



An independent unit reporting to him personally will be set up to measure the performance of government institutions and ensure their continuous assessment. The unit will also be mandated with proposing mechanisms to upgrade the performance of government institutions, gauging service quality and customer satisfaction

HM PRESIDES OVER CABINET MEETING

INDEPENDENT UNIT TO ASSESS PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

HM UNDERScores
SIGNIFICANCE
OF COLLABORATION
OF EFFORTS
OF ALL BODIES

EMPHASIS ON
FOSTERING
COMMUNICATION
AND INTERACTION
WITH SOCIETY

DIRECTIVES
TO STABILISE
FUEL PRICES IN
ACCORDANCE WITH
OCTOBER RATES

DIRECTIVES
TO PROMOTE
EMPLOYEES UNDER
THE CIVIL SERVICE
SYSTEM

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Tuesday chaired a meeting of the Council of Ministers at the Council's premises in Muscat.

At the outset of the meeting, His Majesty the Sultan gave thanks and praise to the Almighty Allah for the riches with which He has

endowed the Sultanate of Oman and its people. He prayed to the Almighty Allah to protect the Sultanate of Oman, its citizens and residents — and to perpetuate the bounties of health, fulfilment and tranquillity for all.

Then, His Majesty the Sultan reviewed developments in the local

arena. He underscored the significance of collaboration of efforts in all institutions of the State towards accelerating the development of government services, pursuing the implementation of digital transformation initiatives, forging comprehensive measures to address challenges and utilising available

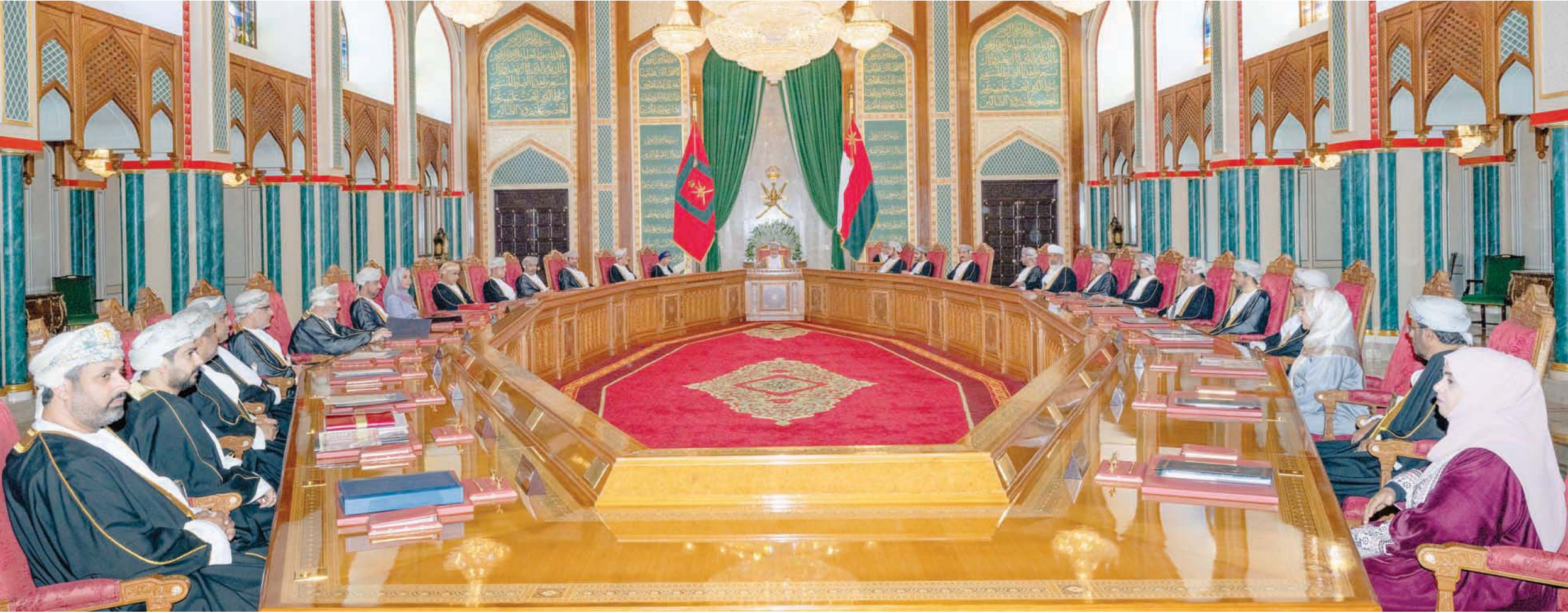
capacities and resources to keep pace with current and future situations. He also laid emphasis on fostering communication and interaction with society to meet its aspirations.

During the meeting, His Majesty the Sultan referred to the outcome of the performance assess-

ment of government institutions for the year 2020-2021. He took note of the efforts made in all sectors to upgrade performance and provide the best services to keep abreast of developments and advance the public interest.

In this context, His Majesty the Sultan said that an independent unit

reporting to him personally will be set up to measure the performance of government institutions and ensure their continuous assessment. The unit will also be mandated with proposing mechanisms to upgrade the performance of government institutions, gauging service quality and customer satisfaction.



Independent unit to assess performance of government institutions



FROM P1
His Majesty the Sultan also gave directives to initiate a unit to support decision making. The unit will report to the Secretariat-General of the Council of Ministers and it will be tasked with upgrading the standard of performance through

efficient decision making. In pursuance to His Majesty the Sultan's attention to employees of the State's Administrative Apparatus and to motivate them to ameliorate performance in the next stage, His Majesty the Sultan gave directives to promote a segment of

government employees under the Civil Service System and other civil systems, namely those eligible to promotion since 2011. The promotion of this segment takes effect from 2022. Also, in continuation of Royal attention to social and economic aspects and to the

services rendered to citizens, His Majesty the Sultan gave directives to stabilise vehicle fuel prices in accordance with the rates of October 2021 as a maximum ceiling. The government will bear the differences from any excess resulting from oil prices till the end of 2022.

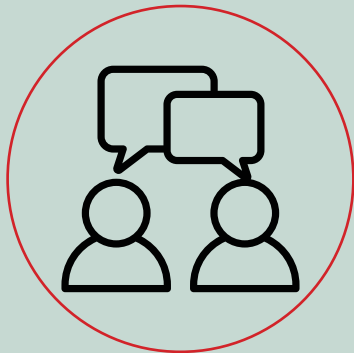
To incentivise the national economy and stimulate the investment climate, His Majesty the Sultan ordered the cancellation of a set of fees imposed on activities of some sectors, as well as the reduction of fees of other sectors. At the conclusion of the

meeting, His Majesty the Sultan touched on other areas of interest to citizens and residents and gave his Royal directives accordingly. His Majesty the Sultan wished all success in serving the good of "this dear homeland and its loyal people". — ONA



- Development of government services
- Implementation of digital transformation initiatives
- Utilising available capacities and resources to keep pace with current and future situations.

- Fostering of communication and interaction with society to meet its aspirations.
- Provide the best services to keep abreast of developments and advance the public interest.



- An independent unit reporting to HM will be set up to measure the performance of government institutions and ensure continuous assessment. The unit will also be mandated with proposing mechanisms to upgrade the performance of government services.

Fees for 548 govt services reduced after HM's orders

MUSCAT: Based on orders issued by His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, fees charged for various government services have been reduced.

The Ministry of Finance said fees for 548 services have been cut ranging from 17 per cent to 96 per cent. These services include those by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, and the municipalities sector.

The ministry clarified in a statement that a number of service fees have been canceled to facilitate the beneficiaries, and the competent authorities will take the necessary measures so that the new fees will take effect from January 1, 2022 and the details will be available on the ministry's website.

On Tuesday, His Majesty the Sultan issued orders to prepare a unified guide for pricing for government services. "In implementation of the directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik regarding the preparation of a unified guide for pricing government service fees, a unified mechanism for determining and pricing service fees, taking into account the potential financial, economic and social effects will be put in place."

A comprehensive view will be taken when studying the fees to account for both stakeholders, the government department as well as the applicant, to clarify the aspects through which it is possible to facilitate and simplify the procedures for providing the service. — ONA



- His Majesty the Sultan gave directives to promote a segment of government employees eligible to promotion since 2011. The promotion of this segment takes effect from 2022.

- His Majesty the Sultan gave directives to stabilize fuel prices with October prices as ceiling. The government will bear the differences until the end of 2022.



- To incentivise the national economy and stimulate the investment climate, fees imposed on activities of some sectors will be cancelled as well as reduced in other sectors.

CEILING ON FUEL PRICES WELCOMED

VINOD NAIR
@vinot_nair

People of the Sultanate of Oman have welcomed the Royal Directives to stabilise vehicle fuel prices in accordance with the rates of October 2021 as a maximum ceiling.

The government will bear the loss from the differences in oil prices till the end of 2022, the directive said.

The fuel prices for the month of October were 229 baisas/litre for M91; 239 baisas/litre for M95; and 258 baisas/litre for diesel. In line with the global trend, the fuel prices had gone up by three baisas for M91 and M95.

"We had hoped that the fuel prices will be contained as crude prices continue to go up due to demand," said Sahid in his social media post.

As fuel prices were expected to go up in the Sultanate of Oman in line with the rising demand for oil worldwide, motorists have been worried on the impact it will have on their daily budget.

"Fuel prices ceiling will give the positive feeling as businesses are getting normal have some people have to travel a minimum of 100 km daily for work and back," Mohammed al Balushi, who works in Halban and stays in Amerat.

Several expatriates who spoke to the *Observer* welcomed the



The fuel prices for the month of October were 229 baisas/litre for M91; 239 baisas/litre for M95; and 258 baisas/litre for diesel. In line with the global trend, the fuel prices had gone up by three baisas for M91 and M95.

decision as more offices are shifting away from city centre to places like Madinat Al Irfan (Airports area), Ghala and South Al Batinah.

The Sultanate of Oman's refineries recorded an increase in the production of automobile fuel until the end of September 2021 by 13 per cent, compared to the corresponding period of 2020, according to data released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

Of the total production, sales of petrol (M-95) stood at 9,510,900 barrels, an increase of 16 per cent, while its exports stood at 1,422,200 barrels, comprising a rise by 10 per cent, compared to the corresponding period in 2020.

The production of standard grade petrol (M-91) by Omani refineries stood at 9,933,000 barrels comprising a rise by 41 per cent till the end of September 2021, compared to the corresponding period in 2020.

Domestic sales of petrol (M-91) stood at 6,379,500 barrels comprising a 10 per cent increase, while its exports reached 3,850,300 barrels, a rise by 41 per cent, compared to the corresponding period in 2020.

Domestic sales of diesel stood at 9,953,900 barrels, a drop of 1 per cent, and its exports reached 17,382,200 barrels, an increase of 13 per cent, compared to the corresponding period in 2020.

Oman Sail to launch sailing festival on November 12 in Suhar

MUSCAT: Oman Sail has unveiled nationwide sailing initiative that aims at encouraging the communities across the country to try sailing this winter.

Supported by OQ, the social initiative marks the return of sailing activities post-Covid-19 and complements the series of World and Asian competitions that Oman Sail is organising this quarter of the year.

At each venue of the community initiative, there will be opportunities for visitors to try sailing and windsurfing, including Para Sailing through the SailFree programme and visits to local schools.

There will also be a beach clean-up operation at each location to highlight the importance of preserving the Sultanate of Oman's natural beauty and marine life for generations to come and SME activations in Musandam, Duqm and Salalah where local school children will be invited to attend.



The festival will run until January 15. The festival will be marked in Musandam (November 16-20); Kalbuh in Muscat (November 26-27); Sur (December 3-4); Hawana Salalah (January 6-8, 2022); and Duqm (January 11-15 2022).

The festival will kick off at the Silver Jubilee Garden in Suhar on November 12 and will run until January 15. The festival will be in Musandam (November 16-20); Kalbuh in Muscat (November 26-27); Sur (December 3-4); Hawana Salalah (January 6-8, 2022); and Duqm (January 11-15 2022).

Ali al Sheheimi, Al Mouj Muscat Sailing School Centre Manager, said, "the Sultanate of Oman has a rich maritime history and this is an excellent opportunity to reignite the nation's passion for sailing, offer a free introduction to the sport and encourage more people to take up the sport. — ONA

RO 11 million disbursed to 11,000 families hit by cyclone

MUSCAT: HE Dr Laila bint Ahmed al Najar, Minister of Social Development, affirmed that a sum of RO 11 million has been distributed to 11,000 families that suffered the direct impacts of the recent tropical condition Shaheen in the Sultanate of Oman. The cash came from the cyclone-related emergency relief aid.

The minister made the statement during an interview on the Economic Forum Programme at the Radio Sultanate of Oman. She explained that the relief aid is still being disbursed in some wilayats, along with other measures for addressing tenancy and inheritance issues. HE Dr Laila pointed out that her ministry developed its services to society, from institutional supervisor to an active partner in development and empowerment. The ministry's mission is to respond to the needs of families and the



HE Dr Laila bint Ahmed al Najar, Minister of Social Development, inspecting clean-up operations. — FILE PHOTO

neediest segments, with emphasis on training and troubleshooting through public awareness about domestic and global concerns, she said. HE Dr Laila added

that the ministry seeks to keep pace with the goals of Oman Vision 2040, notably the overall objective of realising welfare for all segments of society. — ONA

MINISTERS RECEIVE GCC SECRETARY-GENERAL



Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal al Busaidy, Minister of Interior received Dr Nayef Falah Al Hajraf, Secretary-General of the GCC, in Muscat on Tuesday. The meeting reviewed the agenda of the GCC Interior Ministers' Meeting, which is scheduled to be held in the coming period. It also discussed topics related to security work between the GCC countries. The meeting further touched on the role of the GCC Secretariat General in enhancing the joint GCC action. — ONA



Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister received Dr Nayef Falah Al Hajraf, Secretary-General of the GCC, and Abdulrahman Ahmed Al Harbi, GCC General Coordinator of Negotiations and Head of the Negotiations Team, in Muscat on Tuesday. The meeting discussed a spectrum of topics on the joint GCC action. It also reviewed means of enhancing cooperation and relations with friendly countries, unions and regional and international organisations in economic and trade spheres. — ONA

Oman hosts international meet of pharmacovigilance

MUSCAT: The 20th annual meeting of the International Society of Pharmacovigilance (ISOP) began on Monday under the auspices of Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed al Saeedi, Minister of Health.

The three-day event is hosted by the Ministry of Health, Directorate General of Pharmaceutical Affairs and Drug Control. Dr Mohammed al Rubaie, Director-General of Pharmaceutical Affairs and Drug Control, affirmed that this meeting is a platform for discussing current issues and concerns related to pharmacovigilance raised particularly amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has compelled the national regulatory authorities and the National Immunisation Programme to implement vigilance plans for vaccines in order to monitor the safety and effectiveness of Covid-19 vaccines.

Al Rubaie highlighted the significance of pharmacovigilance being an essential part of the medical care system.

He pointed out that the ministry seeks to adopt the best practices related to pharmacovigilance in order to ensure the safety and security of traded medicines in the Sultanate of Oman.

He added that the success of pharmacovigilance depends on



the optimal use of information and communication technology to process and analyse data, immediate interventions, and corrective measures that are supported by a high-standard audit process.

Meanwhile, Dr Mira Harrison, President of ISOP, said that the ISOP provides an independent international forum for scientific discussion and debate in the field of pharmacovigilance and creates opportunities for collegial relationships and networks.

The event sees 300 participants from all over the world and on-site event brings together approximately 100 participants representing pharmacovigilance regulatory authorities and pharmaceutical companies,

in addition to international organisations and bodies such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

The event aims to identify updates of monitoring and analysing adverse effects of drugs and finding necessary solutions to avoid or reduce their severity.

The agenda of the meeting includes a spectrum of scientific sessions that address a number of topics including global post marketing safety surveillance of Covid-19 vaccines-planning and implementation, coordinating key stakeholders of national pharmacovigilance and harmonising safety surveillance across different groups of health products, in addition to integrating

safety data from different sources.

Moreover, sessions will review global updates regarding risks and benefits of medicines in pregnancy, incorporating new patient safety challenges into pharmacovigilance, trends in the development of global regulatory frameworks for pharmacovigilance, and promoting patient safety through pharmacovigilance infographics and other visuals.

Selecting the Sultanate of Oman to host this global event reflects the prominent position of the country in the field of health and pharmacy services, particularly the regulatory role the Ministry of Health plays in ensuring effectiveness, safety and security of medicines. — ONA

MTC hosts conference on water engineering

MUSCAT: The Military Technological College (MTC) organised Oman International Conference on Water Engineering and Management of Water Resources in Muscat on Tuesday. The conference was held under the auspices of Air Vice Marshal Khamis bin Hammad al Ghafri, Commander of the Royal Air Force of Oman (Rafo), and Chairman of the college's Board of Directors. The meeting saw the participation of 40 scholars and keynote speakers, as well as more than 200 participants from all over the world. The event included various research papers, diverse experiences and scientific discussions.

