

► **NEWS BRIEF**

OMANI, DUTCH BUSINESSES EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES

Dubai, UAE - The Commissionerate General of Oman's pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai, in coordination with the pavilion of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, held a meeting between businessmen from Oman and the Netherlands, as well as representatives of companies headquartered in Dubai.

The meeting aimed to discuss areas of business cooperation between the two countries, particularly in fields of renewable energy, food, waste management and investment opportunities available in these areas.

The investment opportunities in Oman were presented by officials of Oman Investment Authority, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) and the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

H E Stella Kloth, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Oman, said the sultanate and the Netherlands share a common history of trading and seafaring.

Oman's first electric car launched

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Mays Motors, in cooperation with Oman Technology Fund, launched the sultanate's first electric car at Al Bustan Palace, A Ritz-Carlton Hotel, on Sunday. Priced at RO25,000, hundred units have been pre-booked in the first stage of production.

Speaking to Muscat Daily, Haider bin Adnan al Zaabi, co-founder of Mays Motors, said, "We are proud to unveil Oman's first electric car - Mays iE1 - today."

According to Zaabi, Mays Motors' electric car is the beginning of a new and promising sector in the sultanate. "We have a team with more than 15 years of experience in the automotive field and are offering an opportunity to establish the first factory for the electronic car industry in the sultanate with an investment of RO5mn."

Zaabi claimed he and the Mays Motors team visited more than 130 car factories across Italy, Germany, China, USA, and India to arrive at the final design and specifications of Mays iE1, and that experts at Tesla, Maserati, BMW and Porsche have complimented the design of the car. "They predict global success for Mays iE1. It can accelerate from zero to 100km in a less than four seconds"

The two-seater has a large dash with displays and controls,



(Syed Fasiuddin/Muscat Daily)

► 0-100km
<4 seconds

► Max speed
280km/h

► Price
RO25,000

► Range in single
charge - **500km**

including door functions. Its battery can be charged at home and has a driving range of 500km+.

Zaabi described the car with a carbon fibre body as "loaded

with a lot of technology similar to international brands such as Lamborghini and Ferrari".

Though the starting is RO25,000, "similar cars abroad cost anywhere near RO50,000",

Zaabi said.

He informed that the car complies with international standards and specifications.

Zaabi informed that the company is currently operating in a small factory in Barka. "We will start production at the end of 2023. We expect to make about 600 cars in the first five years. We have hired international marketing experts to promote our car."

Zaabi is hopeful that manu-

facturing of the electric car will contribute to building an integrated system of industries related to the automotive sector in the sultanate, exploiting locally available raw material and creating more than 800 job opportunities for small and medium companies.

"The company also has plans to make electric motors for boats."

Mays Motors has signed a co-operation agreement with the

Renewable Energy Research Centre at Sultan Qaboos University to validate the sustainability of self-charging technology.

"We call on investors in Oman to invest in the car manufacturing industry, not for Oman only, but for profitability as well. Our revenue forecast for the first five years is over RO20mn. With further expansion, the value of the company is expected to increase to RO100mn in the next ten years," Zaabi said.

SAI recovers RO580mn in 9th Five-Year Plan

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In proof of Oman's commitment towards tackling corruption and detecting financial and administrative violations, the State Audit Institution (SAI) stated on Sunday that it recovered RO580mn during the Ninth Five-Year Plan (2016-2020).

A statement issued by the institution said that it has released its annual report for 2020. 'The total amount collected and recovered during the Ninth Five-Year Plan was RO580mn. The institution dealt with 207 cases in coordination with the Public Prosecution, some of which have already seen judicial rulings, while others are under litigation.'

It stated that the report aims to enhance transparency in order to serve the development

The number of complaints and reports in 2020 increased 51 per cent over 2019

process in the sultanate.

According to SAI, the total number of complaints and reports from 2011 to 2020 was 4,544, of which 94 per cent were dealt with. It added that the number of complaints and reports in 2020 increased 51 per cent over 2019.

The number of administrative and financial complaints were 2,767; delay in completing transactions - 1,063; grievances of employees - 232; abuse of authority - 116; failure to award tenders - 122; and 244 others.

OIA launches project to produce alternative protein from dates

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Focusing on its role in attracting foreign investments and advanced technologies to the sultanate, Oman Investment Authority (OIA) has signed an agreement with US-based MycoTechnology to establish a company called Vital Foods Technologies that will produce alternative protein utilising Omani dates.

Vital Foods Technologies will produce mushroom-based protein using dates as the main element, in collaboration with international partners, predominantly MycoTechnology.

This partnership came on the heels of OIA's investment in MycoTechnology, founded in 2013. It is a leading US food biotechnol-



(Supplied photo)

ogy company focused on production of alternative protein and sugar-reduction ingredients. The company has successfully established a fermentation technology platform producing a variety of ingredients which address some of the food industry's most pressing challenges.

The partnership was an-

nounced at the Future of Food event organised by OIA and MycoTechnology to introduce the prospects of the project for which several techno-economic studies have been conducted.

The event witnessed the formal signing between OIA and MycoTechnology to establish Vital Foods Technologies, and

was attended by several senior government officials, corporate leaders, representatives of companies and funds investing in the food sector, and MycoTechnology representatives.

OIA is trying to enhance food security, achieve national sufficiency and attract international expertise to local projects. Re-

sults of the partnership will help achieve economic diversity, create direct and indirect job opportunities and create opportunities for Omani SMEs, according to a press release.

"This innovative project represents the benefits OIA can reap from international investments. After attracting international partners to establish their projects in Oman, advanced modern technologies can be transferred to the country," said Ibrahim al Eisri, director of private equity at OIA.

"Oman produces about 400mn MT of dates a year, and over 50 per cent of it is not suitable to serve as table dates which can be made available to produce mushroom protein," said Alan Hahn, CEO and founder of MycoTechnology.

WINTER OLYMPICS 2022 COME TO A CLOSE



Fireworks spell out 'One Family' during the closing ceremony of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games, at the National Stadium, known as the Bird's Nest, in Beijing, on Sunday (AFP)

See also Page 14

UK to end self-isolation for COVID-19 next week

London, UK - People with COVID-19 won't be legally required to self-isolate in England starting next week, the UK government has announced, as part of a plan for "living with COVID" that is also likely to see testing for the coronavirus scaled back.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said ending all of the legal restrictions brought in to curb the spread of the virus will let people in the UK "protect ourselves without restricting our freedoms". He is expected to lay out details of the plan in Parliament on Monday.

Johnson has denied throwing "caution to the wind" as he prepares to end all pandemic-related legal restrictions in England, amid a political backlash and scientific

unease.

In a BBC interview broadcast on Sunday, he said that with case numbers and hospitalisations from the Omicron wave apparently under control, it was time to revert to "personal responsibility" rather than legal mandates.

"I'm not saying that we should throw caution to the wind. But it's time for everybody to get their confidence back," he said, after bringing forward the plan by a month from when the current law was due to expire in late March.

However, he also stressed: "I think it's very important we should remain careful. COVID-19 remains a dangerous disease, particularly if you are unvaccinated."

AFP

See also Page 11



Four social projects worth RO340,000 launched



Asyad Ports-Duqm starts operation of 3 berths



OMAN - A SPORTS DESTINATION

What other international events like Tour of Oman should be hosted to put the spotlight on the sultanate?

SEND US ON OUR
NEW
WHATSAPP NO
91953774

**NOW ON
WHATSAPP**

Share your comment in not more than 50 words along with your full name, profession and front facing photo before next Sunday, 10am, via WhatsApp

Fuad al Farsi
Private sector employee

Oman is well positioned to host world-class events as it has the infrastructure needed for these. Being a car rally fan, I would love to see international rallies being held in Oman. This is in addition to other sports events. By doing so, we can promote Oman as a destination for international events.



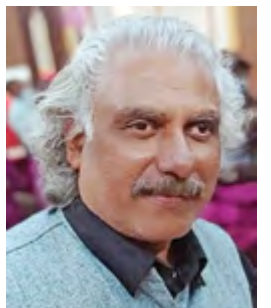
Shaandar Bukhari
Private sector employee

International events are a good source of revenue but with restrictions on gatherings, the events industry is now adapting to hybrid events, combining virtual and in-person attendance. Music concerts can be in-person and sports events can be live streamed.



Vinod Raghavan
Media strategist

Tour of Oman is an excellent event that puts Oman on the world map. Some of the other events that can be scaled up to the same level of international participation are Muscat Marathon and the Muscat International Film Festival.



Jayatee Choudhury
Student

To put the spotlight on Oman, in addition to Tour of Oman, we should organise international film festivals and world cup matches in different sports held both indoor and outdoor. International music and literary events, besides Formula 1 races, can help lift Oman's profile globally.



Ruskeen S
Sales manager

Oman should host international competitions in mountain biking, indoor sports like table tennis, events such as Beach Games, Muscat Open Tennis, etc. These will highlight Oman on the international sports map.



Jay Prakash
Private sector employee

Oman has the resources and world-class infrastructure to host international events like Tour of Oman. Muscat also hosted the Women's Asia Cup Hockey 2022 in January. Next off, car rallies, indoor sports like badminton and table tennis, and cricket tournaments will help put the spotlight on the sultanate.



**? NEXT ON
YOUR SAY**

Are medicines in Oman overpriced compared to other countries? How can the authorities deal with the situation?

The views stated here are those of the respondents and not endorsed by *Muscat Daily*. If you feel strongly about the issues discussed here, you can email your comments to muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om Log on to our Facebook page or tweet us your comments on the issue

Cinemana Arab Film Festival 3 kicks off

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The third edition of the four-day Cinemana Arab Film Festival (CAFF) opened in Muscat on Saturday. Over a hundred films from all over the Arab world will be screened at the festival being held in Omani Film Society and Jebel Sifah Hotel - 8pm to 10pm daily - besides filmmaking workshops being conducted at Cultural Club, Qurm, every day from 10am to 12pm and 5pm to 7pm. Entries for CAFF 3 were accepted from the beginning of January to February 15.

The first two editions of CAFF - 2020 in Egypt and 2021 in Kuwait - were held online. While CAFF 3 has no particular theme, the inaugural festival was held under the theme of COVID-19 and received 40 entries.

"From a humble start of 40 films, we have come a long way. We never imagined a festival that started during the lockdown to grow by leaps and bounds," said Dr Khalid al Zadjali, director and president of the festival.

The idea of an online film festival emerged following consultations between members of the Arab Union for Film Artistes,



(Supplied photo)

headquartered in Cairo, Zadjali informed.

"The inaugural year, 2020, was a bad time all over the world and we were locked in. Young people needed avenues for constructive expression of their energies. The festival helped them be engaged and also contribute to the arts," Zadjali said.

"This year, we have judges from all over the Arab world."

According to filmmaker Mohammad Darwish, who will supervise the workshops, the event will see training in every aspect of filmmaking, including editing,

scripting and cinematography. "It is an excellent opportunity for all movie enthusiasts to learn. The workshops are open to Omanis and expatriates and will be conducted by experts."

A workshop held on Sunday at Cultural Club on film stunts, conducted by an expert from Sudan, saw 20 young enthusiastic participants.

"This is the first time such a workshop was held in Oman. We realise that action films are more popular now and filmmakers need to be prepared for what is trending," Darwish said.

CPA shuts down manpower office

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Consumer Protection Authority (CPA) has temporarily suspended operations of a commercial establishment dealing in manpower recruitment in Sohar for failing to provide services to consumers based on agreed terms.

In a statement, CPA said it

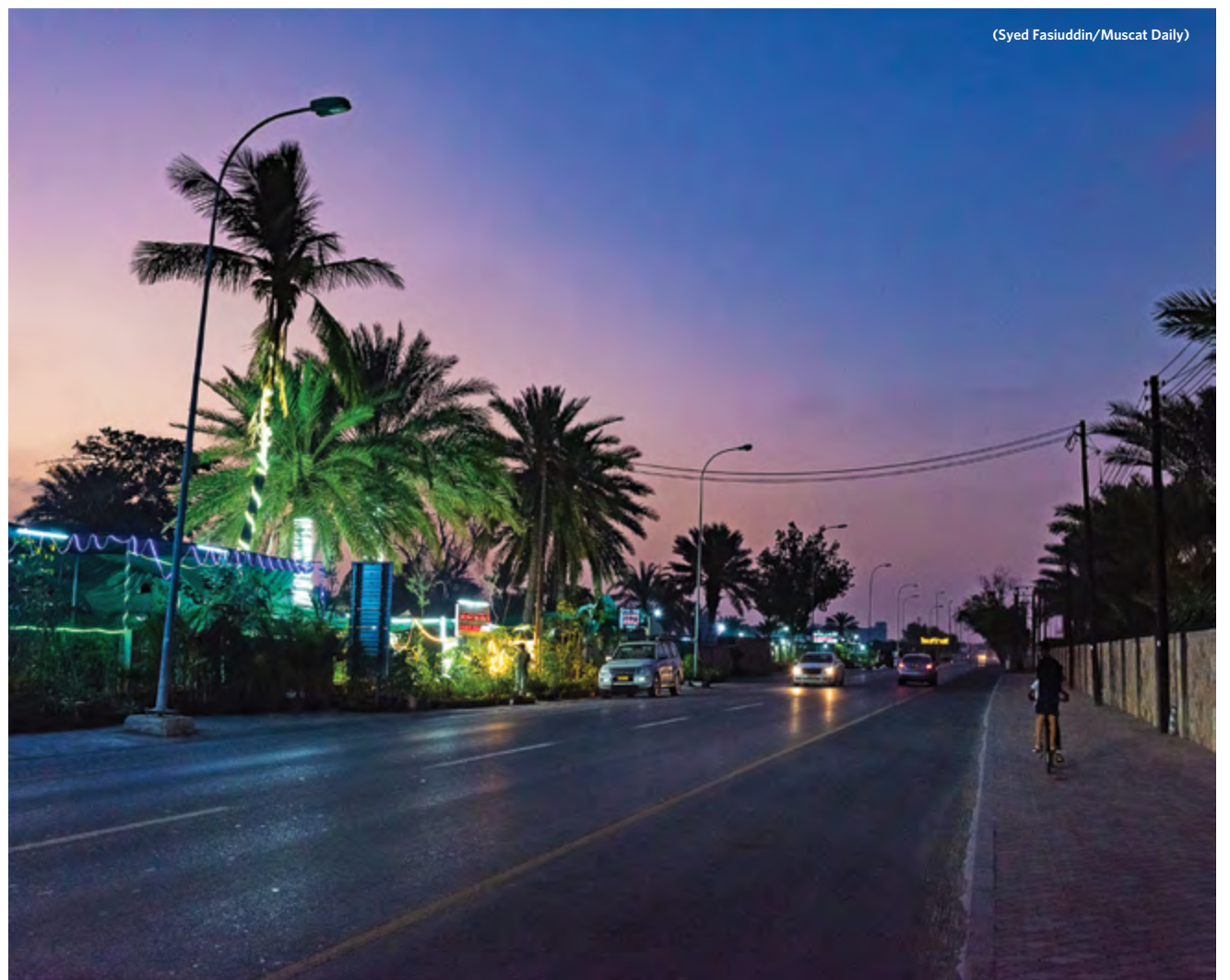
shut down the establishment for violating Article No 37 of the Consumer Protection Law issued via Royal Decree No 66/2014.

"The authority received a number of complaints about the institution not fulfilling agreements concluded between it and its clients, including failure to refund fees in the event of workers' refusal to work and recruitment of workers who refuse to work on

health grounds," it stated.

These were in addition to non-compliance with contracts within stipulated time. "The authority took necessary legal measures and after exhausting all options, the file was transferred to competent authorities, supported with all relevant data and information showing the institution was procrastinating in responding to complaints," CPA stated.

DARK STREETS TO SEEB SOUQ



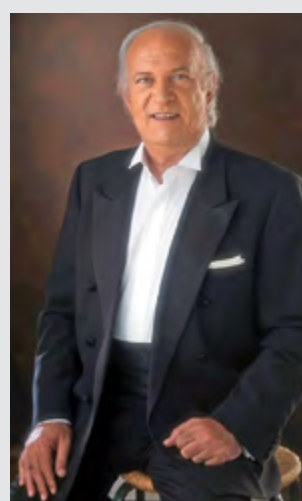
(Syed Fasiuddin/Muscat Daily)

The road to Seeb Souq in front of the popular plant nurseries has no streetlights most days. An attendant at one nursery said, "The streetlights sometimes work, but most days, they don't. The area becomes dark and eerie when the nurseries close and switch off their lights."

