed, they are in place to monitor, evaluate and maintain each asset within the property and overcome the costly reactive or corrective approach.

The functions for which a facility has been developed and created include an array of services, capabilities, procedures, and instruments required to ensure the built environment remains for a longer life.

Property management and maintenance typically include the day-to-day activities necessary for the building/built structure, its systems and equipment, and occupants/users to perform their intended function. Property management and maintenance cannot operate at peak efficiency without being maintained; therefore, the two are discussed as one.

The views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of Muscat Daily or Apex Media Publication

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ISMAIL KAMEL
The writer is the founder and CEO of Integrated Real Estate Services LLC in Oman

components rather than focusing on implementing a risk management programme that aims in controlling or reducing risk to acceptable levels which reflects on the asset life. Facility managers focus more on implementing a reactive/corrective maintenance programme rather than implementing a planned preventive/predictive programme which by default results in the short life of an asset.

Failure to manage facilities properly increases the overall cost ownership of facilities and assets. This results in lower profit margins, which compensates for the lack of profit by increasing commodity prices.

Tenants look for comfort

Customers' convenience is everything. If maintenance such as plumbing, HVAC, lighting sys-

poorly managed maintenance decreases the tenant's satisfaction and increases overall maintenance expenses on the longer period. The demand for maintenance is becoming increasingly significant and as well difficult due to poorer conditions resulting from negligence in following a proper maintenance plan.

Direct effect on asset

Over the life cycle of a building, maintenance of properties are necessary to preserve and enhance the usefulness of the building. Lack of proper funding by landlords and poor services provided by property management firms can be related to a major factor of improper management of facilities, services include financial and human capital as well.

There are also other causes for the bad management across

Qatar signs world's 'longest' gas supply deal with China

Doha, Qatar – QatarEnergy announced a 27-year natural gas supply deal with China Monday, calling it the "longest" ever seen as it strengthened ties with Asia at a time when Europe is scrambling for alternative sources.

The state energy company will send four million tonnes of liquefied natural gas annually from its new North Field East project to China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec), it said.

The deal "marks the longest gas supply agreement in the history of the LNG industry", said Saad Sherida al-Kaabi, Qatar's energy minister and QatarEnergy's chief executive.

Asian countries led by China, Japan and South Korea are the main market for Qatar's gas, which is increasingly being sought by European countries since Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Negotiations with European countries have struggled as Germany and others have balked at signing the sort of long-term deals made with Asian nations.

North Field is at the centre of Qatar's expansion of its liquefied natural gas production by more than 60 per cent to 126mn tonnes a year by 2027.



China is the first country to seal a deal for North Field East (QatarEnergy)

Qatar's state energy company, QatarEnergy, will send four million tonnes of liquefied natural gas annually from its new North Field East project to China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec)

China is the first country to seal a deal for North Field East.

The Chinese company's chairman revealed that it had also requested a full share of the North Field South project that is dominated by Western energy giants.

The accord would "further solidify the excellent bilateral rela-

tions between the People's Republic of China and the State of Qatar and help meet China's growing energy needs", Kaabi said.

Sinopec chairman Ma Yongsheng, who took part in a virtual signing ceremony from Beijing, said it was a "milestone" accord

as "Qatar is the world's largest LNG supplier and China is the world's largest LNG importer".

He told the ceremony that he had "formally" requested in October last year a share of Qatar's North Field South project. Total-Energies of France, Shell of Britain and US giant ConocoPhillips will share the 25 per cent foreign stake in the field.

"Thank you for taking it into serious consideration," Ma told Kaabi at the ceremony, adding that Sinopec wanted to explore other potential deals with QatarEnergy.

AFP

GPCA Forum to host exclusive GCC energy ministers panel

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia – The Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association (GPCA), the voice of the chemical industry in the Arabian Gulf, announced an exclusive ministerial panel featuring energy ministers from across the GCC, including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Qatar at the 16th Annual GPCA Forum taking place for the first time in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia during December 6-8, 2022.

Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman al Saud, Dr. Mohamed bin Mubarak bin Daina, Minister of Oil and Environment and Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, Bahrain, and Saad bin Sherida al Kaabi, Minister of Energy of Qatar, will share the stage on the opening day of the forum to address the panel's topic 'Balancing net-zero ambitions in the energy sector with growth – A policymaker's balancing act'.

According to GPCA research, GCC chemical revenue in 2021 soared by 77.2 per cent, the highest level recorded since 2013 due to post-Covid recovery that led to increasing demand and high chemical prices globally. At the same time, chemical revenue grew from US\$54bn in 2020 to US\$95.9bn year on year. Off the back of higher chemicals prices, GCC chemical



Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman

trade balance revenue almost doubled between 2020 and 2021 from US\$27bn to US\$53bn, with trade balance volume also growing by 30 per cent, reaching 56.5mn tonnes.

While the industry remained buoyant over the last 18 months, it is currently off track to achieve its ambitious net-zero targets by 2050. According to the International Energy Agency, globally direct CO2 emissions from primary chemical production amounted to 925 metric tonnes in 2021, a 5 per cent increase with respect to the previous year. This is due to a production increase to levels above those in 2019.

In a press release, Dr Abdulwahab al-Sadoun, Secretary General of GPCA, said, "If the industry is to achieve its net-zero ambitions by 2050, it would

need to focus on growing its utilization of renewables, improving its energy efficiency, reducing its emissions, and capitalising on new markets for carbon and other by-products as part of the circular economy. Regional producers alongside their regional and global value chain partners are taking concerted steps, committing new investments and accelerating their research and innovation efforts in line with their decarbonization efforts."

"Both the public and private sector have a crucial role to play on the road to net-zero. GPCA is, therefore, pleased to host some of the region's most prominent policymakers for an exclusive ministerial panel where forum delegates will have an opportunity to hear first-hand about our regional governments' plans and initiatives enabling the transition."

Hosted by SABIC, this year's forum will be held under the theme 'Chemistry in Action: Shaping a Sustainable Future.'

The Annual GPCA Forum will host the inaugural GPCA Symposium on December 7-8 under the slogan 'Delivering our Plastics Circularity Ambitions' to showcase the efforts of the plastic industry in enabling a more sustainable and circular future.

Recession-hit UK needs more migrant labour: Business group

London, UK – Britain needs more migrant labour to boost productivity as it faces a toxic mix of soaring inflation and shrinking growth, the country's main lobby group warned Monday.

The verdict from the Confederation of British Industry came at its annual gathering in Birmingham, Britain's second biggest city.

The CBI conference comes after the government of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak slashed spending and hiked taxes in a budget, despite admitting that the inflation-wracked economy had fallen into recession.

"We come together, once more in extraordinary times," CBI director-general Tony Danker told delegates in Birmingham, central England.

"Britain is in the middle of stagflation - rocketing inflation and negative growth - for the first time that probably most of us

can remember.

"We know how to fight inflation. We know how to fight recession. But we don't really know how to fight them together."

Sunak, who also addressed the CBI on Monday, took office one month ago after predecessor Liz Truss delivered an unfunded tax-slashing mini-budget that tanked the pound and sent UK borrowing costs soaring.

UK inflation sits at a 41-year peak of 11.1 per cent on rocketing food and energy costs in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Consumer prices have also raced higher as demand rebounds following the lifting of pandemic lockdowns.

That has worsened a cost-of-living crisis for businesses and individuals, hit also by soaring interest rates as the Bank of England seeks to cool runaway inflation. The UK has forecast the economy to shrink 1.4 per cent

next year, hit also by fallout from Brexit which has resulted in foreign workers returning home.

"When you look at the (growth) data, the only thing holding it up, actually, is higher hours worked due to higher immigration," Danker added on Monday.

"People are arguing against immigration - but it's the only thing that has increased our growth potential since March.

"Let's be honest -- we don't have the people we need, nor do we have the productivity."

Sunak, addressing the conference later on Monday, ducked the CBI's call for more legal migrant labour - and stressed that he was focussed on curbing illegal migration.

He also told CBI delegates that last week's budget sought "to grip inflation and balance the books".

AFP

Russia's economy falls into recession

Moscow, Russia – Russia has entered a recession, nine months after launching its offensive in Ukraine as Western sanctions weigh on the economy, according to official data.

Gross domestic product shrank four per cent in the third quarter, according to a preliminary estimate by the national statistics agency Rosstat.

As that follows one of the same size in the second quarter, Russia now meets the technical definition of a recession with two consecutive quarters of falling GDP.

The four per cent drop in economic output between July and September was less than the 4.5 per cent contraction many analysts had expected, however.

The contraction was driven by a 22.6 per cent plunge in wholesale trade and a 9.1 per cent drop in retail trade.

Meanwhile, construction grew by 6.7 per cent and agriculture 6.2 per cent.



Russia's economy has been struggling under a myriad of problems.

Western sanctions have limited exports and imports, including of key manufacturing components and spare parts.

Companies have also been suffering from a lack of staff as a partial mobilisation has taken several hundred thousand men out of the workforce.

Despite a contracting economy, Russia's unemployment rate stood at 3.9 per cent in September, according to Rosstat.

As a result, the Russian econ-

omy has become even more dependent upon energy exports, which have accounted for about 40 per cent of federal government revenue.

According to the office of Boris Titov, the presidential commissioner for entrepreneurs, about a third of the 5,800 Russian companies recently surveyed had suffered a drop in sales in the past months.

The September mobilisation of 300,000 military reservists has impacted a third of companies, according to that same survey, the daily Kommersant said.

"The situation has continued to deteriorate, it's no surprise," said Dmitry Polevoy, director of investments at Locko Invest in Moscow.

Yet the Russian economy has so far survived Western sanctions better than many economists expected.

On November 8, the central bank predicted gross domestic product would contract by 3.5 per cent this year.

The IMF and the World Bank are respectively estimating a fall in Russian GDP of 3.4 per cent and 4.5 per cent.

The resilience of the economy is due in large part to the surge in global energy prices following the offensive in Ukraine and a restrictive monetary policy.

After Russia was hit by Western sanctions, the central bank drastically raised the key rate from 9.5 per cent to 20 per cent in a bid to counter inflation and prop up the ruble.

AFP

Twitter turmoil, staff exodus aggravate security concerns

Washington, US - Twitter's owner Elon Musk has pledged the platform will not become a "hellscape," but experts fear a staff exodus following mass layoffs may have devastated its ability to combat misinformation, impersonation and data theft.

Twitter devolved into what campaigners described as a cesspit of falsehoods and hate speech after recent layoffs cut half the company's 7,500 staff and fake accounts proliferated following its botched rollout of a paid verification system.

Further throwing the influential platform into disarray - and raising doubt about its very existence - reports said hundreds of employees chose to depart the company Thursday in defiance of an ultimatum from Musk.

"The huge number of layoffs and resignations raises serious questions about content moderation and the security of user data," Cheyenne Hunt-Majer, from the non-profit Public Citizen, told AFP.

"It is imperative that (US regu-

lators) act with urgency as users could have their sensitive data exploited or even stolen given the lack of sufficient staff that remain to adequately protect it."

The hashtag #RIPTwitter gained huge traction on the site after resignations poured in from employees who chose "no" to Musk's demand that they either be "extremely hardcore" or exit the company.

Twitter has plunged into turmoil as Musk, a self-professed free speech absolutist, seeks to shake up the money-losing company after his blockbuster US\$44bn buyout late last month.

'Debate'

The site's content moderation teams - largely outsourced contractors that combat misinformation - have been axed and a number of engineers fired after openly criticizing Musk on Twitter or on an internal messaging board, according to reports and tweets.

Wary brands have paused or slowed down ad spending - Twit-



This combination of file pictures shows Tesla CEO Elon Musk and Twitter logo outside its headquarters in San Francisco (AFP)

ter's biggest revenue source - after a spike in racist and antisemitic trolling on the platform.

"Misinformation super spreaders" - or untrustworthy accounts peddling falsehoods - saw a 57 per cent jump in engagement in the week after Musk's acquisition of Twitter, according to a survey by the non-profit watchdog group NewsGuard.

"Elon Musk has swiftly decimated Twitter's ability to maintain the platform's integrity, health and safety," said Jessica Gonzalez, co-chief executive offi-

cer at the non-partisan group Free Press.

"If there is one lesson that all social-media platforms must take away from this debacle, it's that without protecting users from hate and lies you have no company at all."

In a response to critics, Musk on Friday indicated a new direction for content moderation on the site.

While not being totally removed from the site, Musk said that "negative/hate tweets" will be "max debossed (and) de-

monetized, so no ads or other revenue to Twitter."

