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DOMESTIC TOURISM - HOLIDAY CLOSER TO HOME
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First COVID-19 field hospital opens at old Muscat Airport

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The first phase of the field hospital for COVID-19 patients on the premises that housed the old Muscat Airport was inaugurated by Sayyid Saud bin Hilal al Busaidi, Minister of State and Governor of Muscat, in the presence of Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed al Sa'eedi, Minister of Health, and a number of high-ranking officials on Monday.

The ministers and accompanying officials were briefed on the field hospital and procedures and protocols set to receive and treat COVID-19 patients.

"This hospital will play a role in reducing the burden on hospitals across the governorate, and consequently, these hospitals will be able to provide their regular services," Sayyid Busaidi later said.

"The first phase of the hospital has 100 beds, but the facility will eventually have 312-bed capacity. We are also trying to establish an intensive care unit in the field hospital soon. A shelter centre will be attached to the field hospital spread over 10,000sqm with a capacity of 384 beds. The shelter will be transformed to a hospital if necessary," Dr Sa'eedi informed.

"The field hospital was completed in less than two months, which is a record time. Unfortunately, some citizens and residents do not adhere to the procedures and continue to hold gatherings. This hospital will re-



(Supplied photo)

The field hospital was completed in less than two months, which is a record time. Unfortunately, some citizens and residents do not adhere to the procedures and continue to hold gatherings

DR AHMED BIN MOHAMMED AL SA'EEDI

lieve pressure on the Governorate of Muscat and the neighbouring areas," he said, adding that hospitals of Muscat are full to capacity. "The government

has provided and will provide everything possible to combat the virus."

Addressing the issue of rising infections, he said, "The number

of COVID-19 patients and deaths is increasing day by day. We currently have 210 COVID-19 patients in intensive care units, which is the highest number for a single disease. Getting medical staff to work in ICUs is not an easy thing, but we have provided staff for this work. The economy will not stop, but I hope that all members of society abide by the health measures and the decisions of the Supreme Committee."

Besides relieving pressure on the sultanate's hospitals, the field

hospital also aims to maintain the health of the health workers in the hospitals.

Talking about immunity shots for COVID-19, he said, "Vaccines depend on scientific studies. Some vaccines are in the final experimental stages. Unfortunately, there is no specific date for the production and sale of the vaccine commercially."

He thanked His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik for his support to the health sector on behalf of MoH.

Continued on Page 05



App to help Omani women farmers wins Arab award

Our Correspondent
Muscat

A computer application for Omani women farmers has won the silver medal at an Arab competition.

Three students from Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) designed the application called 'Shatla' to help women farmers engage in their work in easy and innovative ways.

The app designed by Inas Shadoul, Maryam al Nuaimi and Meera al Azzani won the silver medal in the competition titled 'Innovations to Empower Rural Women in the Arab Region through a Mobile Application - 2020'. It was conducted by the Arab Women Organisation in co-operation with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Inas said, "We participated in

the competition in July and got the silver medal on September 30."

She said the app provides services to facilitate work on farms including remote irrigation and pest control. Additionally, it provides information on crops via an audio feature to support rural women who are unable to read, and information on weather besides helping communicate with experts for advice on cultivation and pests.

"Getting information from farmers was not easy, but some friends helped us communicate with them," Inas informed.

According to her, she and her team are keen to establish a company after graduating. "We hope to obtain financial support to develop the app further and provide services via drones."



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HOLIDAY CLOSER TO HOME

With the tourism sector grappling with the effects of COVID-19, local tourism is positioned to support the national economy

Our Correspondent
Muscat

With no international tourists visiting Oman as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the fate of the sultanate's tourism industry in the immediate future depends on domestic tourism. As the tourism sector grapples with the effects of COVID-19, local tourism is positioned to support the national economy.

To realise this, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism will implement a number of programmes and initiatives under the National Tourism Strategy, which includes the development of 14 tourist projects across various governorates. 'The developments will take into account the elements of sustainability, empowerment of local communities, and enhancing their roles in preserving their cultural heritage and customs for posterity,' stated the ministry.

According to figures from the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI), 47.1 per cent or RO608.7mn of the total tourism revenue in 2019 was generated by domestic tourism compared to 52.9 per cent or RO684.7mn from inbound tourism. The tourism sector generated RO1.3bn in 2019, an increase of 4.9 per cent over RO1.2bn in 2018.

Within domestic tourism, hotels contributed 24 per cent, equivalent to RO146.1mn, followed by tourism services, including shopping, made up 13.7 per cent of the total or RO83.2mn. Travel and tour agencies ranked third with 13.5 per cent or RO82.1mn, followed by air and land transport services accounting for 12.4 per cent and 7.6 per cent respectively, according to NCSI.

The centre added that domestic tourism contributed RO608.7mn to the national economy in 2019, which indicates it is an important component of Oman's tourism industry.

The NCSI statistics show that the total direct value of the tourism industry to the economy was RO717.9mn in 2019, an increase of 4.1 per cent over 2018 when it accounted for RO689.5mn. In 2017, the tourism industry added RO738.4mn to the national economy as opposed to RO682.6mn in 2016.

The number of visitors to the sultanate continued to increase during the last four years (2015-2019) with a growth rate of 7.4 per cent to reach 3.5mn visitors in 2019 compared to 2.6mn visitors in 2015. The number of visitors to Oman in 2019 was up by 8.2 per cent compared to 2018.