Omar Khairat to perform with ROSO at ROHM

Muscat - Royal Opera House Muscat (ROHM) will present composer and pianist Omar Khairat in concert with the Omar Khairat Group on February 24 and 25 with a special performance by Royal Oman Symphony Orchestra (ROSO).

Khairat has long enthralled the Arab music world with his unique and compelling sound, exploring ways in which to combine the much loved classics of artists like Umm Kulthum and Mohammed



Abdel Wahab with his own voice so that these continue to resonate with audiences from all around the world. The resulting style brought Khairat widespread acclaim. His music bridges contemporary Egyptian and Western music.

Adding to the wide appeal of this talented artist, the concert will be enriched by ROSO, which has established itself as a respected orchestra, demonstrating a versatility which is widely acknowledged.

Ticket holders are invited to

enjoy coffee and dates at ROHM on February 22, 7pm. This event offers fans an opportunity to gather with Khairat and hear him talk about his life and musical influences.

All visits to ROHM are conducted under the guidelines of the Supreme Committee responsible for measures to tackle the developments resulting from COVID-19. Social distancing is maintained throughout the building and wearing of face masks is mandatory.

Social projects worth RO340,000 launched in North Batinah

Muscat - Jusoor Foundation celebrated the launch of four projects implemented within its social investment programme in North Batinah governorate on Sunday. The projects are worth about RO345,000, funded jointly by OQ and Sohar Aluminium.

The ceremony was held in Al Qurm Natural Park in Shinas, under the auspices of Sayyid Khalifa bin al Mardas al Busaidi, Secretary General for Governorates Affairs in the Ministry of Interior, a press release said.

The event was attended by Sheikh Saif bin Hamiyar al Malik al Shehhi, Governor of North Batinah and chairman of Jusoor board of directors, as well as officials of North Batinah governorate and the companies that funded the projects.

The first project involves the development of the 28,000sqm Al Qurm Natural Park in the wilayat of Shinas with an investment worth RO200,000 funded by Sohar Aluminium and OQ, in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior represented by the Municipality of North Batinah.

The scope of the development includes implementation of a 3km walkway, an arena theatre, a migratory bird viewing platform, 11 family rest areas and



(Supplied photo)

barbecue sites, as well as the construction of a crossing bridge over the waterway, children's games, gardens and a café. The development works also include the establishment of a park gate, mosque, security booth, toilets and a parking lot.

The second project involves the construction of a park in the mountainous area of Alhaleen in the wilayat of Suwaiq on an area of 2,000sqm, which is surrounded by a 320m walkway. The park is equipped with children's rides, as well as a café, toilets and family rest areas, with an

investment of RO55,000 funded by Sohar Aluminium.

The third project is for providing equipment to clean beaches in the wilayats of North Batinah governorate. The equipment will filter, purify and remove all the waste stuck on beaches. The project was funded with an investment of about RO40,000 by OQ.

The fourth project is for supplying and installing 60 recreational rides for public parks in the wilayat of Sohar with an investment of about RO50,000 by OQ.

Sheikh Shehhi said, "These projects fall within the programme of social projects implemented by Jusoor Foundation within its commitment to social responsibility and OQ, Sohar Aluminium and Vale companies' contribution to social development in the wilayats of North Batinah governorate, and hence directly meeting the demands and needs of the residents of these wilayats."

Al Mutasim bin Said al Sariri, member of the board of directors of Jusoor and representative of OQ, said, "These social projects

reflect the extent of the real partnership between the government and the private sector and proves the achievement of social responsibility. OQ is constantly working to contribute to sustainable development."

Ahmed bin Mohammed al Kharousi, member of Jusoor's board of directors and representative of Sohar Aluminium, said, "The projects launched by Jusoor Foundation are important projects for the community. We are pleased that Sohar Aluminium has been involved in the funding of some of the projects."



(Supplied photo)

Adventures Box to bring professional US bikes to Oman

Muscat - Omani company Adventures Box has signed an agreement with Specialized Bicycles, that will see marketing and supply of high-quality US-made bicycles in Oman.

Specialized Bicycles is an American company known for manufacturing all types of bicycles, a press release said.

The agreement was signed by Dr Hilal bin Saif al Dhameiri, board chairman of Adventures Box, and Sam Keshia Zadeh, founder and partner of The Cycle Hub Company as a representative of Specialized Bicycles on Thursday.

The signing ceremony was held at the headquarters of The Cycle Hub Company in Jumeirah,

Dubai, and attended by Bassam bin Saif al Dhameiri and Musaab bin Saif al Dhameiri of Adventure Box.

The agreement will provide added value that will contribute to promoting the hobby of cycling in the sultanate through training, technical support, marketing and supply of different types of bicycles to ensure the provision of a world-class service, a press release stated.

Commenting on the agreement, Hilal said, "Our company seeks to establish a new showroom that will be the biggest of its kind in the sultanate. The showroom will provide services that will serve all athletes and adventurers."

ESO renews commitment to protect Arabian Sea humpback whale

Muscat - In recognition of World Whale Day which falls on February 20, Environment Society of Oman (ESO) raised awareness about one of Oman's most famous cetaceans, the Arabian Sea humpback whale.

ESO will be initiating two projects in 2022, both designed to support the conservation of the Arabian Sea humpback whale.

The first project aims to implement a Conservation Management Plan, working with local authorities to implement alternative solutions to harmful marine practices that threaten the whales' survival. Complementing the conservation plan, ESO will also be launching a two-year capacity building programme designed to develop the next generation of cetacean researchers and activists, a press release said.

The Arabian Sea humpback whale is one of 20 species of marine mammals found in Oman's waters. Classified as endangered on the IUCN Red List of threatened species in 2008, it is estimated to be the smallest and potentially most vulnerable whale population in the world,



(Supplied photo)

numbering fewer than 100 individuals. Research supported by ESO has also proven Oman's humpback whales to be the only known population in the world not to migrate between high and low latitudes, staying instead to breed and feed in the waters surrounding Oman.

Since its inception in 2004, ESO has focused on developing a better understanding of the distribution and ecology of the dif-

ferent whales found in Oman's waters. Among its achievements last year, the country's only non-profit organisation focusing on environmental preservation launched the *Marine Mammal Atlas of Oman*, a publication that is the culmination of 20 years of scientific research and serves as an important reference for studies on environmental diversity, while also raising awareness on the species.

Whilst research and monitoring for the Arabian Sea humpback whale will continue, ESO's long history of research means that there is now sufficient scientific information for meaningful conservation actions. As a result, the focus of ESO's work going forward will shift to deliver more advocacy and mitigation options to help protect these endangered whales.

All visitors urged to register online for Muscat book fair for ease of access

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Muscat International Book Fair has urged all visitors, including schools and universities that wish to visit the exhibition, to pre-register via an online link.

A statement issued by Muscat International Book Fair said, "We urge visitors to pre-register via the electronic link to enhance

the entry mechanism and organise visits. Registration will keep everyone safe."

Visitors must register via <https://www.mctbookfair.gov.om/visitor-registration>

The management of the book fair urged visitors to adhere to health measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. "The administration calls on visitors to wear a face mask at all times in

the exhibition and in public places, and present a certificate of vaccination upon entering the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre."

"Those who have symptoms of COVID-19 or respiratory symptoms (cough, runny nose and shortness of breath), will be banned from entry," it stated.

The book fair will open on February 24 and run till March 5.

ROP NEWS



(Supplied photo)

ROP arrests thieves, khat smugglers

Royal Oman Police (ROP) arrested a person in Batinah on charges on theft and robbery of money from a fuel station using knives and damaging an ATM machine of a bank. Legal measures have been taken against him.

In another case, three foreigners were arrested on charges of vandalism and theft in Muscat governorate. 'After search, investigations and follow-up, Muscat Governorate Police Command arrested three foreigners of Asian nationality on charges

of theft during the night time and vandalising 18 shops during which they stole money and mobile phones,' ROP stated.

ROP also arrested seven people for attempting to smuggle a large quantity of khat into Oman. ROP said 'The Coast Guard Police in the Governorate of Dhofar arrested seven infiltrators of Arab nationality on board two smuggling boats in two different sites in the Arabian Sea and seized a large quantity of khat in their possession.'

Man arrested for murder in North Batinah

Royal Oman Police (ROP) has arrested the accused of a murder committed in North Batinah governorate.

A statement issued by ROP on Sunday said, 'North Batinah Command arrested an Asian expatriate on charges of murdering a person of the same nationality due to a financial dispute.'

MSC inks MoU with French Navy

Muscat - The Maritime Security Centre (MSC) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the French Navy on exchanging information in the field of maritime security on Sunday.

The MoU was signed by Rear Admiral Saif Nasser al Rahbi, Commander of Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) and chairman of Maritime Security Committee, and Admiral Pierre Vandier, Chief of Staff of the French Navy, who is currently visiting Oman.

Rear Admiral Rahbi received Admiral Vandier at MSC on Sunday and discussed matters related to the maritime field between the two countries.

Admiral Vandier toured the centre's facilities and viewed its latest equipment and technologies. He was also briefed on the



(ONA)

tactical roles and tasks carried out by the centre within its national duties as it coordinates with relevant authorities in search and rescue missions, as well as in the safety of the maritime environment.

Later, Admiral Vandier met

Vice Admiral Abdullah Khamis al Ra'eesi, Chief of Staff of Sultan's Armed Forces in his office at Al Murtafa'a Garrison.

The two sides exchanged views and discussed military matters of common interest.

ONA

Al Isra'a Wal Miraj holiday on March 1

Muscat - The Ministry of Labour has announced that Thursday, 27 Rajab, 1443 AH, corresponding to March 1, 2022, is an official holiday for employees of units of the State's Administrative Apparatus and other legal entities, as well as establishments of the private sector on the occasion of the blessed anniversary of Al Isra'a Wal Miraj.

The ministry stated that employers may agree on the terms to engage employees on the said holiday - if deemed necessary due to the nature of their work - provided they compensate the workers for the holiday.

ONA

WEATHER WATCH

	Max	Min
Abu Dhabi	26	16
Doha	24	14
Kuwait City	22	13
Manama	21	15
Muscat	29	17
Riyadh	23	9

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr	5.20am
Sunrise	6.36am
Duhr	12.26pm
Asr	3.43pm
Maghrib	6.10pm
Isha	7.21pm

SEND YOUR COMMENTS TO

muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om

G20 vows careful post-virus recovery, says Indonesia



G20 finance chiefs and delegates pose for the 'family photo' at the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors meeting in Jakarta on Thursday (AFP)

Jakarta, Indonesia - The world's biggest economies are committed to taking a careful approach to unwinding support introduced during the coronavirus pandemic, Indonesia said on Friday at a meeting of G20 finance chiefs.

Some central banks, including in the United States, are moving towards hiking rates and withdrawing stimulus as economies rebound strongly from COVID-induced downturns and inflation surges.

But there are concerns that aggressive policy tightening could knock a fragile recovery

off course, and send shockwaves through developing countries.

At the end of a two-day meeting of finance leaders from the Group of 20 major economies in Jakarta, Indonesia's central bank chief said the approach would be cautious.

"The G20 countries are committed to have well-calibrated, well-planned, and well-communicated normalisation policies," Bank Indonesia governor Perry Warjiyo said.

"It's important, so that these policies have a minimum impact on global financial markets, and

on developing countries in terms of spillover effect."

International Monetary Fund chief, Kristalina Georgieva, said in a separate statement that "strong international cooperation and extraordinary policy agility will be crucial to navigate a complex 'obstacle course' through 2022."

Indonesia currently hold the presidency of the G20, which brings together the world's top economies, including China, the United States, and several European nations.

In its final communique, the G20 said that 'supply disruptions,

supply-demand mismatches, and increased commodity prices, including energy prices, have also contributed to rising inflationary pressures in a number of countries and pose potential risks to the global economic outlook.'

The group 'will continue to strengthen the resilience of global supply chains. We remain vigilant of the impacts of these challenges on our economies', the statement said.

The moves to tighten monetary policy are aimed at tamping down on inflation, which has been surging due to pandemic

supply and logistics snags.

Inflation has been particularly pronounced in the United States - which last month saw its largest annual jump in nearly four decades.

The meeting has been overshadowed by concerns that Russia may invade Ukraine, and the threat to the global recovery that conflict would bring.

Indonesian Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati said while specifics of the Ukraine crisis were not discussed at the talks, its potential impacts were.

AFP



India targets to be green hydrogen hub

New Delhi, India - India has unveiled the first part of a drive to attempt to turn the world's third-largest emitter of greenhouse gases into a 'hub' for green hydrogen.

Green hydrogen is produced using non-fossil fuel power to then be utilised in carbon-heavy industrial processes like making steel and concrete, and for transportation.

Although the technology has been heralded as a potentially game-changing way to reduce emissions, it is beset with huge challenges - particularly the high cost of the required infrastructure.

'The Mission aims to aid the government in meeting its climate targets and making India a green hydrogen hub,' New Delhi said on Thursday, announcing the first phase.

This would include industrial incentives like free transmission of renewable electricity between states for producing hydrogen and also ammonia, used in fertilisers, for 25 years.

The country aims to produce five million tonnes of green hydrogen annually by 2030.

'The implementation of this policy will provide clean fuel to the common people of the country. This will reduce dependence on fossil fuel and also reduce crude oil imports,' the power ministry said.

Land in renewable energy parks will also be allocated for manufacturing green hydrogen

and ammonia, and bunkers will be set up near ports for the storage and export of green ammonia, according to a government document.

Delhi is considering offering subsidies and requiring oil refineries and fertiliser plants to use the fuel in the second phase, which is still being prepared, Power Minister Raj Kumar Singh said, Bloomberg News reported.

With its booming population, India is projected to become the world's most populous country in this decade, and energy demand is rising fast.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi committed in November's Glasgow climate summit to reach net-zero emissions by 2070, but wants rich nations to help pay for the transition.

"Energy requirements of the people of India are expected to nearly double in the next 20 years. Denying this energy would be denying life itself to millions," Modi said earlier last week.

"Developed countries need to fulfil their commitments on finance and technology transfer," he told the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) on Wednesday.

Indian industrialists including Gautam Adani and Mukesh Ambani, major players in coal and oil, have also announced large investments in renewable technologies including green hydrogen.

AFP

Sri Lanka out of cash to buy oil, says Energy Minister

Colombo, Sri Lanka - Sri Lanka's state-run petroleum company has run out of cash to buy oil, and fuel shortages across the country could get worse, the Energy Minister Udaya Gammanpila said on Friday.

Gammanpila said the loss-making Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) continued to haemorrhage cash and could no longer afford to procure supplies from abroad.

"Earlier, we were short of dollars to import oil. Now we don't have the rupees to buy the dol-



A worker fills the tank of an auto rickshaw at a petrol station in Colombo on Friday as the country grapples with fuel shortages (AFP)

lars," Gammanpila said.

Diesel is the most commonly used fuel for public transport, and motorists outside the capital have reported long queues at understocked pumps.

Several thermal power stations, meanwhile, closed on Friday afternoon after running out of fuel, leading Sri Lanka's energy utility to announce the resumption of rotating power cuts across the country.

Gammanpila said the CPC suffered losses of up to 42 per cent on the sale of diesel at gov-

ernment-mandated prices, with losses of US\$415mn last year alone.

"Even if taxes are lifted on oil sales, it is not enough to cover our losses," he said. "A severe shortage is inevitable unless we increase prices or the treasury offers a bailout."

The shortage of furnace oil has already led to the shutting down of thermal electricity generators, resulting in unannounced power cuts across the Indian Ocean island.

AFP

Soaring US inflation rates 'not acceptable', says Janet Yellen

Washington, US - Soaring US inflation rates are 'not acceptable' but the health of the world's largest economy is fundamentally sound thanks to policies that have mitigated the impact of the pandemic, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen told AFP.

Yellen conceded in an interview she is 'concerned' about inflation running at its highest level in decades, and warned of further 'global fallout' if the West moves ahead with punishing sanctions on Russia over the Ukraine crisis.