"You won't find the tweet unless you specifically seek it out, which is no different from rest of Internet," he added.

But his plan fell on skeptical ears.

'Significant blow'

"We could certainly see a spike in misinformation, hate speech, and other objectionable content because of Musk's latest moves," Zeve Sanderson, executive director of the New York University's

Center for Social Media and Politics, told AFP.

"Content moderation is a lot harder to do without people around to actually do content moderation."

Potentially adding to the pressure: Musk on Saturday restored the Twitter account of Donald Trump, 22 months after the then-president was suspended over the US Capitol riot by his supporters seeking to overturn the 2020 election result.

In a letter to the Federal Trade Commission, a regulatory agency, a group of Democratic senators blamed Musk for introducing "alarming" new features that undermined safety despite warnings that they would be "abused for fraud, scams and dangerous impersonation."

"Users are already facing the serious repercussions of this growth-at-all-costs strategy," they wrote in the letter published Thursday, noting the recent spike in fake accounts impersonating companies, politicians and celebrities.

Among the victims was drug-maker Eli Lilly, whose stock price nosedived -- erasing billions in market capitalization - after a parody account stamped with a verification tag purchased for US\$8 tweeted that insulin was being made available for free.

Last week, Twitter disabled sign-ups for the contentious feature known as Twitter Blue, with reports saying it had been temporarily disabled to help address impersonation issues - but not before several brands took a hit.

Given the apparent vulnerabilities, digital experts have warned activists, particularly in autocratic countries, of the increased risk of identity theft or their private messages falling into the hands of hackers.

"Around the world, Twitter is used to organize against oppression," said Hunt-Majer.

"If Musk's mismanagement kills it, that would be a significant blow to freedom of information and, frankly, human rights in general on a global scale."

AFP

‘Fill & Win’ at Al Maha on special promotion

Commemorating the Sultanate’s 52nd National Day of the Renaissance, Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Company SAOG has kick-started the celebration by organising a few events including a ‘FILL & WIN’ raffle draw to reward its loyal customers. The draw promises a chance to win a range of fun and exciting prizes, including 52 e-rial cards worth RO52 each, 2 iPhone 14 and Changan Alsvin as the grand prize. Running till December 15, customers can enter the National Day exclusive raffle by scanning the QR code displayed at all Al Maha fuel stations and fill in the details requested such as Mobile Number and Tax invoice number on the purchase of M91 and M95 petrol for RO5.

Dentons celebrates 40 years in Oman

Dentons organised an evening reception at the Beach Restaurant, Chedi Hotel, Muscat on November 2 to mark its over 40 years of operations in Oman. ‘Hosting more than 100 guests, we were honoured to have been joined by a number of distinguished dignitaries, clients, friends and colleagues from around the region to celebrate our successes,’ they said. Beginning operations back in 1981, Dentons is proud to have retained an office in Muscat for more than 40 years. One of the earliest international firms to open its doors in Oman, Dentons has steadily grown to become the largest international law firm operating in the sultanate, it added.

DHL to open office in Sohar freezone

DHL, the leading international provider of air, ocean, and road freight services has announced opening of a new office in Sohar Freezone. Matrix Prime Logistics, a leading company for warehouse logistics operations at Sohar Freezone, has signed a lease agreement with DHL Global Forwarding, for the sub-lease of warehouse space for the efficient distribution of goods in Oman and other global markets. The warehouse is strategically located at Sohar Freezone and the partnership will further cement Sohar’s role in positioning Oman as an attractive global logistics and transit hub.

Iqbal Day celebrated in Pakistan school

Pakistan School Muscat on November 9 celebrated Iqbal Day at its auditorium to pay tribute to Allama Muhammad Iqbal, a renowned Urdu poet and philosopher from Pakistan. It was organised to acknowledge and commemorate contribution of Allama Iqbal, also known as the ‘Poet of the East’, for a separate homeland now which is called Pakistan. A special video message of Allama Iqbal’s grandson Muneeb Iqbal was played to inspire the audience and to relate the true sense of Allama Iqbal’s poetry. The occasion was graced by chief guest Dr Majid Kiani Nijad, Iran’s cultural attaché; Ameer Hamza, chairman of the Board of Directors; and Pakistan Embassy officials, besides others. A large number of students, teachers and community members attended the programme.

OOMCO interacts with customers

As part of its long-term dedication to interact and engage with its customers, Oman Oil Marketing Company (OOMCO) recently celebrated its ‘Customer Care Week’ in Oman. Annually, the company’s team meets with people visiting OOMCO’s service stations to further connect with its customers through unique and personalised service offerings. The week-long event was led by OOMCO Chief Executive Officer Tarik al Junaidi, and provided the company’s team with an opportunity to get valuable face time with its customers. The celebrations including a competition and the distribution of giveaways to motorists visiting select OOMCO service stations.

Voice of Oman: Omantel's tribute

Omantel, the leading telecom operator and services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, launched a campaign to pay its tribute to the nation as part of Oman’s 52nd National Day celebrations. The campaign themed ‘The Voice of Oman’ was created to celebrate the country’s progress and its achievements over the past 52 years, in addition to aspiring future generations.

The campaign includes the release of a newly penned song that reflects how our inner voices, aspirations, and thoughts lead us to create something for the joy and pride of the nation. The song is a collection of several themes that is related to the country, all combined into one, to create a better future for the nation. Like every national day campaign, Omantel has captured the emotional aspect of the day and combined it with the company’s key message to spread love, joy and unity on this significant day.

As part of this initiative, Omantel has collaborated with a number of celebrities and inspiring figures in Oman, including Ali al Habsi, Sumaya al Siyabi and Sultan al Amri among others.



The celebrities involved have all collaborated and established this catchy song to spread ‘The Voice of Oman’, or ‘Sawt Oman’ in Arabic. They

showcased their inner voices to share their unique and inspiring stories, messages, skills, and talents to create something bigger and better for the nation that people can look up to.

The campaign was officially launched with a catchy music video across all social platforms, in addition

to a creative interactive figure at the Mall of Oman. The figure illustrates the campaign name and produces key voice inspirational messages from the campaign’s characters for the people to listen and get inspired from.

Commenting on the campaign, Saba al Busaidi, Senior Manager of Corporate Affairs at Omantel, stated, “We are excited about the 52nd National Day’s campaign themed ‘Voice of Oman’ that was launched recently as part of our celebrations. Through this campaign, Omantel seeks to showcase its responsibility and proactivity to convey a positive message to the community through creativity and inspirational characters.

“In addition, this initiative was designed to reach out to the widest segment of the society to celebrate the nation’s growth and development through the years, in addition to inspiring future generations.”

“Oman’s National Day is a significant occasion for all of us, and we have added to the fun and excitement by launching this song to spread happiness to people across the nation,” she concluded.

Indian School Darsait celebrates its annual day



Indian School Darsait celebrated its 30th annual day at the Grand Hall of Al-Falaj Hotel on November 10. Indian Ambassador H E Amit Narang was the chief guest for the occasion, while Dr Sivakumar Manickam, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Indian Schools in Oman, was the guest of honour.

Amongst others who graced the occasion were dignitaries from the Indian Embassy, distinguished guests from the Board of Directors and members of the school management committee.

The Royal Anthem of Oman and the National Anthem of India marked the commencement of the event followed by lighting of the lamp. An invocation dance performed by the students evoked the blessings of the Almighty. Head boy Maganda Dinesh accorded a formal welcome to the guests. Ajit Vasudevan, convenor and head of academics, school management committee addressed the gathering. School

principal Amar Srivastava gave a digital presentation of the annual report.

The chief guest honoured the staff for completing 25 years of service at ISD and for excellence in teaching. The students were felicitated for their remarkable achievements in the field of academics and sports. H E Narang also presented the trophies to the runners up and winners of Inter-House cultural events and Overall Champion House of the year. The Indian Ambassador lauded ISD for its achievements in three decades and the leading role it has been playing in the lives of the Indian diaspora. The chief guest called upon the students to consider education as ‘a vehicle and passport’ for success and proposed a four-pronged matrix for learning emphasising on learning from everyone, learning from everything, learning about surroundings and learning to ask ‘why’ in order to be a better learner.



Bank Nizwa holds staff meet

The Sultanate of Oman’s first and most trusted Islamic bank, Bank Nizwa, hosted a National Day celebration gathering for its employees. The event witnessed the presence of senior management and Bank employees. During the event, employees who completed ten years and consistently demonstrated quality work ethics and dedication in accomplishing their assigned tasks were honoured with accolades.

The morning of celebrations commenced with an inspirational video followed by a keynote speech delivered by Bank Nizwa’s Chief Executive Officer Khalid al Kayed. Later a question and answer session was held for the employees. It also featured several engaging activities, including a presentation by Haifa al Lawati, Assistant General Manager, Human Resources, on the contribution of employees to the success and excellence of Bank Nizwa. Additionally, several competitions were held in which employees partici-

pated enthusiastically. To add to the enthusiasm.

On this national occasion, the bank CEO said, “I and all Bank Nizwa employees extend our warmest congratulations and blessings to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik - may Allah Almighty protect him - and to all the people of Oman. It is our prayer that Oman and its people continue to prosper with pride and dignity.”

“The National Day provides a unique opportunity to celebrate our achievements and mobilise energies to continue giving back to our community.

“By providing innovative and sustainable products and services in accordance with Islamic sharia’a, Bank Nizwa has always contributed to the comprehensive growth witnessed by the sultanate,” Kayed said, adding, “Additionally, we continue to invest in our efforts to plan, employ, train and qualify Omani youth. We are committed to providing the community with

the highest quality products and services compatible with sharia’a.”

Moreover, he said, everything necessary had been prepared to provide support and appreciation to those who strive. Praise and appreciation are at the top of the list of priorities that the administration is looking forward to communicating to employees. The CEO praised the achievements made during the past period, calling on employees to continue their efforts to achieve more success during the coming period.

During such Town Hall meetings, Bank Nizwa staff and key executives or representatives interact closely. Through these gatherings, the bank believes that the trust and morale of employees are enhanced, transparency is promoted, a collective sense of purpose is created and momentum is built toward achieving strategic goals. Involving employees in discussions boosts motivation and creates a more cohesive body of work.

Shahi Golden Bonanza scripts huge success in Oman

Shahi Foods and Spices LLC, the sultanate’s leading spices, pulses, coffee, nuts, dry-fruits and cereals company is pleased to announce the second set of winners of its Golden Bonanza promotion at a special ceremony held at its flagship buy and mill food mart - Mashhoor - in Sohar recently.

The promotion offers customers the golden opportunity to win a gold coin (22 karats) every day of the campaign period, which ends on January 15 next year. The prize distribution ceremony was presided over by Khalid al Badi from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, in the presence of Shahi Foods managing director Mohammed Ashraf Mulamparambil, and executive director Abdul Rahman Mohamed Ashraf Mulamparambil.

Congratulating the winners of both raffle draws, Abdul Rahman Mohammed Ashraf Mulamparambil said, “We are delighted to present gold coins to the lucky winners of our Golden Bonanza promotion. The coins are a token of our appreciation and gratitude for our customers for repeatedly purchasing our products and reposing their faith in us over the years. As a customer-focused legacy brand,



we look to add value to our product offerings and enhance their overall experience continuously.”

“Customers gain entry into the Shahi Golden Bonanza raffle draw via a scratch and win coupon, which they receive at participating supermarkets and hypermarkets throughout Oman, on buying Shahi products worth RO3. They then get a chance to win one gram gold coins under the monthly raffle draws that are conducted announcing one winner for each day of the month. The winning prizes of the scratch and win coupons are Shahi Products, which can be claimed immediately at the supermarket or hypermarket. The Golden Bonanza

promotion will culminate in a Grand Raffle Draw; with the first five prizes winning a whopping 100, 50, 25, 10 and 5 grams of gold respectively. The more customers buy, the more their chances to win!”

The next draw will be held in December and the Mega Raffle Draw will be held in January next year.

The lucky winners of the second installment of the draw who received a gold coin each are Aziz al Shidi, Are Mohan Rao, Yasseen, Navas, Abdulljaleel, Mohammed al Saadi, Sahadmon S, MD Ayub, Rashid, Abdullah, Morshed, Ivy Babu, Maruti Kambali, Ala al Mahrouqi, Gangadhar Alle, Mohammed Robel, Mohammed, Abdu

Melethil, Ahmed Sayf Hamd, Amna al Farsi, Delwar Hossain, Rafid Rasheed, Nithin Ozhukil Meethal, Bishojit, Joby Joy, Sanjay Kumar Panda, Hamad al Badi, Shahzaib, Issa al Mahmooli, Mohammed Abu Taher, Khamis al Mak-toumi.