GCC nationals accounted for the highest number of inbound visitors - 40.3 per cent or 1.4mn of the total - followed by visitors from Asian countries (24.8 per cent) and Europeans (20.7 per cent).

Entertainment was the main purpose of the visits (46.4 per cent of the total) accounting for 1.6mn tourists, followed by visits to friends and family (30.5 per cent) and for business (11.7 per cent).

NCSI statistics also show that 26,405 flights landed and departed from Muscat, Salalah and Sohar airports by the end of July 2020. It added that there were 3,723,897 passengers (arrival, departure and transit in Muscat, Salalah, Sohar and Duqm airports) at the end of July 2020 compared to 9,357,788 in 2019.

CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM TO ECONOMY (2019)

TOTAL REVENUE	INBOUND TOURISM	DOMESTIC TOURISM
RO1.3bn	RO685mn	RO609mn

TOP FIVE SOURCE MARKETS (AUG 2020)

GCC	INDIA	GERMANY	UK	CHINA
297,646	90,015	46,642	37,610	30,157

VISITORS TILL AUG 2020

811,000

3-5 STAR HOTEL REVENUE (AUG 2020)

RO61mn

3-5 STAR HOTEL GUESTS (AUG 2020)

491,000

DOMESTIC TOURISM CONTRIBUTION (2019)

HOTELS	TOURISM SERVICES (INCLUDING SHOPPING)	TRAVEL AND TOUR AGENCIES
24% or RO146.1mn	13.7% or RO83.2mn	13.5% or RO82.1mn

Topfruit

NO ADDED SUGAR

ORANGE

100% JUICE

APPLE

100% JUICE

FRUIT COCKTAIL

NO ADDED SUGAR

MANGO MIXED FRUIT

NO ADDED SUGAR

RED BERRIES MIX

NO ADDED SUGAR

Teachers reimagine the future during crisis

Shaddad al Musalmay
Muscat

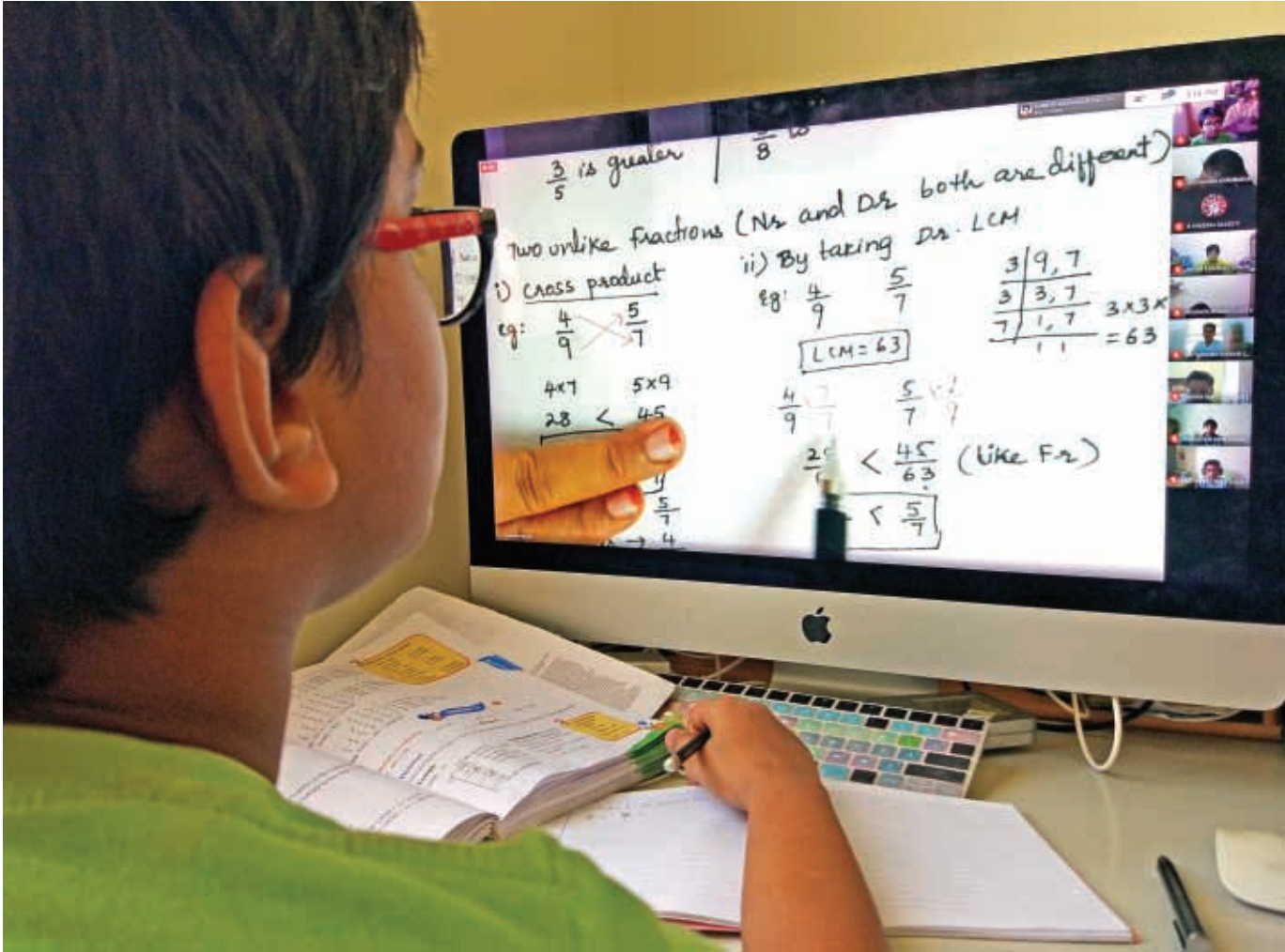
Marking World Teachers' Day (October 5) amid the COVID-19 pandemic this year has different as one sector that continues to benefit from the crisis is online education. The current situation has significantly changed the on-line education business which is likely to set the way knowledge is going to be imparted in the future.