But President Joe Biden's Treasury chief struck a confident note on the broader outlook for the US economy, which despite two years of pandemic upheaval has avoided the catastrophic damage seen in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis.

In particular, Yellen pointed to the strength of the job market.

And she voiced confidence that the Federal Reserve will act in an 'appropriate way' to contain inflation while ensuring the US recovery continues.

Prices have been on the rise globally for months, triggered by pandemic supply and logistics snags that initially hit industries like autos and appliances, but have since spread to a wide range of goods.

US consumer prices in January climbed 7.5 per cent compared to a year earlier, their



Janet Yellen (AFP)

largest increase since February 1982.

Months of surging prices defied predictions from central bankers and other economists who said inflation pressures would abate quickly, and have undermined Biden's popularity.

Tools at the ready

The US central bank is now poised to embark on a series of interest rate increases, pulling back the extraordinary stimulus pumped into the economy at the start of the pandemic.

But rising borrowing rates could slam the brakes on economic activity - something the Fed has struggled with in past recoveries.

"I have confidence the Fed... [will] deploy their suite of tools in an appropriate way to keep the

recovery on track, but also deal with the excess pressures that we have that are causing inflation," Yellen said.

Energy prices have contributed to rising inflation pressures, and tensions with Russia over Ukraine threaten to worsen the situation.

"We are concerned about potential impacts on energy markets, given the importance of Russia's role as a supplier of oil to the world market and of natural gas to Europe," she said.

Treasury is working with US allies to prepare a package of sanctions to retaliate against Russia if it invades Ukraine.

While Russia would be the target, 'we recognise that there will be some global fallout from sanctions as well,' Yellen said.

Strong recovery

She said high prices should diminish as the pandemic impact wanes, and the Biden administration is 'doing everything that we can' to help alleviate the bottlenecks for key supplies like semiconductors that have impacted prices of goods such as autos.

"Inflation is clearly a great concern to Americans, and it really needs to be addressed," she said, adding, "Certainly it's not acceptable to stay at current levels."

AFP



شركة ظفار لتوليد الكهرباء
Dhofar Generating Company SAOG

PO Box: 1571, PC: 211,
Salalah, Sultanate of Oman.
www.dgcoman.com

Invitation to Annual General Meeting of Dhofar Generating Company SAOG

The Board of Directors of Dhofar Generating Company SAOG (the "Company") has the pleasure to invite the shareholders of the company to the Annual General Meeting ("AGM") to be held at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, 10 March 2022 at the Ruby, Grand Millennium, Muscat Governorate, and on the e-portal for convening general meetings which may be accessed through the Muscat Clearing and Depository SAOG ("MCD") website (www.mcd.gov.om).

Failing quorum of the AGM, a second AGM shall be convened at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, 16 March 2022 at the Ruby, Grand Millennium, Muscat Governorate, and on the e-portal for convening general meetings which may be accessed through the Muscat Clearing and Depository SAOG ("MCD") website (www.mcd.gov.om) to discuss the following agenda:

- To consider and approve the Board of Directors' Report for the financial year ended 31 December 2021.
- To consider and approve the Report on Corporate Governance for the financial year ended 31 December 2021.
- To consider and approve the Auditor's report and the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account of the Company for the financial year ended 31 December 2021.
- To ratify the payment of sitting fees to the Board of Directors and Sub-Committees for the financial year ended 31 December 2021 and to determine the sitting fees of the Board of Directors and Sub-Committees for the next financial year 31 December 2022 (Annexure 1).
- To notify the General Assembly with transactions carried out with related parties during the financial year ended 31 December 2021 (Annexure 2).
- To notify the General Assembly of donations disbursed to support community services during the financial year ended on 31 December 2021 (Annexure 3).
- To ratify the payment of Directors' remuneration for an amount of RO 25,000 (Rials Omani Twenty Five thousand only) for the financial year ended 31 December 2021.

- To consider and approve the allocation of a budget of RO 15,000 (Rials Omani fifteen thousand) to support community services during the financial year ending 31 December 2022.
- To appoint the statutory auditors for the financial year ending 31 December 2022 and approve their fees.

According to the CCL promulgated vide the Royal Decree No. 18/2019 and the Regulation for Public Joint Stock Companies Decision No. 27/2021, the Shareholders shall have the right to nominate a proxy to attend and vote on their behalf on decisions/resolutions of the meeting, such proxy must be on the proxy form issued by Muscat Clearing and Depository Company, save the shareholders who owned shares in the Company after it has delivered the invitation of the general meeting, provided that such shareholders shall provide a proof to that effect. If the proxy is on behalf of more than one shareholder, it must not be on behalf of more than five percent (5%) of the shares of the Company, else the proxy shall be deemed null and void. The natural shareholder shall enclose a copy of the ID card, or the passport copy for females and minors who do not have an ID card, residence card or passport copy for non-Omanis along with the proxy form. The juristic shareholder's proxy must be signed by an authorized signatory and sealed with entity's stamp, and should be submitted along with a commercial registration certificate and copy of the authorized signatory. The proxy will not be valid if a member of the board of directors represents a shareholder.

In accordance with the Rules for Convening General Meetings via Electronic Means, issued by the CMA we would like to call your attention to the following:

- only a corporate person may authorize a natural person to attend and vote on its behalf on decisions/resolutions of the AGM through electronic means, provided such natural person has an investor number with the MCD.
- voting on any item of the agenda shall commence prior to the convention of the AGM at a maximum of three (3) days and ends on the day of the AGM. If a shareholder's balance is changed either by increase or decrease, the voting process shall stand canceled and must re-vote at the AGM.

Please attend at the venue or online at least 30 minutes prior to the AGM.

For more information, please contact Mr. Salim Al Amri of Dhofar Generating Company SAOG on telephone No. 9884 9480.

Chairman

Auditor

Legal Advisor

GOjuniors Tour 2022 woos young golfers

After a break of almost two years, the Oman Golf Association resumed its programme of tournaments for junior golfers this weekend.

As part of its mission to grow the game of golf in the Sultanate the Oman Golf Association identified a lack of playing opportunities for younger golfers, as despite many children taking golf lessons at the clubs in Oman, only a small percentage actively played on the golf course.

To provide an opportunity to not only compete but also to meet other junior golfers the GOjuniors series was developed, a press release said.

The 2022 GOjuniors Tour will feature 10 events throughout the year spread around the courses in Muscat where the youngsters will compete in three age divisions – under-18, under-15 and under-13.

Although the GOjuniors Tour is aimed at those juniors who can demonstrate a suitable level of ability by way of holding an official golfing handicap index there are other GOjuniors activities planned during the year for those less experienced.

With the necessary safety measures in place, Al Mouj Golf was the venue for the first event



of the 2022 season with many of the Oman Junior National Team in attendance as well as several players participating in their first tournament.

At the front of the field were the under-18 players. Despite a disappointing double bogey at the last hole, it was Ahmed al Wahaibi who took top honours in the gross division with a steady round of 78 which included three birdies.

Ayman al Busaidi claimed the best net score (the score with

the handicap index taken into account) with a net 75.

Next onto the links were the under-15s where Adam al Barwani dominated the gross division to win by a margin of 14 strokes, with Pransh Jagwani claiming the net division with a fine net score of seven under par 65.

Adam's victory continued a great golfing weekend for the Barwani family as the day prior Ghala Golf Club had hosted the annual Kais Celebration Golf

Trophy in which Adam's father, Masoud, and sister, Huwaida, had won the men's and ladies divisions respectively. Adam himself had finished as runner up to fellow Junior National Team player Faris al Busaidi.

The popular stableford tournament is held annually to celebrate the huge contribution that the late H H Sayyid Kais bin Tariq al Said made to the development of golf in Oman.

With his passion for golf and youth development, it was



rather fitting that the winners demonstrated the unique nature of golf where family members, both young and old, male and female, can play and compete together.

In an encouraging sign for the future of golf, the largest division of the day was the under-13s.

Although the younger players only played the front 9 holes, the competition was no less fierce and it took a countback to separate the two leading players - Jacobo Moreno and Krish Pawani

- who both scored an impressive gross 40. By virtue of a better last six holes, however, it was Jacobo who took the best gross title, with Krish taking the best net with a five under par 31.

Mundhir al Barwani, chairman of the Oman Golf Association is quoted as saying "We are delighted to be able to resume our junior tournaments and we must thank our programme sponsor Oman LNG and partners Sohar Aluminium and Moore for supporting us in providing this opportunity to

Oman's young golfers. Events such as these are essential to grow the game but also provide a great opportunity for social development.

After the challenges of the last two years, it was great to see the children back on the golf course engaging in some friendly competition."

The next event in the GOjuniors Tour will be played at Ghala Golf Club at the end of February.



NBO opens new branch in Bukha

National Bank of Oman (NBO) recently celebrated the opening of its new branch in Bukha, in the Governorate of Musandam.

Having relocated its existing branch to a bigger premises, the new facility is fully modernised and equipped with a Full Function Machine (FFM), enabling customers to access a comprehensive range of services, including account management, card issuance, and inquiries. Opened

under the auspices of H E Sayyid Ibrahim Bin Saeed al Busaidi, Minister of State and Governor of Musandam, the branch marks the latest in NBO's efforts to make the banking experience as convenient and as enjoyable as possible for its growing customer base, a press release said.

Tariq Atiq, Chief Retail and Digital Banking officer at NBO, said, "In our quest to make banking accessible to people across

the Sultanate of Oman, we continue to place our branches in strategic and convenient locations.

Our new branch in Bukha is an extension of our efforts to meet the needs of our customers in Musandam, while offering them excellence through a tailored range of innovative products and services."

As Oman's local bank, NBO provides a full suite of innovative

and high-quality banking solutions through 60 branches across the country, including two in the Governorate of Musandam, as well as a wide network more than 189 ATM and deposit machines.

Having built a rich history of innovative banking services that keep pace with the needs of its customers, it continues to modernise and evolve, in readiness for the future.

Alizz Islamic Bank continues competitive financing offers

As part of Alizz Islamic Bank's constant efforts to make customer's dreams come true, the bank continues its competitive finance offering that helps customers fulfill their aspirations.

The bank's offer provides the opportunity to purchase and build a perfect home as per their monthly income through simple and easy procedures. In addition, it extends attractive offers to purchase a vehicle or fund electronic products or furniture which is subject to flexible terms with respect to the funding period or repayment, a press release said.

As per the offer, customers can purchase or build a house, with home financing at a competitive profit rate starting from 4.85 per cent.

In addition, special offers are being extended to those wanting to transfer their existing financing to Alizz Islamic Bank from other Islamic and commercial banks at a reduced financing rate starting from 4.75 per cent for customers who transfer their financing to Alizz Islamic Bank.

Likewise, the option of car and



commodity financing has become flexible and accessible as the customer can choose the car model and complete transactions in no time, with a financing ratio rate starting from 4.95 per cent.

Commenting on launching this campaign, Mohammed Juma al Ghassani, AGM and Chief Consumer Banking Officer at Alizz Islamic Bank, said, "Your home and your car are waiting for you at Alizz Islamic Bank. In fact, these offers make it easier for customers, whether new or existing, to purchase or build a small house, a car or finance commodities through easy and flexible procedures. Such diversity of options meets various expectations and requirements of

different customers.

"Our team is aware that customers' interest must be given the highest priority, as serving our customers, satisfying their needs and giving them advice is of utmost importance to us.

Customers from all segments of society who are willing to apply for such finances can visit our branches across the governorates and wilayats."

Customers also have the option to call the customer service center on 80072265.

Alizz Islamic Bank, as one of the pioneering Integrated Islamic banks in the Sultanate, is keen to provide Shari'a-compliant banking solutions and products approved by the Shari'a Supervisory Board (SSB).

Indian School Al Seeb celebrates 20th annual day

Indian School Al Seeb (ISAS) celebrated its 20th Annual Day (2021-22) with great zeal and enthusiasm on a virtual platform on February 10.

The event showcased the year's activities and achievements while awards were given to deserving students and teachers were felicitated.

The chief guest of the event, Syed Salman, vice chairman, Board of Directors, Indian Schools in Oman, in his address congratulated the school management committee and staff on the successful completion of twenty years of ISAS. In his message, he emphasised that excellence is the outcome of hard work, perseverance, and learning, and the most important aspect is to 'love what one does'.



Salman stressed, that in this era of digital technology and online learning, a teacher is still the student's greatest companion and motivator.

He also urged students to learn to appreciate and celebrate their achievements.

Dr Leena Francis, principal, presented an impressive Annual

Report highlighting the activities, achievements and accolades of the academic session 2021-2022.

The support and guidance of directors in charge of Indian School Al Seeb has undeniably led to the success of all endeavours taken up by the school, she said.

Al Qalaa reopens with new menu

The stunning Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort has reopened the doors to its Arabic restaurant, Al Qalaa. The reopening ushers in a new head chef, Khalid Abu Aladas, and celebrates this with a new menu as well.

Al Qalaa, housed in a free-standing tower that takes inspiration from the iconic architecture of Khasab Castle in Musandam, boasts a constellation of hanging lanterns with a chic dining room dressed in distinctive arabesque details, and offers authentic recipes from Oman and across the Middle East presented with flair, a press release said.

Diners can experience local flavours with highlights on the new menu, including the signature Omani Hamour Fish Shuwa.



The menu also includes the options of hot and cold mezze platters as well as an array of options from the charcoal grill. Guests of the restaurant can additionally indulge in Omani flavoured desserts such as chocolate and pistachio 'muhlabia', and Omani halwa. The restaurant also has a kid's menu, making it ideal for a family friendly experience.

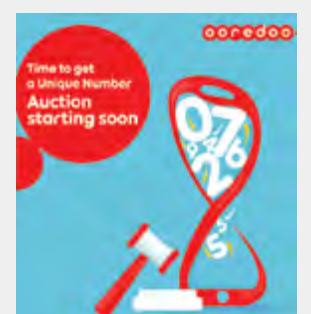
Ooredoo offers special numbers

Ooredoo's popular charity number auction is back and from February 24 to 27 when customers have the chance to bid for as many as 10 of their favourite mobile numbers.

With 100 of Ooredoo's one of-a-kind Diamond and Gold digits up for grabs, making it even more special, all the proceeds from the sale of the special numbers will be donated to deserving charities.

It's the perfect mix of fun and helping those in need, a press release said.

Interested customers can browse the online list, which includes different starting



prices for different numbers. A registration fee of RO20 is applicable to take part in the auction and first-time bidders are required to fill out a registration form.

Those who have participated in previous auctions can simply activate their account.

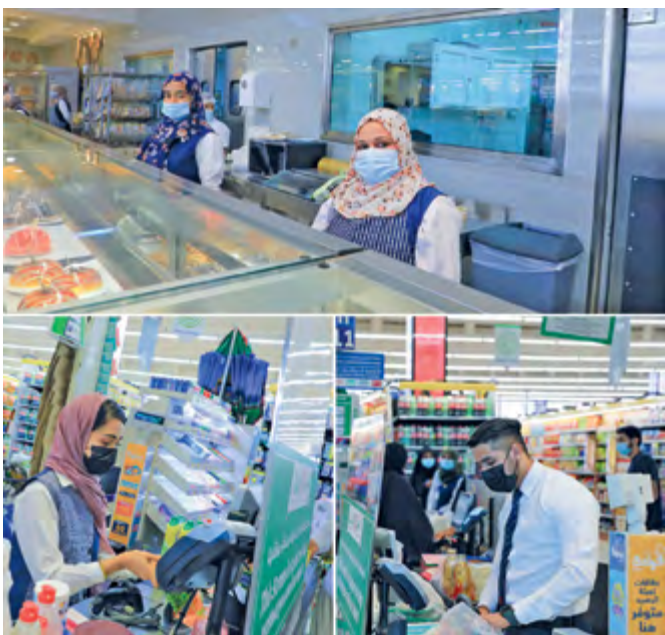


Lulu Group empowers Omani youth in jobs

As part of its efforts to encourage and nurture local talents in the retail sector, Lulu Group Oman had embarked on an ambitious drive and boasts of a work force in excess of 3200 Omani employees from different educational qualifications for its operations in the Sultanate of Oman.