The winners of the first draw were: Muhammad Shuhaib, Rahul Kaushal, Muhammed Shareef, Faisal Kuzhichal, Asim Saif, Neha Basheer, Mohammed al Mawaali, Ashiq, Abdul Malik, Latha M, Nuruddin Sehab, Hamad, Jinoy antony, Ayman al Ajmi, Wafi al Rahbi and Hashim Salah Aldeen

Founded in 1986, Shahi Foods & Spices LLC is Oman’s leading brand in the offering over 200 varieties of food products in the categories of pulses, lentils, spices, nuts, dry fruits and Arabic coffee. Their uncompromising commitment to quality, wide range of products and penchant for innovation makes Shahi the most trusted household name in the sultanate. The company procures raw materials from the countries of origin and processes it at its own manufacturing unit. Known for setting benchmarks for quality, safety and taste in Oman and beyond, Shahi also owns the country’s largest coffee processing facility.

Delta Pharmacy opens 10th retail branch in North Al Hail

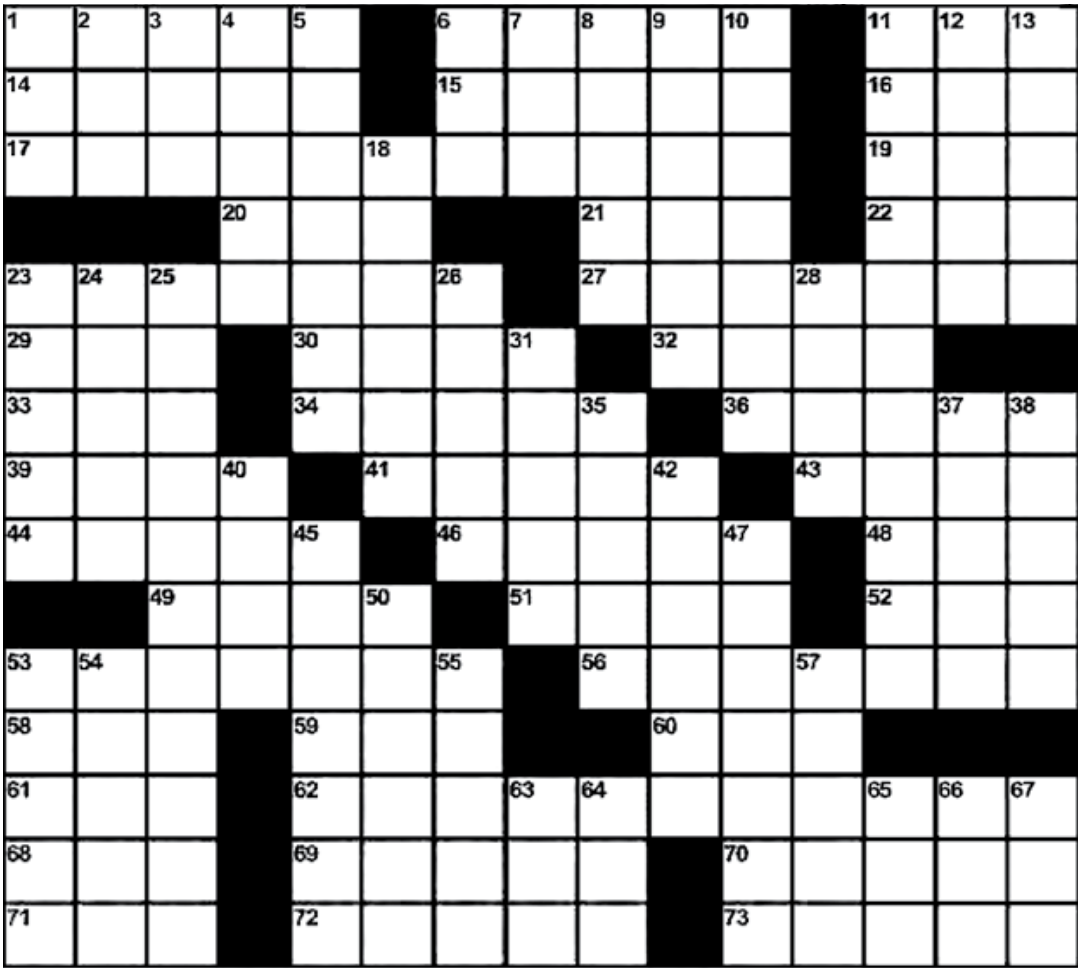
Delta Pharmacy has opened its tenth retail branch of Oman at Hypermarket in North Al Hail on Friday

The branch was inaugurated in the presence of Board Directors Ghalib Mohammed al Maawali, Jamsheed N K and Mohammed Munzir M K.

“Delta Pharmacy is active in retail pharmacy chain and whole sale distribution and we are delighted to open the 10th retail branch on the auspicious 52nd National Day of Sultanate of Oman. We thank the Almighty, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Ministry of Health officials, Delta Pharmacy team, pharma community of Oman and especially the people of Oman,” said Ghalib Mohammed al Maawali during the opening ceremony.

“Delta Pharmacy’s motto is ‘Delivering the Best Care’, and to achieve the same, our pharmacists are well trained,” he added.

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1) "The Count of_ Cristo"
- 6) Waikiki welcome
- 11) Boat in a harbor
- 14) Be of use to
- 15) Stitched
- 16) Blvd. cousin
- 17) Illegal boxing blow
- 19) Seed vessel (Var.)
- 20) In-flight info, for short
- 21) One for the off-road
- 22) It's shady
- 23) Comic bit (Var.)
- 27) Act as
- 29) Half of a dance?
- 30) Emulate a picador
- 32) Curb (with "in")
- 33) Burgle
- 34) Becomes bushed
- 36) Tangle
- 39) "It's...to Tell a Lie"
- 41) Log home
- 43) Audio effect
- 44) Allots (with "out")
- 46) Bustles
- 48) Eye protection
- 49) Online bookmarks, essentially
- 51) Mexicali moolah
- 52) Ship's dir., perhaps

- 53) Leave
- 56) Abraham or Homer, on TV
- 58) _ nouveau
- 59) Org. for heavyweights
- 60) All eternity, to a bard
- 61) "Polloi" preceder
- 62) Carroll poem
- 68) Rapid bustling move-ment
- 69) Howling with laugh-ter
- 70) Indoor plant areas
- 71) Japanese currency unit
- 72) Large wall painting
- 73) Adolescent
- DOWN**
- 1) Vandalize
- 2) Egg cells
- 3) Apprehend
- 4) Lhasa's land
- 5) Snobby one
- 6) Fanged Nile menace
- 7) Romanian currency
- 8) Take the blame
- 9) Trojan War hero killed by Achilles
- 10) Sticks like glue
- 11) Tent sanctuaries
- 12) Throat dangler
- 13) Swarming with bacte-ria
- 18) Bait and switch, e.g.
- 23) "Beat it!"
- 24) Decided
- 25) Addiction
- 26) Fort Knox unit
- 28) Fork feature
- 31) Jazz genre
- 35) Agrees (with)
- 37) Second-largest land animal
- 38) Thick green cloth
- 40) Bookworm, in stereo-types
- 42) More intrusive
- 45) R&B ballad
- 47) By hook or by crook
- 50) Toyota rival
- 53) Laughter sounds
- 54) Waste away
- 55) Old drum played with a fife
- 57) Prefix with "type" or "plasm"
- 63) Meadow call
- 64) Schubert's "The_-King"
- 65) Fine-wine-producing

- vineyard
- 66) Do-it-yourselfer's
- purchase
- 67) "Fargo" assent

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Even if it's been a long day, and it probably has been, your usual bedtime won't feel like bedtime. Rather than just lying there trying to think of some way to make yourself tired before dawn arrives and the birds start singing (which will sound much more like screaming, at that point), how about giving in and planning something that will tire you out? You'll think of something.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

Fortunately for all parties even remotely concerned with making your day memorable, there won't be much work to do on that front, not as far as they're concerned anyway. Regardless of how hard they try to keep it the same or make it different, your world won't be the same when you close your eyes tonight as it was at the moment you opened them this morning. That said, do what your sign does best: make the very best of it.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER21

When you least expect it (which just might be now, the way the stars are looking), someone you haven't heard from in forever could visit, extend an invitation from right out of the blue, or reenter your life quite suddenly with all kinds of niceties, from actual gifts to apologies to sudden offers to give your relationship a second try. If you're unsure (and at this point it's hard to imagine being sure about anything), don't say anything other than "let me think about it."



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

Believe it or not, you may be feeling just a bit on the excessive side at the moment. Not that you won't get up at the usual time, execute the usual routine, and perform as well as always. But you should be aware that anyone who's speaking with an especially charming accent, wearing something unusual, or telling a story you've never heard before will be more than enough encouragement to keep you up late. Better get an extra supply of coffee for the morning.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Rely on your good energy to give you solid footing and a sense of direction today. When you have faith in yourself, you can do anything you set your mind to. Are you unsure about a new person you're forced to work with? Stay charming and engaging and it won't take any time at all to get to know them better. There's no reason to be intimidated by them! Now is the time to reach out and connect with other people, because they need to see what you're capable of.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Last-minute turnarounds have never been at the very top of your list of most favorite things, but that's kind of the point: We don't see it happening, so we have to reach deep inside ourselves to react, which gives us a chance to get to know ourselves all over again without anyone's expectations about how we "should" be acting, based on what they think of us. Treat the incident like a learning opportunity and it can't help but turn out to be just that.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

When the heavens are in the mood to inspire recklessness, it affects some of us more dramatically than others. For example, take your sign. You're always game to try something at least once, and at least twice if you like it. That's what's on the agenda now, and travel will likely be the issue at hand. If you just can't stand the thought of doing anything the way that you've usually done it, don't. Get busy tossing some variety into that schedule. Lots of it.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

Everyone needs friends and advisers who are just skilled enough at taking risks that they know when to hold 'em and when to fold 'em. You, in particular, need to have one of those people on hand right now, and you need to have absolutely no doubts about them whatsoever. If you do, don't be afraid to bring in someone who won't be afraid to shake things up entirely, even if it means losing some fans in the process.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

As impulsive as you can be, there's usually one department, and only one, in which you're famously cautious: committed relationships. For starters, that's because you value your personal freedom above all else, and since settling down definitely puts a crimp in that, it isn't something you're easily convinced to do. Once you've decided that a certain someone is the right person for the position, however (like now, perhaps), you're just as tough to talk out of it.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

Tilt your head back and take a gander at the skies above you. Does it look like there's a storm coming? Sure is, and it's going to be a great big one. Does that mean your world will be blown apart? Hardly. The difference between whether this turns out to be a great day or a bad one lies in your attitude, and that's the only variable over which you'll have control. Smile. A lot.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

There's been some fuzzy communication lately, and you might have suffered a bit because of it. There isn't much you can do about improving things just yet. The people who are communicating with you just aren't doing a very good job of it, and they need time to figure out how to improve. Their ideas aren't very organized, so try to be patient. If you pressure them too much, you'll only confuse them more.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Things could be very unpredictable today, so expect some last-minute changes. Think of your day as a mechanism that just got a giant wrench tossed into it! Nothing is for certain, nothing is written in stone, and you can't take anything for granted. But in a way, not knowing what's going on could be kind of fun and exciting. There has been so much predictability in your life lately that this day of shake-ups could be exactly what you need.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