According to Unesco, World Teachers' Day celebrations in 2020 were held under the theme 'Teachers: Leading in crisis, re-imagining the future'.

'The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly added to the challenges faced by already over-extended education systems throughout the world. It is no exaggeration to say that the world is at a crossroads and, now more than ever, we must work with teachers to protect the right to education and guide it into the unfolding landscape brought about by the pandemic,' Unesco said.

'In this crisis, teachers have shown, as they have done so often, great leadership and innovation in ensuring that #LearningNeverStops, that no learner is left behind. Around the world, they have worked individually and collectively to find solutions and create new learning environments for their students to allow education to continue. Their role advising on school reopening plans and supporting students with the return to school is just as important,' stated a joint statement from Unesco, ILO, Unicef and Education International.

According to education ex-



In this crisis, teachers have shown, as they have done so often, great leadership and innovation in ensuring that #LearningNeverStops, that no learner is left behind

UNESCO, ILO, UNICEF AND EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL

perts and parents in Oman, educating children in the 'new normal' has brought about new realities, including teacher training.

H E Dr Abdullah bin Khamis bin Ali Ambusaidi, Undersecretary in the Ministry of Education, said all teaching staff will be

trained ahead of the school year.

"There will be a training programme for teachers and support groups on how to use e-learning platforms and deal with distance learning," he said.

"Education will be blended, which is a mixture of traditional education and distance learning,

and it will help reduce direct contact between students and the teacher," H E Dr Ambusaidi added. For parents, this will mean investment in computers and laptops for their children.

The parents *Muscat Daily* spoke with have already started getting ready with laptops and Internet connection.

"As we know that there would be both school attendance and online education, we as parents have to be ready. I have already invested in a new laptop which my children will use. What I have to do now is apply for a WiFi connection. COVID-19 has made

us more tech savvy now and this means more expenses. However, this is good for our children," said Sulaiman Mohammad, father of four children from Seeb.

Blended education will also mean more work for parents.

"Giving our children access to Internet and laptops will require us to monitor them. We do not want them to indulge in other things other than education. So, we have to be alert when they are online. The new way of education is not only changing children but parents too," said Sawsan al Ajmi, mother of four.

@shadadm

Parents get more 'homework' now

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Lack of direct interaction between students and teachers, missing values of friendship and sharing, and inactivity are some aspects parents worry about as their children learn online these days.

Ever since schools shut down due to the pandemic, online education has been the way forward. Though there are a number of advantages for students like not having to carry heavy schoolbags, parents have noted several issues related to children's social behaviour.

Parents claim that children being cut away from the world, including peers, is a setback for their overall growth.

"A child, in his early years, needs to interact and play with his friends, get experiences and feel life. Sadly the pandemic has affected all of us, but the main fear is about our children. Now they are lagging behind in social skills. We are social animals and our growth happens with our good and bad times with people. Though as adults we can adjust, for children this is a matter of concern as they are slowly being isolated," said Pradeep M Verma, whose son is in the second grade at Indian School Wadi Kabir.

Online education, another parent said, makes children

lazy. Running around school with friends, attending classes in different rooms, playing games during sports period and extracurricular activities challenge the body and mind of the child.

Rashid Khan, whose children go to Pakistan School Muscat, said, "My daughters used to take part in extracurricular activities. This made them energetic and spontaneous. But now with online classes, nothing happens and they just sit at the desk and often stop the video and go for breaks."