The Group has remained steadfast in its policy of encouraging Omani employees to shoulder key responsibilities in the operations across its 31 facilities, including 28 stores and three logistic hubs, and the regional headquarter operations, a press release said.

Nasr bin Mubarak bin Salim al Maawali, general manager - HR at Lulu Group, stated, "Lulu Group has always been committed to the empowerment of national cadres in all its departments. We believe in the importance of career progression of the local workforce through specialised training under the supervision of expert



trainers in order to enhance their skills, experiences, and practical knowledge. In the recent drive, we have recruited employees who are post-graduates, degree holders, high school freshers and others. The Group has also demonstrated its commitment towards Omanisation by hiring

large batches of Omanis in various fields in all its branches in the sultanate."

Nasr also informed that, in the recent intake, Omanis were hired to senior positions such as general managers, managers, assistant managers, trainers, marketing executives, account-

ant, IT professionals, Happiness Center in-charges and department heads across the spectrum of operations.

He explained that a training centre with state of the art infrastructure has been set up to train Omani citizens on a regular basis in their areas of work. As part of its HR development strategy, the company has also trained the incumbents for improved language skills in English as well as sharpened inter and intra interaction skills.

The Group has focused on the importance of training Omani youth according to the employment plans adopted by the Ministry of Labour by raising their efficiency in dealing with customers and understanding the areas of work related to hypermarkets. As a matter of career progression, Lulu has also introduced a motivational scheme to employees by rewarding them through promotions and upgradations based on individual's efficiency and proficiency.

Bank Muscat offers varied corporate banking solutions

Bank Muscat continues to launch new innovative financial services and solutions that simplify corporate banking. As one of the enduring successes of the Sultanate's Renaissance, the bank has been playing a key role in transforming the Omani banking sector with a number of innovative products and services over the past four decades.

Bank Muscat enjoys the enduring trust of government institutions, corporates and SMEs who have been partners in the bank's journey since the very beginning, and its constant development over the years. Today, Bank Muscat is the largest financial services provider for corporates in the sultanate, a press release said.

Bank Muscat is proud to have contributed significantly to the emergence and establishment of many institutions that are leading institutions in the private sector today. The bank is contributing steadily to the implementation of their production



Ahmed Faqir al Bulushi

Omani institution, which provides a full suite of banking products, services and solutions. One of the great success stories of the sultanate's renaissance, Bank Muscat has become a trusted corporate banking partner to government institutions and corporates, both big and small, over the past four decades. We are delighted to further build on this success and continue launching new world-class banking services and solutions that fulfill the complex requirements of our valued customers so as to realise the ambitious goals of Oman Vision 2040."

Speaking about the digital transformation of the banking sector, Bulushi said, "During the past few years, the world has witnessed many challenges that helped accelerate digital transformation due to the growing need to provide unlimited access for all regardless of their circumstances. Digital solutions are playing an ever bigger role in economic growth."

Travel momentum builds as restrictions are lifted: IATA

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has released data showing growing momentum in the recovery of air travel as restrictions are lifted.

IATA reported a sharp 11-percentage point increase for international tickets sold in recent weeks (in proportion to 2019 sales). In the period around February 8, the number of tickets sold stood at 49% of the same period in 2019. In the period around January 25, the number of tickets sold stood at 38% of the same period in 2019. The 11-percentage point

improvement between the January and February periods is the fastest such increase for any two-week period since the crisis began, a press release said.

The jump in ticket sales comes as more governments announce a relaxation of COVID-19 border restrictions. An IATA survey of travel restrictions for the world's top 50 air travel markets (comprising 92% of global demand in 2019 as measured by revenue passenger kilometers) revealed the growing access available to vaccinated travelers.

"Momentum toward normalising traffic is growing. Vaccinated travellers have the potential to travel much more extensively with fewer hassles than even a few weeks ago. This is giving growing numbers of travellers the confidence to buy tickets. And that is good news. Now we need to further accelerate the removal of travel restrictions. While recent progress is impressive, the world remains far from 2019 levels of connectivity. Thirteen of the top 50 travel markets still do not provide easy access to all vaccinated travelers.

Two sustainability campaigns to begin at Food For Future

This week's Food For Future Summit and co-located Global Agtech Innovation Expo, at the Dubai Exhibition Centre (DEC), at Expo 2020 Dubai, will serve as the launchpad for two major sustainability campaigns, designed to foster a global movement.

Hosted by the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (UN FAO) as strategic partners, the summit and expo, which runs from February 23-24, will unite world leaders, industry innovators, influential minds, start-up, and food revolutionaries, galvanising all sectors of the agriculture and food supply chains for profound discussions and innovative outcomes for a sustainable food ecosystem.

Two UAE-based changemakers are seeking to capitalise on the fact the global industry's eyes will be firmly fixed on Dubai to set sustainability wheels in motion, a press release said.

Food for Life', a first-of-its-kind public awareness and engagement campaign will be launched by partners Emirates Nature-WWF, the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, UAE Ministry of Health and Prevention and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). The campaign seeks to promote a healthy and mindful relationship with food and build awareness of how intercon-

nected a healthy diet is with the sustainability of our food systems through an exciting calendar of events and outreach programmes.

"We are looking to mobilize UAE society to take control of our collective health and food security. This summit provides us with a real opportunity to work through the challenges of food security and nutrition, analyse them from all different perspectives, and come up with solutions together. We want to change the way we think about food and raise awareness of how important a healthy, balanced diet is to the sustainability of our food systems," said Laila Mostafa Abdulatif, director general at Emirates Nature-WWF.

Meanwhile, Goumbook, the UAE's leading social enterprise promoting sustainable living and green practices, will launch The FoodWise Challenge, a campaign aimed at schools and universities to instil behavioural mindset changes among the country's youth surrounding sustainable, healthier food choices and the undeniable connection with food security.

"The FoodWise Challenge gives our younger generation, who are increasingly conscious of global food waste challenges, a chance to make a difference," says Tatiana Antonelli Abella, founder and managing director at Goumbook.

Desert Nights Resort does brisk business

Desert Nights Resort at Wahiba Sands in Sharqiyah North Governorate received about 3,000 visitors in January 2022.

Local visitors accounted for 46% of the total number of visitors, while tourist coming from the European and Asian markets constituted 43%, a press release said. These numbers reflect the high demand on the camp during the winter tourism season amid the endeavours exerted by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism to promote the tourist attractions in the governorate throughout the year.

Anurin Jansen, general manager of Desert Nights Resort,



said, "Taking the current COVID-19 situation into consideration, we had to carefully iron out pro-

cedures to encourage travelling by way of charter flights with countries that adhere to the

cise its promotions."

It is noteworthy that Desert Nights Resort, which spans an area of 10 acres of silk sand, received many international awards, the latest of which is the Luxury Lifestyle Award 2021, the International Luxury Award in 2020, the Best Employer Brand Award 2019 and the Best Hospitality Managers Award 2019. In the same year, the resort came first in the Quality Competition for Hotel and Tourist Establishments in Ash Sharqiyah North Governorate, organised by the Ministry of Tourism in 2019. It also won the Excellence Award in 2018 for high ratings.

Muriya introduces Turkish cuisine at 'Tugra'

Muriya has announced the opening of a new dining venue at Jebel Sifah - Tugra.

Offering uninterrupted views of the marina and a delicious menu of authentic Turkish cuisine, Tugra highlights the culinary traditions of a centuries old culture in a vibrant setting, a press release said.

All tastes are catered for with an array of expertly prepared favourites at the hands of Chef Faruk, from aromatic appetisers to beautifully grilled meats, freshly baked breads and mouth-watering sweets. Topped off with a selection of mixed beverages, it's the ideal place for a laid-back lunch or luxurious dinner, for a quick bite or as part of a leisurely day out at Muscat's



most stunning lifestyle destination.

"At every Muriya destination, our aim is to enrich the lives of

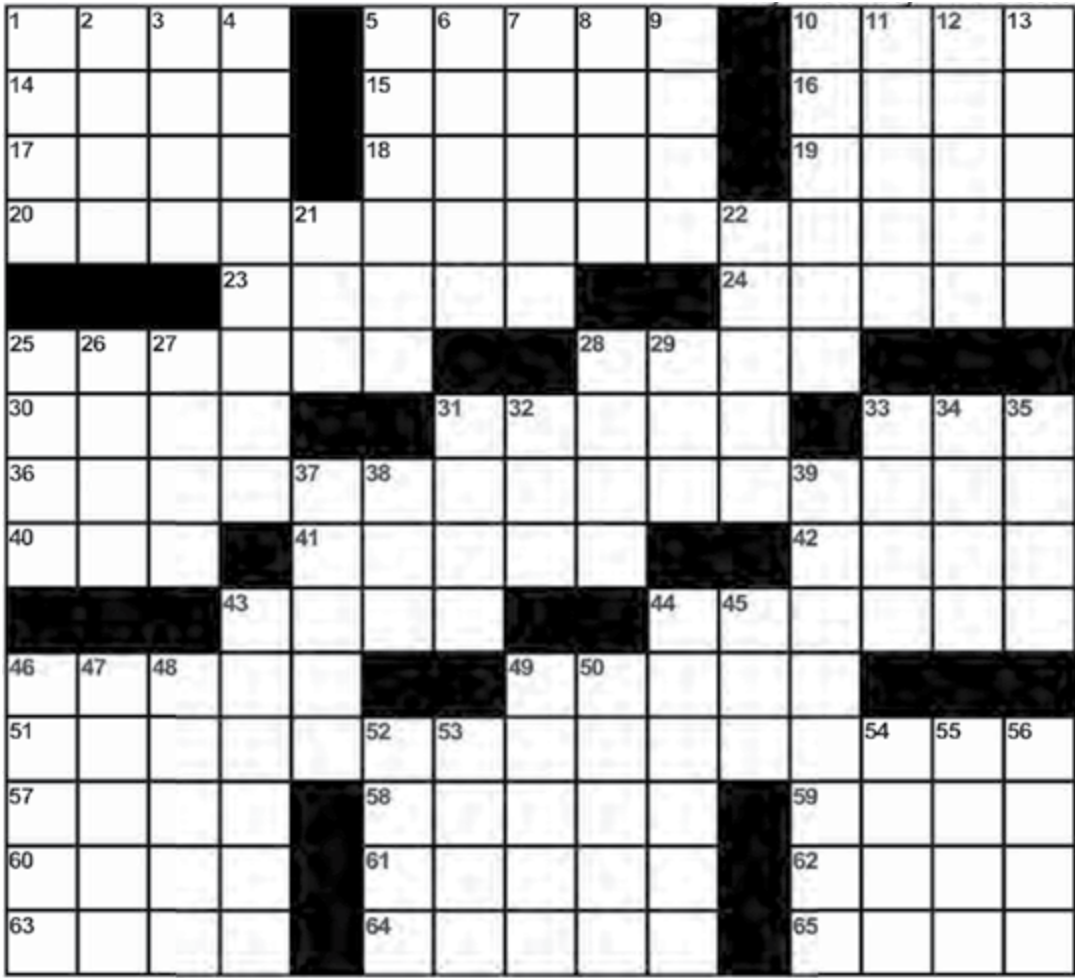


our communities, tourists and visitors from across the globe, and we continue to bring in new experiences that make every visit

memorable and unique. As Jebel Sifah continues to expand and evolve, Tugra is a wonderful addition to its high-end dining op-

tions, catering to couples and families alike," said Tarek Eid, hotel manager, Sifaway Boutique Hotel, in charge of Tugra.

DAILY CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**

 - 1) Rough file
 - 5) Cold shower?
 - 10) Very excited
 - 14) Way, way off
 - 15) Classic John Wayne film
 - 16) "Ain't gonna happen"
 - 17) "Frasier" actress Gilpin
 - 18) "Encore!"
 - 19) "Hold_ your hat!"
 - 20) Stung a second time
 - 23) Make president
 - 24) Battery projection
 - 25) Barroom fights
 - 28) It's historic?
 - 30) Exercise for the flexible
 - 31) Organic fertilizer
 - 33) Object stared at in disbelief
 - 36) Certain condiment
 - 40) Chapter in a history book
 - 41) Count of jazz
 - 42) Paste alternative
 - 43) Legend's cousin
 - 44) Fine wool
 - 46) Book of many places
 - 49) Crooner Sam
- 51) Container ship, e.g.
 - 57) "Swan Lake" costume
 - 58) Taper off, as wind
 - 59) Kind of palm
 - 60) Advil target
 - 61) Aficionado
 - 62) Units of work
 - 63) Casting need
 - 64) Looks of wickedness
 - 65) Backtalk

DOWN

 - 1) Wholly absorbed
 - 2) Not many
 - 3) Wrapped Indian garment
 - 4) Bargain hunter's accomplishment
 - 5) Tends to stubble
 - 6) Mr. Spock's forte
 - 7) Make new laws
 - 8) Cut a scene
 - 9) "Beloved" author Morrison
 - 10) Consecrate with oil
 - 11) Muppet with a hooked nose
 - 12) Didn't take part (with "out")
 - 13) Rock containing crystals
 - 21) Building addition,
- sometimes
 - 22) Type of jar
 - 25) Computer info quantity
 - 26) Laugh like a lion?
 - 27) Taj Mahal location
 - 28) Cover ground?
 - 29) Singer DiFranco
 - 31) "Gee whillikers!"
 - 32) Prefix with "cycle" or "sex"
 - 33) Jamaican fruit
 - 34) Roman satyr
 - 35) Popular cookie
 - 37) Bottomless pit
 - 38) Gangster's rapid-firer
 - 39) Ways out
 - 43) Former Panamanian leader Noriega
 - 44) Workers with vans
 - 45) _ out a living
 - 46) Essence of roses
 - 47) Event that buries hatchets
 - 48) Carpenter's rotating device
 - 49) Yearn for
 - 50) Playful aquatic mammal
 - 52) Gloomy atmosphere
 - 53) Slender woodwind
- 54) Gilbert of "Roseanne"

55) Baker's dozen?

56) It's not for a winner
- NOTE PAD**
-

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

You might get backed into a corner by a boss or co-worker today, but don't panic. When you panic, you start to make stupid decisions and your tendency to exaggerate grows. So if someone asks for something you haven't done yet, don't run around like a chicken with its head cut off. Ask for the time you need and get it done correctly. The timetable you're being asked to adhere to might be unrealistic, and that's not your fault.

LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

You've been procrastinating too often recently, and while it hasn't created any problems, it could. If you're dealing with a nagging issue at work or school, it deserves all your attention today. This problem involves some time-sensitive elements that could create more drama if they're left unchecked, so don't put it off until tomorrow! Get the job done and then you can treat yourself to all the stress-free play you can handle.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER21

You're always prepared to hear the truth, but the truth might not come in such a diplomatic package this time. Someone whose opinion you value could give you feedback today that leaves you feeling confused. They might react too critically for your tastes, although their intent is to help you. Try not to take it personally. Accept it at face value, and don't blame them for speaking candidly. It's really a compliment. They just care about you.

TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

The big issues are totally under control, and you're on a positive path, but things are getting a bit weird. Public information is suddenly going private and secrets abound. Everyone is shutting doors and talking in whispers. Put a lid on your paranoia. This is not a development you should worry about just yet. In fact, it could signal some good news for you soon, so just wait things out and keep your mind busy with trifles in the meantime.

VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

There's no question that a group effort is the best way to go today. Other people will have suggestions you hadn't considered before, and that's huge. You can't possibly be expected to come up with every fantastic idea. Getting a consensus about vital information will give everyone a stake in this project, make you look like a great leader, and set a much more positive tone for the days ahead.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Whatever you're trying to distract yourself from isn't going away any time soon! Until you face the person, place, or thing you're trying to avoid, you'll never find the peace of mind you deserve. Buying things to make yourself feel better might provide temporary fulfillment, but sacrificing your financial security will just make matters worse. Instead, focus on being grounded in reality. Ask for help if it gets to be too much.

GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

You're underestimating your ability to juggle, so push yourself to take on a little bit more than you normally would. After all, time is on your side. No matter how many errands you have to run today, you'll have lots more flexibility than you think. So don't limit yourself. Don't cut off any new opportunities because you're afraid of falling short on time. If you rearrange your schedule a bit, you'll be golden.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

Whichever direction you move in, take it slowly until you get comfortable. The pendulum swings in the other direction of your life today. You might be confronted with information that makes you rethink your most ardent beliefs. If you are usually quiet and shy, you'll find yourself at the center of attention. If you're normally loud and gregarious, you'll be communing with the wallflowers. The change of perspective will work wonders.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Be careful who you deal with today, and confide only in the people who have proven their trustworthiness. Try not to get too paranoid, but just remember it's wiser to be safe than sorry. Your keen observational skills are on fire today, so pay attention when others tell you what you're seeing isn't quite reality. After all, everyone else might have a different agenda, one that doesn't jibe with yours.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Give everything your full effort and attention or it will only come back to bite you. What you need are thorough solutions to the problems that arise today. Putting bandages on something that requires open-heart surgery won't save you any time. Today, any drama that pops up should be fairly insignificant, although annoying. Take this turmoil seriously. If you ignore it, it'll just keep coming back to drive you crazy.

CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

It's not about the destination this time; it's all about the journey. Don't rush ahead when you really want to take your time. You'll not only end up creating a subpar product, but you won't enjoy the process. So if you feel like slowing down today, do it! You'll be amazed by how much extra time you can buy yourself simply by asking for it. People want to help you out more than they want you to comply.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

You can't be responsible for the behaviour of other people, so don't let yourself get caught up in the drama. Mutual respect could feel like a lost cause today when you're forced to deal with someone who bullies you to get their way. Luckily, the encounter should be fairly brief. You can try to teach them a lesson if you really want to, but it might be much more amusing if you just laugh in their face and walk away.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What 1973 film starring Al Pacino, John Randolph and Tony Roberts is based on the true story of New York City policeman who went undercover to expose the corruption of his fellow officers?

A. Rain Man
B. Serpico
C. The French Connection
D. The Third Man

2. Where did Mulligatawny enter the world cuisine from?

A. Northern Ireland
B. Sri Lanka
C. Scotland
D. Pakistan

3. One of the cratons, or relatively stable areas, in the South American tectonic plate is known as the what Shield?

A. Atacama
B. Brazilian
C. Guiana
D. Altiplano

Answers: 1. b 2. b 3. c

KIDS COLOURING

BOGGLER

A	E	S	E
R	D	A	D
M	R	R	I
A	D	M	E

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

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

UAE warns of drone threat as it opens defence conference

Abu Dhabi, UAE - The United Arab Emirates warned on Sunday of the rising threat of drone attacks, such as those launched against it by Yemen's Houthi rebels, at a defence industry conference on unmanned systems.

"We have to unite to prevent the use of drones from threatening civilian safety and destroying economic institutions," said Mohammed bin Ahmad al Bawardi, UAE's Minister of State for Defence Affairs.

The Unmanned Systems Exhibition (UMEX) kicked off in Abu Dhabi on Sunday, with regional and Western military and industry representatives, including from the United States, Britain and France.

While the event will showcase the latest in high-tech drone technology, the host country warned that such weapons are becoming cheaper and more widespread.

They are now part of the arsenals of 'terrorist groups that use the systems to terrorise civilians or to impact the global system in a negative way', said the UAE's Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Omar bin Sultan al Olama.

"That is a challenge that requires us to... work together to ensure that we can create a shield against the use of these systems."

The UAE is part of a Saudi-led military coalition that has been



An undated launch of an unmanned aerial vehicle that was used in a strike on Saudi and Emirati airspace (AFP)

fighting in Yemen since 2015 to support the government against Iran-backed Houthi rebels.

While the Emirates announced it withdrew its troops from the country in 2019, it remains an influential player, back-

ing fighters there.

The UAE has been on heightened alert since a Houthi drone and missile attack killed three oil workers in Abu Dhabi on January 17. Authorities have since thwarted three similar attacks,

including one claimed by a little-known militant group believed to have ties with pro-Iran armed factions in Iraq.

The UAE's staunch ally the United States has deployed a warship and fighter planes to

Such weapons (drones) are now part of the arsenals of terrorist groups that terrorise civilians or impact the global system in a negative way. We require to work together to ensure that we can create a shield against them

OMAR AL OLAMA

help protect the Middle East financial and leisure hub, usually a safe haven in the volatile region. Meanwhile, France said it would bolster its defence cooperation with the UAE, mostly in securing its air space.

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis have recently launched hundreds of drones against Saudi Arabia, while Tehran has been accused of being behind an attack on an Israeli ship last year.

Israel's military said its air defences fired at a drone that had crossed into its airspace from Lebanon on Friday, the second such incident in as many days.

AFP



Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett (right) chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting, with Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, in Jerusalem on Sunday (AFP)

Israel sees Iran nuclear deal 'shortly', warns it will be weaker

Jerusalem - Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said on Sunday that Iran may 'shortly' agree a new nuclear deal with major powers but warned it will be weaker than the original 2015 agreement.

Bennett was speaking ahead of a weekly cabinet meeting following indications that the outline of a deal was taking shape at talks in Vienna.

"We may see an agreement shortly," Bennett said. "The new agreement that appears will be made is shorter and weaker than the previous one."

The 2015 Iran nuclear agreement offered Tehran sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear programme, but the United States unilaterally withdrew in 2018 under then-president Donald Trump and reimposed heavy economic sanctions.

"We are organising and preparing for the day after, in all dimensions, so that we can maintain the security of the citizens of Israel on our own," he told his cabinet.

'Moment of truth'

Bennett also claimed, without detailing his sources, that the new deal could expire in 2025, when the original JCPOA negotiated under former US president Barack Obama was due to lapse.

"If the world signs the agreement again - without extending the expiration date - then we are talking about an agreement that buys a total of two and a half years, after which Iran can and may develop and install advanced centrifuges, without restrictions," the hawkish premier said.

Nigeria returns two looted treasures to royal palace

Benin City, Nigeria - Nigeria's government has handed over two bronze treasures to a traditional royal palace in part of a series of restorations of artefacts looted during colonial times.

In a ceremony accompanied by songs, drums and dancers on Saturday, a bronze cockerel and a king's bust were given to King Uku Akpolokpolor Ewuare II, one of the traditional rulers in Africa's most populous country.

Thousands of Nigeria's Benin Bronzes - 16th to 18th century sculptures and art - were pillaged from the palace of the ancient Benin Kingdom and held in museums across the US and Europe.

Nigerian officials negotiated the return of the two objects held



The two artifacts, a bronze cockerel and a bust, are placed on a table inside the Oba of Benin palace in Benin City on Saturday (AFP)

in Aberdeen and Cambridge and plan to build a museum in Benin City in southern Edo state, where

it hopes to keep more bronzes.

"This return gives us a lot of joy because they symbolised that

for us, the hope that all the stolen artifacts will be returned," Charles Edosomwan, Benin Kingdom High Chief said.

"They're stolen if they are with you, they are not with us, until you return them, you are in receipt of stolen goods."

The bronzes are considered some of the most highly regarded works of African art.

"We have been consulting, we have been interacting with various institutions, various museums and various governments across the world," said Abba Tijani, director of National Commission for Museums and Monuments.

The return of the two artefacts comes as calls grow in

Africa for Western countries to return colonial spoils from their museums and private collections. France, Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany have all received requests from African countries to return lost treasures.

France last year handed back 26 royal treasures to Nigeria's neighbour Benin, and President Patrice Talon on Saturday officially opened an exhibition of the objects to the public in Cotonou.

Germany has agreed to start giving back hundreds of ancient pillaged artworks to Nigeria.

The Ethnological Museum in Berlin has 530 historical objects from the ancient kingdom.

AFP

Ethiopia starts generating power at mega-dam on Nile

Guba, Ethiopia - Ethiopia began generating electricity from its mega-dam on the Blue Nile on Sunday, a milestone in the controversial multi-billion dollar project.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, accompanied by high-ranking officials, toured the power generation station and pressed a series of buttons on an electronic screen, a move that officials said initiated production.

The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) is set to be the largest hydroelectric scheme in Africa but has been at the centre of a regional dispute ever since work first began in 2011.

Abiy described Sunday's development as 'the birth of a new era'.

"This is a good news for our continent & the downstream countries with whom we aspire to work together," he said on Twitter.

Ethiopia's downstream neighbours Egypt and Sudan however view it as a threat because of their dependence on Nile waters,



Workers are seen walking at the site of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam in Guba, Ethiopia, on Saturday (AFP)

while Addis Ababa deems it essential for its electrification and development.

But Abiy, wearing sunglasses and a khaki-coloured hat emblazoned with the Ethiopian flag as he toured the site, dismissed those concerns.

"As you can see this water will

generate energy while flowing as it previously flowed to Sudan and Egypt, unlike the rumours that say the Ethiopian people and government are damming the water to starve Egypt and Sudan," he said as water rushed through the concrete colossus behind him.

"Ethiopia doesn't have the desire to hurt anybody. Ethiopia's only desire is to provide electricity to the mothers who have never seen a lightbulb, to alleviate the burdens of those who carry sticks on their backs to generate electricity, and to extricate them from the poverty

we're in currently."

Existential threat

The US\$4.2bn project is ultimately expected to produce more than 5,000 megawatts of electricity, more than doubling Ethiopia's electricity output.

Only one turbine of 13 turbines is currently operational, with an installed capacity of 375 megawatts.

Ethiopia doesn't have the desire to hurt anybody. Ethiopia's only desire is to provide electricity to mothers who have never seen a lightbulb and to extricate them from poverty

ABIY AHMED

A second turbine will come online within a few months, project manager Kifle Horo told AFP after the ceremony, adding that the project is currently expected to be fully completed in 2024.

The 145-metre high dam lies on Blue Nile River in the Benishangul-Gumuz region of western

Ethiopia, not far from the border with Sudan.

Egypt, which depends on the Nile for about 97 per cent of its irrigation and drinking water, sees the dam as an existential threat. Sudan hopes the project will regulate annual flooding, but fears its own dams could be harmed without agreement on the GERD's operation.

Both countries have been

pushing Ethiopia for a binding deal over the filling and operation of the massive dam, but talks under the auspices of the African Union (AU) have failed to reach a breakthrough.

"The newly generated electricity from the GERD could help revive an economy that has been

devastated by the combined forces of a deadly war, rising fuel prices and the COVID-19 pandemic," said Addisu Lashitew of the Brookings Institution in Washington.

Project delays

The dam was initiated under former prime minister Meles Zenawi, the Tigrayan leader who ruled Ethiopia for more than two decades until his death in 2012.

Civil servants contributed one month's salary towards the project in the year of the project launch, and the government has since issued dam bonds targeting Ethiopians at home and abroad.

But officials on Sunday credited Abiy with reviving the dam after what they claim was mismanagement delayed its progress.

"Our country has lost so much because the dam was delayed, especially financially," project manager Kifle said in his remarks at the launch ceremony.

AFP

Russian drills continue; West warns invasion

Kyiv, Ukraine - Russian military exercises in Belarus will continue, Minsk announced on Sunday, leaving Moscow with a large force near the northern Ukraine border as Western powers warn of an imminent invasion.

The announcement came as French President Emmanuel Macron called Russia's Vladimir Putin for talks the Elysee described as 'the last possible and necessary efforts to avoid a major conflict in Ukraine'.

Moscow had previously said the 30,000 troops it has in Belarus were simply carrying out readiness drills with its ally, which would be finished by February 20, allowing the Russians to head back to their bases.

But, as the day arrived for the operation to end, the Belarus Defence Ministry said Putin and Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko had decided to 'continue inspections', citing increased military activity on their shared borders and an alleged 'escalation' in east Ukraine.

The move will be seen as a further tightening of the screws on Ukraine, already facing increased shelling from Russian-backed separatist rebels and a force of what Western capitals says is more than 150,000 Russian personnel on its borders.

It will also be seen as a rebuff to efforts by leaders like Macron and Germany's Chancellor Olaf



A Russian paratrooper is seen taking part in a joint exercise of the armed forces of Russia and Belarus near the city of Baranovichi in Belarus on Saturday (AFP)

Scholz to urge their Russian counterpart to pull back from the brink of war.

More bombardments were heard by AFP reporters overnight close to the frontline between government forces and the Moscow-backed rebels who

hold parts of the districts of Lugansk and Donetsk.

Occupied enclave

"Every indication indicates that Russia is planning a full-fledged attack against Ukraine," NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said,

echoing US President Joe Biden, who believes the invasion is imminent. The Moscow-backed separatists have accused Ukraine of planning an offensive into their enclave, despite the huge Russian military build-up on the frontier.

Kyiv and Western capitals ridicule this idea, and accuse Moscow of attempting to provoke Ukraine and of plotting to fabricate incidents to provide a pretext for a Russian intervention. "Russian military personnel and special services are planning

to commit acts of terror in temporarily-occupied Donetsk and Lugansk, killing civilians," alleged Ukraine's top general Valeriy Zaluzhnyi. "Our enemy wants to use this as an excuse to blame Ukraine and move in regular soldiers of the Russian armed forces, under the guise of 'peacekeepers'," the military chief of staff said.

The rebel regions have made similar claims about Ukraine's forces and have ordered a general mobilisation, while staging an evacuation of civilians into neighbouring Russian territory.

Officials with the Lugansk rebels claimed on Sunday they had repulsed an attack by Ukrainian forces that had left two civilians dead, but the Ukrainian interior ministry immediately denounced the claim as an 'absolute fake'.

Russian investigators said they had opened a probe into the alleged incident.

Russia, according to Western leaders, has more than 150,000 troops along with missile batteries and warships massed around Ukraine, poised to strike.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky told Macron on Saturday he would not respond to Russia's provocations, according to the Elysee.

But in his speech to the Munich Security Conference, he also condemned 'a policy of appease-

ment' towards Moscow.

"For eight years, Ukraine has been holding back one of the greatest armies in the world," he said.

He called for 'clear, feasible timeframes' for Ukraine to join the US-led NATO military alliance - something Moscow has said it would never accept, as it tries to roll back Western influence. Western officials in Munich warned of enormous sanctions if Russia attacks, with US Vice President Kamala Harris saying this would only see NATO reinforce its 'eastern flank'.

Nuclear drills

On Saturday, from the Kremlin situation room, Putin and Lukashenko watched the launch of Russia's latest hypersonic, cruise and nuclear-capable ballistic missiles.

Putin has also stepped up his rhetoric, reiterating demands for written guarantees that NATO roll back deployments in eastern Europe to positions from decades ago.

"The big question remains: does the Kremlin want dialogue?" European Council president Charles Michel asked at the Munich Security Conference. "We cannot forever offer an olive branch while Russia conducts missile tests and continues to amass troops."

AFP

Australian PM terms China laser incident 'intimidation'

Sydney, Australia - Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison accused China of an 'act of intimidation' on Sunday after Canberra said a Chinese naval vessel shone a laser at one of the country's defence aircraft.

The ship was one of two Chinese navy vessels sailing through waters off Australia's northern coast on Thursday when it illuminated a surveillance aircraft in an incident that had 'the potential to endanger lives', the defence department said.

"I can see it no other way than an act of intimidation," Morrison said, terming the act 'unwarranted and unprovoked'.

Australia's Defence Minister Peter Dutton echoed his concerns, saying it was 'a very aggressive act'.

"I think the Chinese government is hoping that nobody talks



Two Chinese navy vessels are seen leaving the Torres Strait and entering the Coral Sea on Friday (AFP)

about these aggressive bullying acts," Dutton told Sky News on Sunday.

According to the Defence Ministry, the ships were sailing east through the Arafura Sea, just north of Australia.

The Chinese government has not responded to the allegations

from Australia.

China last faced accusations of targeting Australian aircraft using military-grade lasers in 2019, when Australian Defence Force helicopters were illuminated over the South China Sea.

AFP

Protest in Nepal against \$500mn US grant

Kathmandu, Nepal - Nepal police fired rubber bullets and tear gas on Sunday as hundreds protested against a US\$500mn US grant going before parliament that has become a bone of contention between China and the United States.

Nepal signed the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) pact in 2017 to fund infrastructure projects but its ratification has been in limbo because of divisions within political parties, including the ruling coalition.

Several people were injured in the latest day of angry demonstrations outside parliament as the government put the bill before lawmakers ahead of a deadline of February 28 to pass it.