01. The fifth longest river in Africa, the Rhumel (or Amp-saga) River, runs through which country?

- A. Morocco
- B. Algeria
- C. Libya
- D. Mauritania

02. Oil from oil wells was first used for what?

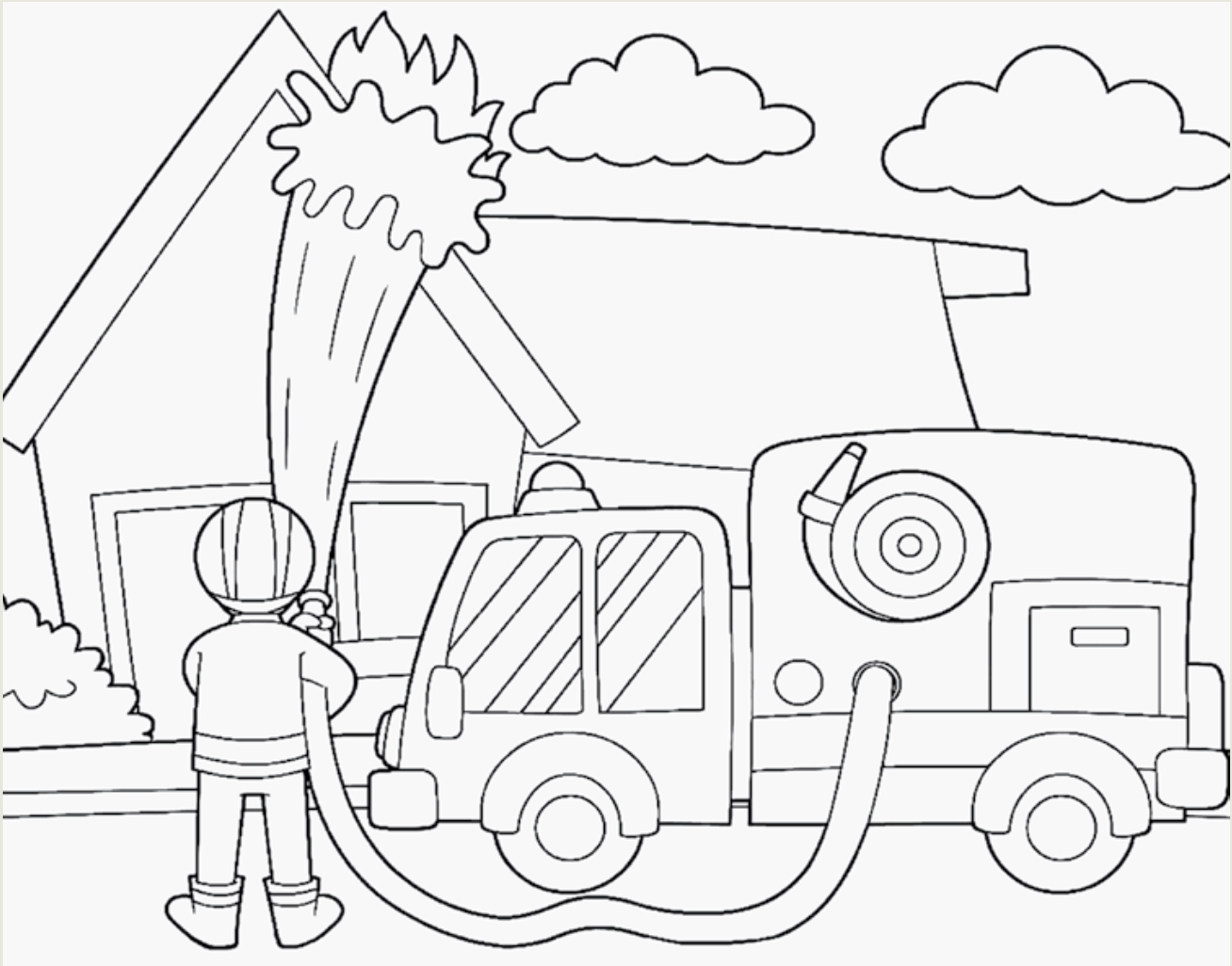
- A. Evaporate brine to produce salt
- B. Fuelling railway engines
- C. Lubricating weaving machines
- D. Lighting

03. Which of these is the name for a textbook of magic spells?

- A. Omnibus
- B. Almanac
- C. Lexicon
- D. Grimoire

Answers: 1.B 2.A 3. D

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

T	L	A	N
M	I	L	W
L	S	O	E
B	G	B	U

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

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

DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

WORD BUILDER



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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

VP Harris vows ‘unwavering’ commitment to Philippines

Manila, Philippines - The United States has an ‘unwavering’ commitment to the Philippines, US Vice President Kamala Harris told the country’s president on Monday during a visit aimed at countering China and rebuilding ties that were fractured over human rights abuses in the Southeast Asian nation.

Harris is the highest-ranking US official to visit Manila since President Ferdinand Marcos took power in June, signalling a growing rapport between the longtime allies after years of frosty relations under his Beijing-friendly predecessor Rodrigo Duterte.

She also met with her Philippine counterpart Sara Duterte, the daughter of the former leader whose deadly drug war sparked an international investigation into alleged human rights abuses.

“We stand with you in defence of international rules and norms as it relates to the South China Sea,” Harris told Marcos at the start of talks in the presidential palace in Manila.

“An attack on the Philippine armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in the South China Sea would invoke the US mutual defence commitment... that is our unwavering commitment to the Philippines.”

Marcos said he did not ‘see a future for the Philippines that does not include the United States’.

The United States has a long and complex relationship with



US Vice-President Kamala Harris waves as she arrives for the town hall meeting about the empowerment of women at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza in Pasay, Metro Manila on Monday (AFP)

the Philippines - and the Marcos family. Marcos’s dictator father ruled the former US colony for two decades with the support of Washington, which saw him as a Cold War ally. Relations between the two countries soured under the then US president over his controversial drug war.

Washington is now seeking to bolster its security alliance with Manila under the new president. That includes a mutual defence treaty and a 2014 pact, known by the acronym EDCA, which allows for the US military to store defence equipment and

supplies on five Philippine bases. It also allows US troops to rotate through those military bases.

EDCA stalled under Duterte but the United States and the Philippines have expressed support for accelerating its implementation as China becomes increasingly assertive.

“We have identified new locations and have begun a process with the Philippines to finalise those,” a US official told reporters on condition of anonymity ahead of Harris’s meeting with Marcos.

On Tuesday, Harris will visit the Philippine island province of Palawan, which lies along hotly contested waters in the South

China Sea.

China claims sovereignty over almost the entire sea, while the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei have overlapping claims to parts of it.

Beijing has ignored a 2016 international tribunal ruling that its claims have no legal basis.

Harris will meet members of the Philippine Coast Guard on board one of its two biggest vessels and deliver a speech.

US commitment

Harris’s trip to the Philippines is part of US efforts to remove any doubt about its commitment to the Asia-Pacific as China aggressively expands its regional influence. It comes after Harris and

US President Joe Biden met separately with Chinese President Xi Jinping last week.

Harris reinforced Biden’s message that ‘we must maintain open lines of communication to responsibly manage the competition between our countries’ while speaking to Xi on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in

We stand with you in defence of international rules and norms as it relates to the South China Sea

KAMALA HARRIS



Malaysia’s opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim gives a press conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Monday (AFP)

Malaysia’s Anwar in talks with arch-rivals despite anti-graft pledge

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim said on Monday he is in talks with the party of ex-premier Najib Razak, who is in jail for corruption, to form the next government after an inconclusive election.

Anwar’s multi-ethnic coalition, which campaigned on an anti-corruption ticket, won 82 seats in Saturday’s election, the most of any bloc but still short of the majority needed to form government. Malaysia, one of South-east Asia’s biggest economies, has had three changes of government in as many years, underscoring recent political instability. Saturday’s election offered no immediate solution to that impasse, only more of the political horse-trading that have characterised recent polls.

“I am still very optimistic that we will be able to form a government, more transparent, more democratic and to safeguard the interests of the people in

Malaysia,” Anwar told a news conference.

Another bloc, headed by former premier Muhyiddin Yassin, has also claimed it has enough backing to form government with the support of the conservative Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS).

Malaysia’s king is poised to break the stalemate. Parties have been told to submit their preferred prime minister and coalition partners to the king’s palace, with a deadline extended to 2pm local time (0600 GMT) on Tuesday.

Anwar spoke after holding formal talks with the incumbent ruling bloc Barisan Nasional, which is dominated by Najib’s graft-tainted United Malays National Organisation (UMNO).

He said the talks with his old foes were predicated on him becoming the prime minister, a dream he has held for more than two decades.

AFP

China reports more COVID deaths as infections surge

Beijing, China - China reported two new deaths from COVID-19 on Monday, both elderly Beijing residents, as several major cities persisted with strict virus curbs despite a much-touted recent loosening.

The last major economy wedded to a zero-COVID policy, Chinese authorities have continued to impose snap lockdowns, mass testing and lengthy quarantines in response to emerging outbreaks. Despite the central government this month announcing its most significant easing of the measures so far, authorities in many areas have stuck to hardline curbs as the num-

ber of new cases has spiked.

Monday’s deaths involved a 91-year-old woman with a history of stroke and Alzheimer’s disease, and an 88-year-old man with a history of cancer, bronchitis and stroke, local authorities said. On Sunday, Beijing announced China’s first COVID fatality since May, an 87-year-old man whose mild case worsened after he contracted a bacterial infection.

New cases in the capital jumped to 962 on Monday from 621 the day before, as authorities maintained a patchwork of restrictions in an effort to extinguish flare-ups.

AFP

G7 demands tougher sanctions on North Korea

Washington, US - The G7 nations on Sunday slammed North Korea’s ‘reckless’ launch of another intercontinental ballistic missile and called on the UN Security Council to take further ‘significant’ action to halt the tests.

Foreign ministers from the Group of Seven nations said repeated launching of missiles by North Korea ‘further destabilises the region, despite calls from the international community for peace and stability.’

The missile North Korea test fired on Friday appeared to be its newest ICBM with the potential range to hit the US mainland.

The G7 statement called for ‘a united and robust response by the international community, in-



The launch of North Korea’s new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) ‘Hwasong Gun 17’, at Pyongyang International Airport on Friday (AFP)

cluding the need for further significant measures to be taken by the UN Security Council.’

The G7 comprises Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain and the United States. A

representative of the European Union joined in on the statement. So far this month, North Korea is believed to have fired 30 short-, medium- and long-range missiles, including Friday’s launch which landed in Japan’s exclusive economic zone west of Hokkaido.

North Korean state news agency KCNA claimed that the missile fired on Friday was a Hwasong-17, its latest variant and one it asserted is ‘the strongest strategic weapon in the world.’ KCNA said North Korean leader Kim Jong Un witnessed the latest launch in the company of his daughter.

A series of test launches in October included a likely ICBM that flew over and past Japan,

prompting warning sirens to sound in northern Japan.

North Korea has launched more missiles in 2022 than in any previous year.

The UN Security Council has passed nearly a dozen resolutions imposing sanctions on North Korea over its nuclear and missile activity since 2006.

North Korea tested six nuclear bombs between 2006 and 2017, and has vowed to never cease its nuclear programme.

The G7 statement reiterated demands that North Korea’s nuclear programme must be verifiably dismantled and said the reclusive nation ‘will never have the status of a nuclear-weapon state’.

AFP

Kazakhstan president Kassym Tokayev re-elected as leader

Almaty, Kazakhstan - Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev was re-elected as leader of Central Asia’s largest country in a landslide, months after deadly unrest, preliminary results showed on Monday.

Independent monitors criticised a lack of real opposition but regional power broker Russian President Vladimir Putin congratulated Tokayev’s ‘convincing’ win despite a cooling in their personal ties over Ukraine.

The 69-year-old, who came to power in 2019, received 81.31 per cent of the vote, the oil-rich nation’s electoral commission said. Final results were due to be announced within a week, after a tally of votes from abroad.

The outcome came as no surprise as Tokayev’s five opponents were virtually unknown. None scored double digits and 5.8 per cent of voters cast their ballot against all candidates.

Turnout was just over 69 per

cent among 12mn eligible voters, election officials said.

“The people have clearly expressed their confidence in me and we have to justify it,” Tokayev said as results emerged.

The mission from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) however said the election lacked ‘competitiveness’ and showed the need for legislative reforms.

Rich in natural resources and located at the crossroads of important trade routes, Kazakhstan sank into chaos during protests over high living costs in January, which left 238 dead.

‘No monopoly of power’

Tokayev - once a steady hand, if generally considered lacking charisma - showed a ruthless streak earlier this year by violently suppressing protests.

While Kazakhstan has stabilised, tensions persist, as



Incumbent Kazakh president Kassym-Jomart Tokayev casting his ballot at a polling station in Astana on Saturday (AFP)

shown by the arrest last week of seven opposition supporters accused of an attempted coup.

Sunday’s election was a chance for Tokayev to consolidate his grip on power.

Hoping to turn over a new leaf after the unrest and tensions over the Ukraine war, Tokayev had said he was seeking a ‘new mandate of trust’.

And after voting early on Sunday in the capital Astana, he said ‘the main thing is that there is no monopoly of power’.

AFP journalists saw voters taking selfies in front of the polling stations in Astana and the economic hub of Almaty. Many said they would be ‘required’ to show the photos when they returned to work on Monday.