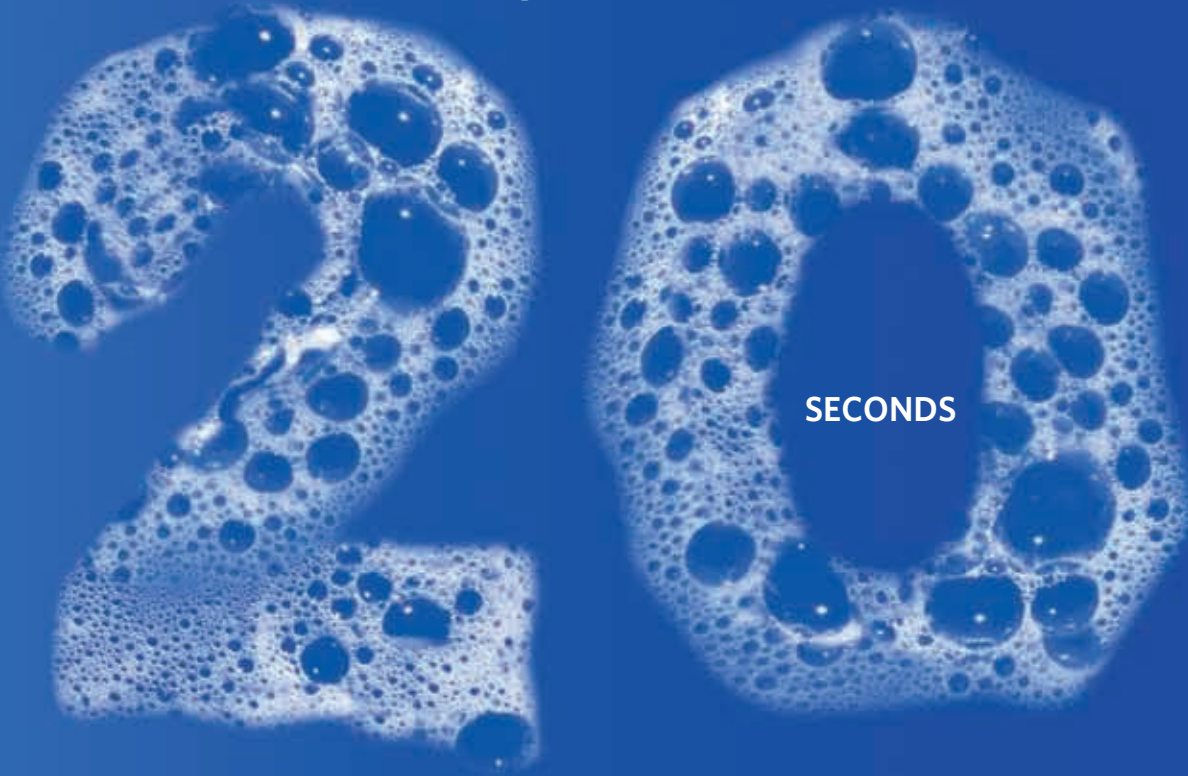
Another concern is students are not serious.

"I feel when a student has a teacher in front of him or her, they are more studious. It is almost impossible to monitor a child online. A child needs a mentor to advice, guide as well as teach him physically," said Seema, whose son studies in grade six at Indian School Muscat.

Nazim Qureshi, vice principal of Indian School Wadi Kabir International, said, "We human beings connect with emotions achieved through social bonding. We have not developed yet to bond virtually. Hence I must say that a student performs well when he has a teacher. Teachers are trying their best to establish this bond online through activities and creating certain scenarios during teaching."

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Nearly 350 volunteers come together to increase green covering in Dhofar

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To increase green areas and preserve the environment, nearly 350 volunteers recently came together to plant trees in Dhofar governorate.

Conducted to boost afforestation, the initiative involved people from a cross section of society including youngsters, doctors and nature lovers.

The Qairoon Hairitti volunteer team started working in 2017 on afforestation in several areas to increase green covering in Dhofar.

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Khalid Tabook, a team member, said, "Our aim is to spread environmental awareness among members of society and motivate young people to participate in volunteer work. The team has also replanted trees after severe climatic conditions."

Tabook said it is necessary to



spread awareness regarding afforestation and increase green spaces in the country.

"We are encouraging parents

to inculcate this culture in children through our initiatives to grow various trees, especially figs. The volunteers want to ed-

ucate the society and save the environment."

On July 28, the team began uprooting the Parthenium weed

in the village of Qairoon Hairitti in Dhofar, he said.

"To uproot the poisonous plant, we worked from 8am to

We are encouraging parents to inculcate this culture in children through our initiatives to grow various trees, especially figs. The volunteers want to educate the society and save the environment

KHALID TABOOK

5pm. This needed a lot of effort and money, but with the help of the people, and our determination, we overcame the hurdles. We uprooted the toxic plant from a large area."

Increasing green covering on Earth is the need of the hour,

Tabook said. "It will also boost health of humans and motivate them."

The team, in cooperation with Salalah Municipality, is now working to move fig trees that have grown randomly on streets and bridges.

"We are uprooting them from those places and planting them in other places far from homes and streets to increase afforestation. Wild figs are local trees that fight desertification and do not need much water."

He urged people to cooperate in their endeavours.

"We urge the residents of Qairoon Hairitti to cooperate with us in the coming days and do their bit to save the environment. We thank all the citizens who support us. We will continue our afforestation efforts and not stop. I hope that all volunteer teams in Dhofar come together under one umbrella."

Pact signed to hire agricultural quarantine specialists at Suwaiq port

Our Correspondent
Muscat

As part of its efforts to support the agricultural sector and farmers, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources (MoAFWR) has signed an agreement with Marafi to finance the employment of agricultural quarantine specialists at Suwaiq port.

The agreement aims to facilitate the provision of inspection services for imported and exported agricultural consignments around the clock to ensure that these are free of plant pests and diseases. The agreement also aims to facilitate the entry of agricultural consignments through direct import from different sea ports to ensure that the local market gets various agricultural products.

The agreement was signed by Eng Suleiman bin Mahfouz al Toobi, director general of Agricultural Development in the



The agreement was signed by Eng Suleiman al Toobi and Dr Ahmed al Abri (Supplied photo)

MoAFWR, and Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed al Abri, CEO of Marafi.