In his speech, the Dean of MTC underscored the importance of organising similar events and keeping pace with developments

in the research field in accordance with Oman Vision 2040. The chief guest toured the exhibition which was held on the sidelines of the conference. He viewed a demonstration by private sector companies, which presented their projects in the field of water resources. Meanwhile, Eng Ali bin Mohammed al Abri, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources for Water Resources, said that the conference is a great opportunity to discuss issues related to water resources in the regional and international levels. He added that he looks forward to see the recommendations of the conference implemented by departments concerned to contribute to solving the challenges facing water resources. — ONA

Oman Air's add-ons to enhance journey

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 9

Oman Air, the national carrier of the Sultanate of Oman, has launched a suite of new services for passengers arriving and departing Muscat International Airport.

“As a premium airline with a long list of award-winning products and services, easing the airport journey was the natural next step in providing more flexibility and convenience for our guests”, said Oman Air Chief Executive Officer Abdulaziz al Raisi.

When arriving to Muscat International Airport, Meet & Greet Arrivals provides a quick, easy and expedient airport check-out. Passengers are greeted at their arrival gate and escorted through fast track passport control and customs to the main arrivals area. Service also includes buggy transfer to the Primeclass Lounge for light refreshments, dedicated porter at baggage carousels and personal escort to ground transportation or pick-up point.

When departing Muscat International Airport, Meet & Greet Departures offers expedited check-in at Departures Gate A (First and Business Class Gate) followed by fast track escort through immigration and security and through the airport to flight boarding gate. Service also includes dedicated curbside assistance, complimentary 3-hour access to the Primeclass Lounge, buggy transfer and personal porter to assist with bags. When arriving or departing Muscat International Airport, economy class passengers can now purchase Primeclass Fast Track service to avoid long lines and speed up their journey with dedicated passport lanes and security counters.

When departing Muscat International Airport, Primeclass Lounge elevates the travel journey with comfort and convenience for both business and leisure travellers. The service includes 3-hour access with full-board services, open buffet, relaxation zone, private and family rooms, free entry for children under the age of two and more.

Nakheel Oman takes part in the global trade fair

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 9

Nakheel Oman Development Company concluded its participation in the 14th edition of Yummex Middle East, the world's largest trade fair for confectionery and snacks.

The trade fair had space dedicated to major date production companies, distributors, hotels, restaurants, retail stores and other traders specialised in the dates sector in order to discuss opportunities to supply fresh and dried dates products and other related date products.

The company's corner



witnessed a great demand from suppliers, retailers and global wholesalers. Nakheel Oman seeks to establish and create a commercial exchange to promote

and market Omani date products and their derivatives from the manufacturing industries, as well as open new channels in the food industry worldwide.



Event highlights industrial safety

MUSCAT: Madayn (The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates) organised on Tuesday a discussion on 'Safety and security requirements and challenges of insurance coverage provision for industrial units.'

A number of public and private bodies participated in the session including the Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority, Public Authority for Social Insurance, Capital Market Authority, insurance companies, and companies and factories based in Madayn's industrial cities.

The discussion session underlined the safety and security requirements in the industrial units; occupational accidents, injuries and diseases; and the significance of safety and security equipment and solutions in the

The discussion session underlined the safety and security requirements in the industrial units; occupational accidents, injuries and diseases

workplace.

Moreover, the session highlighted the reasons of insurance coverage refusal by insurance companies; key insurance coverages and products available for industrial units; challenges faced by insurance companies in covering industrial establishments; legal provisions that hinder insurance companies and modification recommendations for the Capital

Market Authority; reinsurance agreements and risk assessment procedures and property valuation in the industrial units.

It furthered discussed requirements of insurance companies regarding security and safety facilities; incentives and promotional offers that insurance companies can provide to the industrial units that comply with occupational health and safety standards; in addition to insurance coverage related recommendations. The event also highlighted the best practices and models in the provision of insurance coverage, and adoption of safety and security requirements, as well as underlined suggestions to unify the insurance policy among all insurance companies. — ONA

Knowledge management to boost efficiency

DR MOHAMMED SHAFIUDDIN

Knowledge management which is the innovative branch of management started to change into many new domains in the new era of Covid-19. Knowledge management is one of the branches which boosts the efficiency of an organisation's decision-making ability. The four components of knowledge management are people, process, content/information technology and strategies.

When we examine the three-step process of knowledge management, the three steps are knowledge accumulation, integration and reconfiguration. This process is known for its natural ability to promote strategy and practicality suitable to all the organisations. These three steps appear to be complicated but in practice they are highly interrelated. Knowledge accumulation is linked with integration and reconfiguration which ensures that companies exchange knowledge to overcome challenging situations in the time of Covid-19.

The world is rapidly changing day by day and the business world more than most. No environment has changed as quickly as Covid-19. During this stage, the knowledge collected by organisations should be kept within their business and used to improve to face competitors.

As flexible work arrangements become the new and compulsory norm, businesses face new operational challenges in this period. So, it is necessary for the organisations to find new ways to innovate their offices



The world is rapidly changing day by day and the business world more than most. The knowledge collected by organisations should be kept within their business and used to improve to face competitors

and work remotely. These new imperatives make the organisation both technologically and culturally for transformation and ultimately require businesses to think strategically about how to keep employees engaged with the organisation's collective knowledge. The organisations which are faster can adapt new flexible work models and faster they gain advantages of the market. The pandemic changed the urgency of customer interactions rapidly. As self-service dominates, human interactions with companies become crucial points. In fact, great customer experiences rest on great employee experiences. The pandemic has forced

organisations to adopt a flexible work system. Flexible working means these workers work when, where, and how they need to. This is the future of work, which increases employee productivity and makes companies more quickly into desired ways. Knowledge management is necessarily required technology to adopt a flexible working model. It democratises organisational knowledge and helps faster for teams to grow and acquire goals.

Organisations must select a knowledge management solution which allows simple content capture, robust content life cycle management, and easy access.

Ineffective knowledge management impacts the financial front and employee satisfaction levels of the organisation. So, while applying knowledge management the nature of the knowledge not the process plays an important role in the development of organisations efficiency. Nowadays neither the brainstorming nor the group discussion works effectively but where to keep what is most important in the knowledge management system.

The author is with OCMT-Barka.

FIXED LINE INTERNET USERS RISE 7.4 PER CENT

The total number of mobile phone subscriptions decreased by 3.4 per cent at the end of September 2021

MUSCAT: The total fixed line Internet subscriptions in the Sultanate of Oman reached 522,127 by the end of September 2021 while the number of fixed Internet subscriptions via Internet protocol increased by 7.4 per cent compared to the same period in 2020, according to data released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

Of this, total fixed telephone line subscriptions reached 585,362 by the end of September 2021 while prepaid and postpaid analogue fixed telephone lines fell by 4.8 per cent to 283,891 subscribers compared to the same period in 2020.

The number of fixed Internet subscriptions via Internet protocol stood at 244,896. Moreover, ISDN channel subscriptions rose by 2.8 per cent compared to the same period in 2020 to reach 48,543. Fixed wireless subscriptions reached 1,231 by the end of September 2021, comprising a drop by 15.6 per cent.

Public payphones remained the same at 6,801. The total number of mobile phone subscriptions decreased by 3.4 per cent at the end of September 2021 to reach 5,872,681. Of

those, prepaid mobile phone subscriptions came first with 4,656,017, comprising a decrease by 10.2 per cent compared to same period in 2020. The number of subscribers through service providers reached 3,625,106 while subscriptions through resellers stood at 1,030,911.

Fixed broadband Internet subscriptions that have more than 256 kilobytes speed went up by 5.6 per cent to 520,082 compared to the same period in 2020. Moreover, the number of inter Internet net subscriptions of a speed lower than 256 kilobytes (including phone calls and some leased Internet connections) reached 2,045, comprising a rise by 0.5 per cent compared to the same period in 2020. The number of mobile broadband subscribers stood at 5,088,357 at the end of September 2021, comprising an increase by 8.6 per cent compared to September 2020.

The total international capacity of the Internet went up by 3.4 per cent to hit 1,461,777 megabytes compared to the same period in 2020. Moreover, the number of local leased circuits reached 4,949, whereas the number of Telex line subscriptions stood at 116 by the end of September 2021. — ONA

Master class of Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh held

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 9

A four-day Advanced Dentistry Masterclass jointly accredited by the Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh and Oman Medical Specialty Board (OMSB) was held at Oman Dental College (ODC).

The first-of-its-kind masterclass targeted all the general dental practitioners who wished to upgrade their skills in endodontics saw 21 delegates working as dentists in various private establishments attending the classes.

The sessions included 13 lectures, 03 guest lectures and 28 hours of hands-on workshop over 4 days.

"This masterclass has been specifically designed to upgrade the skills of endodontics in General Dentists and provide the community with better treatment results", said Dr Viresh chopra from ODC.

"The course covered broad range of endodontic topics delivered through direct coaching with lectures and hands-on workshops" said Dr Gurdeep Singh.

This course provided the participants with 16 CPD points from OMSB and 20 from RCSED making a total of 36 CPD points. The workshop was concluded by distributing certificates to the delegates by the Dean of Oman Dental College Dr Nutayla al Harthy.

"As learning is an ongoing process, high quality CPD activities like these will help upgrade skills and provide much better treatment to the community and help community achieve better oral health" said Dr Al Harthy.



Procurement Department

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Oman Data Park SAOC, (hereinafter referred to as 'ODP') announces the following Tenders for local and international bidders:

Tender Ref.	Tender Title	Tender Fees	Start date for documents sale/collection	Last date for documents sale/collection	Tender submission date
RFP#02-09-21	DMARC & Email Authentication Services	25 OMR	10/11/2021	18/11/2021 before 2:00 PM	1/12/2021 before 2:00 PM
RFP#03-09-21	External Vulnerability Management Detection and Response	25 OMR	10/11/2021	18/11/2021 before 2:00 PM	1/12/2021 before 2:00 PM
RFP#04-09-21	Internal Vulnerability Management	25 OMR	10/11/2021	18/11/2021 before 2:00 PM	1/12/2021 before 2:00 PM
RFP#05-01021	Brand Protection/Anti Phishing Services	25 OMR	10/11/2021	18/11/2021 before 2:00 PM	1/12/2021 before 2:00 PM
RFP#06-01021	ADAudit & Exchange Reporting	25 OMR	10/11/2021	18/11/2021 before 2:00 PM	1/12/2021 before 2:00 PM
RFP#07-01021	Mobile Application Penetration Testing Service	25 OMR	10/11/2021	18/11/2021 before 2:00 PM	1/12/2021 before 2:00 PM

Instructions to Bidders:

- Any Clarification shall be emailed to the Contact Point before the Submission Date
- If applicable, site visit may be conducted to allow Bidders over viewing site conditions and share the proposal accordingly.
- Bidders are requested to submit their Technical and Commercial Bid on or before the Submission Date in sealed envelope along with a soft copy inside the sealed envelopes via USB to the physical address: [7th Floor, Zone 2, KOM4, Knowledge Oasis Muscat PO Box 35, PC 135 Rusayl, Sultanate of Oman]
- Technical and Commercial Bid shall be submitted in two separate envelopes.
- Any Bid received after the time and date mentioned in the Submission Date will be rejected automatically.
- ODP is not obliged to accept the lowest priced Proposal.

Tender collection: specialized companies may obtain Tender documents/ specifications from procurement department upon receipt of complete payment of tender fees, scanned copy of tender fee deposit receipt along with a copy of company registration certificate to Email: accounts@omandatapark.com provided with company name, tender ref. and contact person as a mandatory.

ODP Bank accounts details:

Account Name: Oman Data Park SAOC
Account No: 0614-50035765-0001
Name of bank: Meethaq Islamic Banking
Branch: SQU Meethaq branch
Swift Code: BMUSOMRXISL

For further clarification, all bidders shall be communicated with the Contact Point:
Malik Al Sagri- Procurement specialist | T: +968 24171194 E: Procurement@omandatapark.com

Israeli strikes hit Syria, two soldiers wounded

DAMASCUS: Israeli missile strikes on central and western Syria on Monday evening wounded two Syrian soldiers, state news agency Sana said, quoting a military source.

They targeted “the central and coastal regions... wounding two soldiers and causing some material damage”, it said.

“Syrian air defences responded to the enemy’s missiles and shot down several of them,” the agency added, without giving further details. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor said the raids hit close to a military airport in central Homs province.

Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman said Syrian government forces have military posts in that area “where groups” are also deployed. According to the Observatory, Syria’s air defences downed at least four missiles.

Similar strikes on November 3 hit positions held by the Syrian government and its allies near Damascus, according to the



This picture shows an aerial view of destruction in Syria’s northern city of Raqa. – AFP

Observatory. After those strikes, Sana confirmed the raids but said they only caused material damage.

Israel rarely comments on

individual strikes, but has confirmed carrying out hundreds in Syria since the civil war erupted in 2011 in a bid to stop gaining a foothold on its doorstep.

BOOSTING TROOPS

Egypt said it was boosting troop numbers around Rafah in restive Sinai in the battle against IS group militants, after

striking a coordination deal with neighbouring Israel.

No details of how many extra soldiers would be sent, but it is the first agreed increase in troops since 2018.

“The joint military committee succeeded in amending the security agreement, in coordination with the Israeli side, to increase the number of (Egyptian) border guard forces” in Rafah, the army’s spokesperson said in a statement.

Israel’s army said they would “continue working together to ensure security along our border”.

Egypt’s Rafah crossing is the only passage to the Palestinian Gaza Strip not controlled by Israel.

The deployment comes amid “efforts to preserve Egyptian national security,” Egypt’s statement added.

Egypt was the first Arab country to sign a peace treaty with the Jewish state in 1979 after decades of enmity and conflict.

The peace treaty requires each

side to agree to any change of troop numbers along the border region.

Militants in Egypt’s Sinai have multiplied their attacks since the army’s 2013 ouster of president Mohamed Mursi.

Authorities have been since February 2018 conducting a nationwide operation against militants, mainly focused on North Sinai and the country’s Western Desert. Around 1,073 suspected militants and dozens of security personnel have been killed since the start of operations, according to official figures.

In a rare public admission of close security cooperation with the Israelis, President Abdel Fattah al Sisi told CBS in 2019 that “the air force sometimes needs to cross to the Israeli side” adding that “that’s why we have a wide range of coordination with the Israelis”.

Cairo played a key role in negotiating a ceasefire in May between Israel and Hamas to end 11 days of fighting. — Agencies

Court orders restoration of Sudan Internet access

KHARTOUM: A Sudanese court ordered the country’s three main telecommunications providers to restore Internet access, as the country entered its sixteenth day of a blackout following a coup by military leaders on October 25.

While some Sudanese users have managed to find a connection, the blackout has made it difficult for most people to communicate, particularly with those outside the country.

A judge ordered Zain, MTN and local provider Sudani to restore Internet service immediately, according to lawyer Abdelazim Hassan, who raised a complaint on behalf of the Sudanese Consumer Protection Society.

The blackout has meant further impunity for attacks in Darfur, said Adam Rojal, spokesman for the Coordinating Committee for Refugees and Displaced People, which records attacks in the region.

At least four people have been killed in more than 10 militia attacks across the region, with more injured and assaulted, he said.

“The lack of Internet is allowing them to commit so



Sudanese youth wave a national flag as they protest in the streets of Khartoum. – AFP

many violations without accountability. We used the Internet to document and report and that would make them a little bit scared,” he said.

The blackout was also affecting camp residents economically by making it impossible for them to request or receive money from family abroad, Rojal said.

The coup, led by General Abdel Fattah al Burhan, halted a power-sharing arrangement between the military and civilians. Top civilian politi-

cians were detained and Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok was placed under house arrest.

Mediation efforts have stalled, and Burhan has said he is committed to appointing a technocratic cabinet until elections in July 2023.

However, more than two weeks into the military’s rule, while interim appointments have been made, the country is still without a cabinet, head of state Sovereign Council, or key judicial bodies.

— Reuters

Slow steps for Palestinian economic recovery: WB

GAZA CITY: Palestine’s economy is showing “signs of recovery” but still faces serious challenges including “very high unemployment and deteriorating social conditions” in Gaza, the World Bank said on Tuesday.

In the first half of 2021, growth reached 5.4 per cent, and is expected to reach 6 per cent this year, the World Bank said in a report. However, growth in 2022 is predicted to slow to around 3 per cent, it added.

“The way ahead is still uncertain,” said Kanthan Shankar, World Bank Country Director for the West Bank and Gaza, adding that progress “depends on coordinated actions by all parties in revitalising the economy and providing job opportunities for the young population”.

The Gaza Strip was hit hard during 11-days of devastating conflict with Israel in May, while the economy was also impacted by restrictions imposed to stem the spread of coronavirus.

In Gaza, a Palestinian enclave of two million people controlled by Hamas, unemployment stands at 45 per cent, while the poverty rate has risen to 59 per cent from 43 per cent five years ago.

“The dire living conditions and



Palestinian women attend a craft workshop funded by the World Bank Group in Gaza City. – AFP

the high dependency on social assistance of the people of Gaza is of particular concern,” Shankar said. In the occupied West Bank, the unemployment rate is around 17 per cent, the World Bank calculates, saying the “Palestinian Authority’s fiscal situation remains very challenging” and warning it was “no longer able to borrow from domestic banks”.