Tokayev came to power in 2019 after winning 70 per cent of the vote in an election whose outcome was inevitable after he obtained the backing of former ruler Nursultan Nazarbayev.

For the following two-and-a-half years, he played a role of loyal protege.

That changed after protests erupted in January and Tokayev ordered law enforcement to ‘shoot to kill’ demonstrators.

Tokayev then distanced himself from his former mentor Nazarbayev, purged his clan from positions of authority and promised a ‘new and just Kazakhstan’.

Closer Beijing ties

He announced reforms, a constitutional referendum and introduced single presidential terms of seven years but critics are still sidelined.

Nazarbayev, who led Kazakhstan for three decades, was the first to congratulate Tokayev on his re-election. It was, he said, ‘unquestionable proof of the people’s unshakeable faith in (his) reforms’. Nazarbayev praised his attitude ‘at critical times’ for the

country, a reference to violence earlier this year.

Tokayev this year also stood up to Putin, as Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine shocked former Soviet republics like Kazakhstan.

The invasion has reawakened Kazakh concerns that Moscow may have ambitions on the north of the country, home to three million ethnic Russians.

In response, Tokayev strengthened his country’s ties not only with China, but also with Europe.

Putin congratulated Tokayev on his ‘convincing mandate’ and praised the ‘strategic partnership’ and ‘alliance’ between Russia and Kazakhstan.

The presidency said Tokayev had also been congratulated by China’s leader Xi Jinping, who was cited as saying that Beijing was ready to ‘open a new stage of eternal comprehensive strategic partnership’ with Astana.

AFP

INDIA

Mangaluru blast accused influenced by global terror outfit, says top cop

Mangaluru, India - Karnataka ADGP Alok Kumar on Monday said that the accused Sharik in the Mangaluru auto-rickshaw explosion case, has been earlier involved in cases under UAPA and was on the run.

The top cop further said that the accused had links with a terrorist organisation which is having a global presence. "We can say that the accused's acts have been inspired and influenced by some terrorist organisation which is having a global presence. So, it is due to that," the Karnataka ADGP said.

"A passenger was carrying a bag that had a cooker bomb. It exploded, causing burn injuries to the passenger and driver of the auto. The identity of the auto driver as Purshottam Pujari and the passenger as Sharik has been confirmed," Alok Kumar said addressing a media gathering after he displayed all the material recovered from the residence of the accused.

"The accused is already an accused in three cases - two in Mangaluru city and one in Shivamogga. He was booked under



UAPA (The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act) 2008) in two cases and was 'wanted' in the third one. He was on the run for a long time," the ADGP added.

He also reiterated that the accused was carrying a fake aadhar card in the name of a 'public servant'.

Following the investigation, the police raided the Mysore premises of Sharik in Lok Nayak Nagar. They recovered a number of explosive materials in-

cluding sulphur, phosphorus, matchboxes, nuts and bolts and circuits. "We have come to know the sources of it because some of them were bought online and others offline, so we are working on it," the ADGP added mentioning that two other accused persons are absconding, as of now, who have been handling the case with Sharik.

He further added that Sharik is in touch with three other persons whose identity is yet to be identified and for that, police

have formed a total of five teams to probe the matter and nab the network.

"Sharik's immediate handler was Arafat Ali, accused in two cases. He was in touch with Mussavir Hussain, an accused in the Al-Hind module case; Abdul Matin Taha was one of the accused, as per our information. So far he is the main handler of Sharik. But Sharik is also in touch with two or three others who are yet to be identified," he said.

"We have searched seven

places and have seized electronic devices whose content is being looked into," he added while informing that the police will also inquire about all the persons in whose names the sim cards recovered from Sharik were registered.

"We are going to check if remote persons have any contacts with him or if there are some persons who are financially supporting him and giving him background support. We can say that his acts have been inspired and influenced by some terrorist organisation with a global presence," ADGP Kumar added further.

He highlighted: Despite Sharik learnt making the explosives, it is yet to be identified if he was trained by someone.

"We ascertained his identity after his family came to meet him today, and confirmed us," ADGP Alok Kumar said.

Police Commissioner N Sashi Kumar had said that one male and three female members of Sharik's family had come to visit him.

ANI



Aftab Amin Poonawalla (in hoodie) being taken by Delhi police personnel during an investigation in New Delhi on Sunday. (ANI)

Delhi Police seek polygraph test on Shraddha murder accused

New Delhi, India - The Delhi police has moved a lower court seeking permission to conduct a polygraph test on Aaftab Amin Poonawala, the accused in the Shraddha Walker murder case.

Police had earlier said Aaftab, who confessed to killing his live-in partner and chopping her body into 35 pieces, was giving misleading answers to questions. Metropolitan magistrate Aviral Shukla of Saket Court referred the matter to Magistrate Vijayshree Rathore, who earlier granted permission for a narco analysis test on Aftab.

The court is likely to hear the plea on Tuesday.

According to sources, Aaftab is to be produced before the court after the expiry of his five-day police custody.

Delhi police had earlier submitted in court that Aftab was giving wrong information and misleading the investigation.

The plea for polygraph test is the second scientific examination that Delhi police sought to conduct on Aaftab.

On Thursday, the court ordered Rohini Forensic Science Laboratory to conduct a narco test on Aaftab within

five days.

However, the court directed the investigating officer in the case not to use third-degree on the accused as it extended its custody by a further five days.

Metropolitan magistrate Vijayshree Rathore had allowed the application seeking permission for a narco analysis test on Aaftab.

The court had allowed the plea after taking note of the accused's consent through Legal Aid Counsel Harshit Sagar. The accused was connected to the court proceedings through video conferencing.

"The FSL, Rohini is directed to allow the IO to conduct a Narco Analysis Test of the accused within five days from today," the court had said on Thursday.

During the proceedings, the accused was explained the meaning of the narco analysis test and its consequences. He was informed that since he was not physically produced before the court and his consent for the test was being sought through video conferencing, his consent would be recorded through the legal-aid counsel appointed on his behalf on November 14.

ANI

Hindu faith bottled and home-delivered

Gangotri, India - High in the Himalayas, where the mighty Ganges is still a frigid glacial stream, labourers fill jerry cans with its holy waters to be distributed to Hindus all over India.

Buyers sparingly use the precious liquid to bless important occasions, from births, weddings, and funerals to festivals such as Diwali or the purchase of a new car.

"This is for every faithful Hindu who can't get here personally," said one of the workers in the pilgrimage town of Gangotri, giving his name as Ramesh.

"It feels blessed to be part of a project that reaffirms our Hindu faith and delivers this di-



A daily wage worker fills cans with meltwater of Gangotri glacier which is the primary source of the pious river Ganges, in Uttarakhand (AFP)

vine water to all corners of the country," he told AFP.

The scheme is run by the Indian postal service and is one example of a raft of initiatives,

from the symbolic to the gargantuan, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi promoting Hinduism in the country 75 years after independence.

The water is considered purest closest to its source so is collected in Gangotri, where the Ganges starts its roughly 2,500km journey across India, and trucked to a bottling plant 100km downstream. After being left to settle for three or four days, it is filtered in tanks before workers decant it by hand into 250ml plastic bottles.

Bought over the counter at post offices around India, they cost just 30 rupees (US\$0.37) each - customers can also order them online for home delivery at 321 rupees for a pack of four.

Millions of the little containers have been sold since the scheme launched six years ago. Since winning elections in

2014, Modi has put Hinduism front and centre of his government in the officially secular nation of 1.4bn.

The core tenet of Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and its militaristic ideological parent the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, is that Hinduism is India's original religion.

This worries India's 210mn Muslims and other minorities. Social media is rife with hate speech and attacks on Muslims and Christians have risen, activists say.

Modi's biggest religious construction project is a grand temple being built in the ancient city of Ayodhya.

AFP

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Shallow earthquake kills 162 in Indonesia

Cianjur, Indonesia - A shallow 5.6-magnitude earthquake killed at least 162 people, with hundreds injured and others missing, when it toppled buildings and triggered landslides on Indonesia's main island of Java on Monday, officials said.

Doctors treated patients outdoors after the quake, which was felt as far away as the capital Jakarta, left hospitals in the West Java town of Cianjur without power for several hours.

Indonesia's disaster mitigation agency said 25 people remained trapped under the rubble as the rescue mission stretched into the night.

The agency increased the death toll from 56 and said more than 2,000 houses were damaged and more than 5,000 people were taken to evacuation centres.

"You can see it yourself, some got their heads, feet sewn outdoors. Some got stressed and started crying," West Java governor Ridwan Kamil told a news conference broadcast on Kompas TV.

Kamil said power had been partially restored by the evening, without specifying if that meant by generators or connection to a power grid.

The afternoon quake was centred in the Cianjur region and local authorities said as many as 700 had been wounded, warning the death toll could rise further.

"Because there are still a lot of people trapped on the scene, we assume injuries and fatalities will increase over time," Kamil said as ambulance sirens blared in the background.

Agus Azhari, 19, was with his elderly mother in the family home when the living room was destroyed within seconds, parts of the walls and roof collapsing around them.

"I pulled my mother's hand, and we ran outside," he said. "I heard people screaming for help from all around me," Azhari told AFP.

The majority of deaths were



Wounded people rest under a tent displayed outside a hospital following an earthquake in Cianjur on Monday (AFP)

counted in one hospital, the head of Cianjur's local administration Herman Suherman said earlier, with most of the victims killed in the ruins of collapsed buildings.

He told Indonesian media the town's Sayang hospital had no power after the quake, leaving doctors unable to operate on victims immediately.

More health workers were urgently needed due to the overwhelming number of patients, he said.

Locals rushed victims to the hospital in pickup trucks and on motorbikes, according to footage obtained by AFP.

'Emergency state'

They were placed in front of the facility as residents spread a tarpaulin on the road for the bodies.

At another facility, Cimaan hospital, green tents were erected outside for makeshift treatment, according to an AFP reporter at the scene. Victims arrived covered in blood, while parents looked for their children.

Kamil, the governor, said multiple landslides had cut off road access to some areas and bulldozers were being used to reopen them.

Shops, a hospital and an Islamic boarding school in the town were severely damaged, according to Indonesian media.

Broadcasters showed several buildings in Cianjur with their roofs collapsed and debris lining the streets. The town is situated in a hilly area where many houses are built with a mixture of mud and concrete.

"The ambulances keep on coming from the villages to the hospital," Suherman said. "There are many families in villages that have not been evacuated."

Cianjur police chief Doni Hermawan told Metro TV authorities had rescued a woman and a baby from a landslide but a third person they found had died of their injuries.

French President Emmanuel Macron was the first world leader to offer his condolences.

"Indonesia was hit this morning by an earthquake of destructive and deadly force. Thoughts for all the victims," he wrote. Indonesian President Joko Widodo is yet to respond to the quake.

Indonesia's meteorological agency said it recorded 62 aftershocks in Cianjur after the quake, with magnitudes ranging from 1.8 to 4. There were no reports of casualties or major damage in Jakarta, a three-hour drive away.

Indonesia experiences frequent seismic and volcanic activity due to its position on the Pacific 'Ring of Fire', where tectonic plates collide.

AFP

Palestinian man killed during Israeli army raid in West Bank

Jenin, Palestinian Territories - Israeli forces killed a Palestinian man during an army raid Monday, the Palestinian health ministry said, while the Israeli army confirmed troops opened fire during an operation in the area targeting a 'suspect.'

The ministry charged that the man killed in the northern Jenin area was a civilian, who was named as Mahmoud Al-Saadi, 19, by the city's deputy governor Kamal Abu al-Rub.

"A civilian succumbed to critical wounds after he was hit by live occupation (Israeli) bullets in the abdomen, in Jenin," the min-



Palestinians mourn over the body of a youth who was reportedly killed during a raid by Israeli forces in Jenin on Monday (AFP)

istry said in a statement, adding that two others were seriously wounded.

The Israeli army said it had operated in Wadi Bruqin, near Jenin, seeking to arrest a wanted 'terror operative' whom it named as Ratib al-Bali.

"During the activity, shots were fired and explosive devices were hurled at the soldiers," it said.

"The soldiers responded with live fire toward suspects who fired at them.

"A hit was identified," the army said, without confirming a specific fatality.

The army added that nine other suspects were arrested in raids across the West Bank early on Monday.

The official Palestinian news agency Wafa reported that the Jenin area clash broke out as the army 'besieged a house'.

After the shooting, a large crowd massed around Saadi's body, which was wrapped in white cloth.