According to the ministry's statistics, of the 1.3mn animals exported and imported between January 1 and July 31 of 2020, the number of sheep and goats imported was 1,054,038, while 63,935 cows were imported. The number of sheep and goats ex-

ported was 178,677 while 5,350 cows were exported.

The ministry stated that it has put strict measures in place for export of livestock.

"Export of livestock is not allowed without approval of the ministry. Livestock exporters must obtain export permit three days prior to the date of export. The livestock should undergo

three-day quarantine before being exported but that period may vary as per requirements applied by the importing country."

The ministry is making concerted efforts to provide the required quantities of livestock needed by the local market and maintain the supply of imported as well locally produced food commodities.

Volunteer group holds second plasma donation campaign

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To speed up the recovery of those infected with COVID-19, volunteer group Pratheeksha Oman, in cooperation with the Department of Blood Bank Services at the Ministry of Health (MoH), held its second plasma and blood donation campaign last week.

"In July 2020, Pratheeksha Oman held the first plasma donation campaign, when a lot of people responded to our call," said Ashraf Ali, a member of the group. "We held the second plasma donation event on October 2. It is part of our campaign to inform common people about the importance of donating blood and plasma, specially for those in need the most - the ones suffering from COVID-19."

A large number of volunteers participated in the camp and 75 people donated blood.



"We also had two volunteers who donated plasma for the second time after getting infected with COVID-19."

The camp was conducted jointly with the Global Money Exchange.

Pratheeksha Oman is a social group of likeminded individuals who believe in social service. The group has been working in Oman for the last nine years relentlessly in the area of public service such as conducting regular blood do-

nation camps, common iftars, supplying drinking water to workers, etc.

Ali revealed that the Central Blood Bank authorities appreciated Pratheeksha Oman for the systematic arrangements done by the organisation as well as for following all the protocols stipulated by the Supreme Committee. The team will continue to organise plasma donation campaigns to help those affected with COVID-19.

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Sohar - 26704639/49/50
Apollo Hospital Muscat,
Hamriya: 24787766,
24782666, 24787780
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24770800, 90999335,
90999334 (Emergency)
Starcare Hospital: 24557200
Emergency number: 24558333
Dr Harub's Clinic:
24563217, 2456381,
99254940 (Emergency)
Emirates Medical Center:
24604540
KIMS Oman Hospital:
24760105
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24788577, 24707566,
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Send your comments to muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om

Omantel and Equinix inaugurate Oman's first international data centre

Muscat - Taking yet another major technological stride that will further revolutionise the future of telecommunications in Oman and the Middle East region, Omantel announced the opening of MC1, an international data centre built in collaboration with Equinix – the world's digital infrastructure company.

The facility is the first world-class, carrier-neutral hub in Oman where carriers, content providers and cloud providers can colocate their critical IT infrastructure. The state-of-the-art hub, an International Business Exchange (IBX) data centre, that has been opened in Barka is strategically located between Asia, Africa and Europe.

As per a statement, MC1 will serve as a regional interconnection hub providing ultra-low latency connection points between key global business markets. The new facility benefits from direct connectivity to strategic cable landing stations (CLS) and sub-sea cable systems that terminate directly inside the facility, providing customers with increased performance and security, along



with significant cost savings.

Talal al Mamari, CEO of Omantel, said, "Today, data centre infrastructure sits at the heart of global ICT and enables all of us to enjoy the cloud-based apps and services we use every day. MC1 represents a significant step forward for Oman and the Middle Eastern ICT markets. We are delighted that the facility is now operational, and together with Equinix, we hope to enable a new era of telecommunications both

regionally and globally. Coupled with the majority of the GCC's international submarine cables landing in Oman, all accessible from the Equinix data centre, we believe this partnership will further enhance Oman's competitiveness in the global digital economy."

MC1 will provide customers with direct access to the Equinix Internet Exchange, creating a regional peering hub for networks, content providers and large en-

terprises to exchange Internet traffic over the world's largest peering solution. MC1 is Equinix's first data centre in Oman and its fourth in the MENA region.

Omantel entered into a joint venture with Equinix in 2018 to deliver data centre and interconnection services to customers in the Middle East through the development of the new network-dense data centre. The resulting site, MC1, is operated by Equinix and includes 23,600 sq ft colo-

cation space and 725 cabinets. The site also has the capacity to grow to 2,150+ cabinets with future IBX builds.

With subsea cable systems terminating directly in MC1, the site benefits from continued investments by Omantel in multiple strategic subsea cable systems throughout the world, reaching over 50 countries globally. Omantel currently has investments in more than 20 subsea cable systems and lever-

ages six diverse landing stations in Oman and one in Marseille, France.

Eugene Bergen Henegouwen, president, EMEA, Equinix, said, "We are seeing an accelerated demand for digital transformation in MENA. Across different sectors, organisations are re-assessing their cloud adoption strategies and cloud readiness. In the digital age, companies need to reach all the right places and partners to seize opportunity, and they need to do it out at the edge."

"Our partnership with Omantel greatly supports our ability to meet this need, particularly as our customers can now leverage Omantel's significant subsea cable infrastructure. This type of colocation and interconnection services platform creates a magnetic effect that draws in more users that can leverage a global subsea cable fabric connecting cities, countries and continents together. Our investment in the Middle East market reflects our commitment to our customers as they continue their digital transformation journeys."