The PA’s deficit is expected to reach \$1.36 billion in 2021, it added.

The World Bank called on donors “to help reduce the budget deficit”, and for the “systematic transfer” of revenues Israel

raises from businesses operating in the so-called Area C of the West Bank, where Israel holds full control under the 1995 Oslo Accords.

“Releasing some of these funds would provide much needed quick financing in these difficult times,” it added.

Meanwhile, the Gaza Strip’s sole power plant was preparing to cease operations due to a severe shortage of fuel supplies in the Palestinian enclave. The Palestinian Energy Authority said on Saturday that supply of diesel fuel has not been delivered since last Tuesday. —Agencies

SHORT TAKES

BEIRUT

UAE foreign minister arrives in Damascus: Reports

The United Arab Emirates foreign minister landed in Damascus on Tuesday, Lebanese broadcasters reported, a sign of improving ties between President Bashar al Assad and the UAE.

There was no immediate confirmation from either the UAE or Syrian foreign ministries or the Syrian presidency, and no word on the visit on Syrian state media.

Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed would be the most senior Emirati dignitary to



visit Syria in the decade since the eruption of a civil war.

The foreign minister arrived with a senior delegation, according to Al Manar TV, which is run by Lebanon’s Hezbollah.

TUNIS

Tunisian dies after inhaling tear gas at protest

A Tunisian demonstrator died overnight after inhaling tear gas as police dispersed protests over the reopening of a landfill site, a medic and a relative said on Tuesday.

The 35-year-old died in the town of Aguerb in the central region of Sfax, which has seen weeks of angry demonstrations over a growing waste crisis. “Abderrazek Lacheheb was transferred to Aguerb hospital suffering from asphyxia,” a hospital official said. The man’s



cousin Houcine Lacheheb said the man had been alive when he arrived at the hospital but had died after security forces fired tear gas outside. “It was the police who killed him,” he said.

ROME

Pope condemns drone attack on Iraqi PM

Pope Francis on Tuesday condemned the recent drone attack on the residence of Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al Kadhimi in Baghdad as a “vile act of terrorism”.

He expressed his condolences to Al Kadhimi, his family and all those injured on Sunday.

The pope said the people of Iraq had the strength and wisdom to continue on the path of peace through dialogue and brotherly solidarity. Al Kadhimi survived the attack unharmed.



According to media reports, some bodyguards were injured.

It remains unclear who was behind the attack.

Pope Francis visited Iraq in early March this year on a trip lasting several days.

In brief

■ SINGAPORE



COURT DELAYS DISABLED MAN'S EXECUTION OVER COVID

Singapore's top court on Tuesday postponed the imminent execution of a Malaysian man — whom campaigners say is mentally disabled — after he tested positive for Covid-19, with his family hailing a “miracle.”

Nagaenthran K Dharmalingam was arrested in 2009 for trafficking a small amount of heroin into the city-state, which has some of the world's toughest drugs laws. He was sentenced to death the following year.

He was scheduled to be hanged on Wednesday after losing a series of appeals, despite mounting international outrage over the decision.

■ COLOMBO



15 DEAD IN SRI LANKA AND INDIA AFTER HEAVY RAINS

Heavy rains and landslides in several parts of Sri Lanka have left 10 people dead and over 15,000 displaced, officials said on Tuesday. In neighbouring Tamil Nadu state of India, across the Palk Strait, five people died in rain-related incidents.

Four were killed in landslides in two separate areas on Monday night in Sri Lanka.

In Rambukkana, 95 km east of the capital Colombo, three people from a family of four who were buried in a landslide died. One of them was rescued, while the bodies of three others were recovered, police said.

In the central Narmmla area, a 23-year-old woman was killed in a landslide.

■ WASHINGTON



EX-DIPLOMAT SAYS MYANMAR JUNTA 'OPEN' FOR PROGRESS

Bill Richardson (pictured), the former US diplomat turned global troubleshooter, said that he believed Myanmar's junta was open to working with the world on humanitarian relief and possibly more after a rare visit that drew scrutiny.

Richardson, a former US ambassador to the United Nations and governor of New Mexico, appeared last week in a photo meeting military leader Min Aung Hlaing, who had just been snubbed at a summit of the Asean regional bloc.

In an interview, Richardson said that he hoped he made progress including in addressing the severe Covid-19 outbreak.

IS violence dents Taliban claims on safety

TALIBAN ENVOY TO VISIT PAKISTAN AS INDIA HOSTS AFGHAN MEETING

ISLAMABAD: Last month, the family of Mawlawi Ezzatullah, a member of Afghanistan's Hizb-e Islami party, received a WhatsApp message from his phone: “We have slaughtered your Mawlawi Ezzat, come and collect his body.”

Ezzatullah's killing, in the eastern province of Nangarhar, was one of a steady stream of assassinations and bombings that have undermined Taliban claims that they have brought greater security to Afghanistan after 40 years of war.

Victims have ranged from former security officials from the ousted government to journalists, civil society activists, Taliban fighters and apparently random targets like Ezzatullah, whose family said he had no enemies they knew of.

The Taliban have said their victory has brought stability to Afghanistan, where thousands of people were killed in fighting between the group and Western-backed forces between 2001 and 2021 before the group emerged victorious.

But on just one day last week, pictures from Jalalabad — the provincial capital of Nangarhar



Taliban military from the Al Badr unit sit on armed vehicles during a parade in Kandahar on Tuesday. — AFP

— appeared online showing two bodies swinging from a rope. Residents also reported a mullah's murder and video footage was circulated of a group of gunmen firing into a car, apparently killing its occupants, one of whom was identified by local journalists as a Taliban official.

Reuters was unable to verify the images and footage independently.

On Sunday, according to locals, three bodies were brought into a hospital in Jalalabad after a roadside bomb explosion that apparently targeted Taliban fighters in a pickup truck.

Later that day, gunmen shot a

former Afghan army soldier in front of his house, killing him and two friends standing nearby.

The Taliban have downplayed such incidents, saying that after decades of war, it will take time for the country to be completely pacified. “There are 34 provinces in the country and in a week,

20 cases will be prevented for every one that takes place,” said spokesman Bilal Karimi. “We have had 20 years of revolution and invasion and the level of these incidents will go down.”

Some former soldiers and intelligence officers from the ousted government blame members of the Taliban for targeting them since taking over. The group has promised there would be no reprisals, but accepts rogue fighters may have acted alone. Many targeted killings remain unclaimed and some may be the result of local vendettas.

But others look the result of increasingly open conflict between the Taliban and a local affiliate of IS, a development which the new US Special Representative for Afghanistan, Tom West, said on Monday was causing concern in Washington.

“They are trying to undermine and discredit the Taliban. The Taliban promised security and they're trying to show they can't deliver it,” said Antonio Giustozzi, a specialist on militant groups from the Royal United Services Institute in London.

— Agencies

■ A BURNING ISSUE



An activist of the Indian Youth Congress holds a cutout of a Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) canister during a protest against the recent price hike of the LPG cylinder, outside the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in New Delhi on Tuesday. — AFP

Duterte daughter quits mayor race as election deadline looms

MANILA: The daughter of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte on Tuesday removed herself from the running for mayor of Davao City, just days away from a deadline to change candidates for a presidential election next year.

Sara Duterte-Carpio, who has been widely tipped to run to succeed her father, did not say why she was withdrawing from the mayor contest, but told supporters on Facebook that further announcements would be made later.

The 43-year-old has led opinion polls throughout this year as the most preferred candidate for president, but has said she does not want that job. The Philippines holds elections in May 2022 for positions from president down to governors, mayors and local officials. The window for changing candidates expires on November 15.

“This afternoon I am withdrawing my candidacy for may-



Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio (L) and Ilocos Norte Governor Imee Marcos gesture during an alliance meeting. — AFP file photo

or of Davao City,” she said, announcing her brother Sebastian, her vice mayor, will run instead.

Duterte-Carpio has repeatedly said she was not interested in running for president.

But she recently expressed willingness to forge an alliance with another presidential candidate, Ferdinand “Bongbong”

Marcos Jr, the controversial son and namesake of the late dictator who was overthrown in 1986.

The Marcos family has for decades been among the Philippines' most powerful political families. Marcos' supporters have urged Duterte-Carpio, who is known by her nickname Imee, to be his running mate. — Reuters

India's Pushkar Camel Fair returns after Covid hump

PUSHKAR, India: Hundreds of herders and their animals gathered in the desert city of Pushkar on Tuesday for India's biggest camel-trading fair.

The northern city typically attracts thousands of pilgrims, cattle traders and herders for the annual event, but it was called off in 2020 because of the pandemic.

The gathering in the desert state of Rajasthan sees traditional camel breeding communities trek sometimes hundreds of kilometres from their remote villages to trade their animals.

The 13-day fair, which opened on Monday, coincides with several auspicious days in the



A camel trader stands in front of his camels at the Pushkar Camel Fair in Pushkar in Rajasthan on Tuesday. — AFP

Hindu calendar, adding to the crowds thronging the revered lakeside city.

“Pushkar is about both cattle

trading and religious rituals,” Prafull Mathur from Rajasthan's animal husbandry department said.

“The Covid-19 situation hasn't fully normalised but we still expect a good attendance,” Mathur added.

Organisers usually hold competitions for camel herders, which are a major attraction for domestic and international tourists, but the government hasn't yet clarified if the contests will be allowed this year.

The fair is the only time of the year when camel breeders — most of whom live in remote, nomadic communities in the desert — can earn cash income that helps sustain their way of life.

The camels are mostly purchased by people from Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh to

use on their farms or as transport. Other animals, including horses, are also bought and sold at the event.

India's security forces deployed along the international border with Pakistan also use camels extensively to patrol remote stretches.

To help remote camel breeding communities diversify their income, the government has been trying to promote camel milk, camel leather and camel bone products.

The region's prominent camel herding community, Raikas, believe that the Hindu god Shiva handed them the responsibility to rear camels. — AFP



French President Emmanuel Macron with Benin's President Patrice Talon in Paris on Tuesday. — Reuters

France hands back 26 treasures looted from Benin

PARIS: France on Tuesday handed back 26 treasures that were looted from Benin during colonial times, fulfilling a promise made by President Emmanuel Macron to restore a lost part of Africa's heritage.

Benin President Patrice Talon and Culture Minister Jean-Michel Abimbola travelled to Paris to bring home the artefacts that were snatched by French forces 130 years ago.

Talon said he felt "overwhelming emotion" at recovering the objects taken during the ransacking of the kingdom of Dahomey in the south of present-day Benin, including a royal throne.

Speaking to reporters at the presidential palace in Paris, where France signed over the artefacts to Benin, Talon said the treasures were much more than cultural goods — the term used by France to describe them.

"This is our soul, Mr President", he said, flanked by Macron.

The French leader hailed "a symbolic, moving and historic moment" which had been long-

awaited by Africans.

The return of the pieces taken from Abomey palace, which also include three totemic statues, comes as calls mount in Africa for European countries to return the colonial spoils lining their museum shelves.

In France, most are held by the Quai Branly museum, which has begun a major review of its collection to identify works believed to have been acquired through violence or coercion.

French lawmakers last year passed a bill allowing Paris to return artefacts to both Benin and Senegal, another former French colony in west Africa.

Talon made clear that he saw Tuesday's handover as just the first step in a large-scale restitution process, asking "how do you expect my enthusiasm to be complete" when France still held other key artefacts.

But he added he was "confident" that further restitutions would follow.

"Beyond this handover, we will continue the work", Macron promised. — AFP

Hundreds of migrants stuck at Poland-Belarus border

SOKOLKA: Hundreds of migrants shivered in freezing temperatures and huddled round campfires on the Belarusian border with Poland on Tuesday in front of razor wire fences and lines of Polish border guards blocking their entry into the European Union.

Polish authorities were bracing for further clashes after some migrants used logs, spades and other implements on Monday to try to break down a border fence, escalating a months-long crisis that has prompted calls for tighter sanctions on Minsk.

Poland and other EU member states accuse Belarus of encouraging illegal migrants from the Middle East, Afghanistan and Africa to cross the border into the EU in revenge for sanctions already slapped on Minsk over human rights abuses.

"The Belarusian regime is attacking the Polish border, the EU, in an unparalleled manner", Polish President Andrzej Duda told a news conference in Warsaw.

"We currently have a camp of migrants who are blocked from the Belarusian side. There are about 1,000 people there, mostly young men. These are aggressive actions that we must repel, fulfilling our obligations as a member of the European Union."

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko's government, which is backed by Russia, denies manufacturing the migrant crisis and blames Europe and the United States for the plight of the people stranded at the border.

The European Commission



Migrants gather in a camp near the Belarusian-Polish border as they attempt to cross it in the Grodno region, Belarus on Tuesday. — Reuters

said on Tuesday Belarus was taking a "gangster-style" approach to the issue by illegally offering migrants easy entrance into the EU via its territory. It said more sanctions against Minsk were on the way.

"The citizens of these countries (in the Middle East and elsewhere) are being misused, are being made victims by state-sponsored activities", a Commission spokesperson told a briefing.

The United Nations refugee agency UNHCR also called for an end to the use of vulnerable as political pawns.

EU governments partially suspended a visa facilitation deal for Belarusian officials.

A spokesman for Poland's

Poland and other EU member states accuse Belarus of encouraging illegal migrants from the Middle East, Afghanistan and Africa to cross the border into the EU in revenge for sanctions already slapped on Minsk over human rights abuses

special services, Stanislaw Zaryn, said Belarusian security personnel were "firing empty shots into the air, simulating dangerous events" to further destabilise the situation at the border.

"We also know the Belarusian authorities are helping migrants to destroy the border barriers. We see how they bring them tools to cut wires... to destroy the fence", he added.

Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki visited the area early on Tuesday to show support for the thousands of additional soldiers, police and border guards deployed there.

Footage published by the Polish police on Tuesday showed migrants' tents and campfires on the Belarusian side of the barbed wire fence. Poland's Border Guard said it had registered 309 attempts to cross the border illegally on Monday and 17 people, mainly Iraqis, had been detained. — AFP

Tuvalu minister films climate speech standing in ocean

GLASGOW: Tuvalu's foreign minister has filmed a video address to be shown at a UN climate summit on Tuesday standing thigh deep in seawater and pleading for help as his country slips beneath rising oceans.

In the video, Simon Kofe tells delegates that "climate change and sea-level rise are deadly and existential risks for Tuvalu and low-lying atoll nations". "We are sinking, but so is everyone else", he said.

"And no matter if we feel the effects today, like Tuvalu, or in a hundred years we will all still

feel the dire effects of this global crisis."

The film begins with a close-up Kofe standing at a lectern, wearing a suit and tie, in front of a blue screen with Tuvalu and UN flags.

"We are demanding that global net-zero be secured by mid-century, that 1.5 degrees be kept within reach, that urgently needed climate finance be mobilised to address loss and damage", he pleaded.

"We are looking for the world to get its act together."

The camera then pulls out to reveal Kofe standing up to his



Simon Kofe gives a COP26 statement while standing in the ocean in Funafuti, Tuvalu. — Reuters

thighs in the water off Tuvalu's coast.

Delegates are gathered at the COP26 summit in Glasgow to try and implement the goals of Paris Agreement of limiting global heating to "well below" two degrees Celsius and to a safer 1.5°C cap if possible.

Host Britain says it wants the conference, which runs until the weekend, to "keep 1.5°C alive".

Based on latest national emissions cutting plans, Earth is set to warm by 2.7°C this century, according to the UN.

Kofe said his nation of 12,000 people was "preparing now for the worst case scenario, where our lands disappear and our people must leave".

He also said it was pursuing "bold legal avenues" to ensure that Tuvalu's borders are still recognised internationally if or when its land territory is lost to climate change.

"We cannot wait for speeches when the sea is rising around us", he said.

"We must take bold, alternative action today to secure tomorrow."

— AFP

GENEVA

World short of 1-2 bn Covid vaccine syringes

There could be a shortage of one to two billion syringes needed to administer Covid-19 vaccinations in 2022 which could also impact routine immunisations and undermine needle safety, the World Health Organization warned on Tuesday.



National health authorities should plan their needs well in advance to avoid the "hoarding, panic buying and type of situation" seen early in the pandemic with the lack of personal protective equipment, WHO expert Lisa

Hedman said. "We could have a global shortage of immunisation syringes that could in turn lead to serious problems such as slowing down immunisation efforts as well as safety concerns," she told a UN briefing.

PARIS

Harris arrives in Paris to ease France-US tensions

US Vice-President Kamala Harris touched down in Paris on Tuesday on a mission to further mend relations with France after a crisis sparked by a cancelled submarines contract. During her four-day visit — her third overseas trip in office — Harris will meet with French President Emmanuel Macron and attend a peace forum with other world leaders. She will also participate in a conference on Libya and join commemorations for the anniversary of the end of World



War I. Her trip comes after a huge French-American row that erupted in September when Australia walked out of a multi-billion-dollar submarines deal with Paris in favour of an alternative one with the US.