"Although they agreed to present the agreement in the parliament, it's still not clear whether all coalition partners will cast their vote in favour... Our efforts will continue to con-



Demonstrators chant slogans during a protest against the proposed grant agreement from the US in Kathmandu on Friday (AFP)

vince them," Prakash Sharan Mahat, spokesperson for the ruling Nepali Congress party, told AFP.

There is major opposition from Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's coalition partners including Maoist politicians -

seen as traditionally close to China - who say it undermines Nepal's sovereignty.

Indian daily the *Hindustan Times* reported on Tuesday that Washington believes China is behind a disinformation campaign against the pact.

According to Nepali media, US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Donald Lu recently held separate telephone conversations with Nepali politicians, urging them to endorse the MCC pact by February 28 or Washington would 'review its ties with Nepal'.

Days later Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said such development cooperation should 'come with no strings attached'.

"We oppose coercive diplomacy and actions that pursue selfish agendas at the expense of Nepal's sovereignty and interests," he told a regular briefing in Beijing.

The MCC, created by the US Congress in 2004, offers large grants to support economic growth and reduce poverty, according to Washington.

AFP

Stray Nigeria airstrike kills seven children in Niger

Niamey, Niger - An airstrike by the Nigerian army targeting 'bandits' has left seven children dead and five others wounded 'by mistake' in the Maradi region of southern Niger, a local governor told AFP on Sunday.

"There was a mistake with the Nigerian strikes on the border that resulted in victims on our territory in the village of Nachade on Friday," said Chaibou Aboubacar, governor of the Maradi region, close to Nigeria.

"The victims are 12 children, seven of them dead and five wounded."

Four children died instantly and three others succumbed 'to their injuries while being transported to hospital', he said. According to the governor, the parents were attending a ceremony and the children were probably playing when the strikes hit them.

He believes the planes were targeting 'armed bandits'

in the border areas, but 'missed their target' hitting Nachade instead.

Aboubacar said he visited the children's graves on Saturday as well as the scene of the bombardment. Several municipalities in the Maradi region are seriously affected by the violence of heavily armed gangs from the Nigerian states of neighbouring Katsina, Sokoto and Zamfara.

In 2018, Niamey reinforced military patrols along its border with Nigeria to prevent the incursions of these gangs which carry out assassinations, kidnappings for ransom, attacks on traders and raids on cattle which they then lead into Nigeria.

In April 2021, International Crisis Group (ICG) said it feared a third militant centre could emerge in this region of Maradi, exploiting the actions of Nigerian gangs and conflicts between local communities.

AFP

Passenger found alive on ferry ablaze off Greece

Corfu, Greece - A passenger was on Sunday found alive aboard a ferry that has been ablaze off Greece for three days, coastguards said, with reports suggesting several more missing people have survived.

Eleven truck drivers remained unaccounted for on Sunday before Skai television reported that an operation was underway 'to rescue 4-5 more passengers who are alive'.

Rescuers had first spotted a 21-year-old man on the stern of the stricken vessel as it was being towed to port.

The *Euroferry Olympia* was 2km off the northern part of Corfu, the coastguard said.

The smiling Belarussian was taken to Corfu on a coastguard boat wearing flip flops and put in an ambulance heading to hospital, television footage showed.

"I'm fine", he told journalists.

"Tell me I'm alive," the truck driver, had told rescuers, according to the Proto Thema news website.

Clad in tan shorts and a black t-shirt, he climbed down a ladder



Smoke rises from the Italian-flagged Euroferry Olympiad off Corfu on Sunday (AFP)

into a rescue boat, according to images from the iefimerida news website. "I was in my cabin. I went to the lower deck. I heard voices. I did not see others," the survivor told rescuers.

The news of the man's 'miraculous' survival, according to Greek media, had raised hopes further lives might be saved.

"There is optimism. Given the fact this man managed to get to the upper deck in these conditions," coastguard spokesman Nikos Alexiou told Ert television.

According to the fire brigade, 40 firemen were deployed in the area on Sunday morning to help with rescue efforts.

"The thermal load and the toxicity on the vessel remain high. In some areas, fire is still burning. The operation is really delicate," Shipping deputy minister, Costas Katsafados told Skai.

The blaze broke out on the Italian-flagged *Euroferry Olympia* late on Thursday as it sailed from Igoumenitsa in Greece to Brindisi in Italy, with nearly 300

people aboard.

'Corrosive goods'

Criticism has mounted over conditions aboard the vessel, which was reported to be carrying fuel and 'corrosive, dangerous goods'.

Rescuers had managed to save 280 passengers on Friday, evacuating them to Corfu, but 12 lorry drivers remained missing.

The man rescued on Sunday was one of those drivers, the coastguard said.

Authorities initially gave the missing as seven from Bulgaria, three from Greece, one from Turkey and one from Lithuania.

On Sunday, they said there was an error and the missing Lithuanian was actually the man saved, who was from Belarus.

The drivers are believed to have been asleep inside their lorries when the blaze broke out.

Olympia was carrying an estimated 800 cubic metres of fuel and 23 tonnes of 'corrosive dangerous goods', according to Italy's Environment Ministry which said on Saturday that a 'possible spill' was detected after a fly-over by an Italian coast-guard aircraft.

The vessel was officially carrying 239 passengers and 51 crew, as well as 153 trucks and trailers and 32 passenger vehicles, the Grimaldi company has said. But the coastguard has said two of the 281 people rescued were Afghans not on the manifest, sparking fears that more undocumented passengers could also be missing.

AFP

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Show of force in Ottawa as police clear main protest hub

Ottawa, Canada - Police in riot gear cleared the main protest hub in downtown Ottawa on Saturday, using batons and pepper spray and making dozens of arrests, as they worked to flush out a hard core of demonstrators occupying the Canadian capital.

In a day-long show of force, hundreds of officers pushed into the city centre - facing off in tense scenes with determined protesters who hurled gas canisters and smoke grenades at advancing police, linking arms and chanting 'freedom'.

By the afternoon, police backed by tactical vehicles and overwatched by snipers had cleared Wellington Street in front of the Canadian parliament - the epicentre of the trucker-led demonstrations that began almost a month ago over COVID-19 health rules.

Trucks were towed and tents, food stands and other structures set up by the demonstrators were torn down.

Ottawa interim police chief Steve Bell told a news conference 'very important progress' had been made on day two of the operation to clear the protesters, though he cautioned it was 'not over'.



A flatbed removes a truck from the convoy after police cleared Wellington Street occupied by the Freedom Convoy in Ottawa, on Saturday (AFP)

On side streets around the parliament, a police message boomed by loudspeaker urged die-hard demonstrators, "You must leave, (or) you will be arrested." A few hundred ignored the order, braving bone-chilling cold into the night while waving Canadian flags, setting off fireworks at a barricade and singing the 1980s rock anthem, *We're Not Gonna Take It*.

Bell said 170 people had been arrested since the start of the operation, 47 of them on Saturday. He also called out parents for putting their children 'at risk' by bringing them 'to the front of our police operation'.

As tensions ratcheted up, police used what they called a 'chemical irritant' - apparently pepper spray - against the protesters, who they said were being 'assaultive and aggressive', launching gas canisters at officers.

Organisers of the so-called 'Freedom Convoy' meanwhile accused police of beating and trampling demonstrators, telling supporters to leave 'to avoid further brutality'.

Some truckers had chosen to depart on their own as the police closed in, driving their 18-wheel-

ers away after weeks of demonstrations that at their peak drew 15,000 to the capital.

Others were defiant. "I'm not leaving," said Johnny Rowe at the start of the day.

"There's nothing to go back to," he said. "Everybody here, myself included, has had their lives destroyed by what's happened in the past two years."

AFP

Queen Elizabeth II catches 'mild' infection: Palace

London, UK - Britain's 95-year-old Queen Elizabeth II tested positive for COVID-19 on Sunday but her symptoms are 'mild' and she intends to continue with light duties at her Windsor Castle residence, aides said.

The news comes after Prince Charles, the queen's eldest son and heir, tested positive on February 10, two days after meeting his mother at Windsor.

No information was given then on whether Queen Elizabeth - who this month marked 70 years on the throne - had taken any COVID-19 tests herself.

She resumed in-person audiences at the castle last week, but complained to one attendee of suffering from stiffness and was photographed holding a walking stick.

"Buckingham Palace confirm that the queen has today tested positive for COVID," a statement from the palace said.

"Her Majesty is experiencing mild cold-like symptoms but expects to continue light duties at Windsor over the coming week," it said.

"She will continue to receive medical attention and will follow all the appropriate



Queen Elizabeth II (AFP)

guidelines."

While normally secretive about the queen's health, the palace has previously confirmed she is fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Britain's Press Association said 'it is understood a number of cases have also been diagnosed among the Windsor Castle team'.

There was no immediate comment from Prime Minister Boris Johnson. But his health secretary, Sajid Javid, tweeted, "Wishing Her Majesty The Queen a quick recovery."

Keir Starmer, leader of the main opposition Labour party, also tweeted his best wishes for 'a speedy recovery', adding, "Get well soon, Ma'am."

Nationwide celebrations to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee are due to be held in June.

AFP

China helps virus-ravaged HK build isolation units

Hong Kong, China - Construction crews from mainland China were helping Hong Kong build two temporary isolation facilities to house thousands of coronavirus patients on Sunday as a senior official declared the city 'in full combat mode'.

The crowded Chinese financial hub is in the throes of its worst-ever coronavirus outbreak, registering thousands of confirmed cases a day as hospitals reach breaking point.

A strict zero-COVID policy like China uses kept infections at bay for two years but left the city cut off internationally.

And when the highly transmissible Omicron variant broke through, authorities were caught flat-footed with a dangerously under-vaccinated elderly population and few plans in place to deal with a mass outbreak. Late Saturday city leader Carrie Lam announced that China State Construction International Holdings, the largest state-owned constructor in Hong Kong, would start work on two temporary isolation facilities to provide 9,500



Medical personnel walk down staircases at a designated clinic for COVID-19 patients in Hong Kong's Shau Kei Wan area on Saturday (AFP)

extra beds.

The units will be located at Penny's Bay, which already hosts a quarantine camp, and in Kai Tak where the city's old airport once stood. Lam also announced that three hotels would be used to create an additional 20,000 beds.

Chief Secretary John Lee, Hong Kong's number two official, wrote on his official blog on Sunday that the city's government was in 'full combat mode'. "With our motherland's strong support, we will definitely win the battle," Lee wrote.

The sudden flurry of activity

UK PM prepares to end all legal restrictions

London, UK - British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has denied throwing 'caution to the wind' as he prepares to end all pandemic-related legal restrictions in England, amid a political backlash and scientific unease.

Johnson's premiership is in peril as police investigate a series of lockdown-breaching parties in Downing Street, and he stands accused by opposition parties of seeking to distract public attention with the new COVID plan.

But in a BBC interview broadcast on Sunday, he said that with case numbers and hospitalisations from the Omicron wave apparently under control, it was time to revert to 'personal responsibility' rather than legal mandates. "I'm not saying that we should throw caution to the wind. But it's time for everybody to get their confidence back," he said, after bringing forward the plan by a month from when the current law was due to expire in late March.

However, the Prime Minister also stressed, "I think it's very important we should remain careful. COVID-19 remains a dangerous disease, particularly if you haven't been vaccinated."



Britain's PM Boris Johnson (AFP)

Under a 'living with COVID' plan, the government says it intends this week to end a legal requirement for people to self-isolate when infected with the coronavirus. Johnson could address parliament as early as on Monday. The government says local authorities will be required to manage further outbreaks with pre-existing legal powers, and is expected to phase out free COVID-19 testing for the general public, having already eliminated a mandate to wear masks in public settings.

The NHS Confederation, which represents senior managers in the state-run National Health Service, said its internal polling showed a large majority of health staff were opposed to

ending self-isolation and free tests.

Matthew Taylor, the confederation's chief executive, acknowledged that the government's mass vaccination programme and emergence of new COVID-19 treatments offered 'real hope'. "But the government cannot wave a magic wand and pretend the threat has disappeared entirely," he said.

'Very unwise indeed'

David Nabarro, the World Health Organization's special envoy for COVID-19, said that scrapping the law on self-isolation was 'really very unwise indeed'. While the UK has suffered one of the world's worst per-capita death tolls in the pandemic, it remains a country with 'an enviable record for public health expertise', the British official told BBC radio on Saturday.

"I really do worry that Britain is taking a line that is against the public health consensus - that other countries, other leaders will say if Britain is doing it, why can't we, and this will create a bit of a domino effect around the world," Nabarro added.

In the UK's devolved system, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland set their own health policies and are largely staying more cautious than Johnson's intentions for England.

The opposition Labour party said that ending free testing was akin to substituting 'your best defender' with 10 minutes to go of a football match.

"Boris Johnson is declaring victory before the war is over, in an attempt to distract from the police knocking at his door," Labour's health spokesman Wes Streeting said.

Downing Street confirmed on Friday that Johnson had submitted a written response to police questions over the parties held over the past two years, as detectives probe whether attendees violated strict distancing and virus prevention rules in place at the time.

He stonewalled questions about the 'partygate' affair in the BBC interview, and declined to say if he would resign if he is fined by the police. But Johnson insisted that the public would still follow guidance to self-isolate when necessary, even without a legal mandate.

AFP

Malta calls elections for next month as PM seeks second term

Valletta, Malta - Maltese Prime Minister Robert Abela on Sunday called a general election for March 26, launching a campaign likely to be dominated by the coronavirus pandemic and the fight against corruption.

"In the coming hours, I will be going to the president and advising him to dissolve parliament for a general election to be held on 26 March," Abela said, during a party rally in the small city of Floriana outside the capital.

Abela has led the Mediterranean island nation since January 2020 when Joseph Muscat quit following a political

crisis over the murder of investigative journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia.

"I believe the moment has come for me to come to you and to ask for your support for my first mandate," Abela said.

Recent opinion polls suggest Abela's Labour party has a significant lead over the opposition Nationalist Party, pointing to a comfortable third-term win.

Abela is expected to campaign on his handling of the pandemic, highlighting support for businesses, an EU-leading vaccination campaign and a return to brisk economic growth.



Malta's Prime Minister Robert Abela (AFP)

But Nationalist leader Bernard Grech, who took over a year ago as the party battled poor poll ratings, is likely to focus on the government's record on the rule of law and corruption. Grech has vowed to cancel a controversial 2017 deal to award three public hospitals to a US-based firm, and to get Malta off the monitoring 'grey list' of global money laundering watchdog FATF where it was placed last summer.

A poll conducted by *Malta Today* earlier this month showed Abela with a 'trust rating' among voters of 45 per cent, versus Grech at

30 per cent.

Above the law

EU-member Malta was plunged into crisis following the October 16, 2017 car bomb attack that killed Caruana Galizia, a blogger who had exposed corruption at the highest level in the country.

Muscat quit following widespread public anger over his perceived efforts to protect friends and allies from investigation in the murder, which also sparked outrage abroad.

Dubbed the 'one woman WikiLeaks', Caruana Galizia's work shone a spotlight on

murky links between Malta's business and political elite and the economy, which is dependent on financial services and gaming as well as tourism.

A public inquiry last year found the state should take responsibility for creating an 'atmosphere of impunity'.

Afterwards, Abela offered a public apology on behalf of the state and has insisted that 'no one is above the law'.

Businessman Yorgen Fenech is currently awaiting trial on charges he orchestrated her death, although he has denied involvement.

AFP

ISLAND OF THE GODS



Bali's beaches beckon

Bali (Indonesia) has started welcoming back international tourists this week, a good sign for its heavily tourism-dependent economy

Bali began a tentative re-opening to foreign tourists on Wednesday with the first international passenger flight to the Indonesian holiday island arriving after nearly two years.

The resumption of flights comes as the Southeast Asian archipelago loosens quarantine rules, even as it battles a surge in COVID-19 cases fuelled by the Omicron variant.

Bali's tourism leaders are optimistic the holiday island's economy is about to turn the corner after international flights restarted. Commenting to the local press, Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment, Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, reportedly said he was hopeful the step would trigger a recovery in Bali's tourism economy.

Meanwhile, a Singapore Airlines plane carrying 109 international travellers and 47 Indonesians landed in Bali last Wednesday, the island's governor Wayan Koster disclosed.