First field hospital for COVID-19

Continued from Page 01
"We also thank PDO for its support to establish the field hospital. I wish all young people to cooperate with us to limit the spread of COVID-19. I hope everyone follows the precautionary measures, ignores rumours and believes information only from the right source," Dr Sa'eedi said.

Spread over 6,100sqm, the field hospital has beds for mild and moderate cases, a temporary care section, a pharmacy, a laboratory and a radiology section. It will be run by a medical team from MoH comprising 30 doctors, 115 male and female nurses, seven lab technicians, seven assistant pharmacists and seven radiologists.

The field hospital will cover patients from the governorates of Muscat, South and North Batinah, Dakhliyah and North Sharqiyah. Other governorates will be covered in future if the need arises.

The establishment of the field hospital was a collaboration between a number of government and private authorities, including MoH, Civil Aviation Authority, Oman Airports, PDO, Royal Court Affairs and Royal Oman Police.

OMAN PRESENTS CREDENTIALS TO OPCW



Fernando Arias, director general of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), received the credentials of Dr Sheikh Abdullah bin Salem al Harthy as Oman's permanent representative to the organisation at its headquarters in The Hague. Arias appreciated the efforts of the sultanate and its policies in support of peace and stability and the success of the organisation's role in the region (ONA)

SalamAir to fly to six Indian cities as part of air bubble agreement

Muscat - SalamAir, the sultanate's fast-growing value-for-money airline, has announced special flights to six Indian destinations from Muscat as part of the recently established bilateral air bubble arrangement between Oman and India for the operation of special international passenger flights connecting the two countries.

SalamAir will operate special passenger flights twice a week to Calicut (Kozhikode), Chennai, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Lucknow and Trivandrum (Thiruvananthapuram) till end of November.

SalamAir flight tickets are now open for sale through salamair.com, its call centres and appointed travel agents.

Capt Mohamed Ahmed, CEO of SalamAir, said, "We are happy that we are part of this bilateral air bubble arrangement between India and Oman. While this arrangement is temporary, we are confident and looking forward to launch India as one of our destinations."

He added, "India is one of the most important markets for all airlines operating in the Middle East due to the size of its population, number of tourists from the country and expat residents. SalamAir has operated nearly 700 chartered flights to overseas destinations over the last three months, with many of them fly-



We are happy that we are part of this bilateral air bubble arrangement. While this is temporary, we are looking forward to launch India as one of our destinations

CAPT MOHAMED AHMED

ing to India. This has enabled us to gain a lot of knowledge about the market and passengers' expectation. This exposure will make our entry to the Indian market a smoother experience. We are working closely with concerned authorities to secure necessary clearance to start permanent operations."

The following categories of people can fly on these flights:

►Any Indian national holding a valid residency permit can fly from India to Oman. Airlines must ensure that Indian nation-

als are eligible to enter Oman before issue of ticket/ boarding pass to the Indian passenger. ►Indian nationals stranded in Oman and all Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders holding passports of Oman, and nationals of Oman (including diplomats) holding valid visa issued by an Indian Mission.

All operations are subject to strict adherence to the SOP issued by the civil aviation authorities and other COVID-19 related guidelines issued by the authorities from both sides.

Oman Air to resume flights to three Indian cities

Muscat - Oman Air will resume flights to India on October 8 with two flights per week connecting Muscat with Delhi, Mumbai and Kochi, the airline stated.

Flights to and from Delhi will depart and arrive in each city on Mondays and Wednesdays. Flights to and from Mumbai will connect on Sundays and Thursdays. Flights connecting Muscat and Kochi will depart and arrive on Sundays and Thursdays.

544 new COVID-19 cases, 8 deaths reported on Monday

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Health (MoH) on Monday confirmed 544 new cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), taking the total to 101,814. Eight deaths were reported during the same time.

The number of those who have recovered has also increased by 304.

"The number of recoveries has increased to 90,600 while the number of deaths has reached 985," an MoH statement said.

As of Monday, a total of 535

CASES FROM SEPT 25 TO OCT 05	
Sept 25 to 27 (Average of 574)	1,543
Sept 28	607
Sept 29	528
Sept 30 to Oct 4 (Average of 537)	2,685
Oct 5	544

patients were admitted in health institutions while 207 patients were in the ICU.

MoH calls upon all to adhere to the isolation procedures by staying in an isolated room with an attached toilet and serving the isolated person from outside the room as instructed. It said that social distancing also helps curb the spread of the virus.

MoH advises all citizens and residents to continue washing hands with water and soap, avoid touching the face, nose, mouth and eyes and follow healthy habits.

REGIONAL WEATHER

	Max	Min
Abu Dhabi	38	25
Doha	36	26
Kuwait City	37	27
Manama	39	22
Riyadh	39	22

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr	4.45am
Sunrise	6.00am
Duhr	12.00pm
Asr	3.23pm
Maghrib	5.55pm
Isha	7.05pm

ISQUIZ 2020 launches first prelims



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Our Correspondent
Muscat

The second edition of the mega Inter-school Quiz Competition (ISQUIZ 2020), hosted by Indian School Salalah, under the aegis of the Board of Directors, Indian Schools in Oman, was inaugurated on September 19.