LONDON

Manchester United striker becomes MBE

Footballer Marcus Rashford has been made an MBE for services to vulnerable children at an investiture ceremony at Windsor Castle. The Manchester United and England striker was honoured by the Duke of Cambridge earlier. The 24-year-old has been recognised for his drive to ensure no child in need went hungry during the pandemic. He was joined by his mum Melanie, whose work around food poverty has seen a foodbank warehouse named after her. Rashford's



mother Melanie has also received recognition for her work around food poverty. In March 2020, Rashford took to social media to highlight his fears about the impact that shutting schools would have on disadvantaged children.

Is another Brexit showdown looming?

GUY FAULCONBRIDGE

What happens if Britain triggers emergency unilateral provisions in the Brexit divorce deal known as Article 16?

Article 16 is a clause in the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, a key part of the Withdrawal Agreement — the deal under which Britain left the European Union.

The Protocol sought to avoid a hard border between British-ruled Northern Ireland and EU member Ireland by introducing some checks on the movement of goods to Northern Ireland from mainland Britain. Article 16 is essentially an emergency brake that allows either side to take action if the Protocol leads to persistent “serious economic, societal or environmental difficulties”.

The Protocol does not define such difficulties so there is considerable ambiguity. According to Annex 7, either side can take rebalancing measures one month after formal notification unless a solution can be found within that month.

Triggering Article 16 is seen in Brussels and Dublin as the “nuclear option”. But Britain says the way the Protocol is being implemented is causing unforeseen trade friction and has made clear that unless the EU gives ground it will go ahead. “Article 16 is very much on the table,” Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s negotiator, Brexit minister David Frost, said in Brussels on Friday. “Time is running out.”

Britain, according to officials and diplomats, always planned to revise parts of the Brexit deal. Article 16 is the first big test of that strategy of Brexit renegotiation by attrition.

The EU briefly threatened to invoke Article 16 in January 2021 to restrict exports of Covid-19 vaccines, but then scrapped the plan after an outcry in London. The EU has cautioned Britain that triggering Article 16 — part of a deal Johnson signed in 2020 — would sour ties with the EU and destabilise Northern Ireland. — **Reuters**

The Trade and Cooperation Agreement that was agreed between the British government and the EU was contingent on the implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement which includes the Protocol

SIMON COVENEY
Irish Foreign Minister



A CARING HUSBAND

An Indonesian soldier holds an umbrella for his wife and child before a sending-off ceremony ahead of their 450-member strong assignment to the Indonesia-Papua New Guinea border, at a naval base in Palu, on Tuesday. — **AFP**

As climate damage mounts, poor nations press wealthy to pay up

ANDREA JANUTA AND SIMON JESSOP

Poor nations are pressuring their wealthy counterparts at the UN climate summit to pay up for the mounting damage being caused by global warming, pointing to increasing powerful storms, cyclones, droughts and floods afflicting their people.

The campaign being waged at the UN climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland, seeks hundreds of billions of dollars per year more for climate-vulnerable economies even as they struggle to access some \$100 billion pledged by world powers years ago.

Those previously promised funds, meant to help developing nations transition off fossil fuels and adapt to the future realities of a warmer world, were offered in recognition that poorer countries are least responsible for climate change.

“We’ve been too slow on mitigation and adaption, and so now we have this big and growing problem of loss and damage,” said Harjeet Singh, an adviser with Climate Action Network, who is involved in the negotiations on behalf of developing countries.

He said negotiations so far were focused on including language about “loss and damage” in the official text of the summit agreement, a request that he said was facing resistance from the United States, the European Union and other developed countries worried by the potential costs and legal implications.

Asked whether the European Union should consider a loss and damage fund separate from funding for mitigation and adaptation, Juergen Zattler, head of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, said he believed the question was premature.

“I don’t think the discussion is at that stage yet,” he told reporters at the Glasgow summit. “We do not know yet what loss and damage actually is, how it is different from adaptation. We are poking in the dark here.”

EU climate policy chief Frans Timmermans told reporters the bloc supported efforts to “get money where it needs to be as quickly as possible” but that work still needed to be done to get the details right.

A representative of the US delegation at the conference did not respond to a

request for comment.

Climate-vulnerable countries have been raising the issue of who should pay for climate damage since the earliest international talks on global warming decades ago, before the impacts of global warming were seen as a current threat.

Economists now estimate the costs of damage from climate change-related weather events could be around \$400 billion per year by 2030. A study commissioned by development agency Christian Aid, meanwhile, estimated that climate damage could cost vulnerable countries a fifth of their gross domestic product by 2050.

“It has been a fight every time to get loss and damage to become a standing item at COP. We need to continue to hold the big emitting countries accountable,” said Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, a representative of the Climate Vulnerable Forum representing nations disproportionately affected by global warming.

Singh, from the Climate Action Network, said wealthy nations could acquire the funds, at least in part, by revoking subsidies and imposing fees on fossil fuel companies. — **Reuters**

Why Covid-19 misinformation works...



NOAM TITELMAN

THE WRITER IS AN ASSOCIATE RESEARCHER AT THE CENTER FOR PUBLIC SYSTEMS AT THE UNIVERSIDAD DE CHILE, IS A PHD CANDIDATE IN SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS AT THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

At the United Nations General Assembly meeting in September, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro used his allotted time at the podium to recount his views on Covid-19. He extolled the virtues of treatments that have been rejected by scientists and proclaimed that he had benefited from the anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine.

Bolsonaro’s support for such “miracle cures” is well known. He has appeared regularly in the Brazilian press and on social networks promoting the use of off-label treatments that have no basis in scientific fact. And he is not alone. During his administration, former US president Donald Trump advocated for a variety of unproven remedies, and the president of Madagascar, Andry Rajoelina, has sponsored a drink derived from the herb artemisia

to treat Covid-19. To the despair of the scientific community, these politicians and others have successfully convinced a large swath of the public of such treatments’ efficacy and safety.

Misinformation has run rampant during the pandemic, but it is not a new phenomenon. In their seminal work on the perception of welfare in the United States, the political scientist James Kuklinski and his colleagues showed that significant portions of the American population held inaccurate beliefs about the recipients of state support and the benefits they received. They also found that the prevalence of misinformation prevented inaccurate information from gaining traction. Misinformed people do not simply have inaccurate information; they are heavily invested in their

misconceptions. And this is what makes misinformation so powerful: it combines misperceptions about the world with a high degree of confidence in their accuracy.

People do not believe false information because they are ignorant. There are many factors at work, but most researchers would agree that the belief in misinformation has little to do with the amount of knowledge a person possesses. Misinformation is a prime example of motivated reasoning. People tend to arrive at the conclusions they want to reach as long as they can construct seemingly reasonable justifications for these outcomes. One study published in 2017 has shown that people who have greater scientific knowledge and education are more likely to defend their polarised beliefs

on controversial science topics because of “nonscientific concerns.”

One of the most powerful of these concerns is the preservation of identity. Political leaders are most effective in pushing misinformation when they exploit citizens’ fear of losing what they perceive to be defining aspects of their culture, particularly its language, religion, and received racial and gender hierarchies and roles. In polarised political environments, the purchase that misinformation gains has little to do with low levels of knowledge or engagement, but rather with how information is interpreted in a way that dovetails with partisan identity. The “us versus them” lens means that the different bits of information people receive are processed in a way that is amenable to their worldview.

This is why individuals can draw strikingly divergent conclusions from the same facts.

When political leaders peddle unproven treatments for Covid-19, they are capitalising on this polarising tendency. But an excessive focus on these leaders may obscure the main reason people buy into these messages. The willingness to believe misinformation is rooted in underlying aspects of cultural identity, which politicians manipulate.

Recent research by Mariana Borges Martins da Silva, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Oxford, has shown that one reason Brazilians trust treatments like the ones promoted by Bolsonaro is a deep cultural belief that a “serious doctor” is one who prescribes medicine. **Copy right: Project Syndicate 2021**

sport



Al Bashaer club claims ministry basketball shield title

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 9

After being champions of 2020-2021 Oman Basketball League on October 18, Al Bashaer club lifted the 11th edition of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth Basketball shield title after defeating Seeb 71-67 in the concluding game on Monday.

The Al Dakhiliyah team representative managed to earn another basketball triumph after domination of the domestic titles between Nizwa and Seeb during the previous seasons.

Al Bashaer team commenced the match strongly and the team managed to end the first quarter by 20-15. They continued leading as they concluded the second quarter with ten points gap at 40-30. Seeb, coached by Kazim al Balushi, tried to bounce back and the team reduced the gap to six points as the quarter ended at 58-52.

The last quarter was interesting as both teams were looking to end the match on successful note. Seeb players were very close to reach the finish line as the results reached 60-61 but later Al Bashaer team players pressured hard and managed to conclude the tough encounter at 67-71.

Basil bin Ahmed al Rawas, Under-Secretary of Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth for

Sports and Youth, was the chief guest in presence of Khalfan bin Saleh al Naabi, Chairman of Oman Basketball Association (OBA). After the conclusion of the final fixture, he distributed the medals and shield to the winning teams and players. Al Bashaer team received the Ministry shield, gold medals and cash prize of RO 10,000 while Seeb players have been awarded the silver medals and cash prize of RO 6,000. Nizwa team was positioned in the third place and got bronze medals and cash prize of RO 4,000.

The head coach of Al Bashaer team, Samer al Kayali, said that the final encounter against Seeb was very tough as expected. “Seeb players delivered a top show and they have a very organised and strong attack. The team comprised experienced and talented youth players and I am expecting a successful future for them. The triumph came after a difficult game and the experience part was in Al Bashaer team as the players managed to monitor and control their focus properly to end the match on a successful note,” he added.

Commenting on the team’s plans for near future, the coach responded that the team will begin preparations for the 2021-2022 Sultanate of Oman basketball league and forthcoming championships.



49er and 49er FX Asian Championships set for dramatic finale

MUSCAT: The race for medals will head into the final day of the 2021 Asian 49er and 49er FX Championships in Barcelo Mussanah Resort with several crews still in contention in both classes.

Day two of competition in the 49er FX class saw Molly Highfield and Sandi Choi of Hong Kong edge ahead of India’s Harshita Tomar and Sweta Shervegar. Both teams gained on the overall leaders to finish in third and ninth place respectively. In the overall standings, Odile Van Aanholt and Elise de Eujter of the Netherlands continue to lead, holding a narrow advantage over Lara Granier and Amelie Riou of France. Laura Schoefegger and Lina Forthofer from Austria and Mathilde Lounadina and Marne Riou of France are currently tied in fourth place.

In the 49er class, Akira Sakai and Russell Awylworth from Hong Kong lead from KC Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar of India and the Omani crews of Musab al Hadi, Walid al Kindi, Ahmed al Hasani and Abdulrahman al Mashari. Danish pairing Fredrik Rask and Jacob Precht lead overall, ahead of Great Britain’s James Peters and



Fynn Skerritt. The German team of Jakob Megendorfer and Andreas Spranger ended the day in third, while Ireland’s Robert Dickson and Sean Waddilove are tied in fourth with Herman Umpierre and Fernando Diz from Uruguay just one point off a podium position.

That set the stage for a busy

penultimate day. Molly Highfield and Sandi Choi (HKG) slipped back to sixth as Finnish pair of Ronja Gronblom and Veera Hokka regained second place overall. Lara Granier and Amelie Riou (FRA) dropped a place to third, moving Mathilde Lounadina and Marine Riou (FRA) down to

fourth and Laura Schoefegger and Lina Forthofer from Austria and Mathilde Lounadina and Marne Riou of France are still tied in fifth.

It was all change in the 49er Class today. The Indian crew of KC Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar jumped ahead of Akira

Sakai and Russell Awylworth from Hong Kong with some excellent results aided by the latter being disqualified in the sixth race. Omani pair Musab al Hadi and Walid al Kindi are now just seven points behind in third going into the final day of racing.

Fredrik Rask and Jacob Precht (DEN) remain top of the overall rankings, holding a nine-point lead over Hernan Umpierre and Fernando Diz (URU) in second and Andrew Mollerus and Ian MacDiarmid (USA) in third a further six points back. Jack Hawkins and Chris Thomas (GBR) are fourth, Robert Dickson and Sean Waddilove (IRL) fifth and James Peters and Fynn Skerritt (GBR) finish the day in six, with just two points separating third and sixth place.

Rashid al Kindi, Director of Sailing at Oman Sail, said, “Today served as a reminder of how sailing in Asia has progressed and how much talent is coming through the national sailing programmes. The final day of competition promises to be exciting as medals are decided and crews strive for improvements in performance that could see them rise in the rankings.

We are very pleased with how the tournament has been managed and it has been great to welcome sailors back to the Sultanate of Oman. We are in the middle of a very busy winter season and look forward to seeing the gains made during this competition show in the rankings at the 49er and 49erFX World Championships next week.”

The 2021 Asian 49er and 49erFX Championships attracted fleet of 50 across both classes, representing countries from Asia competing for the title and guest sailors around the world training in a competitive environment.

Many of the sailors will remain in Mussanah after the competition ends to prepare for the 49er and 49erFX World Championships, which takes place from 16 to 21 November. Mussanah is also preparing to host the opening ceremony and first leg of the 11th edition of Sailing Arabia — The Tour on 24th November 2021 and the 50th Youth Sailing World Championships, the first time one of the most significant competitions in the sailing calendar has been held in the Asian federation, starting on December 11, 2021.



England to take on Kiwis in showpiece scrap today

DUBAI: Two years since going toe-to-toe in a thrilling 50-overs World Cup final, England and New Zealand will again seek to deliver a knockout blow when they face each other in the semi-finals of the Twenty20 global showpiece in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday.

The clash pits contemporary cricket's most dominant white-ball team England against arguably the most consistent cross-format side New Zealand, who have reached the final of three of the last four major global tournaments.

The most dramatic of those finals was at Lord's in 2019 when Eoin Morgan's England were crowned 50-overs world champions via a now-scrapped boundary countback rule after the match ended in a tie.

Kane Williamson's team finally shed their bridesmaid's tag by winning the inaugural World Test Championship earlier this year and, like England, are now bidding to become reigning champions in two formats.

New Zealand coach Gary Stead said their heartbreak at Lord's would have no bearing on their Twenty20 World Cup encounter.

"I'm not sure there will be anything from the 2019 game that will really come into it," Stead told reporters ahead of the clash at the Zayed Cricket Stadium.

"They are a quality side and I guess we just look forward to the challenge of playing the best side."

New Zealand were stunned by Pakistan in their Group II

opener but went on to win four straight, with Trent Boult leading a sublime bowling unit backed up by twinkle-toed fielders delivering terrific catches.

With bat in hand, Martin Guptill has been the aggressor and Williamson the anchor, though their ability to chase down big totals remains untested.

TOP-ORDER REJIG

Opponents England looked the form team until being beaten in their final Group I game by South Africa, that defeat felt even more keenly with the loss of opener Jason Roy due to a calf injury.

Roy's absence will force a top-order rejig with Jonny Bairstow likely to partner an in-form Jos Buttler, though the 2010 champions have plenty of other options in an explosive lineup.

"It is a massive blow, not just because of the way he bats but also because of what he brings to the field, and around the boys," all-rounder Moeen Ali said of Roy's absence. The defeat by South Africa could also serve as a wake-up call to Morgan's team, ridding them of any complacency that may have crept in after four easy wins on the trot.

England will also have to cope with the absence of specialist Tymal Mills, who was ruled out with a thigh strain suffered against Sri Lanka, and could be tempted to beef up their attack by including bowling all-rounder David Willey.

— Reuters



'Proud' Kohli signs off as T20 skipper with consolation victory



DUBAI: Virat Kohli on Monday said it had been an "honour" to captain India's Twenty20 side as he ended an otherwise disappointing World Cup campaign on a winning note.

India thrashed Namibia by nine wickets in Dubai to finish with three wins from five Super 12 matches.

India, who bowed out of the tournament on Sunday, eased to a target of 133 in 15.2 overs.

Kohli, who will continue to captain India in Test and ODI cricket, took over the T20 captaincy from MS Dhoni in 2017 and said it is time to manage the workload.

"It's been an honour, but things have to be kept in the right perspective. This was the right time for me to manage my workload," Kohli said.

"It's been six-seven years of intense cricket every time we take the field and it takes a lot out of you."

But the 33-year-old said his intensity on the field will remain the same.

"That's never going to change. If I can't do that I will not play anymore," said Kohli.

"Even when I wasn't captain before I was always keen to see where the game is going. I'm not going to stand around and do nothing."

He has led the team to great heights in Test and white-ball cricket but critics have always pointed at his failure to land a World Cup triumph in either T20 or ODI cricket.

Earlier this year they were also beaten by New Zealand in the first ever World Test Championship final. The superstar batsman said his deputy Rohit Sharma had been overseeing matters going into the game.

"I was given the opportunity and I tried to do my best," Kohli said at the toss in his 50th match as T20 captain.

"But it's also time to create some space and move forward. I've been immensely proud of how the team has played."

"Now I think it's time for the next lot to take this team forward."

Rohit has been looking on anyway, and Indian cricket is in good hands."