Violence has flared this year in the West Bank, where the Israeli army has launched near-daily raids since a series of attacks in Israel that killed several civilians.

AFP

Erdogan says mulling ground operation in Syria



The wreckage of a truck burnt after being hit by one of the rockets fired from northern Syria in the Karkamis district on Monday (AFP)

Istanbul, Turkey - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Monday he was mulling going beyond air strikes and launching a ground operation in Syria following a deadly rocket strike on a Turkish border town.

Erdogan also renewed warnings that those attacking Turkey will pay dearly, a day after Ankara's forces launched air raids on bases of outlawed Kurdish groups in northern Syria and Iraq.

"There is no question that this operation be limited to only an aerial operation," Erdogan told reporters on returning to Turkey from Qatar where he attended the FIFA World Cup opening.

"Competent authorities, our defence ministry and chief of staff will together decide the level of force that should be used by our ground forces," Erdogan said.

"We have already warned that we will make those who violate our territory pay," he added.

Erdogan spoke after a rocket strike from Syrian territory killed at least three people, including a child, in a border Turkish town.

That strike came a day after Turkey carried out air raids against the bases of Kurdish militant groups in northern Syria and Iraq which it said were being used to launch 'terrorist' attacks on Turkish soil.

The overnight raids mainly targeting positions held by Syrian Kurdish forces in northern and northeastern Syria killed at least 31 people, according to the British-based monitoring group the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR).

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), among those attacked, said Turkey launched new air strikes on Monday.

The Turkish raids, codenamed Operation Claw-Sword, came a week after a blast in central Istanbul killed six people and wounded 81.

Turkey has blamed that attack on the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

The blast, the deadliest in five years, revived bitter memories of a wave of nationwide attacks between 2015 and 2017.

The PKK has waged a bloody insurgency there for decades and is designated a terror group by Ankara and its Western allies.

AFP

South African president arrives in UK for king's first state visit

London, UK - South African President Cyril Ramaphosa on Monday landed in Britain ahead of the first state visit hosted by King Charles III as monarch.

Ramaphosa arrived at London Stansted airport on a South African Air Force jet, and was met by a British military guard of honour.

The official programme starts on Tuesday and will include a state banquet at Buckingham Palace.

The last state visit to the UK came in June 2019, when queen Elizabeth II hosted US president Donald Trump and his wife Melania.

The pomp of the major diplomatic event, however, will be clouded by events in South Africa, where Ramaphosa risks impeachment for allegedly covering up a crime.

Climate change, trade and Charles's vision for the Commonwealth are expected to be on the agenda.

Ramaphosa was last in London for the state funeral of the



South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa gets off a plane upon arrival at Stansted airport in London on Monday (AFP)

queen at Westminster Abbey in September.

His state visit comes more than a decade after the last by a South African leader, when Jacob Zuma came to the UK in 2010.

Charles and Queen Consort Camilla will be in charge of welcoming Ramaphosa and First Lady Tshepo Motsepe but will also see the visiting couple meet other senior royals.

Heir to the throne Prince William and his wife Kate, Princess of Wales, will take him to join Charles and Camilla for a ceremonial military welcome.

Charles's youngest brother Prince Edward has also been recruited to accompany Ramaphosa to London's Kew Gardens and a biomedical research centre.

Also on the agenda is an address to lawmakers from both houses of parliament and a meeting with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in Downing Street.

AFP

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GULF FITNESS

Qatar looks to football, World Cup to kick the obesity problem rampant among the population, especially the younger generation

Seven-year-old Alain trains with two dozen other children in Doha, the World Cup's host city, striving to lose weight in pursuit of his dream - becoming a professional footballer.

Dribbling around cones on a hot and sticky evening, he is taking part in a broad campaign to encourage health and fitness in the Gulf, home to alarming levels of obesity.

"I'm here to lose weight and become a footballer... because this sport makes me happy," Alain says with a smile, wiping the sweat from his forehead.

The boy is not the only one who wants to improve his fitness in the resource-rich Gulf, whose wealth and exercise-detering heat have combined to produce some of the world's most overweight populations.

The hundreds of super-fit international footballers, now in Qatar for the World Cup, are an anomaly for the desert peninsula where 70 per cent of adults are overweight.

It's a similar story around the region, with 66 per cent of Omanis overweight or obese, according to official figures, and a 2020 study putting Kuwait's childhood obesity at 35-40 per cent. In the United Arab Emirates, childhood obesity leapt from 12 per cent to 17.4 per cent in just two years to 2020, the health ministry said.

Unhealthy diets and sedentary lifestyles are to blame in a region which imports most of its

Bane of obesity



Physical activity was vital for kids in Doha, where options are largely limited to 'going to shopping centres or parks'

ALI KOTEICH



Ali Koteich, director of the Cedars Sport Academy, oversees children training at a football pitch at the facility in Qatar's capital Doha

food and has some of the world's hottest summers, making it hazardous for outdoor activity.

Ali Koteich, director of the Cedars Sport Academy where Alain trains, said physical activity was vital for kids in Doha, where options are largely limited to 'going to shopping centres or parks'.

"In a place like Doha, sport is very important for children," the 39-year-old told AFP.

Sport and health connected

Twenty-four per cent of deaths among adults in the emirates are the result of heart conditions, and seven per cent are due to diabetes, according to the health ministry.

In a report on physical inactivity issued last month, the World Health Organization said nearly half-a-billion people will develop associated medical conditions by 2030 and called



Musa Karnib and his two sons - Mohamed (L), 9, and Alan (R), 7, pose on a football pitch at the Cedars Sports Academy in Qatar's capital Doha

for governments to take urgent action.

"Obesity is linked to multiple chronic illnesses, including diabetes and stress," explained Yousef al Maslamani, a doctor and health spokesperson for the 2022 World Cup. "That's why it is so important to show how sport and health are connected."

Gulf countries have begun promoting healthy lifestyles, including a fun run organised by the WHO in Doha on Saturday.

Dubai, the UAE's commercial capital an hour's flight away, is in the midst of a 30x30 campaign, encouraging residents to exercise 30 minutes daily for a month.

And at the World Cup, children are being encouraged to send videos of dance moves that players can use as goal celebrations, in a FIFA-backed bid to make them more active.

"We know the negative impact on chil-

dren's health that lack of exercise can have," said FIFA chief Gianni Infantino. Whether hosting big sports events can improve a nation's health is, however, debatable.

In 2019, Britain's National Institute for Health and Care Research said the London 2012 Olympics had only 'small and transient' effects on physical activity for nearby residents.

But healthy messaging is at least being heard. Back at the football academy, nine-year-old Oubay el Sayyed is giving his teammates a pep talk, under the approving gaze of his mother, Nada.

"You shouldn't play with your phone all the time, because you have to do some exercise," he tells them. "Football will make your life easier and help you."

AFP

Replacement of missing teeth



DR REMITHA RAMAKRISHNAN
Dental Surgery and Oral Implantologist
Badr Al Samaa Medical Centre, Al Khuwair

Adental implant (also known as an endosseous implant or fixture) is used to replace missing teeth. It is a surgical component that interfaces with the bone of the jaw or skull to support a dental prosthesis such as a crown, bridge, denture, facial prosthesis or to act as an orthodontic anchor.

Tooth replacement options

Treatment options for replacement of missing teeth are bridges and full or partial dentures. Although they address the short-term cosmetic problem of the missing teeth, they do nothing to stop the bone loss in the area of missing teeth. Bridges require two or more healthy teeth to be reduced in size to serve as pillars (abutments), leaving them at a much greater risk for cavities and root canal treatment. With implants, the healthy teeth are not ground and they transmit the chewing forces to the jaw thereby halting bone loss.

What are dental implants?

Dental implant treatment is the replacement of missing tooth roots with supportive posts. It is usually made of titanium and can be used to replace single tooth, several teeth or for the complete reconstruction of a collapsed mouth.

Titanium is the most bio-compatible material and once placed,

it fuses with the jaw bone in a period of 3-6 months. The basis for modern dental implants is a biologic process called Osseointegration where materials, such as titanium, form an intimate bond to bone. The implant fixture is first placed, so that it is likely to osseointegrate, then a dental prosthetic is added. A variable amount of healing time is required for osseointegration before either the dental prosthetic (a tooth, bridge or denture) is attached to the implant or an abutment is placed which will hold a dental prosthetic. The integration of implant and bone can support physical loads for decades without failure.

Dental implants can be placed in most adults who are in good to moderate health. Certain uncontrolled medical conditions may decrease the effectiveness of implant treatment, so be sure to discuss your full medical history with your doctor before beginning the treatment.

Every patient is different and patient results may vary. Only a trained dentist can determine the best treatment plan for you.

What to expect?

Implant treatment can be carried out in three phases. Treatment planning, Implant placement and Crown placement. Your doctor will take x-rays and create a model of your existing teeth to determine where and how the implant should be placed.

The implant is then placed in the bone and given a period of time to heal (osseointegrate) before attachment of the crown. In some cases, you can receive a temporary crown the same day. The final crown is usually placed 3-6 months after implant placement.

Implant Benefits

Replaces teeth without sacrificing quality of the adjacent teeth. Fuses to the living bone for the 'real-tooth feel'. Provides a reliable, long term, dental solution that can last a life time.

Success or failure of implants depends on the health of the person receiving it, drugs which impact the chances of osseointegration and the health of the tissues in the mouth. The amount of stress that will be put on the implant and fixture during normal function is also evaluated.

Planning the position and number of implants is key to the long-term health of the prosthetic.

The risks and complications related to implant therapy are divided into those that occur during surgery (such as excessive bleeding or nerve injury), those that occur in the first six months (such as infection and failure to osseointegrate) and those that occur long-term.

In the presence of healthy tissues, a well integrated implant with appropriate biomechanical loads can have long term success rates of 93 to 98 per cent.

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FIFA WORLD CUP

Qatar2022



FOOTBALL FIESTA

Three Lions on the prowl

Bukayo Saka, Jude Bellingham sparkle as England hit six goals past hapless Iran in Group B

Doha, Qatar - England made a scintillating start to their World Cup campaign as Bukayo Saka and Jude Bellingham inspired a 6-2 rout of outclassed Iran in Monday's Group B opener in Doha.

Saka and Bellingham were England's driving forces with dynamic displays that underlined their emergence as two of the game's brightest young stars.

Bellingham, 19, shattered Iran's hopes of frustrating England when he rose to head his maiden senior international goal in the first half.

Gareth Southgate's side were in sparkling form at the Khalifa International Stadium and goals from Saka and Raheem Sterling put them in complete control before half-time.

Saka, 21, netted again after the interval and, although Mehdi Taremi struck twice for Iran, Marcus Rashford and Jack Grealish completed the demolition.

There will be far sterner tests to come for England as they bid to win their first major trophy since the 1966 World Cup.

But this was a welcome step in the right direction for Southgate, whose team arrived in Qatar on a six-match winless run that triggered scathing criticism of the Three Lions boss and his perceived negative tactics. The only concern for Southgate was the sight of Harry Maguire being replaced in the second half after being checked for a potential head injury.

England play their second match against the United States on Friday and conclude their Group B fixtures against Wales on November 29.

Just hours before kick-off, England revealed captain Harry Kane would not wear a rainbow-themed 'One Love' armband after the Football Association and several other European countries dropped their campaign in support of LGBTQ rights.

Because the armband was not a FIFA-approved piece of kit, it was reported any player wearing it would be booked -- a risk England were apparently unwilling to take.

The match also took place against the background of turmoil in Iran after months of female-led demonstrations sparked by the



England's Bukayo Saka (L) celebrates with Harry Kane (C) and Luke Shaw after scoring against Iran at the Khalifa International Stadium in Doha on Monday (AFP)

Sublime Saka

Having reached the World Cup semi-finals in 2018 before losing to Italy in the Euro 2020 final, England are desperate to take the last step to silverware in Doha.

Southgate had urged his team "play on the front foot" and they re-

sponded in style, after initially finding their rhythm disrupted by a long delay when Iran goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand smashed into teammate Majid Hosseini.

Despite being in no state to continue amid fears of a concussion, the bloodied Beiranvand played on

before finally being substituted.

England eventually penned Iran deep inside their own half and Bellingham delivered in the 35th minute.

Sterling found Luke Shaw on the left flank and his cross was perfectly weighted for Bellingham, who

GROUP B		
	ENGLAND	6
	IRAN	2

looped a fine header into the far corner.

Playing for Birmingham in the Championship just two years ago, the Borussia Dortmund star's goal made him England's second youngest scorer at a World Cup behind Michael Owen.