The weekly quizzes that appeared on the ISQUIZ space of the Muscat Daily and daily quiz that appeared in the host school's website provided an excellent preparatory platform for inquisitive minds, and all the lucky winners are keenly waiting to receive attractive prizes.

Putting an end to the long

wait, the first prelims of the virtual ISQUIZ 2020 commenced on October 4 for both junior and senior categories. As many as 2,892 students from the 21 Indian schools in Oman registered for the competition in the junior category and 1,162 students registered in the senior category.

A total of 595 participants from the junior category and 401 participants from the senior category successfully accomplished the specified benchmark and qualified for the second prelims scheduled on October 6. The quiz wizards of the 21 Indian schools in Oman are intensely preparing to secure a place in the Grand Finale on October 10.

Bank Muscat's National Day draw to give RO500,000 to fifty lucky customers

Coinciding with the sultanate's 50th National Day celebrations on November 18, Bank Muscat has begun the countdown to conduct a special Al Mazyona draw for this National Day. Fifty lucky winners will win prizes of RO10,000 each during the special draw. The prize draw represents an excellent opportunity for the bank's customers to win one of these special prizes.

All that a customer needs to do is maintain a minimum balance of RO1,000 in their Al Mazyona account to be eligible. The draw is being held in such a way that the more the customer's savings, the greater the chance to win one of the valuable prizes.

Speaking on the occasion, Abdullah Tamman al Maashani, deputy general manager - Institutional Sales and Product Development, Bank Muscat, said, "The bank is pleased to allocate these special prizes to our cus-



tomers on the occasion of the 50th National Day celebrations of Oman. The bank places great priority on this special occasion as it is a much loved and dear occasion for all Omanis and residents of the sultanate. To enable heartfelt celebrations by our customers, the bank will be offering large financial prizes during the raffle draws on this occasion, with the total amount of prizes amounting to RO500,000."



Bank Muscat always participates in all national events in order to bring joy and happiness to its customers and will continue to conduct special prize

draws on a number of other occasions too during the year. It calls upon customers to continue

their savings in their accounts to get more opportunities to win exciting financial prizes.

Al Mazyona has succeeded in inculcating a strong savings culture in Oman. For over 25 years, Al Mazyona has rewarded numerous customers and enriched

their lives. Bank Muscat encourages everyone to save for the future with the objective of creating a life-changing experience for winners and improving the well-being of their families.

Oman's flagship savings scheme continues to reward a prudent and financially responsible savings habit among millions of customers with a massive RO11mn to be won by 6,677 over the course of the year. Al Mazyona is designed to transform the lives of prudent savers.

The scheme is targeted to accommodate all nationalities and segments, including ladies, youth, children, high-savings balance customers and salary account holders, thereby inculcating a strong savings habit among citizens who will be financially responsible. The bank has invited all its customers to take maximum advantage of the opportunities and win exciting prizes by increasing the savings.

Carrefour Oman helps customers skip queues with Scan&Go Mobile



Carrefour Oman has launched Scan&Go Mobile — a first-of-its-kind mobile service in the region. The feature provides customers full autonomy, enabling them to scan and bag purchases as they journey around Carrefour stores using their smartphones. It is one of many innovations developed by Carrefour to help customers shop with ease.

Scan&Go Mobile underlines Carrefour's ongoing commitment to creating seamless shopping experiences for all its customers, with the new feature allowing customers to skip the inconvenience of long queues. Moreover, it enables a truly con-

tactless shopping journey as customers not only use their smartphones, but are also encouraged to utilise their reusable bags as they shop.

Using the Carrefour Oman mobile app, customers can scan the barcode of each product they would like to purchase as they shop, before making their way to a dedicated Scan&Go checkout area to process their payment — via a debit or credit card — within minutes.

Set to raise customer service levels, Scan&Go Mobile is now available across all Carrefour hypermarkets and supermarkets in Oman.

Najib Haddad, country man-

ager of Carrefour Oman, said, "At Carrefour, we take great pride in offering the most convenient and integrated shopping experiences possible. We understand that today, more so than ever, customers really do place a premium on convenience and quality customer service.

"Scan&Go Mobile enables us to provide that, empowering customers with more autonomy and control. Its use of cashless payments limits unnecessary contact with other customers and touchpoints, offering shoppers even more peace of mind."

How to use Scan&Go:

- Download the Carrefour

Oman App on IOS or Android and register for MyClub.

- Open your App, and select the "Scan&Go" feature.
- Proceed to scanning and bagging items as you wish.
- The scanner's intuitive touchscreen allows you to view all the items in your basket. Using the scanner, you can add or deduct items from your basket to monitor your total bill.
- When you've finished shopping, simply scan your QR code at the designated Scan&Go terminal, insert your card to make your payment and exit the store.

To learn more, please visit www.carrefouroman.com



Ahlibank's digital channels provide 24/7 safe and secure transactions for customers

Ahlibank has continually enhanced its digital channel offerings to provide 24/7 safe and secure transactions for customers.

COVID-19 pandemic has seen a sudden uptick in online and mobile banking. Ahlibank's digital initiatives such as mobile app and Internet Banking for retail banking customers, ahliB2B, and ahliNET for corporate clients have played a key role in driving growth and efficiency making it one of the preferred banks in the sultanate.