Rohit, a white-ball star and a swashbuckling opener, is the standout candidate to take over the reins with five Indian Premier League titles under his belt as captain of Mumbai Indians.

Kohli has also quit as captain of IPL side Royal Challengers Bangalore and many have welcomed his decision to concentrate more on his batting.

Head coach Ravi Shastri also bid adieu to the team after working alongside Kohli for five years.

Shastri, a former India all-rounder, said he believes the current side are "one of the greatest" of all time.

"Sometimes in life, it's not about all you accomplish, it's about what you overcome," Shastri told *Star Sports*. "And what these guys have overcome in the last five years, the way they've performed in all corners of the world in all formats, will make this one of the greatest teams in the history of the game." — AFP

In brief

MEXICO



SABALENKA, SWIATEK
IN SAME GROUP AT
WTA FINALS

World number two Aryna Sabalenka and 2020 French Open champion Iga Swiatek have been drawn in the same group for the season-ending WTA Finals, which begins on Wednesday in Guadalajara.

The event, contested by the world's top eight singles players and eight doubles teams, was relocated to Mexico from Shenzhen due to Covid-19 travel restrictions in China.

Monday's draw saw Sabalenka and Swiatek joined by Greece's Maria Sakkari and Spain's Paula Badosa in 'Group Chichen Itza'.

Sabalenka is the top seed after world number one Ash Barty decided not to travel to Mexico.

PARIS



INJURED POGBA OUT
OF FRANCE'S WORLD
CUP QUALIFIERS

Midfielder Paul Pogba has been ruled out of France's World Cup qualifiers against Kazakhstan and Finland after suffering a right thigh injury, the French federation (FFF) said on Monday.

The Manchester United player was seen leaving Monday's training session with team doctor Franck Le Gall.

"Paul Pogba is forced to withdraw from France's next two games at the Parc des Princes against Kazakhstan and against Finland in Helsinki," the statement read.

He is being replaced in the squad by AS Roma's Jordan Veretout.

DOHA



SIXTH VENUE OF
WORLD CUP 2022 TO BE
INAUGURATED

The stunning Al Bayt Stadium will be inaugurated on 30 November when it hosts the FIFA Arab Cup group stage match between hosts Qatar and Bahrain.

It will become the sixth FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 tournament venue to be inaugurated after Khalifa International, Al Janoub, Education City, Ahmad Bin Ali and Al Thumama.

The 60,000-capacity stadium features a design inspired by the tents historically used by nomadic peoples in Qatar and the region. It will host five matches during the FIFA Arab Cup, including the final on 18 December, and nine matches during Qatar 2022 up to the semi-finals stage.

Egypt poised to join Morocco, Senegal in World Cup playoffs



CAPE TOWN: Egypt look likely to be the next African nation to win a place in the playoffs for next year's World Cup, with the winners of the continent's 10 qualifying groups to be known next week.

The second phase of the African preliminaries will conclude after a whirlwind six days of qualifying games, with two rounds sandwiched between Thursday and next week.

Only group winners go to the final round playoffs in March — for five berths in Qatar — and Egypt should comfortably join Morocco and Senegal before the conclusion of their campaign.

An away victory in Angola on Friday will ensure top place. Yet even if they do not win, their four-point lead in Group F over second place Libya means that if Libya drop points in Gabon at the same time then Egypt could secure top spot with a draw.

Egypt appointed Carlos Queiroz as their coach in September despite a winning start to the campaign under his predecessor Hossam Al Badary. Home-and-away success over Libya last month marked the perfect start to the 68-year-old Portuguese coach's reign.

"The team played with competence and character. It was

nice to enjoy a good start, but a good start alone is not enough," he said. "This is all about finishing with success."

Tunisia, who were also at the last World Cup finals in Russia, will win their group on Saturday with an away success at Equatorial Guinea. But other groups may come down to potentially thrilling showdowns on the final matchday with some of Africa's World Cup regulars facing the threat of elimination.

CAMEROON ON EDGE

Cameroon, whose seven past trips to World Cup finals is the

most by any African country, are expected to have to win their last qualifier at home against the Ivory Coast in Yaounde on Tuesday to advance.

It is a heavyweight clash that comes just two months before Cameroon are to host the Africa Cup of Nations finals. They sit one point behind the Ivorians in the Group D.

The Ivory Coast's hopes have been hit by Wilfried Zaha's withdrawal. The Crystal Palace attacker has asked to sit out the two matches because he says he has not recovered from a virus picked up on his last trip to Africa

in October.

Ghana and South Africa are also expected to play a Group G decider at Cape Coast on Sunday while Mali and Uganda's meeting in Agadir the same day could also decide the outcome of Group E.

Nigeria should qualify at the expense of the tiny Cape Verde Islands, as long as there is no repeat of the shock home loss they suffered last month to lowly-ranked Central African Republic.

The top 10 group victors will be drawn into five playoff ties in March, from which the aggregate winners go on to represent the continent in Qatar. — **Reuters**

OOC organises Olympic day in Musandam

MUSCAT: The Oman Olympic Committee (OOC), represented by Sports and Active Society Committee, is organising the Olympic Day in Musandam Governorate, which kicks off on Wednesday in Khasab, under the patronage of Sayyid Ibrahim bin Said al Busaidy, Minister of State and Governor of Musandam, and in cooperation with the Department of Culture, Sports and Youth in Musandam Governorate.

The event includes many sports and activities such as walking, swimming, weightlifting, beach football, volleyball, handball, rowing, and a number of traditional games such as tug of war and dome, and a folklore band.

The event targets all community segments with the aims of promoting health, spreading the culture of walking and increasing the number of its practitioners, making the practice of sport and



the values and principles of the Olympic Movement a component of the general culture of the members of society in thought and

practice, and strengthening the concepts of sport in the community and making it a priority in their daily life.

The event will also include many competitions and recreational games for children in order to develop their social skills, develop

the child's motor skills, instil the love of sports in children and the spirit of competition and team play.



#With_BankDhofar_Savings_Scheme

Be one of the 59 Winners of OMR 1,000 in National Day Prizes

Total National Day Prizes OMR 59,000

BankDhofar

In brief

LONDON



OIL APPROACHES \$84 AS LIFTING OF US TRAVEL BAN BOOSTS DEMAND

Oil rose towards \$84 a barrel on Tuesday, gaining for a third session, as the US lifting of travel restrictions and more signs of a global post-pandemic recovery lifted the demand outlook, while supply remained tight.

Travellers took off for the United States again, while the passing of US President Joe Biden's infrastructure bill and better-than-expected Chinese exports helped paint a picture of a recovering global economy.

— Reuters



GE TO SPLIT INTO THREE COMPANIES; SHARES JUMP 15 PER CENT

General Electric said on Tuesday it would split into three public companies, as the storied US industrial conglomerate seeks to simplify its business, pare down debt and breathe life into a share price battered over several years.

The split marks the end of the 129-year-old conglomerate that was once the most valuable US corporation and a global symbol of American business power.

— Reuters



FED'S POWELL TOUTS BENEFITS OF MAXIMUM EMPLOYMENT

The US Federal Reserve looks at a wide range of indicators in gauging how close the economy is to reaching full employment, Fed Chair Jerome Powell said on Tuesday, as he reiterated the benefits of targeting workers who often remain on the sidelines.

"When we assess whether we are at maximum employment, we purposely look at a wide range of indicators," Powell told a virtual conference on diversity and inclusion in economics, finance and central banking.

— Reuters

Ministry of Finance issues guidelines for closing of 2021 state account

DETAILED CIRCULAR: Strict deadlines issued to ministries, public departments and SOEs for submission of accounts, inventories of government assets

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 9

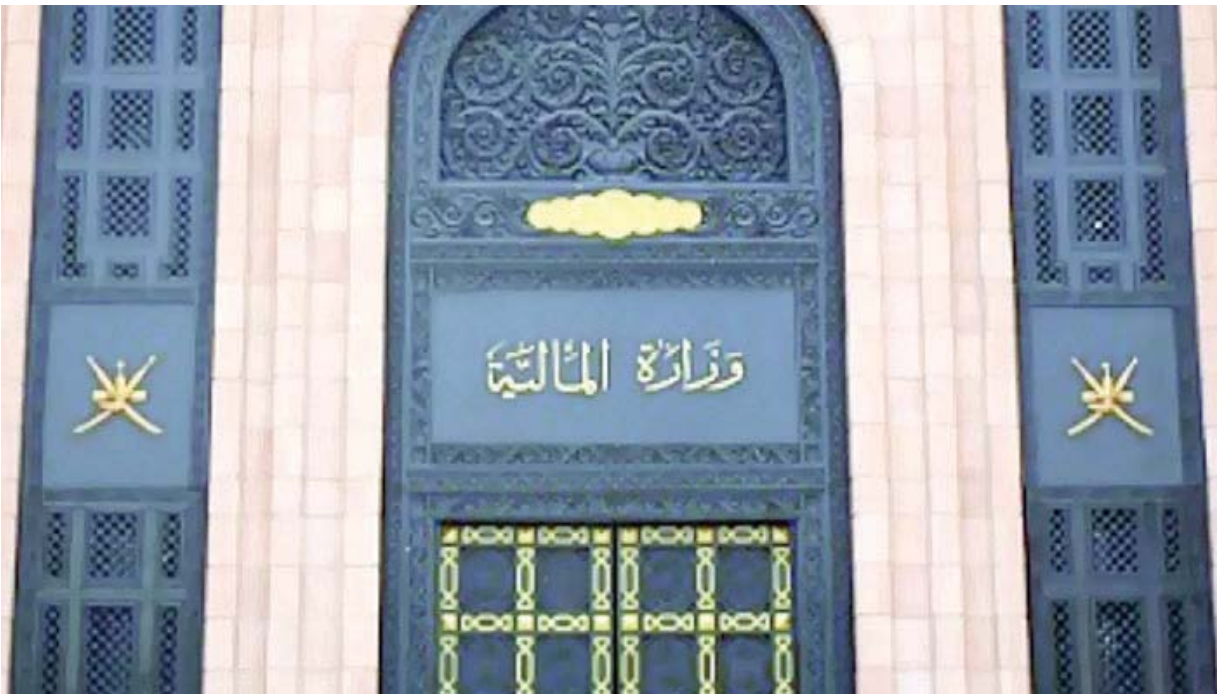
The Ministry of Finance has issued guidelines in preparation for the year-end closing of the state account for fiscal 2021.

A circular issued in this regard on Tuesday cited the provisions of a number of laws and regulations issued by Royal Decree and Ministerial Decisions. The final close of the account for Fiscal 2021 is set for December 31, 2021, it noted.

"The ministry calls on all ministries, government units, public bodies and institutions, sports federations and others to follow the prescribed procedures while complying with the deadlines when submitting their final accounts for fiscal year 2021 to the ministry," it said.

The circular sets a deadline of Thursday, December 30, 2021, for the submission of a statement of accounts pertaining to, among other things, funds retained in government safes or bank accounts. Additionally, a statement detailing any revenues earned for fiscal 2021 that were not received by ministries or government units, should be provided no later than Sunday, January 30, 2022.

With regard to permanent and temporary advances, the circular



explained that ministries and public departments are required to disclose expenses from the permanent advances approved by head of the government unit to pay the amounts disbursed from the permanent advance no later than Thursday, January 13, 2022.

This disclosure shall also include advances approved during December 2021. All such statements must be accompanied by a certificate from the bank showing the cash balance as on December 31, 2021.

All temporary advances must be fully adjusted by December 31, 2021. Heads of government units or their representative should, by January 13, 2022, submit to the Ministry of Finance a statement detailing the amounts disbursed from outstanding accounts during fiscal year 2021, account numbers and claims, along with supporting

documents.

Third parties providing services to the government are required to submit a declaration stating that there are no outstanding amounts owed by them to the government as on December 31, 2021.

Each ministry or government unit is responsible for taking all legally necessary measures to collect any amounts and debts due to it including the fees for issuing licences and work cards to non-Omanis due in line with the provisions of the current and previous labour laws and other decisions.

With regard to government real estate, the circular said that government units must conduct an inventory before the end of fiscal year 2021 of all properties allocated to the government unit in accordance with the stipulated procedures.

A declaration to this effect shall be provided to the Ministry

of Finance by January 30, 2022.

With regard to State Owned Enterprises (SoEs), the circular noted that monthly statements for December 2021 should be submitted no later than January 20, 2022.

Failure to make timely submission will have an impact on the 2022 budgeting.

Omani diplomatic missions abroad must submit monthly statements for December 2021 for each individual mission after all their data are entered into the computer system by January 20, 2022. It also warned that violations will be deemed as "financial irregularities", particularly when accounting of revenue for fiscal 2021 is not communicated in a timely manner to the Ministry of Finance.

Also construed as irregularities are failures to submit a declaration of the annual inventory of

The ministry calls on all ministries, government units, public bodies and institutions, sports federations and others to follow the prescribed procedures while complying with the deadlines when submitting their final accounts for fiscal year 2021 to the ministry

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

government warehouse assets, the value of store assets, and failure to provide a declaration of the annual inventory of the assets of government libraries and the value of library assets.

The circular noted that the following entities are obliged to submit their accounts and financial statements for fiscal year 2021 to the Ministry of Finance and the State Financial and Administrative Audit authority by Sunday, January 16, 2022, as soon as they are audited:

- 1) Sports federations (Cultural Club and Oman Olympic Committee)
- 2) Royal Omani Amateur Radio Society
- 3) Public institutions to submit their accounts in the style of commercial accounts

(With inputs from ONA)

CMA raps Oman Fisheries for violations

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 9

The Disciplinary Committee constituted under the Capital Market Law has reprimanded Oman Fisheries (SAOG) for alleged violations by the company's Board of Directors of various provisions of the Commercial Companies Law.

The panel also issued an ultimatum to the partly government-owned company to submit a plan of action for the rectification of these violations within 30 days.



"The decision was issued after it was established. The company's board of directors committed

several violations that impacted the performance of the company in violation of Articles 184, 202,

The panel also issued an ultimatum to the partly government-owned company to submit a plan of action for the rectification of these violations within 30 days

204 and 206 of the Commercial Companies Law," the Capital Market Authority (CMA) said in a statement.

"The articles provide that the directors or executive management shall not take advantage of the office

for obtaining benefits for themselves or for any other person and that the directors and related parties shall not have direct or indirect interest in the transactions or contracts entered into by the company or for the company's benefit except the transactions and contracts concluded in accordance with the rules issued by the competent entities."

The Authority stressed that the companies listed on the MSX must comply with the laws and regulations of the capital market.

National Finance, Dar Al Atta’a sign collaboration pact

MUSCAT: Dedicated to empower local communities, National Finance recently signed a collaboration agreement with Dar Al Atta’a to support the Green House project, under the Tamkeen programme that supports people with special needs as a sustainable initiative.

The agreement was signed by Tariq bin Suliman al Farsi, Chief Executive Officer of National Finance and Maryam bint Issa al Zadjalayah, Chairperson of Dar Al Atta’a. Held under the auspices of Shaikh Rashid bin Ahmed al Shamsi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Social Development, the signing ceremony took place in the office



of His Excellency at the Ministry. This partnership aims to build nine green houses at various locations of Al Wafa Social Centres to empower people with special needs, by creating job

opportunities for them, thereby enabling sustainable income.

Tariq al Farsi said, “We are delighted to join hands with Dar Al Atta’a and to support charitable associations in

general. At National Finance, we strongly believe that we have responsibilities not only towards our customers, employees, and shareholders, but also to the communities in which we

serve. Hence, we shall establish beneficial partnerships with various entities to add great value to the people of our community and create a bright future for them.”

Maryam al Zadjalayah expressed her gratitude and appreciation for the support provided by National Finance and its ongoing commitment to serve the people of the Sultanate of Oman through viable sustainable programmes.

“The Green Houses Project supports the integration programmes for people with special needs at the Al-Wafa Social Centre. This is done by enrolling them in the

production and marketing of agricultural crops to enhance their engagement with society. Through Tamkeen programme, Dar Al Atta’a aspires to deliver sustainable projects aimed at serving the community and promoting social solidarity”, said Siham bin Yousuf al Kharousi, Tamkeen Programme Manager.

National Finance, established in 1987, has built a reputation as the market leader trusted by thousands of customers across the Sultanate of Oman. National Finance offers a wide range of products targeting both individual customers and SMEs through its 20 branches across the Sultanate of Oman.

Alizz Islamic Bank announces special National Day offers



MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank recently announced a variety of offers and cash prizes that meet the different needs of customers as part of the nation’s 51st National Day celebrations.

Offers include various types of financing such as home finance, auto finance and goods finance.

Additionally, new and existing customers of Bushra Prize Savings Account are eligible for cash back rewards. Alizz Islamic Bank’s Bushra Prize Savings account is Oman’s first Sharia-compliant prize savings account and reflects the bank’s commitment in pioneering innovative Sharia-compliant products and services that cater to customers’ needs.

All the products offered by Alizz Islamic Bank are Sharia-compliant and approved by the Fatwa and Sharia Supervisory Board. Alizz Islamic Bank, has announced easy home finance, whether for those wishing to buy or build a house, with a profit rate not exceeding 5.1 per cent.