Eight minutes later another of England's gifted prodigies doubled the lead.

Maguire headed down a corner and Arsenal forward Saka swivelled to lash a superb left-foot finish into the top corner.

Sterling put the result beyond doubt with his first goal at a World Cup in first-half stoppage time.

Bellingham fed Kane, whose pinpoint cross was volleyed home by Sterling with the outside of his boot.

Saka made it four in the 62nd minute when he shuffled across the Iran area before stroking his shot past Hossein Hosseini.

Taremi fired into the roof of the net to reduce the deficit three minutes later.

Rashford's cool finish in the 71st minute, 49 seconds after he came on, was followed by Grealish's 90th-minute tap-in.

Taremi struck from the penalty spot with the last kick of the game after a shirt pull by John Stones, but the margin of victory reflected England's total dominance.

AFP



England's Jack Grealish celebrates scoring against Iran on Monday (AFP)

Grealish keeps promise to young fan with World Cup celebration

Doha, Qatar - Jack Grealish kept his promise to a young fan who has cerebral palsy with his celebration after scoring his first World Cup goal for England against Iran on Monday.

Grealish tapped home the final goal from close range and marked the moment with a broad smile and stretched his arms out to the

side, rolling them in waves.

The Manchester City midfielder was keeping a pledge he made to 11-year-old Finlay.

Finlay met his favourite player after writing a letter to Grealish, whose sister Holly also has cerebral palsy.

"I wish there were more people in the world just like you who treat

people with disabilities the same as anyone else," Finlay had written. Grealish, 27, followed up with a letter of his own and also made a surprise visit to meet Finlay at a football session run by City's charity programme.

It was there that he pledged to dedicate his next goal to the boy with the arm gesture.

Late goals help Netherlands get the better of Senegal

Doha, Qatar - Late goals by Cody Gakpo and Davy Klaassen gave the Netherlands a 2-0 victory over African champions Senegal on Monday on their return to the World Cup stage.

With Senegal missing injured star man Sadio Mane and the Dutch without their main attacking threat Memphis Depay at kick-off, the Group A encounter in Doha looked set to end in a goalless draw.

But with just six minutes remaining PSV Eindhoven forward Gakpo got up in front of Senegal goalkeeper Edouard Mendy to head in a floated Frenkie de Jong cross from the left.

Substitute Klaassen then secured the victory deep in injury time, following up to score after Mendy had saved from Depay, who had also come off the bench.

The result leaves the Netherlands level at the top of the group

GROUP A		
	SENEGAL	0
	NETHERLANDS	2

with Ecuador, who beat hosts Qatar 2-0 in the tournament's opening match on Sunday.

Louis van Gaal's side play Ecuador on Friday, while Senegal now face a must-win contest against Qatar.

Senegal saw Bayern Munich superstar Mane - who came second in this year's Ballon d'Or - pull out of the squad with a leg injury on the eve of the tournament.

His absence was clearly felt as the contest at Al Thumama Stadium - played out to the backdrop of the non-stop drumming and dancing of the Senegal support, but also in front of a considerable number of empty seats -- never lived up

to its billing.

Everton midfielder Idrissa Gana Gueye came closest to scoring for Senegal with a strike on the half-volley from the edge of the box that was beaten away by Netherlands goalkeeper Andries Noppert in the 73rd minute.

Noppert, the giant Heerenveen goalkeeper who was making his international debut, also excelled with saves from Boulaye Dia and Pape Gueye in the second half as the Netherlands played their first World Cup game in eight years.

The three-time runners-up were semi-finalists under Van Gaal in Brazil in 2014 before failing to qualify for the last World Cup in Russia in 2018.

The Dutch team was captained by Virgil van Dijk, who was making his debut at a major international tournament on the occasion of his 50th cap.

AFP



Cody Gakpo (L) of the Netherlands scores past Senegal goalkeeper Edouard Mendy in their Group A match at the Al Thumama Stadium in Doha on Monday (AFP)



FIFA WORLD CUP Qatar2022



Kyllian Mbappe takes a shot at goal during a training session in Doha on Saturday

France place hopes on Kylian Mbappe

Doha, Qatar - World Cup holders France will need Kylian Mbappe at his best in Qatar following the loss of Bal-lon d'Or winner Karim Benzema to in-jury, coach Didier Deschamps said on Monday.

France begin their defence against Australia on Tuesday as they look to move on from a troubled build-up which saw several key players pull out injured. Benzema was then forced to withdraw over the weekend.

The Real Madrid striker suc-cumbed to a left thigh injury, although he played no part in France's 2018 tri-umph in Russia when Mbappe burst onto the world stage.

The Paris Saint-Germain striker was just 19 but scored four goals dur-

ing that World Cup, including one in the 4-2 final win over Croatia.

"He is still a young player, just a bit moe than four years ago, but he al-ready did very important things four years ago," Deschamps told reporters in Doha.

"Since then he has become more mature and there is now even more recognition for him around the world.

"He doesn't have any more respon-sibility within the squad than he did before, but he has always had the abil-ity to make the difference and we will need that.

"He has the ability to be decisive at any moment, unlike many other play-ers."

AFP



He (Mbappe) is still a young player, just a bit more than four years ago, but he already did very important things four years ago

DIDIER DESCHAMPS

MOMENT IN TIME



Ecuador's Angelo Preciado looks the picture of poise and concentration as he acrobatically kicks the ball during their opening match against Qatar at the Al Bayt Stadium in Doha

Poland's Szczesny backs goal machine Lewandowski to fire at World Cup

Doha, Qatar - Poland goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny believes Robert Lewandowski will break his World Cup duck in Qatar as his country aims to reach the knockout phase for the first time since 1986.

Lewandowski is Poland's record scorer with 76 goals in 134 games but the Barcelona star failed to find the net four years ago in Russia as the Poles exited in the group stage.

The 34-year-old has struck 25 times across the last two World Cup qualifying campaigns but has yet to open his account at the fi-nals.

"I think it's definitely important for him (to score)," Szczesny told reporters Monday on the eve of Poland's opening game against Mexico.

"He's very motivated before the World Cup. No one doubts that Robert is one of the best players in the world right now."

After eight record-breaking sea-sons at Bayern Munich, Lewandowski has been just as pro-lific in his first season with Barcelona - hitting 18 goals in 19 appearances.

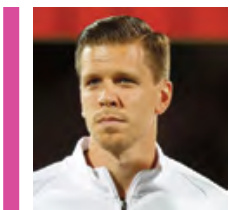
"He would definitely like to see his ambitions come true, not only at club level but for his national team. This is a very important tour-nament.

"I do believe we'll add Robert Lewandowski to the great names of Polish football with what he does in Qatar."

Poland have failed to get past the group phase in their past three World Cups appearances, the last



Poland's Robert Lewandowski controls the ball during a training session in Doha on Friday (AFP)



No one doubts that Robert is one of the best players in the world right now

WOJCIECH SZCZESNY

of which saw Szczesny punished for a mistake in the first match against Senegal.

The Juventus goalkeeper has suffered a series of mishaps at past major tournaments, including being sent off in the Euro 2012 opener

when Poland were co-hosts.

Szczesny played no further part at Euro 2016 after an injury in the first group game. He also conceded an own goal as Poland kicked off their Euro 2020 campaign with a loss to Slovakia.

"I think each tournament has its own history," said the 32-year-old Szczesny, who confirmed this will be his last World Cup.

"I'm not thinking about tomor-row's game going back to the pre-vious tournaments. I'm very enthusiastic and looking forward to the first game."

Poland face Saudi Arabia in their second Group C match on Novem-ber 26 before coming up against Li-one! Messi's Argentina four days later.

AFP

European teams say won't wear 'OneLove' World Cup armband

Doha, Qatar - England, Ger-many and five other European teams at the World Cup on Monday abandoned plans to wear a rainbow-themed arm-band in support of LGBTQ rights, citing the threat of disci-plinary action from FIFA.

"FIFA has been very clear that it will impose sporting sanctions if our captains wear the arm-bands on the field of play," they said in a joint statement.

Under FIFA rules, players wearing kit that is not autho-rised by football's world govern-ing body could be shown a yellow card.

If that player was then shown a second yellow card, they

would be sent off.

The "OneLove" armband due to be worn by the likes of England captain Harry Kane and Germany counterpart Manuel Neuer is designed as part of a campaign to promote inclusiv-ity.

"As national federations, we can't put our players in a posi-tion where they could face sporting sanctions including bookings, so we have asked the captains not to attempt to wear the armbands in FIFA World Cup games," the federations of England, Wales, Belgium, Den-mark, Germany, the Nether-lands and Switzerland said.

AFP



Germany's Manuel Neuer wears the captain's armband with the inscription 'OneLove' during their friendly match against Oman on Wednesday

TODAYS
MATCHES



ARGENTINA
VS
SAUDI ARABIA
2 PM



DENMARK
VS
TUNISIA
5 PM



MEXICO
VS
POLAND
8 PM



FRANCE
VS
AUSTRALIA
11 PM

One last time

Time running out for Lionel Messi but World Cup stars seem to be aligning for Argentina

Doha, Qatar - Spain coach Luis Enrique said earlier this week it would be “unfair” if Argentina great Lionel Messi were never to win the World Cup.

But the seven-time Ballon d’Or winner is running out of time and opportunities.

Alongside Portugal’s Cristiano Ronaldo, the Qatar extravaganza will likely be the fifth and last World Cup for one of the two outstanding players of their generation - believed by many to be the two greatest footballers of all time.

Unlike previous contenders for the title of greatest of all time - Brazil’s Pele and Diego Maradona of Argentina - at least one, and maybe both, will never lift football’s greatest prize.

Yet in the case of Messi, this may well be his best chance yet to win that elusive prize.

He cut a distraught figure in 2014 after Argentina succumbed 1-0 to Germany in the final in Brazil, even briefly announcing his international retirement in 2016.

He changed his mind and last year led Argentina to their first major title in 28 years, defeating hosts Brazil in the Copa America final by the same score line and in the same Maracana stadium where they had floundered seven years earlier.

‘He’s a legend’

Argentina head into this tournament on the back of a 36-match unbeaten run as one of the clear favourites.



Their group does not appear, on paper at least, the most taxing.

They begin against Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, followed by clashes with Mexico and Poland.

“Argentina are one of the favourites for the whole World Cup,” said Poland forward Robert Lewandowski earlier this week.

“They have not lost for 30-odd games, they’re very dangerous opponents for everyone.”

As the new darling of the Camp Nou in Barcelona, Lewandowski has been able this season to see first hand the legacy left behind by Messi in Catalonia.

“He is a Barcelona legend. You see it all over the place being at the club,” the Pole said.

“He is Argentina’s leader, one of the top players. We know who we’re going to play against, it’s a huge challenge.” Lewnadowski will likely be

among the last players ever to play a World Cup match against Messi, along with the unfancied but confident Saudis.

Midfielder Abdullellah Al-Malki insists he will not be overawed by the occasion.

“He’s a legend and it’s a dream for any player to play against him, but we represent Saudi Arabia and we fear no-one,” he said.

Messi’s predecessor as Argentina icon, the late Maradona secured his footballing immortality by inspiring the country to their second world title in 1986.

Messi would desperately love to add World Cup glory to all his other accolades that include four Champions League crowns and 10 La Liga titles.

And he’s not alone.

“If Spain don’t win the World Cup, I would like Argentina to win it because of Messi,” Enrique, who coached Messi at Barcelona for three years, said on Twitch earlier this week.

“It would be unfair for Messi to retire without winning a World Cup.”

There is a feeling that despite the recent retirements of attacking talents such as Sergio Aguero and Gonzalo Higuain, Argentina have a better balance in the squad than in previous years.

As well as Messi, fellow veteran Angel Di Maria and Lautaro Martinez provide thrust and trickery in attack.

There is an industrious midfield including Rodrigo De Paul, Leandro Paredes and Alexis Mac Alister, and combative defenders in the mould of Cristian Romero and Manchester United revelation Lisandro Martinez, with the safe hands of Emiliano Martinez guarding the net.

It really is now or never for Messi but there is a growing feeling in Argentina that this will be the international swansong a nation and a legend have long dreamt of.

AFP

Ronaldo says row with Manchester United ‘won’t shake’ Portugal team

Doha, Qatar - Cristiano Ronaldo insisted Monday that his explosive row with Manchester United would not impact Portugal’s chances at the World Cup as they prepare for their opening match in Qatar with Ghana.