The foreign visitors were required to stay

in a quarantine bubble at one of 27 designated hotels for three to seven days, depending on the number of vaccine doses received, according to new nationwide rules published.

"I hope that in early March, there will be no more quarantine obligation for tourists, as long as they comply with health protocol requirements and show negative test results on departure and arrival," the governor said.

Arriving at Bali airport, Australian holiday-maker James said the re-opening was a 'great sign' for tourism.

Swiss national Manuela, a frequent visitor to Bali before the pandemic, said she had been eagerly anticipating the first flight to the 'Island of the Gods'.

"Two years not going to Bali is a long time. After my friend wrote to me that Bali would open, I immediately looked for the first flight," she said.

Singapore Airlines said it will operate daily flights between the city-state and Bali to meet good demand. Other airlines, including Australia-based Jetstar Airways, could resume flights to the holiday hotspot as early as next month, Bali's governor added.

"We are aware of the increasing and fluctuating Omicron variant cases, but as long as we are strictly implementing health protocols, we should not be worried," said Bali Hotel and Restaurant Association chair Rai Wijaya.

Bali authorities trialled a limited re-opening in October for a group of select countries but the response was tepid due to strict quarantine requirements and the absence of direct flights.

Indonesia had reported a record number of new coronavirus cases on Tuesday. Daily infections topped 57,000, according to the government's COVID-19 taskforce, surpassing the previous peak in July last year during the country's Delta wave.

Bali's economy is largely dependent on the tourism sector, which contributes more than half of the province's gross domestic product. In 2019, the island, known for its beaches, temples, and nightlife, welcomed around 6.2 million foreign visitors, mostly from Australia and China. The coronavirus pandemic, however, brought tourist activity to a halt, dealing a heavy blow, not only to the local, but also the national economy.

(With inputs from AFP)



Travellers walk through the international arrivals hall at Ngurah Rai International Airport in Tuban near Denpasar on Indonesia's resort island of Bali on February 16 - AFP

CLASSIFIEDS

VAT

VAT Registrations, Quarterly Returns, Taxation Consultancy & Audit

Gulf Center Consultancy & Audit Chartered Accountants

Contact: 92469602/93949235

Offices at Muscat, Salalah, Sohar & Sur

WJ Towell Group Company

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

Muscat 9014 6672, 9679 0684
Sohar 9731 6218 | Salalah 9429 9325

www.orbit-oman.com

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

أوربت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

FREE CLASSIFIED LISTING

Muscat Daily now offers free classified listings for individuals in the following categories:
Situations Wanted/ Accommodation Wanted or Available/Sale of Household Items/ Car for Sale or Wanted/ Matrimonial Alliances (Word limit is 35)

Please email your listing to
dailyclassifieds@apexmedia.co.om or call 99104346

MIGRANT CAMPS



Refugees in Greece face hunger, homelessness, and uncertainty of survival, despite status

Two minutes into a Greek jobs fair interview, Hashim, a 21-year-old Afghan refugee, is offered work as a waiter at a swanky Corfu hotel. It's his ticket out of the grim migrant camp he has called home for the past year, but there's a caveat - he has to cut his ponytail.

"Health and safety protocol," his interviewer explains. And Hashim, who won asylum in Greece a month-and-a-half ago, has little choice.

"If I do not have work, I need the camp," he explains in a mix of broken English and Greek, summing up the predicament of many refugees in Greece.

Athens has granted refugee status to over 68,000 people in the past three years, according to the migration ministry. But if obtaining asylum in an EU country is a dream come true for many migrants, in Greece it means having to confront a whole new set of challenges.

Right now "it's probably easier to survive in Greece as an asylum seeker than as a refugee," says Spyros-Vlad Oikonomou, advocacy officer at the Greek Council for Refugees, one of the country's leading rights groups.

"It's a particularly sad paradox... essentially, Greece still has no integration system," he told AFP.

Starting in 2019, the conservative government began phasing out accommodation and financial assistance for people with asylum status, arguing that such benefits only encouraged further migration.

"Our country will not give refugees lifelong pensions and accommodation," Migration Minister Notis Mitarachi said at the time.

"A month after asylum (is granted), provision of shelter, food and financial



A refugee pulls his cart out of Eleonas refugee camp in Athens. Greece has granted refugee status to over 68,000 people in the past three years

Refugees prepare for job interviews during a job fair which aims at employing refugees in the hospitality sector in Athens

support stops. Whoever wants to stay in this country must be able to work, get back on their feet," he told the Parapolitika daily.

Since then, Greece has shut down an EU-funded accommodation programme that was housing over 6,500 approved refugees and passed a law requiring them to leave the country's migrant camps once they get the nod to remain in Greece.

Same rights as Greeks

Louise Donovan, communications officer for refugees with the UN refugee agency in Greece, said the 30-day grace period was very short compared to other EU member states and that many refugees struggle to put a roof over their heads.

Many gravitated towards Athens to seek help in finding shelter, or contacts to enable them to leave the country. Some lived in public squares or squats. Others remained in migrant camps in violation of the rules, with some 500 ending up in the Eleonas camp, near central Athens, which is slated for closure this year.

In October, 26 rights organisations accused Greek authorities of leaving people in camps, including refugees, short of food.

"Though practices differ from region to region, it is roughly estimated that 60 per cent of people living in camps do not re-

A month after asylum (is granted), provision of shelter, food and financial support stops. Whoever wants to stay in this country must be able to work, get back on their feet

NOTIS MITARACHI
Migration minister

ceive food in the mainland," the groups said. However, the migration ministry replied that asylum recipients were not supposed to be in camps in the first place.

It noted that they have the same rights as Greek citizens and can apply for jobs and state health coverage.

No jobs

Several people with refugee status interviewed by AFP and others who spoke to rights groups tell a different story.

With unemployment in Greece still officially at around 13 percent, 36-year-old



Cameroonian Yannick Ghislain Dzernyuy says there are "literally no jobs, and the ones you have pay very little."

Obtaining social insurance and tax registration can take months, and it's nearly impossible to learn Greek while working at the same time, refugees say.

Under the Helios scheme run in cooperation with the International Organisation for Migration, newcomers can avail of six-month integration classes and limited rent subsidies. But only refugees who gained the right to remain after 2018, or those already living in state-provided accommodation when they were granted asylum, may benefit.

Currently, fewer than 1,700 people are receiving the rental subsidies, and around 600 are enrolled in integration classes.

Moving West

Forced onto the streets, thousands of

refugees have left Greece for other EU states on short-term travel documents.

In June, the home affairs and migration ministers of Belgium, France, Germany, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, and Switzerland jointly complained to the European Commission that considerable numbers of refugees have been travelling from Greece and lodging new asylum claims elsewhere.

More than 17,000 people who had already received refugee status in Greece have requested asylum in Germany since July 2020, said a joint letter by the ministers, seen by AFP.

Complaining of 'flagrant abuse' of provisions allowing refugees 90-day travel through the Schengen Area, they urged the Commission to work with Greece on improving conditions for the physical subsistence and integration of refugees..

AFP



Beijing Winter Olympics closes after sporting drama, doping and golden Gu

Beijing, China - A Beijing Winter Olympics which saw sporting drama and milestones but was tarnished by a Russian doping scandal ended on Sunday with an uplifting closing ceremony.

The Games will be remembered for new stars such as Eileen Gu but also for the doping controversy which engulfed 15-year-old figure skater Kamila Valieva and because they took place inside a vast COVID-secure "bubble".

The "Bird's Nest" stadium, which also took centre stage when Beijing hosted the 2008 Summer Games, was the scene for a celebratory, snowflake-themed closing ceremony attended by President Xi Jinping and a socially distanced crowd seated among red lanterns.

Declaring the Games closed and handing over to 2026 hosts Milano-Cortina, International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach hailed an "unforgettable Olympic experience".

There was no feared mass outbreak of COVID-19 at the Games or in the wider community in the Chinese capital, but Bach said: "If we want to finally overcome this pandemic, we must be faster, we must aim higher, we must be stronger -- we must stand together."

"In this Olympic spirit of solidarity, we call on the international community: give equal access to vaccines for everybody around the world."

Fireworks lit up the night sky as the ceremony reached its crescendo, spelling out the words "ONE WORLD".

Doping overshadows Games

Since the opening ceremony on February 4, a new global star emerged in the form of 18-year-



Performers take part in the closing ceremony of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games, at the National Stadium, known as the Bird's Nest, in Beijing, on February 20 (AFP)

old freestyle skier Gu, who was born in California but switched to China in 2019 and became the unofficial face of the Games.

There was a new men's figure skating champion in 22-year-old Nathan Chen of the United States, who dethroned two-time Olympic champion Yuzuru Hanyu, in what could be the Japanese legend's final appearance at a Games.

Another iconic figure of winter sports, the American snowboarder Shaun White, will definitely not return to competition

In this Olympic spirit of solidarity, we call on the international community: give equal access to vaccines for everybody around the world

THOMAS BACH

of any sort after calling it quits.

The 35-year-old's last event ended agonisingly out of the medals and he was in tears as he bid farewell to snowboarding -- "the love of my life".

There was bitter disappointment for his fellow American, the

alpine ski star Mikaela Shiffrin, one of the biggest names at the Games but who went home without a medal.

There were tears from Valieva after it emerged that she had failed a drugs test prior to the Games, catapulting her to the

forefront of yet another Russian doping controversy to mar an Olympics and piling intense pressure on the teenager.

In what will go down as a notorious episode in the history of the Winter Olympics, the pre-tournament favourite for singles gold fell several times on the ice in the finals, to audible gasps from the socially distanced crowd of hand-picked spectators.

Her doping case looks certain to drag on in the coming months, long after the Games have

packed up. She was allowed to skate in the Chinese capital but has not been cleared of doping.

In a Games first, the skating team medals were not awarded after Valieva played a starring role in propelling the Russians to gold, ahead of the United States and Japan.

The American skaters made an 11th-hour court bid on Saturday to get their hands on their medals before they went home, but the Court of Arbitration for Sport rejected it.

AFP

Milestones

Fears about a mass COVID-19 outbreak in the "closed loop" bubble sealing the nearly 3,000 athletes and about 65,000 others never materialised.

Some athletes did though catch the illness and the pandemic was never far away -- Russia and Canada's women ice hockey teams played each other wearing medical masks after the results of their daily PCR tests failed to arrive in time.

Concerns about human rights had dominated the build-up, with the United States leading a diplomatic boycott by its closest allies over China's rights record, especially the fate of the Muslim Uyghur minority in Xinjiang. Their athletes did however compete.

China warned in the fraught lead-up that foreign athletes criticising the authorities could face consequences, but in the end, any protests against the hosts were extremely muted.

There were numerous records -- among them American bobsleighter Elana Meyers Taylor becoming the most decorated Black athlete in the history of the Winter Olympics.

Snowboarder Zoi Sadowski Synnott made history for New Zealand, winning her country's first Winter Games gold; with Gu pocketing two golds, the hosts enjoyed a significant medal bump and finished third in the medals table with nine golds.

Finland finally win hockey gold in last event of Beijing Games

Beijing, China - Finland roared back to beat defending champions Russia 2-1 on Sunday and win the country's first gold medal in ice hockey, in the final event at the Beijing Olympics.

Russia scored first on a power-play goal by Mikhail Grigorenko 13 minutes into the game after Finland's Hannes Bjorninen was sent to the penalty box for high-sticking.

But the more cohesive Finnish attack controlled the puck for much of the match and continually created chances.

The Finns tied it in the second period when a shot by Ville Pokka squirted between the legs of a Russian defender and past imposing two-metre (6-foot-6) goalie Ivan Fedotov.

Finland went ahead 30 seconds into the final period when Bjorninen scored, and nearly added more down the stretch.

With the victory, Finland finally add gold to a packed Olympic medals case in ice hockey.

The Finnish men have now won medals in seven of the past 10 Winter Olympics going back



Finland's Hannes Bjorninen (C) falls on the ice as he protects the puck from Russian players (AFP)

to 1988, including two silver and four bronze.

"It is hard to put in words what this means. Hockey is a big thing in Finland," said captain Valterri Filppula.

"We have come close a couple of times and it is finally nice to get the first one (gold)."

Stacked with talent

Finland and the Russians came

into Beijing as joint favourites after perennial contenders Canada and the United States were weakened by the NHL's decision to keep its stars home over pandemic concerns.

The US and Canada, making do with second-choice rosters, fell in the quarterfinals.

Even without the NHL present, Finland and Russia would have been formidable con-

tenders. Both are stocked with top talent from Russia's Kontinental Hockey League (KHL), widely considered the world's second-best after the NHL, and a wealth of championship experience.

Finland had several key players from their 2019 world championship team and last year's second-place squad.

AFP

MEDALS TABLE				
	G	S	B	T
Norway	16	8	13	37
Germany	12	10	5	27
China	9	4	2	15
United States	8	10	7	25
Sweden	8	5	5	18
Netherlands	8	5	4	17
Austria	7	7	4	18
Switzerland	7	2	5	14
Russian O C	6	12	14	32
France	5	7	2	14
Canada	4	8	14	26
Japan	3	6	9	18
Italy	2	7	8	17
South Korea	2	5	2	9
Slovenia	2	3	2	7
Finland	2	2	4	8
New Zealand	2	1	0	3
Australia	1	2	1	4
Great Britain	1	1	0	2
Hungary	1	0	2	3
Belgium	1	0	1	2
Czech Republic	1	0	1	2
Slovakia	1	0	1	2
Belarus	0	2	0	2
Spain	0	1	0	1
Ukraine	0	1	0	1
Estonia	0	0	1	1
Latvia	0	0	1	1
Poland	0	0	1	1
G Gold S Silver B Bronze T Total				



USA's Vincent Zhou performs in the figure skating exhibition gala during the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games on February 20

US skater barred from closing ceremony after missing competition

Beijing, China - American figure skater Vincent Zhou had a terrible Beijing Olympics - a potential medallist, he had to withdraw the day before his event after a positive COVID-19 test. Then on Sunday, he was barred from the closing ceremony.

Finally out of isolation, Zhou was set to march with his team at the "Bird's Nest" stadium on Sunday - but was barred as he tried to board a bus after being flagged as a close contact risk.

"I have tested negative 14 times in a row. I have antibodies

and am not contagious whatsoever," Zhou wrote in frustration in an Instagram story.

"I am double masked and would be walking outdoors with the same people I am about to travel with in a couple of hours. Out of everyone marching, I would be the least at risk of transmitting to others."

Zhou had managed to make it onto Olympic ice earlier on Sunday, skating first in the traditional event-ending exhibition gala.

AFP

China celebrates record Winter Olympics haul

Beijing, China - China celebrated a record gold medal haul as the Beijing Winter Olympics concluded Sunday, narrowly beating out chief geopolitical rival the United States to rank third in the medal count.

Traditionally much stronger in the Summer Games, China earned an unprecedented nine gold medals during its home-hosted winter edition after the state ploughed resources into training.

By Sunday afternoon, at least four trending hashtags related to China's best haul had received almost 200 million views on the Twitter-like platform Weibo.

Much of that commentary was as pleased about beating the United States by one place as it was China's best winter finish.

"Last year the US surpassed China by one gold medal in the Summer Olympics, this year China surpassed the US by one medal," read one comment liked more than 2,800 times.

The Chinese team won 15 medals in total - nine golds, four silvers and two bronzes.

Figure skating duo Han Cong and Sui Wenjing secured the country's last Olympic gold -- and broke a previous world record -- in an emotional pairs event on Saturday evening.

Winter powerhouse Norway was in first place with 16 gold medals and a total of 37. Runner-up Germany received 12 golds and 27 medals in total.

Beijing sees the Winter Games as a propaganda show-piece with which to burnish its international image and project soft power abroad.

But the event has been



Gold medalists China's Sui Wenjing and Han Cong celebrate during the venue ceremony of the pair skating figure skating event (AFP)

The winter sports industry is still in its infancy. So coming third in the medal tally, ahead of countries like the US and Canada, is a real achievement

MIN RUI, 32-YEAR-OLD TECH WORKER



clouded by political controversies.

The United States led a diplomatic boycott of the Games over China's human rights record, which was joined by multiple Western countries.

The Games also saw a doping

scandal involving a teenage Russian athlete and growing fears of a Russian invasion of Ukraine.