As part of the personal financing offer for goods, Alizz Islamic Bank is also offering an affordable profit rate that does not exceed 5.1 per cent, whether for finances with a financing period of up to 5 years or 60 months for financing with a repayment period of between 6 to 10 years, i.e. from 60 to 120 months.

Ahlibank to conduct celebratory special draws

MUSCAT: In commemoration of the Sultanate of Oman’s 51st National Day, and as part of its Wafra prize scheme for the month of November, ahlibank has announced a special draw with cash prizes totalling RO 51,000, which will be awarded to 51 lucky account holders of the bank (RO 1,000 for each winner).

The special draw reflects the bank’s ongoing efforts to promote a culture of savings among the members of the community and throws the spotlight on its celebrations to mark the Sultanate of Oman’s National Day on November 18.

To qualify for this special draw, customers are required to retain an average monthly balance of RO 100; the minimum balance should be present in the account on the day of the draw, which is scheduled to be held during the month of November. Proceedings of the draw will be



streamed live on the bank’s social media accounts.

Commenting on the commemorative draw, Muneer al Balushi, AGM — Head of Retail Distribution, ahlibank, said, “The National Day is a special day in

our hearts as Omanis, and we are pleased to announce distinct draws for this glorious day. Such draws are reflective of the bank’s keenness to bring more joyous occasions for its customers, giving them chances to win

prizes as part of the 51st year of the Renaissance celebrations.

On behalf of all members of the ahlibank family, I extend my highest congratulations and blessings to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, may Allah bless him, and Omani people. We pray to the Almighty Allah to return this occasion to the Sultanate of Oman and its people for many years ahead, with safety and pride.”

“We are proud of the success of the 2021 Wafra prize scheme, through which the bank seeks to foster a culture of savings among customers and the general public. In addition to the valuable prizes that ahlibank offers to its customers through Wafra, the bank endeavours to expand the winners’ base, giving as many customers as possible the opportunities to win. With 51 winners, the National Day draw is truly exemplifies this approach.”

50 winners at the National Day Prize Draw from Maisarah



MUSCAT: In tandem with the Sultanate of Oman gearing up for the National Day celebrations, Maisarah Islamic Banking Services — BankDhofar’s Islamic banking window — revealed details of the exclusive prize draw to be conducted on the upcoming November 18. As per the Prize Account scheme, RO 50,000 have been allocated for the National Day special draw with 5 cash prizes, RO 1,000 each, guaranteed for each of the 10 Maisarah branches.

“The aim of this exclusive draw is to share the joy and the sentiments of this jubilant occasion with our customers”, stated Nasser bin Said al Bahantah (pictured), Maisarah’s Chief Retail Banking Officer.

“We have witnessed a tremendous turnout for our previous special draws as part of the Prize Account 2021, and we are looking forward to this upcoming event to be celebrated with Maisarah customers nationwide.”

In addition to the National Day special prizes, Maisarah recently announced the winners of the Omani Women’s Day special draw where 10 lucky winners were granted RO 1,000 each during a special draw that took place on October 17, 2021.

Moreover, Maisarah had revealed additional cash prizes with a total prize amount of RO 52,800 for 68 winners during special draws to be held in December 2021 for healthcare professionals, teachers, retirees, Ministry of Defence and Royal Oman Police employees, as well as new Maisarah customers and existing customers with new credit cards.

Valid through December 31, 2021, weekly prizes of RO 100 each are also granted to three winners from each branch, with total number of 30 winners every week. Moreover, there are exclusive prizes for children in the monthly draws where one winner per branch is awarded RO 100, with total number of 10 winners every month.

Ford unveils exciting year-end benefits across the range

MUSCAT: Ford has unveiled exciting year-end benefits across the range, making owning a Ford an even more memorable experience. Customers owning a brand new Ford can benefit with service 3 years / 60,000 kms and 5 years / 100,000 kms and 1 year registration. (Conditions apply. For details visit a Ford showroom.)

The offer is valid until December 30, 2021.

The all-new F-150 XLT raises the standard for all light-duty trucks. It boasts best-in-class towing and payload capability, introduces all-new features to increase customer productivity.

The Ford F-150 is equipped with a 3.5-litre EcoBoost twin-turbo V6 engine that produces 400 horsepower and 677 Nm torque to give it impressive payload capabilities.

The all-new F-150 starts with a durable, proven foundation — a fully boxed high-strength steel frame with a high-strength, military-grade, aluminium alloy body. All-new F-150 offers the latest driver-assist features as part of Ford Co-Pilot360 2.0. More features are now standard, including Pre-



Collision Assist with Automatic Emergency Braking and Pedestrian Detection to help avoid a possible collision with another vehicle or a pedestrian, rear view camera with dynamic hitch assist, auto high-beam headlamps and auto on/off headlamps.

Ford’s range in the Sultanate of Oman, includes the Ford Explorer comes standard with a 2.3L i-4 Ecoboost engine. The Ford Explorer now sports abundant new features; better cargo space behind the third row and a quiet highway ride, Intelligent 4WD Terrain Management System, BLIS with Cross Traffic Alert, Individual Tyre Pressure

Monitoring System, 360-Degree Camera, Tri-Zone Electronic Temperature Control and more.

The Expedition is the most powerful and fuel-efficient Ford SUV till now, offering customers a full-size utility vehicle with a 3.5L V6 EcoBoost Engine producing 400 HP, stylish design and fresh interiors. It also features rotary gear shift and 10-speed automatic transmission and safety features like Pre-collision assist with pedestrian detection and much more.

The Ford Taurus has been redesigned with a focus on safety and practicality.

The Taurus has the effortless power to match its sporty

appearance. The Taurus is powered by a 2.0-litre EcoBoost inline four-cylinder petrol engine that produces 240 horsepower and an impressive 390Nm torque. The engine is mated to an eight-speed automatic transmission — which is operated by a contemporary rotary gear shifter on the centre console.

In the Sultanate of Oman, Ford vehicles are brought to you by Arabian Car Marketing Co LLC. Please log on to www.fordoman.com, or www.facebook.com/FordOman or www.youtube.com/FordOmanChannel or www.instagram.com/ford_oman for the latest news, test drive requests and the latest press releases.



Four MENA IPOs raised \$1.8 billion in Q3 2021

KEY TREND: TOTAL YEAR-TO-DATE PROCEEDS IN THE MENA REGION REACH \$2.3 BILLION, ACCORDING TO EY

BUSINESS REPORTER

MUSCAT, NOV 9

The MENA region saw four IPOs raise total proceeds of \$1.836 bn during Q3 2021 — a 1,483 per cent increase in value on the same quarter in 2020.

According to EY's MENA IPO Eye Q3 2021 report, the number of IPOs increased from one in Q3 2020, representing a 300 per cent surge.

The year-to-date total number of IPOs stands at eight in the MENA region so far this year, with a combined value of \$2.261bn. Direct listings continued their momentum with seven such listings occurring during Q3 2021.

The four IPOs in Q3 2021 were Al Yah Satellite Communications Company (Yahsat), Tanmiah Food Company (Tanmiah), Mataam Bayt AlShatira Lilwajbat Alsariya Company (Burgerizzr) and Arabian Internet and Communications Services Company (Solutions by stc). The Yahsat listing is the first IPO to occur on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX) since 2017, raising \$730.6m by offering 40 per cent of its shares.

The offering was oversubscribed multiple times, with Mubadala continuing to retain a circa 60 per cent shareholding in the company.



Equity markets have also had an exceptional year so far, with the ADX continuing to be the top performer with a YTD return of 52.6 per cent.

Saudi Arabia's Tadawul is the second-best performing MENA market with a YTD return of 32.3 per cent.

The third quarter of 2021 saw a series of notable regulatory changes with Qatar amending its Commercial Companies Law, while the ADX and Dubai Financial Market (DFM) extended

their trading hours and waived the minimum commission fee on trades for all listed securities. The Capital Market Authority of Saudi Arabia approved three IPOs and one direct listing on the Nomu-Parallel Market.

In addition, three IPOs on the main market received approvals. Matthew Benson, EY MENA Strategy and Transactions Leader, says: "During Q3 2021, the number of IPOs increased 300 per cent as compared to Q3 2020, when there was only one IPO on the MENA

markets, with proceeds increasing 1,483 per cent compared to Q3 2020. This brings the total number of IPOs YTD in 2021 to eight, with total proceeds of \$2.3 billion.

As MENA economies rebound from the pandemic and oil prices remain favourable, companies with strong fundamentals continue to receive ample investor interest and the pipeline of IPO candidates is ever increasing.

At EY, we continue to work closely with MENA companies to support them on this

We are seeing IPOs being pulled or delayed in multiple markets due to the large number of offerings looking for investment, so we need to remain vigilant in this region as the pipeline grows

GREGORY HUGHES

EY MENA IPO and Transaction Diligence Leader

transformational journey to go public, which starts many months and often years ahead of their IPO journey."

Oman's economy, according to the latest IMF report, is set to recover in 2021, with non-hydrocarbon GDP growth of 1.5 per cent as the vaccine rollout gradually restores domestic activity, alongside the recovery of external demand.

Oil production in the Sultanate of Oman is projected to increase after the current Opec+ agreement expires in April 2022, while

inflation in the Sultanate of Oman has been subdued.

Gregory Hughes, EY MENA IPO and Transaction Diligence Leader, says: "The MENA IPO market activity has picked up in Q3 2021 with four listings raising a total of \$1.8 billion in proceeds. KSA and Abu Dhabi are leading the IPO activity and continue to have a strong pipeline for the coming quarters, while activity in Dubai continues to lag. We have also seen the re-emergence of larger IPOs, which have been met with solid investor interest, further demonstrating the ample liquidity that is currently available in the market.

Around the world, however, we are seeing IPOs being pulled or delayed in multiple markets due to the large number of offerings looking for investment, so we need to remain vigilant in this region as the pipeline grows."

Notably, the ESG context is rapidly evolving globally across the MENA region — and MENA policy is broadly keeping pace with investor sentiment. Institutional investors are raising the stakes when it comes to assessing company performance using ESG factors. Right across the region, Q3 saw a flurry of announcements relating to new ESG mandates.

Asyad Global Start-up Challenge concludes

BUSINESS REPORTER

MUSCAT, NOV 9

Asyad Group announced the three final winning companies of Asyad Global Start-up Challenge organised in partnership with Hypermotion Dubai and Omantel, winning a total prize of \$50,000.

Showcasing how to harness emerging technologies to advance the transport and logistics sectors, Cubex Global from the UAE took home 1st place with a prize of \$25,000, while US-based UVL Robotics home-grown from Oman and PalletPal from the USA were awarded 2nd and 3rd place respectively.

The intense competition saw 12 semi-finalists pitch to a panel of international judges and investors.

A launch-pad for budding entrepreneurs, Asyad Global Start-up Challenge provided participants with an opportunity to engage with peers from around the world and share sustainable forward-thinking solutions to increase the competitiveness of the sector both locally and



ASYAD GLOBAL START-UP CHALLENGE PROVIDED PARTICIPANTS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE WITH PEERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD AND SHARE SUSTAINABLE FORWARD-THINKING SOLUTIONS TO INCREASE THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE SECTOR

internationally.

In line with its drive to support local start-ups as a key driver of economic growth, Asyad Group

sponsored the participation of three Omani companies in the challenge.

The last day of the Challenge included several enlightening discussions presented by Asyad Group represented by SOHAR Port and Freezone and Oman Post Asyad Express as well as its strategic partners, Omantel.

The sessions focused on the importance of technology in port management, supply chain efficiencies and last mile delivery in e-commerce as well as 5G as a catalyst for sector growth.

The start-up challenge was highly competitive and selective.

Having whittled down almost 50 applications to just 12, the final competition included seven regional companies and five internationals.

As part of its efforts to bring Oman's competitiveness in the logistics sector to the forefront, Asyad Global Logistics Start-up Challenge aimed to capitalise on the power of data and attract global talent all the while creating a nurturing environment for creative solutions. The innovation-driven event marked a successful participation of Asyad Group in Expo 2020 Dubai.

Oil steady amid rosier outlook for global economy, fuel demand

TOKYO: Oil prices were steady on Tuesday after two straight sessions of gains as the passage of a US infrastructure bill, strong Chinese exports and the global post-pandemic recovery lifted the outlook for fuel demand.

Brent crude was up 27 cents at \$83.68 a barrel by 0735 GMT, after gaining 0.8 per cent on Monday. US oil was up 3 cents at \$81.96 a barrel, also after a 0.8 per cent gain the previous day. US President Joe Biden's long-delayed \$1 trillion infrastructure bill — which passed through Congress at the weekend — and better-than-expected Chinese exports helped paint a picture of a more expansive global economy.

"The big unknown is whether economies can achieve growth amid the current high price environment, or potentially in an even higher price scenario", said Rystad Energy senior oil markets



A diesel fuel nozzle is seen at a petrol station in Nice, France. — Reuters

analyst Louise Dickson.

JPMorgan Chase commodities analysts said global demand for oil in November was already nearly back to pre-pandemic levels of 100 million barrels per day (bpd). "More consumption growth lies in wait once travel begins in earnest and jet fuel demand picks up."

But as major producers maintained strict supply discipline in October, oil prices rose to seven-year highs, with fuel values also rising. — Reuters

SHORT TAKES

DUBAI

Oil spare capacity to diminish as jet demand returns

Global oil spare production capacity could diminish next year as air passengers return to the skies, removing an important cushion that the market is currently enjoying, Saudi Aramco Chief Executive Officer Amin Nasser said on Tuesday.

"The industry's spare capacity, currently at 3-4 million barrels per day (bpd) is providing some comfort to the market, however, my concern is that the buffer... might diminish, especially next year when demand is expected to



pick up further", Nasser said.

He added that a pick up in jet fuel demand, currently lagging some 3 million bpd behind 2019's 7.5 million bpd mark, will eliminate all the spare capacity. — Reuters

LONDON

Grocery price rises turn up heat on UK consumers

British grocery price inflation was 2.1 per cent in the four weeks to October 31, its highest level since August 2020, market researcher Kantar said. The Bank of England confounded widespread market expectations of an interest rate hike but with overall inflation heading for almost 5 per cent one is expected soon.

Kantar said grocery prices are rising fastest in markets such as savoury snacks, canned colas and crisps while falling in fresh



bacon, vegetables and pet treats.

"Grocery inflation hit its highest rate since August 2020, when retailers were still cutting promotions to maintain stock on the shelves", said Fraser McKevitt, head of retail and consumer insight at Kantar. — Reuters

FRANKFURT

Euro zone housing demand to persist

Demand for euro zone real estate is likely to remain high, driving up prices and raising "affordability issues" for poorer households, the European Central Bank said on Tuesday.

After the Covid-19 pandemic shut much of the global economy, household savings soared and some families, particularly wealthier ones, looked to real estate as a place to put cash they could not otherwise spend.

"Although some transactions driven by excess savings during



the pandemic may have already materialised, the large stock of accumulated savings may still boost housing demand over the near term", the ECB said in an article in its *Economic Bulletin*. — Reuters

Tech gabfest shows conferences a real-world future

To get a sense of how the pandemic will change the conference business, it makes sense to observe how the most digitally connected and technologically savvy have adapted their behaviour. Judging by the 43,000 people who descended on Lisbon for last week's Web Summit gathering, not much has changed.

The jamboree of technology companies, entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers, celebrities and other hangers-on made its comeback in the Portuguese city after an enforced two-year hiatus. Like most conferences, the event co-founded by Paddy Cosgrave in Dublin over a decade ago has been forced to adapt to Covid-19. To reduce crowding, the organisers scaled back the maximum number of participants from the 70,000 who attended in 2019. Delegates were required to show proof of vaccination or a negative test to gain access. Once inside, they had to wear masks.

"It's so good to be back with people to feel the energy that I think only comes when you get a large group of people together", said Microsoft President Brad Smith, who arrived in Lisbon after a stop in Glasgow for the COP26 climate summit.

Even start-ups seeking to cash in on a virtual future were eager to stress their real-world credentials. Venture capitalists were out in force after being confined to their homes and offices. Lockdowns hardly prevented them from deploying cash, though: Venture capital firms invested almost 74 billion euros in Europe in the nine months to September, according to PitchBook, roughly double the total for the whole of 2019.

American investors are also taking a greater interest in the continent, participating in roughly a fifth of European deals. Firms like Sequoia and Bessemer Venture Partners have recently opened offices in London.

Others returned from lockdowns with newly urgent post-pandemic visions of their businesses. Operators of shared bikes and electric scooters like Dott, Bolt and Voi argued that they could help make cities more liveable by ridding them of private automobiles. "We should move from cars to scooters and bikes as much as we can", said Markus Villig, Bolt's Estonian founder. — Reuters

It's so good to be back with people to feel the energy that I think only comes when you get a large group of people together

BRAD SMITH
Microsoft President



UNUSUAL ATTENTION

Ocean Rebellion activists protest against destructive industrial fishing during the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), in Glasgow, Scotland, Britain. — Reuters

COP26: Call for crackdown on polluters



ANDY JALIL
andyjalil@aol.com

BUSINESS LEADERS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO STEP UP AND ADDRESS THIS CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE

Investors have urged a clampdown on the world's biggest polluters and a push for wider adoption of net-zero targets.