Last week superstar Ronaldo lashed out at Premier League club United and the team’s coach Erik ten Hag in a TV interview after being relegated to a peripheral role this season.

“I have no doubt that this recent episode, that interview, and other episodes with other players that happen sometimes, can sometimes shake the player but won’t shake the team,” Ronaldo said at a press conference at the Portugal camp.

Ronaldo, who is set to start his fifth and likely final World Cup, was suspended for the Premier League club’s 1-1 draw at Chelsea after refusing to come on as a substitute against Tottenham last month. The 37-year-old claimed during the interview that he felt “provoked” into that reaction by Ten Hag and on Monday was unrepentant about giving the interview.

“I don’t have to worry about what others think, I talk when I want to,” he said. “Everybody in the team knows who I am, what I believe in.”

Ronaldo said frosty interaction with his team-mate for club and country Bruno Fernandes, along with images of him grabbing Manchester City’s Joao Cancelo by the head, had been being overblown by the media.



“In these final stages of competitions there’s always those type of moments,” said Ronaldo.

“We were just playing around, I have a great relationship with him. I was asking him, because his plane was late, I asked him if he came by boat.

“The same thing happened with Cancelo, he was a bit sad during training and I grabbed him by the neck and told him ‘Come on, you’ve got this’, that’s what I said. And then it became

another controversy at your end.

“The whole atmosphere is excellent, it’s bulletproof and iron clad. The next player who comes here, you don’t have to ask about that, don’t talk about me, you don’t have to talk about Cristiano Ronaldo... help them out, ask them about the World Cup.”

Portugal open their Group H campaign against Ghana on Thursday before facing Uruguay and South Korea.

After missing a friendly with a

stomach bug last week, Ronaldo says he is in perfect shape to play.

“I feel great, I have recovered my best shape, we’ve had good training sessions, the team and myself, I’m ready to start the World Cup in the best possible way,” Ronaldo added.

Messi debate

Ronaldo, who made his Portugal debut in 2003, is poised to appear at his fifth World Cup. He is the all-time top goal scorer in men’s international football with 117 strikes in 191 games.

The forward recently appeared in a Louis Vuitton advert alongside long-time rival, Argentina striker Lionel Messi, where the pair were pictured playing a game of chess.

“I would like to be the player to checkmate Messi, it happened in the chess game and in football it would be magic,” Ronaldo said with a smile.

Paris Saint-Germain forward Messi has won seven Ballon d’Or awards and many consider him to be the best player of all-time.

“Even if I win the World Cup that debate will continue,” said Ronaldo.

“Some people like me more, some people like me less, like in life, some like blondes, some like brunettes. The World Cup will always be a showcase.

“But if you tell me you won’t win any more tournaments in your career, I would still be happy, given all I have achieved.”

AFP



Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand

Denmark in Qatar to win World Cup, says coach Hjulmand

Doha, Qatar - Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand said Monday that his team have come to Qatar to win the World Cup as they prepare for their Group D opener against Tunisia.

The Danes reached the semi-finals of the European Championship last year despite losing their opening game after talisman Christian Eriksen collapsed on the pitch with a cardiac arrest.

They come into the tournament on the back of a strong qualifying campaign and two Nations League wins over group rivals France.

“Our dream is to win something. So when you go into a tournament this group of players has the quality to win, and I mean to win everything,” said Hjulmand ahead of Tuesday’s clash at Education City Stadium.

The Danes will likely be tussling for first place with world champions France, as the runners-up will almost certainly be playing Argentina in the second round.

And Hjulmand, whose team also face Australia in the group stage, was bullish about his team’s chances with Eriksen firmly back in the fold and in top form.

“Are we favourites? No... but we can beat everyone on the day and we have a very strong self-confidence,” added Hjulmand.

“We have a very good group of players working together and the best way of winning everything is to dream big.”

UNSTOPPABLE

Max Verstappen revels in record win but warns of difficulties ahead

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates - Max Verstappen may have dominated Sunday's Abu Dhabi Grand Prix and the 2022 season, but he was quick to warn his Red Bull team not to expect another year of runaway success in 2023.

In the chaotic aftermath of a strategic race, in which tyre management and tactical decisions were decisive factors, the two-time champion made clear he did not expect to equal his own record-breaking feats.

"It has been really enjoyable to work with the whole team to achieve something like this, this year," he said. "I know it is going to be difficult to replicate, but it also gives us some motivation to try and do well again."

Not only did Verstappen reel off an unprecedented 15 wins in a single season, but he did so with masterful authority as Red Bull won 17 races to clinch their first constructors' title since 2013.

Mercedes' record run of eight constructors' championship tri-

umphs was ended and, after a disappointing year of only one victory, they finished third behind an inconsistent and undisciplined Ferrari.

The 'scarlet scuderia' took consolation in Charles Leclerc's clever drive, which included a 'dummy' pit-stop call from his team, to finish second, only eight seconds adrift of his Dutch rival and nemesis, to clinch second place in the drivers' and constructors' championships for himself and Ferrari respectively.

Ferrari team chief Mattia Binotto, whose future has been in doubt, said it was an uplifting result for the team after a run of bungled operational performances in races this year.

It also proved that Ferrari's car is very close in pure speed to the Red Bull and that, with few errors, they can mount a serious and direct challenge to the champions next year.

"It's great for the team, great for the strategists and so great to have done a solid weekend," said

relieved Binotto. "P2 is the balance of this entire season, not only this race. We certainly did a proper job.

"Our dummy pit stop on the Red Bull was the right call. I am so happy for the team. When Ferrari is making mistakes, there is always so much criticism, but we know too that these guys can perform very well."

Hot pursuit

The 'false' call to pit came on lap 34 when Leclerc was told to 'box, opposite Perez'.

The two had started the race level on points in a duel for second in the championship and after the first round of pit stops Perez was second, behind Verstappen, with Leclerc in hot pursuit.

Ferrari's radio call to their Monegasque driver prompted Red Bull to pit Perez for a second time, leaving Leclerc out on track committed to a one-stop strategy. Perez fell to sixth as Leclerc took second, 20 seconds ahead with 24 laps remaining. In a nail-biting finish, Perez struggled to pass rival cars and finished 1.3 seconds adrift at the flag.

AFP



Red Bull's Max Verstappen celebrates with the trophy after the Abu Dhabi Formula One Grand Prix on Sunday (AFP)

Djokovic finishes troubled year with 'deeply satisfying' ATP Finals title

Turin, Italy - Novak Djokovic said winning a record-equalling sixth ATP Tour Finals title on Sunday was a "deeply satisfying" ending to his troubled and truncated year.

The Serb beat Norwegian Casper Ruud 7-5, 6-3 in Turin to match Roger Federer's record of six titles in the year-ending tournament for the top-ranked players.

The 35-year-old Serb, the oldest player to win the Finals, ended in style after a season in which he missed two majors because of his vaccine status.

"It feels deeply satisfying and, at the same time, a huge relief because of the circumstances that I have been through this year, situations earlier this year, of course, with Australia," he said.

"We don't need to go back. We know what happened."

In January, Djokovic was detained and deported from Australia over his Covid non-vaccinated status and missed the Australian Open.

"That had an effect obviously on my start of the year. For the first several months, I was trying to find that balance game-wise but also mentally in order to be able to come back to the court and find that tennis level that I



Serbia's Novak Djokovic kisses the trophy after winning the ATP Finals in Turin on Sunday (AFP)

need."

Djokovic was initially barred from returning to Australia before 2025 but earlier in the week the new government in Canberra said the nine-time Australian Open champion would be free to compete in January's tournament.

"I don't know what the future holds but I know that what I hold

in my mind is a huge hunger still to win trophies," said Djokovic.

The win in Turin, which also brings a cheque for \$4.7 million, came seven years after his last ATP Finals victory and will lift him from eighth to fifth in Monday's new rankings at the end of a season in which he also won Wimbledon. Carlos Alcaraz, who missed the finals injured, is num-

ber one.

"In my mind I always see myself as the best player in the world, of course," he said.

"I'm not. I'm fifth. This week I probably am. Overall the rankings are showing who had the best year, and Alcaraz is the No. 1 in the world."

Djokovic and his wife brought his eight-year-old son and five-

year-old daughter to Turin.

"Extremely special for me," he said. "I don't get to have these moments on the tour with them so much."

"I took both of my children, particularly my son, a lot to the tennis training sessions, warmups, matches. He was very loud, I must say. I was very surprised. I could hear his voice the entire time."

"They both are now aware of what's going on, what the father is doing."

'Close points'

For the 23-year-old Ruud it was a third near-miss of the year. He also lost the finals of the French and US Opens.

"In the end it's been disappointing to end up losing these big finals," he said.

"Overall if you gave me an offer to end the year at No. 3, play the finals that I've played, at the first of January this year, I would probably sign the contract right away."

"I've overachieved compared to my own mind, so I'm very happy about that."

Ruud has never taken a set from either Djokovic or his French Open final conqueror Rafael Nadal.

AFP

Alcaraz-Nadal in historic 1-2 in final ATP rankings

Paris, France - Carlos Alcaraz and Rafael Nadal end the year first and second in the ATP rankings, the first time Spain has had the top two in the final standings. The Spanish duo captured three of the four Grand Slam titles. Teenager Alcaraz won the US Open and Nadal took the Australian and French crowns.

Nadal will enter 2023 seeking to add to his record 22 Grand Slam titles though hotly pursued by Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic, who is just one behind his great rival. The 35-year-old Serbian finished the year fifth in the rankings but ended with a flourish beating Norway's Casper Ruud to win a record-equalling sixth ATP Finals trophy.

Ruud finishes the year third - displacing Greek Stefanos

FINAL RANKINGS	
(Players representing Russia and Belarus are banned from competing under the name or flag of their countries):	
1. Carlos Alcaraz (ESP)	6820
2. Rafael Nadal (ESP)	6020
3. Casper Ruud (NOR)	5820 (+1)
4. Stefanos Tsitsipas (GRE)	5550 (-1)
5. Novak Djokovic (SRB)	4820 (+3)
6. Felix Auger-Aliassime (CAN)	4195
7. Daniil Medvedev	4065 (-2)
8. Andrey Rublev	3930 (-1)
9. Taylor Fritz (USA)	3355
10. Hubert Hurkacz (POL)	2905

Tsitsipas - after a highly successful, if frustrating campaign, in which he reached the French and US Open finals.

AFP



Rafael Nadal (L) and Carlos Alcaraz



Faisal Khan of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia upset Bahrain to help Oman set up title clash with Canada

Muscat - Unfancied Saudi Arabia caused the biggest upset of the Desert Cup T20I Series on Sunday night when they shocked Bahrain by nine wickets in the concluding game of the double round-robin format at the Oman Cricket Academy (OCA) grounds.

Saudi Arabia's massive victory paved the way for hosts Oman to squeeze into the final despite their narrow defeat to Canada.

Canada's three-wicket win

ensured their spot in the final as they garnered a total of ten points to finish on top of the table.

Oman's defeat left them with six points and Bahrain's loss meant both the teams finished with six points each.

However, the hosts had a better net run-rate of +2.135 as compared to -1.044 of Bahrain to scrape through and set up a title clash with Canada.

Bahrain, after winning the toss elected to bat, a decision

that they would regret later. Saudi Arabia restricted the much-experienced rivals to just 112/9 with half the team out back in pavilion inside the powerplay at 32/5. Haider Ali's 41 was the only notable score as Saudi Arabia's bowlers wreaked havoc.

Atif-Ur-Rehman with three for 19 was the most successful bowler while Ishtiaq Ahmed, Usman Najeeb and Zain Ul Abidin picked two wickets each.

In reply, Saudi opening batter

Faisal Khan smashed an unbeaten 81 off just 32 balls, which included nine boundaries and six maximums to power them to a memorable win.

Abdul Waheed Ghaffar's unbeaten 20 saw the Saudis race to win in just 10.5 overs finishing at 115/1.

Earlier, Oman lost to Canada in another exciting game with the leaders recording a three-wicket win with a ball to spare. The two teams will face-off in the final.

PSG president Al Khelaifi considers selling shares

Paris, France - Paris Saint-Germain president Nasser al Khelaifi said on Monday the French giants are considering selling shares after receiving "different offers".

"We received an offer of more than 4 billion (euros) but we are not going to sell, of course, just a percentage of the club, we'll think about it," Qatari Al Khelaifi said.

Al Khelaifi also defended his work over the past 11 years at PSG. Since the Qatari investment fund QSI bought PSG in 2011, the club has won eight French championships and six French Cups.

AFP



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