However, Chinese medal-winners have been lionised as national heroes by state media, while Chinese social media has

been flooded with patriotic comments.

"I am so proud of the Chinese team's achievements," 32-year-old tech worker Min Rui told AFP on Sunday as she shopped with two girlfriends near an Olympic countdown clock in one of Beijing's central districts.

"The winter sports industry is still in its infancy and many athletes were chosen from other sporting disciplines. So coming third in the medal tally, ahead of countries like the US and Canada, is a real achievement."

Beijing's investment in developing winter sports has nurtured

a new generation of breakout stars.

Among them are teenage snowboarding champion Su Yiming and Chinese-American skier Eileen Gu, who is the most decorated Chinese athlete with two golds and one silver medal.

Gu switched to compete for China over the United States in 2019.

China won one gold and a total of nine medals at the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics.

It had never won more than three gold medals in Winter Games history.

AFP

BROKEN VALIEVA TO WHITE'S FAREWELL:

Five Beijing Games moments

Beijing, China - There were plenty of tears, some cheers from COVID-restricted crowds and the sight of an ice hockey match between players wearing medical masks.

Here are five memorable moments from the Beijing Olympics:

1 Valieva's disturbing collapse

In what will go down as one of the most excruciating performances in Winter Olympic history, the 15-year-old Russian figure skater Kamila Valieva dissolved on the ice to finish fourth in the women's singles competition.

The pre-event favourite had been cleared to compete despite failing a drugs test, but with the global spotlight on her, it all became too much.

The talented teenager fell several times - to gasps and shrieks from the audience - and sobbed into her hands at the end.

2 White's emotional farewell

Shaun White said there was "no agony, just happiness" after the snowboard legend narrowly missed out on a medal in his last competitive appearance.

The three-time Olympic champion from the United States finished fourth in the men's halfpipe, falling on his third and final run with a farewell medal up for grabs.

The 35-year-old looked subdued as he slid into the finish area and had tears in his eyes, before smiling and waving to the applauding crowd.

3 Shiffrin's Games to forget

Alpine ski star Mikaela Shiffrin had been one of the biggest names in Beijing, but she had an Olympics to forget and failed to win a medal of any description.

After sliding out of the slalom, she plonked herself on the snow at the side of the course, her helmeted head bowed down and resting on her crossed arms.

One of the big favourites to win the event, her shock early exit came just two days after her bid for gold in the giant slalom ended in much the same dejected fashion.

4 A cool story

Russian and Canadian women ice hockey players wore medical masks for their match after the Russians' daily COVID results failed to arrive in time, in a bizarre pandemic-inspired chapter to the Games.

The Russians took their masks off in the third period after their PCR test results came through and showed they were negative. The Canadians opted to keep them on for the whole game.

5 Policeman wins two gold

Austria's Johannes Strolz bounced back from being dropped from his team - even working as a traffic policeman for a time - to emulate his father in winning alpine combined gold.

AFP

Most decorated figure in wintersports, Shiffrin vows to rebound after 'epic under-performance'

Yanqing, China - Mikaela Shiffrin arrived at the Beijing Games as one of the most recognisable and decorated figures in wintersports, at the peak of a career in which she has dominated the World Cup.

But the American will return home from China with nothing to show from what she dubbed an "epic under-performance".

The 26-year-old failed to add to the two Olympic golds she won in the 2014 and 2018 Games in Sochi and Pyeongchang.

Not only did Shiffrin fail to even finish the slalom, giant slalom and alpine combined -- three events in which she had been a keen favourite -- she did not get close to the podium in either the super-G or downhill either.

Her failure to medal in those events, Shiffrin said, had left her feeling "like a joke", especially after what she said had been a good run-in to the Games.

Redemption came in part



USA's Mikaela Shiffrin takes part in the women's downhill training session on February 14 (AFP)

from a fourth-placed finish with the US quartet in the programme-ending mixed team parallel event on Sunday.

Shiffrin insisted that her experience at the Beijing Games had

given her a learning curve on how to stay positive, notably in the face of criticism, and bounce back from accumulated setbacks.

"Every single person on earth

goes through some kind of hardship and you just need to get up," she said.

"It's the most important take-away from the last couple of weeks for me and it has nothing

to do with the Olympics.

"I'm just grateful that this last couple of weeks has given me a platform to actually say it and maybe even learn something about it."

Shiffrin acknowledged that some of the criticism -- both online and in the media -- she had received had been overwhelming.

"In the grand scheme of things, I don't always receive a ton of hate," she said.

"But there are moments when it's so strong and people can be so mean that you don't want to get out of bed, you don't even want to exist anymore."

She added: "I don't want to talk to them. I hope I never meet them face to face, and I'm sure if I did they wouldn't say what they say and type online."

The Olympics, she continued, were "100 percent focused on the competitions and the skiing", but had also been three weeks of her life.

AFP



India sweep T20 series 3-0 against West Indies

Kolkata, India - Batsmen Suryakumar Yadav and Venkatesh Iyer helped India beat West Indies by 17 runs in the third Twenty20 international on Sunday to sweep the series 3-0.

Yadav, who smashed 65, and Venkatesh, who made an unbeaten 35, put on 91 runs for the fifth wicket to guide India to 184 for five after being invited to bat first in Kolkata.

Venkatesh also took two wickets with his medium-pace as the bowlers restricted West Indies to 167-9 as the hosts remained unbeaten in the six white-ball matches including a 3-0 ODI triumph.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Nicholas Pooran, who hit 61, raised hopes of a West Indies chase with two partnerships including a 48-run seventh-wicket stand with Romario Shepherd.

Pace bowler Shardul Thakur broke the stand to send back the left-handed Pooran and Shepherd fell for 29 off Harshal Patel who stood out with figures of 3-22. Pace spearhead Deepak Chahar removed the openers early before limping off the ground after 1.5 overs.

Pooran, who hit his third successive half-century, and Roman Powell, who smashed 25, counter-attacked in their partnership of 47 off 25 balls but Patel broke through.

Patel got Powell out and Venkatesh struck twice to send back skipper Kieron Pollard, for five, and Jason Holder, for two, to rattle the opposition batting.

Earlier India lost their top four batsmen for 93 runs before Yadav and Venkatesh got to-

gether to take the attack to the opposition.

Shreyas Iyer and Ishan Kishan, who made 34, hit back with a string of boundaries to bring up the team's 50 off 41 balls but leg spinner Hayden Walsh broke through.

Shreyas fell to Walsh for 25 off 16 deliveries and the left-handed Kishan soon followed his partner to the pavilion after being bowled by Roston Chase.

Yadav raised his fourth T20 fifty in 27 balls and finished with seven sixes including three in the final over that cost West Indies 21 runs.

AFP

SCOREBOARD		
INDIA		
R Gaikwad	c Mayers b Holder	4 (8)
Ishan Kishan	b Chase	34 (30)
Shreyas Iyer	c Holder b Walsh	25 (16)
Rohit Sharma	b Drakes	7 (15)
S Yadav	c Powell b Shepherd	65 (30)
V Iyer	not out	35 (19)
Extras:	(lb 10, w 4)	14
TOTAL:	(20 Ov, RR: 9.20)	184/5
Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-63, 3-66, 4-93, 5-184		
Bowling: J Holder 4-0-29-1, R Shepherd 4-0-50-1, R Chase 4-0-23-1, H Walsh 4-0-30-1, D Drakes 3-0-37-1, Fabian Allen 1-0-5-0		
WEST INDIES		
Kyle Mayers	c I Kishan b Chahar	6 (5)
Shai Hope	c Ishan Kishan b Chahar	8 (4)
N Pooran	c I Kishan b Thakur	61 (47)
R Powell	c Thakur b Patel	25 (4)
K Pollard	c R Bishnoi b VR Iyer	5 (7)
Jason Holder	c SS Iyer b VR Iyer	2 (6)
Roston Chase	b Patel	12 (7)
R Shepherd	c Sharma b Patel	29 (20)
Fabian Allen	not out	5 (3)
D Drakes	c Sharma b Thakur	4 (3)
H Walsh	not out	0 (3)
Extras:	(lb 3, w 7)	10
TOTAL:	(20 Ov, RR: 8.35)	167/9
Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-26, 3-73, 4-82, 5-87, 6-100, 7-148, 8-158, 9-166		
Bowling: D Chahar 1.5-0-15-2, Avesh Khan 4-0-42-0, V Iyer 2.1-0-23-2, S Thakur 4-0-33-2, R Bishnoi 4-0-29-0, H Patel 4-0-22-3		



India's Suryakumar Yadav plays a shot during the third and final international T20 against West Indies (AFP)



Sri Lanka batsman Kusal Mendis hits out against the Australian bowling during the fifth Twenty20 on February 20 (AFP)

Mendis slams 69 as Sri Lanka win final T20 against Australia

Melbourne, Australia - Kusal Mendis hit an unbeaten match-winning 69 and skipper Dasun Shanaka blasted 35 as Sri Lanka won the fifth and final Twenty20 against Australia by five wickets on Sunday to prevent a series whitewash.

The home side won all four previous games, three of them convincingly, and when skipper Aaron Finch won the toss and batted they were eyeing a big total.

But they were exposed early on by some impressive Sri Lankan bowling.

Australia struggled to 58 for three off 10 overs before late fireworks from Matthew Wade (43 off 27 balls) and Daniel Sams (18 off 15) ensured a competitive 154 for six.

With nothing to lose, Sri Lanka were up to the task.

Mendis and Shanaka shared an 83-run stand to send the game to the wire with nine needed off the last over from Kane Richardson, which they achieved with a ball to spare in a thrilling finale.

"The boys played really well throughout the series," said

Shanaka. "There was a clear statement that when it comes to the World Cup (in Australia this year) we will be really prepared."

AFP

SCOREBOARD		
AUSTRALIA		
Aaron Finch	c Kumara b Chameera	8 (12)
B McDermott	c Nissanka	
	b Jayawickrama	3 (13)
Josh Inglis	c & b Chameera	23 (20)
G Maxwell	c Chameera b Kumara	29 (20)
M Stoinis	c Karunaratne b Kumara	17 (10)
M Wade	not out	43 (27)
Daniel Sams	c sub b Karunaratne	18 (15)
Ashton Agar	not out	4 (2)
Extras:	(lb 2, w 7)	9
TOTAL:	(20 Ov, RR: 7.70)	154/6
Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-12, 3-55, 4-79, 5-82, 6-146		
Bowling: M Theekshana 4-0-27-0, Lahiru Kumara 4-0-34-2, D Chameera 4-0-30-2, P Jayawickrama 4-0-29-1, C Karunaratne 4-0-32-1		
SRI LANKA		
P Nissanka	c Maxwell	
	b KW Richardson	13 (8)
Kusal Mendis	not out	69 (58)
Kamil Mishara	run out	1 (3)
C Asalanka	b Agar	20 (19)
J Liyanage	run out	8 (9)
D Shanaka	b KW Richardson	35 (31)
C Karunaratne	not out	1 (1)
Extras:	(b 1, lb 1, w 6)	8
TOTAL:	(19.5 Ov, RR: 7.81)	155/5
Fall of wickets: 1-23, 2-24, 3-54, 4-71, 5-154		
Bowling: M Stoinis 2-0-13-0, D Sams 2.1-0-22-0, J Richardson 4-0-38-0, Kane Richardson 3.4-0-28-2, A Agar 4-0-19-1, A Zampa 4-0-33-0		

Oman Racing matches season best top five in Abu Dhabi ALMS race one at Yas Marina

Abu Dhabi, UAE - Aston Martin Vantage GT3 racer Ahmad Al Harthy produced a typically fast, committed and determined performance during round three of the Asian Le Mans Series at Yas Marina Circuit in Abu Dhabi on Saturday, February 19, on the way to matching a season-best top five finish.

Oman Racing's Harthy, plus teammates Charlie Eastwood and Sam De Haan, challenged hard for a deserved GT class podium finish but a red flag stoppage 90 minutes into the four-hour encounter, plus a series of Full Course Yellow cautionary periods, worked contrary to the team's strategy.

Fifth place though, added to sixth and fifth place results in rounds one and two last weekend at Dubai Autodrome, continues the Oman entry's consistent 2022 campaign in ALMS unabated - and Harthy is determined to sign-off the championship on a high on Sunday with a challenge for silver-



ware in the fourth and final round.

"We had really good pace, the car was amazing," said the Omantel, OQ and MHS-ITICS backed Omani, "Unfortunately the Safety Car, Red Flag and Full Course Yellows limited us from reaching the podium, but there are so many positives to take into race two. I'm absolutely happy with my pace in the car, Sam's initial start was really strong and

We had really good pace, the car was amazing. I'm absolutely happy with my pace in the car

AHMAD AL HARTHY

Charlie's ending was really strong as well.

"We're really happy to be in Abu Dhabi and really happy to show our true pace. If everything goes to plan, which obviously isn't always that easy with so much out of your control, we should have a good result in the final round and that's what we're hoping for."

He added, "P5 is very respectable, especially out of a big

and very strong grid, and being the fastest Aston Martin again as well. We're working extremely hard and the team is doing an amazing job to make sure we're as competitive as we can be."

Aston Martin 'factory' driver Eastwood qualified the No.69 car a strong fourth fastest for the round three GT class grid, but De Haan took the opening stint of the first Abu Dhabi race and put together a superb opening lap.

Storming through into second in GT, the Briton was shuffled back to eighth during a very tight battle around 15 minutes into the race but then mounted a great fightback. Prior to a Full Course Yellow cautionary period at the half-hour mark, De Haan had moved back into the top four and he then pitted to hand over the Oman Racing car to Harthy after another FCY late in the first hour.

Harthy climbed behind the wheel for hour two and the multiple GT endurance racing champion had plenty of work to do from 15th position in class.

SPECIAL DISCOUNT

NO 50 ONLY
31.50% discount

NO 20 ONLY
28.57% discount

- Hot & Cold Dispenser
- 2 Full Bottles
- 25 Refill Coupons
- White Tap Dispenser/ Tap Dispenser/ Manual Water Pump/ Cradle with Tap
- 2 Full Bottles
- 15 Refill Coupons

BUY & WIN 310 PRIZES

Get your raffle coupon on
• Purchase of NO 20 or NO 50 offer or
• Coupon book worth NO 20

Register your raffle coupon number at
www.omanoasis.com/discount2022 to win.

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

Special discount valid from 1st January 2022 to 31st March 2022. Conditions apply.

Scan QR Code to Register
C.R.No: 1365452 HM 06/14/2022

Sifr

SODIUM FREE DRINKING WATER

The healthy choice

Call Toll-Free 800 71 222 or GSM 9275 5522

f OmanOasis @ OmanOasisOfficial OmanOasisWater www.omanoasis.com

C.R. No.: 1365452

UNROAD YOURSELF



JEEP GLADIATOR

STARTS FROM

RO 247
PER MONTH

FREE 3 YEARS / 60,000 KMS SERVICE

FREE FIRST YEAR REGISTRATION

5 YEARS WARRANTY & ROADSIDE ASSIST

BOOK NOW

Terms and conditions apply.

Jeep
THERE'S ONLY ONE



CELEBRATE A NEW BEGINNING WITH NISSAN

This year, choose your favourite Nissan from an exciting range and get it with easy instalment options.

NISSAN PATROL CONQUER EVERYWHERE



Available in
4L V6 Engine 275hp & 5.6L V8 Engine, 400hp

EMI STARTING FROM
OMR **391**^{*#}

NISSAN X-TERRA BOND WHEREVER YOU GO



2.5L Engine, 4WD, 7-Speed AT, 7 Seater

EMI STARTING FROM
OMR **206**^{*#}

NISSAN ALTIMA TECH TO TAKE THE LEAD



2.5L Engine, 188hp
Also Available In 2.0L VC-Turbo Engine, 248hp

EMI STARTING FROM
OMR **184**^{*#}

[FOR DETAILS CLICK HERE](#)

*#EMIs mentioned are calculated on the price of the base model variant with 20% down payment and 3.30% rate of interest for 6 years loan tenure. Subject to credit approvals.

Bahwan
International
Group



مجموعة
بـهـوان
العالمية

**Suhail Bahwan
Automobiles LLC**



TOLL FREE
800 50011