Some of the most influential investors in the financial district of London have taken the opportunity of the current COP26 event in Glasgow to ask for less talk and more action on climate change.

The COP26 event which ends this week is the largest summit the UK has ever hosted. More than 30,000 delegates, including world leaders, former US president, Barack Obama, John Kerry, US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, business executives, campaigners and government officials have been present in the Scottish city for the event — the most significant discussion on climate since those held in Paris six years ago.

A number of CEOs gave their views. "Business leaders have a responsibility to step up and address this climate change challenge. And as an asset manager, we are right in the sweet spot — we are trying to direct money and hold the creators of capital to account, while also advising asset owners", said Peter Harrison, Chief Executive of Schroders.

He added: "If we are unable to grasp this, we will miss the most important obligation we will ever face. This is not a focus for next year, this is for doing now."

The summit, postponed last year because of the Covid-19 pandemic, is regarded by many as the last chance for 197 countries to agree on measures to fend off catastrophic climate change, and take forward some of the goals set out by the Paris Agreement. But it is unclear if even the most ambitious climate goals to come out of the event will be enough. Presidents of China and Russia have not attended the summit. The two countries are among the biggest consumers of fossil fuels.

This did not deter the CEO of Aviva Investors, Mark Versey, who called on countries participating at COP26 to follow the UK's lead on the need for climate transition plans, and require companies to outline their plans for decarbonising investments in line with national targets on a 'comply or explain' basis. Publication of these plans should be made mandatory, he said.

Versey also called for policies to make polluters pay for the cost of their emissions in full, via global carbon pricing schemes and a minimum carbon price. "This should be a key focus of the COP26 negotiations", he said.

CEO of BNY Mellon Investment Management, Hanneke Smits said COP26 has come at "a critical point in the race to meet the goals set out in the Paris Agreement."

She added: "Alignment is required not only on policy, but also on the practical aspects of process and implementation — including time frames where differences can readily occur." Chris Cummings, CEO of UK fund management trade body the Investment Association, said investors want to see more countries commit to the objectives set up under the Paris Agreement, which aims to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees.

"Failing to achieve this will threaten not just the value of our client's investment portfolios, but, far more importantly, the health of the planet. Action needs to be taken now", said Cummings.

In addition to that are the comments of the CEO of the international business of Federated Hermes, Saker Nusselbeh: "A comprehensive strategy developed at COP26 needs to encourage business to put in place short, medium and long-term targets aligned with the Paris Accord."

"We need to make progress now on this existential challenge. The science is clear: If we don't take action now on emissions, these issues are only set to get worse", said Catherine McGuinness, policy chair at the City of London Corporation.

(The writer is our foreign correspondent based in the UK)

The case for Chinese foreign aid



NANCY QIAN

The writer is Professor of Managerial Economics and Decision Sciences at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management

RECENT STUDIES SUGGEST THAT CHINESE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IS A RARE EXAMPLE OF AID THAT SYSTEMATICALLY AND MEANINGFULLY BENEFITS RECIPIENT COUNTRIES

Since 2000, China has spent \$843 billion on bilateral aid. That is around \$39.5 billion per year, similar to the amount provided by the United States, the world's largest donor of foreign aid. Although the two countries' definitions of foreign aid differ, no one disputes the fact that China — which in the past two decades has financed 13,427 bilateral aid projects in 165 countries — is the biggest new player in this domain.

Moreover, recent research is challenging outside observers' often negative view of the country's overseas development schemes. Critics accuse China of using aid to advance geopolitical goals, rather than to help the world's poor. Such criticisms are levelled at all foreign aid. But at first glance, China's variety looks particularly unpromising, even by aid sceptics' standards.

For starters, the fact that more than 300 Chinese government institutions and state-owned enterprises financed the country's 13,000-plus projects, with little involvement from private entities, supports suspicions that the Chinese state is using aid as a political tool. And, unlike other large donors, China does not condition

its development aid on recipient countries' institutions or politics.

This further increases the concern that Chinese assistance will be misdirected and fail to fulfil foreign aid's nominal purpose of promoting sustainable economic development in poor countries. The mode of Chinese aid delivery also is unusual.

China typically provides development finance in the form of loans, at either highly subsidised or market interest rates, for large infrastructure projects. The contracts generally stipulate that the recipient country must spend a large share of the money with a given Chinese firm, which provides all materials and labour needed to complete the project. Not surprisingly, recipient countries worry about their growing debt to China.

Meanwhile, critics contend, the benefits of Chinese aid are unclear. Importing Chinese workers to realize projects may limit capacity-building within recipient countries, and even put downward pressure on the wages of local workers. But recent studies show that while there is some truth in these concerns, appearances can be deceiving.

To be sure, political motives do underpin Chinese overseas aid, but they relate more to easing domestic problems than to achieving foreign domination. One recent study documents how the Chinese government's desire to quell political unrest at home drives a large proportion of the country's overseas aid.

For example, when workers protest, the government often allocates foreign-aid contracts to large state-owned firms in the area. These companies then hire additional employees and send labour and materials to recipient countries for several years to build roads, ports, or cell-phone towers. Politically, therefore, aid is a win-win for China.

Aid money helps to reduce domestic unemployment, which presumably eases social tensions, and the recipient country is grateful for the financial assistance.

US food aid operates on a similar principle: The US government buys up wheat in boom production years to provide a secure price floor for American farmers, and then sends the excess food to poor countries as bilateral aid.

But the most important revelation

from recent economic studies is that Chinese aid increases GDP growth, household consumption, and employment in recipient countries. So, contrary to conventional wisdom, the benefits of Chinese foreign aid spill over to ordinary citizens.

In fact, as difficult as it may be for many to accept these findings, they are not surprising. Most economists, as well as officials at institutions such as the World Bank, agree that modern infrastructure is key to promoting economic growth in poor countries.

Yet, the countries that are most in need of such infrastructure are frequently the ones with the most dysfunctional institutions, which is often the reason why these countries are poor and have been unable to build their own infrastructure in the first place. In such cases, Chinese aid can provide a neat solution.

Because Chinese firms bring in their own workers and materials and do not rely on local supply chains, they are largely insulated from local graft and corruption. Moreover, the infrastructure that China builds can have wide-ranging benefits even if the recipient country's government is uninterested in its citizens' welfare.

A new road connecting a mine to a port also provides access to transportation for the people who live along it, encouraging development there. Telecom towers built for government purposes can increase information flow and market access for farmers.

Electric power lines along a road or railway can also provide lighting that allows local children to learn to read. Chinese aid's undoubted flaws will come into sharper focus as researchers devote more attention to the subject. But China's political motivations are not necessarily bad.

The fact that aid can sometimes benefit the poor despite selfish motivations is a promising fact for recipient countries. After all, no donor country commits such large amounts of assistance for entirely altruistic reasons. Based on what researchers know, Chinese aid seems to be a rare example of development assistance that systematically benefits recipient countries in a meaningful way. Taking a closer look may prove useful to policymakers in other countries who are interested in improving the efficacy of foreign aid. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2021

WJ Towell Group Company

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

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

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

أوربت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

Classifieds

Tally
POWER OF SIMPLICITY

TALLY FOR VAT

For Tally Sales, Services or Customization

Contact: TallyGuru +968 79248644, 98753781
Email: guru.prasad@rtsgroup.com
Roudh Lotas Group LLC

TallyPrime

http://www.rltsgroup.com/tally-accounting-software/

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 10, 2021 RABEE AL THANI 5, 1443 AH

OMAN DAILY
Observer

Classified Section

Mohammed al Rashdi: 99841230
m.alrahd86@yahoo.com

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

Saada al Rashdi
95919344

94501166
24649593
24649595

Tally is now available on the **Cloud**

Ask for FREE Demo

Think TALLY
Call 977 TALLY (977 82559)

TallyPrime

TSO, Tally Solutions for Oman, by Infinity Thoughts LLC : 977 TALLY (977 82559) * sales@tallysolutionsoman.com * www.TallySolutionsOman.com

SIT. WANTED

HND (UK) Cum Eng, Sri Lankan, young dynamic boy with 3 years experience with autoCAD, full experience on building construction, take off measurement, estimation etc, looking for a suitable placement in Oman, Email: tmsafnas@gmail.com, +96878149384

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER 10 years GCC experience, Projects installation, Maintenance and Operation, NOC available. Contact: 71938188.

MECHANICAL Engineer graduate, Indian male, 2 years experience, currently in Muscat on visit visa, knowledge in Primavera, PDMS, AutoCad, Solidworks, Microsoft Excel etc, seeks suitable placement. Contact 78375996. Email: vishnutp999@gmail.com

OPERATIONS COORDINATOR

Indian male:

Having 8 years

experience

handling Retail

F&B Operations,

inventory,

purchase, Sales

& Accounting

with various

other skills, NOC

available Contact:

96219904 Email:

khanshah98@

gmail.com

FOR SALE

The Wave flat for sale

Flat for sale only

3 years old, 2

bedrooms +

1 study room,

2 bathrooms,

kitchen, family

hall. Contact:

99233359.

WE supply quantities of excellent mountainous soil in Bausher (suitable for compaction and filling) 99242445, 99327939.

BUYING

AL Awsad Modern llc, electronic and furniture used. 99834373.

SERVICES

WE are specialists in painting, plumbing, interlock, ceramics and buildings maintenance. 96191837, 98937266

AUTOCAD/REVIT ARCH MEP part/full- time. Contact WhatsApp: 79037728.

A LEGAL translation office needs

Marketeers. Contact

E-mail: oman4n@gmail.com

AL SUMRI AC

maintenance. We are

ready to repair and

install all types of Air-

Conditioner within

Muscat Governorate.

94301888.

RENT A CAR

Buttercup

Rent A Car

AMAZING OFFERS

○ Rent a car for 10 days and get an extra free day.

○ Rent for one month and get 5 days free.

All the cars are 2016 brand new special prices for public departments, companies and long-term contracts. 972494490.

LUXURIOUS

Toyota bus 2016, air-conditioned, 30 passengers, offered for daily/monthly/annually, Muscat.

Contact: 98080609, 96316269.

PEST CONTROL OMAN CO. L.L.C.

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

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

Tel: 24787606, 24787503
Direct Line: 24786077
GSM: 99382355, 99172309
pcomctom@omantel.net.om
P.O. Box 565, Al Wadi Al Kabir 117, Sultanate of Oman

Quality Comes First

Tower Cranes & Passenger Lifts:

- Sales and Rental Services
- Installation
- Maintenance Service
- Breakdown Service
- Spare Parts Supply
- Hoist & Lowering
- Support Fixation
- Dismantling

Steel Fabrication Works

NEW MANARA TECHNICAL SERVICES LLC
Mobile: +968 9853 1975, 9853 1970
E-mail: info@newmanara.com / newmanaratechnical@gmail.com
Website: www.newmanara.com

M M T CARGO
DOOR TO DOOR SERVICE

MUSCAT: 95605353, 95605454
BARKA: 95893242, 93743308
SOHAR: 96773031, 95347988
FALAJ: 94002341, 95136067
SALALAH: 94575905, 97858656
DUQUM: 97218831, 94002341

ROAD, SEA & AIR TRANSPORT WORLD WIDE

GTC Building, Near Badr Al Sama Hospital, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman
E-mail: mmmtcargo@yahoo.com
Customer Care: 96773031 / 97695454

Sea Cargo 800 Bz/Kg Express Cargo to Kerala 5 to 7 days*

AL NAMANI CARGO
DOOR TO DOOR AIR & SEA CARGO WORLD WIDE

ALL OVER INDIA EXPRESS DELIVERY

Online Tracking
TOLL FREE NUMBER 80066766

0.800 BAIZA PER KG

INDIA | BANGLADESH | INDONESIA | PHILIPPINES | SRI LANKA | ETHIOPIA | ALL GCC SERVICE AVAILABLE

95587410, 99785420, 99638698, 98523831

HO: RUWI - HAMRIYA, GHALA, AL AMRAT, SEEB, SOHAR

VIGAS CARGO
WORLD WIDE DOOR TO DOOR

Transportation, Packing & Cargo Services

- CARGO SERVICES BY AIR & SEA WORLD WIDE
- DOOR TO DOOR DELIVERY IN INDIA, INDONESIA & UK
- PROFESSIONAL PACKERS & MOVERS
- MUSCAT - DUBAI - MUSCAT REGULAR TRANSPORT

H.O. Ruwi 99851366 92495068

Ghubrah : 93571703
Falaj : 93571704
Store : 93571823
Misfa : 98119561 : 93260956

vigas.cargo@yahoo.com

TRUCK & TRAILOR FOR RENT / LONG LEASE

OPAL(PDO) APPROVED TRUCK AND TRAILOR (6X4-40ft) WITH WELL EXPERIENCED DRIVER AVAILABLE FOR LONG LEASE.

PLEASE CONTACT TEL.: 98192770

EURO CHOICE FOODS L.L.C
(Importers of Frozen, Chilled, Fresh & Dry Food Products)

- Food Service
- Catering Supply
- Ship Chandling
- Re-export
- Fresh Fruits & Vegetables
- Fresh & Chilled Meat and Chicken
- Dairy Product & Grocery Items

Tel: +968 24435211 / 24435177
foodservice@eurochoicefoodsllc.com
www.eurochoicefoodsllc.com

Labor Accommodation Services

We Offer Standard Accommodation Services to Labor & Junior Staff (Capacity to accommodate 1200 Labors). Accommodations near Rusayl Industrial Area next to National Gas Facility.

- Newly build, clean and municipality approved accommodation
- Easy access and customized accommodation facility
- Spacious and ventilated rooms
- 24hrs Security and Monitoring
- Optional paid food & Laundry Facilities etc.

Shaksy
Engineering Services

Kindly Contact:
Mr Hamza – 93200365
Mr Praveen 93201534

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT BY BRIDEGROOM/BRIDE FOR MARRIAGE AT EMBASSY OF INDIA, MUSCAT

I Jefferson Joseph Gomes (holder of Indian Passport No. T7766694) S/o Jude Clive Gomes having permanent residence in Flat No 4, Rustic view CHS, Kalina Village Road Santacruz East, Mumbai 400029, Maharashtra, India (complete postal address in India) and presently residing at Al Khuwair, Post Box No 537, Postal Code 100, Sultanate of Oman (Complete postal address in Sultanate of Oman), intend to marry Ms Fiona Alex Dsouza (Holder of Indian Passport bearing No R0591145, D/o Alex Dsouza having permanent residence in RN 112-1/2, Janta Sevak Society, Mori Road, Mahim, Mumbai-16, Maharashtra, India (complete permanent address) at Embassy of India, Muscat. I swear that I am marrying her at my own free will and not under any duress and intimidation. Any objection towards this marriage may please be communicated to Embassy of India, Muscat, Diplomatic Quarters, Al Khuwair, P. O. Box No. 1727, Postal Code No. 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman within 30 (thirty) days of publication of this newspaper advertisement.

Driving School

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

Contact No: 99074072

GCCA VAT / TAX

GULF CENTER CONSULTANCY & AUDIT

- Vat Registrations
- Quarterly VAT Return filing
- Taxation Services
- Book keeping & Accounting

97239696, 95850405
kumar@gccaoman.com
www.gccaglobal.com

Al Eman Dental Clinic

Flat 22, Floor 2
Abu Zaki Trading Building
Opp. Al Nahda Hospital
Sultan Qaboos Street

+968 24834113
+968 97454854
+968 96438854

Our Mission: To preserve your teeth and smile for a lifetime

ZEN POLYNE

"TARPAULIN WAREHOUSE IN OMAN"

INDIAN BRAND BEST QUALITY LLDPE TARPOLINE CROSS LAMINATED MULTI-LAYER TARPOLINE

FEATURES OF ZEN-POLYNE

- U.V. STABILIZED
- 100% WATER PROOF
- LIGHT WEIGHT
- THERMO - WELDED JOINTS.
- FLEXIBLE & CUSTOMISED SIZES.
- STRONGEST TARPOLIN EVER
- SUPERIOR DART IMPACT STRENGTH

RAVIRA

Please Contact: OMAN : +968 9329 1473 / 7937 1865
UAE : +971 5030 58676
Mail Id: raviranterest@gmail.com / Web: www.raviranti.com

Observer

For Advertisements
Please Contact our Team:

AL KHOORY EQUIPMENT EST.
P.O. Box 545, P.C. 117, Al Wadi Al Kabir Area, Sultanate of Oman

Official distributor of **Schneider Electric**

Stockist & Wholesaler of Low Voltage Switchgear Products and a One Stop Solution for all Switchgear Products and Assembly

Schneider Electric, Lovato electric, DAB, UEB, Franklin Electric, alfanar

Tel: +968 24832474, +968 79474556
E-mail: alkhooory@omantel.net.om • www.alkhoooryoman.com

features

Your next outdoor trip should be Dima W'attayeen's Wadi Tul

A trip further deep into the heart of Dima W'attayeen would actually yield a far better view and a more dynamic wadi that is ideal as a family getaway and a camping spot. Thinking of where to go over the weekend? Wadi Tul should be on your list of next wadi to visit... **P20**



ART

READ



GOING THERE

BY KATIE COURIC

The former anchor of the "CBS Evening News" and "Today" describes some of the personal and professional challenges she faced.

New York's in-person art auctions return with world's most expensive collection

AFTER MORE THAN a year, in-person auctions return to New York this week with the sale of the Macklowe collection — the world's most expensive to hit the market.

At auction houses Christie's and Sotheby's, the message is the same: the art market is thriving.

With sales starting on November 15 estimated to bring in more than \$1 billion in a week, "this is our largest sale season... since 2015," a record year, said Brooke Lampley at Sotheby's.

"Throughout the pandemic, there

was great demand from our buyers, who weren't experiencing the same level of supply as they were accustomed to," she said.

Experts say the pandemic has not negatively impacted the funds nor appetite of potential buyers, who are increasingly in Asia and younger than their predecessors.

For the first half of 2021, when it saw sales increase by 13 per cent compared to 2019, Christie's noted that 30 per cent of its buyers were new clients, and 31 per cent of those

were millennials.

"A lot of people are looking at their walls, thinking about the art they want to add to their collection, because they're spending so much more time in their homes," said Emily Kaplan at Christie's, which resumes in-person auctions on Tuesday.

- \$600 MILLION COLLECTION -

In September, Sotheby's won the rights to sell the Macklowe collection, the subject of a legal dispute following the high-profile divorce of New York real estate developer Harry Macklowe and his ex-wife Linda in 2018.

The auction house is billing the pieces, worth \$600 million, as the largest collection of modern and contemporary art ever put on the market.

Of the 65 pieces, 35 will go under the hammer on November 15 with an estimated value of \$400 million. The rest will go on sale in 2022.

Highlights include Alberto Giacometti's "The Nose", a suspended bronze the sculptor began working on in 1947, and Mark Rothko's minimalist



painting "No. 7". Both are estimated to be worth \$70-90 million.

The collection includes Andy Warhol's "Nine Marilyns" (worth \$40-60 million) and "Sixteen Jackies" (worth \$15-20 million) — as well as several pieces by living artists, such as Jeff Koons, Rudolf Stingel, Wade Guyton and Tauba Auerbach.

"There's incredible demand for contemporary art by artists practicing today," said Lampley.

At Sotheby's, the evening of November 18 will be dedicated to the sale of works from the last 20 years, including two Banksy works estimated to be worth several million dollars each. — Reuters



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

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



SHARE A SLICE OF YOUR LIFE

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



AROUND THE WORLD

ENTERTAINMENT

Taika Waititi to adapt 'The Incal' comics for big screen



TAIKA WAITITI WILL direct the first big-screen adaptation of best-selling and highly influential sci-fi comic book series "The Incal".

The New Zealander — who directed Marvel superhero hit "Thor: Ragnarok" and won an Oscar for his "Jojo Rabbit" screenplay — will also co-write the movie, said publisher Humanoids Associates.

Waititi said he was "stunned to be given the opportunity" to bring the creation of cult Franco-Chilean comics writer Alejandro Jodorowsky and French artist Moebius to life.

"The Incal" has sold millions of copies around the world since its debut in the late 1970s, and is one of the highest-selling sci-fi graphic novels in history.

A sprawling space opera, it follows bumbling intergalactic private eye John Difool as he finds a mystical artefact which is coveted by powerful factions across the galaxy.

He is compelled to save the universe, while undertaking a spiritual journey that takes in questions such as the meaning of existence.

Jodorowsky — a filmmaker in his own right — famously tried to make a highly ambitious movie version of "Dune" in the 1970s, but ended up using elements of that failed project to write "The Incal" soon after.

"The films and graphic novels of Alejandro Jodorowsky have influenced me and so many others for so long," Waititi said in a statement.

The movie is Humanoids Associates' "first of many forays into film production," the French publisher said in a press release, and comes as comic-book adaptations continue to dominate Hollywood and the global box office.

Waititi is also directing the eagerly awaited Marvel sequel "Thor: Love and Thunder," due out in June, starring Natalie Portman, Chris Hemsworth, Matt Damon and Christian Bale.

"When Humanoids' CEO Fabrice Giger introduced me to Taika Waititi's work, it became obvious to me that he was the one," said Jodorowsky, 92, in the statement.

"I fully trust Taika's creativity to give 'The Incal' a stunning take, intimate and at the same time of cosmic proportions." — **AFP**

Facebook unblocks '#saltbae' after Vietnamese minister's golden steak

FACEBOOK'S PARENT company said on Tuesday it had unblocked the hashtag for celebrity chef Nusret Gokce's nickname "saltbae", having found the tag had been blocked globally days after a video was posted online of Gokce feeding a gold-encrusted steak to a senior Vietnamese Communist Party official in London.

"We've unblocked this hashtag on Facebook and we're investigating why this happened," a spokesperson for Facebook operator Meta said, confirming the tag had been blocked for all Facebook users around the world, not just in Vietnam.

It wasn't immediately clear why the tag had been blocked, and the spokesperson declined to comment on potential reasons. While it was blocked, a search for the hashtag generated a message saying community standards had been violated. — **Reuters**

CHANGING WORLD

Your trash for our books: Indonesian library creates literacy from litter



A librarian in Indonesia's Java island is lending books to children in exchange for trash they collect in a novel way to clean up the environment and get the kids to read more.

Each weekday Raden Roro Hendarti rides her three wheeler with books stacked up at the back for children in Muntang village to exchange for plastic cups, bags and other waste that she carries back.

She said she is helping inculcate reading in the kids as well make them aware of the environment. As soon as she shows up, little children, many accompanied by their mothers, surround her "Trash Library" and clamour for the books.

They are all carrying trash bags and Raden's three-wheeler quickly fills up with them as the books fly out. She's happy the kids are going to spend less time on online games as a result.

"Let us build a culture of literacy from young age to mitigate the harm of the online world," Raden said. "We should also take care of our waste in order to fight climate change and to save the earth from trash," Raden said.

She collects about 100 kg (220 lbs) of waste each week, which is then sorted out by her colleagues and sent for recycling or sold. She has a stock of 6,000 books to lend and wants to take the mobile service to neighbouring areas as well.



Kevin Alamsyah, an avid 11-year-old reader, scours for waste lying in the village.

"When there is too much trash, our environment will become dirty and it's not healthy. That's why I look for trash to borrow a book," he says.

Jiah Palupi, the head of the main public library in the area, said Raden's work complemented their efforts to combat online gaming ad-

diction among the youth and promote reading.

The literacy rate for above-15-year-old in Indonesia is around 96 per cent, but a September report by the World Bank warned that the pandemic will leave more than 80 per cent of 15-year-old below the minimum reading proficiency level identified by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. — **Reuters**

A PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE



Dr Yousuf Ali al Mulla

Your work and your happiness

AS EVERY YEAR ends, we ask our new graduates and those young adults: How much do you like your work? Many of them are carefully thinking of their ideal career, training to take on jobs in business or government. Interestingly they assume that in order to be satisfied, you must hold your dream job—one where your skills meet your passion and make a good profit, but can all of them have this? Here is the question!

Indeed and from a psychological point of view, this belief is based on a misunderstanding

duties. Surely, they shouldn't subscribe to something they hate. Instead, I believe that a better approach is to remain flexible in the specific job while searching for values that match their own. So, whatever job they end up in, finding a sense of reaching their goals within it is critical to job satisfaction.

Moreover, this takes us to recognise that for real satisfaction, you should pursue goals—two in particular. The first is success and earning it. And this honestly, takes me to Employers for instance who should provide clear feedback,

In the end, given that, job satisfaction depends on criteria such as people and values rather than tangible characteristics such as job duties and money... a good job can become a bad job without any changes

of what brings job satisfaction. We do know that to be happy at work, you don't have to hold a job that culminates in your educational achievement nor do you have to make a lot of money. I think nowadays is not about what is the work, but may be — if you can agree with me — is about who: such work satisfaction is now about people who you work with and value.

However, job satisfaction mostly depends on a sense of accomplishment, recognition of your job and work-life balance. And here if I could say about our nurses who believed that their work is a divine profession and a tool through which they could obtain spiritual pleasure and satisfaction.

On other hand, by choosing a job or career path, I cannot say only to our youngest adults find the best possible match between their interests and the specific job

reward merit, and encourage their employees to develop new skills that will help in giving such feelings.

Of course, the second goal worth pursuing in any work is serving others — the sense that your job makes the world a better place. This doesn't mean you need to volunteer or work for a charity to be happy!

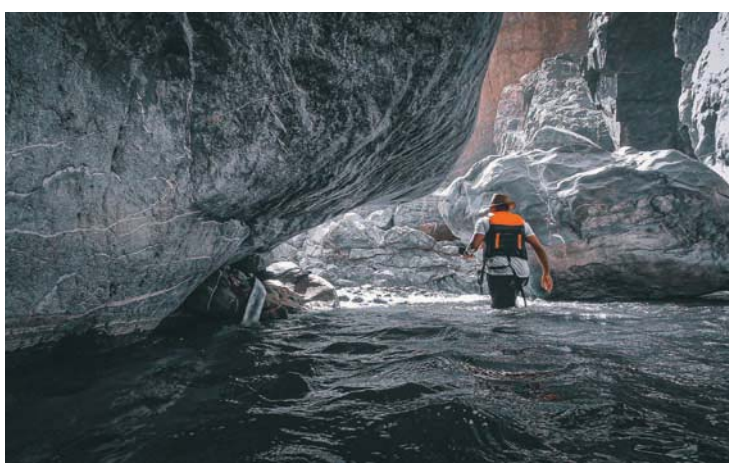
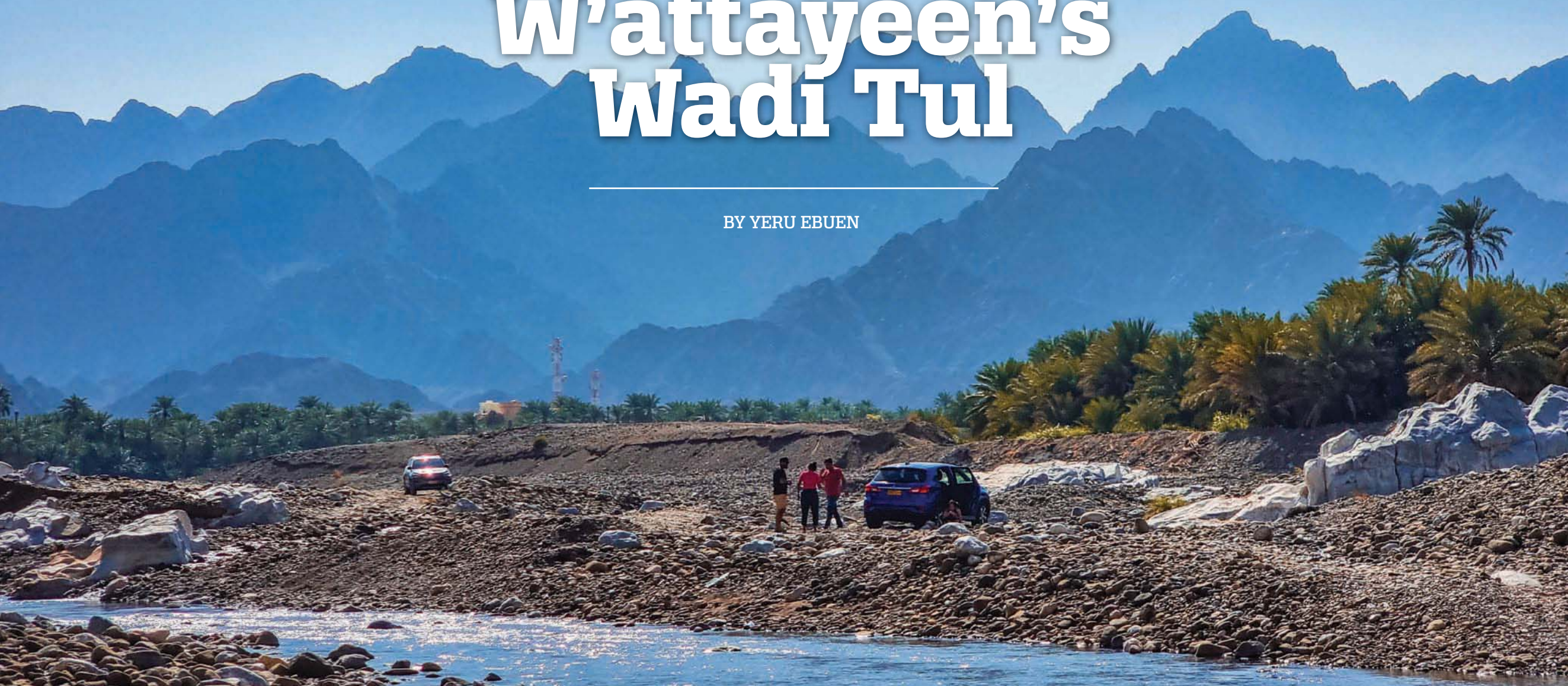
In the end, given that, job satisfaction depends on criteria such as people and values rather than tangible characteristics such as job duties and money. It is worth noting that a good job can become a bad job without any changes that might be apparent. However, I could say that the key point here is: when we know the secrets of a truly satisfying career, really the work can be fun.

Dr Yousuf Ali Al Mulla is a physician, medical innovator and a writer.



Your next outdoor trip should be Dima W'attayeen's Wadi Tul

BY YERU EBUEN



Dima W'attayeen as a destination does not make it often on the news. Scouring through numerous sources, the only place that usually pops up when searching for information is the Sulphur wadi we've already featured in the newspaper several times.

A trip further deep into the heart of Dima W'attayeen would actually yield a far better view and a more dynamic wadi that is ideal as a family getaway and a camping spot.

From one photo, I reached out to our favourite guide Ahmed al Jaabri of Oman Outdoor Adventures to inquire about the location of Tul village where the wadi is located nearby.

Doing rounds on WhatsApp, the photo, taken by a drone, showed an emerald pool in between deep canyons. From the said angle, a couple of Jeeps were parked about five metres away from the water and in the background, radiant under the midday sun are homes dotted by date palms.

Ahmed said that he heard about the place and so set our weekend destination for that week.

We left Muscat past 10 joined by some other friends. Taking the Samayil tunnels, we headed further towards Rimal Al Sharqiya taking a turn where the road leads to Dima W'attayeen.

I'd been to Dima W'attayeen but I've never traversed the way going to the main town and crossing more wadis leading to roads heading to Sur.

We passed by Baad while Rod Stewart was crooning in the background. A white mosque welcomed us and further down, the view gave way to more farms and sleepy villages. Several metres further, an old forgotten tower sits on top of a hill still doing a job the people of the area already forgotten.

The road towards Tul village was a bit long. In between, water overflows on the road causing saloon cars to skirt. Far ahead, the rugged mountain peaks transformed to darken blood and every so often dozens of goats cross the road while others were busy feeding on the foliage of the growing plants.

We passed through the village of Alka and its big concrete houses, the purple domed mosque an iconic structure in the area. After running for another 30 minutes, the view

fades into an amalgam of mountains, old villages and surprisingly, in the middle of nowhere, a football court.

We took a sharp turn which lead to another wadi we had to cross. While we had a 4WD, our tyres were big enough that it was a challenging journey going in.

We will eventually see our first sign of deeper pools when we reached the outskirts of Tul village.

Bigger 4WD cars had no trouble going right inside Wadi Tul. Just like what we saw in the photo, two gargantuan cliffs rise above the wadi throwing shade at the wadi below. Just like the photo, it was dreamy and worth the drive.

The wadi itself is about a 40-minute hike from the main cliff entrance all the way towards the bigger pools. The hike will remind one of the middle part of Wadi Shab where giant rocks and shallow pools are decorated with different water plants. While it is an easy hike, some parts can be challenging for beginners and the end part has natural occurring water slides carved from smoothened rocks.

Personally, Wadi Tul became an instant favourite now becoming part of my top 6 must check out wadis in the Sultanate of Oman. While it's a far drive from Muscat, the cliffs shading the pathways of the wadi were a relief especially during the summer when the sun is torture.

While the photo we saw had much more water on it, we realized that it only happens after it rains. During our visit, the water already subsided but based on the story of the locals, the water pools are there all year round being it the source for watering the villager's gardens.

Difficulty-wise, I will put the wadi at 2 out of 5. We travelled with a 12-year-old kid who has no trouble hiking the first 15 minutes of the hike. I highly recommend bringing along your own food supply as the place is perfect for barbeque and camping. Dima W'attayeen, while a strong agricultural hub, is yet to see big restaurants and hopefully, more visits to the area will fuel economic movement.

Should you visit it? The answer is a definite yes. Wadi Tul has its own charm and while smaller than the more popular Wadi Bani Khalid or Wadi Shab, it is an amazing stop when you are on your way visiting Rimal Al Sharqiya.