In fact, Ahlibank's mobile app offers a slew of facilities for retail customers such as fund transfer (within customer account, within Ahlibank, locally and internationally), statement view option, payment of credit card bills, requests for cheque book, additional savings account and utility bills payment. In addition, the

app offers easy transfer facility through phone number, alias name, QR code (up to RO500 per day and 24/7 instant transfer).

Abdullah al Jabri, deputy CEO, Ahlibank, said, "We have made significant investments in digital technologies by introducing mobile app for retail customers, ahliB2B to transact secure single, bulk payment and salaries transfer (WPS), ahliNET for safe and secure transactions and to enhance banking experience for diverse corporate clients thereby enriching the digital business environment.

"Further, an agreement facilitating TASDEED system integration with Ahlibank's Corporate Internet Banking - 'ahliNET' platform has made it convenient for the bank's clients to pay bills and contributions through these channels from the comfort of

their homes or offices 24x7. The bank's digital channels is one of the top notch instruments for digital payments in the banking sector."

He added, "Given the rapid rate of digitalisation or transfer of transactions to the digital formats, markets around the globe are witnessing rapid developments. Online payments have seen an increase following COVID-19, which underlines the need to set up digital banking solutions for real-time payment and seamless transactions."

The bank continues to enhance features on its ahliB2B platform and the Corporate Internet Banking platform - 'ahliNET', offering greater flexibility and more convenient transaction banking. The bank will continue to pursue and enhance customer-oriented financial services further.

Pfizer and BioNTech to supply Qatar with potential vaccine

Pfizer Inc and BioNTech SE announced an agreement with the Ministry of Public Health in Qatar to supply their BNT162 mRNA-based vaccine candidate against SARS-CoV-2, subject to clinical success and regulatory approval, by the end of 2020 to 2021.

Financial details of the agreement were not disclosed.

As requested by the Vaccine Procurement Taskforce Team, on behalf of the Government of Qatar, deliveries are planned for the end of 2020 to 2021, subject

to clinical success and local regulatory approval.

"We are deeply honoured to work with the Qatar government and to marshal our scientific and manufacturing resources toward our shared goal of bringing a potential COVID-19 vaccine to the Qatar people as quickly as possible," said Lindsey Dietschi, Pfizer Gulf Cluster Lead.

"In the face of this global health crisis, Pfizer's purpose - breakthroughs that change patients' lives - has taken on an even greater urgency. Our hope

is that, subject to clinical and regulatory success, our vaccine will help make this happen."

"I would like to thank the Qatar government for its support and putting trust in our ability to develop a vaccine that, we believe, has the potential to help address this global pandemic threat. Our goal remains to create a global supply of a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine for many people around the world, as quickly as we can," said Sean Maret, chief business and chief commercial officer at BioN-

Tech.

Dr Aisha Ibrahim al Ansari, the chair of the Vaccine Procurement Taskforce commented, "The State of Qatar has spared no effort in ensuring a rapid and timely response in this fight against the novel coronavirus COVID-19. Our citizens and residents are our utmost priority and we are taking all the necessary steps to ensure the timely availability of a safe and effective vaccine against COVID-19. With this partnership, we continue our efforts to combat the virus."

In addition to engagements with governments, Pfizer and BioNTech have provided an expression of interest for possible supply to the COVAX Facility, a mechanism established by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and World Health Organization (WHO) that aims to provide governments, including those in the emerging markets, with early access to a large portfolio of COVID-19 candidate vaccines using a range of technology plat-

forms, produced by multiple manufacturers across the world.

The BNT162 programme is based on BioNTech's proprietary mRNA technology and supported by Pfizer's global vaccine development and manufacturing capabilities.

In July, two of the companies' four investigational vaccine candidates - BNT162b1 and BNT162b2 - received Fast Track designation from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This designation was granted based on preliminary data from

Phase 1/2 studies that are currently ongoing in the United States and Germany as well as animal immunogenicity studies.

On July 27, Pfizer and BioNTech announced that following extensive review of preclinical and clinical data from Phase 1/2 clinical trials, and in consultation with the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER) and other global regulators, the companies selected the BNT162b2 vaccine candidate to move forward into a Phase 2/3 study.

Rolls-Royce: Conquering urban frontiers in Oman

Compromise is not a word recognised in the Rolls-Royce lexicon. Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is an everlasting expression of the exceptional, and in Oman, unprecedented levels of creativity, craftsmanship and imagination came to life as Black Badge Cullinan, Wraith and Dawn embarked on an urban adventure.

Conquering new city frontiers alongside Areej al Balushi, all three motor cars stood boldly and took centre stage in a warehouse in Muscat, forming the perfect backdrop for exceptional craftsmanship to come alive.

Taking control of its industrial surroundings is the marque's dramatic alter ego, the King of the Night; Black Badge Cullinan. In Twilight Purple and Black Badge High Contrast, both motor cars demand attention. The gaze immediately settles on the prow of the car as the defining expression of Black Badge, the Spirit of Ecstasy mascot, is presented in high gloss black chrome.

Stepping into Black Badge Cullinan is stepping into superlative comfort and audacious design. Reflecting the marque's Bespoke philosophy, Black Badge Cullinan benefits from a near-indefinitely configurable interior colour palette, converting the cabin into a stage to bring patrons' creative visions to life. Additionally, the Starlight Headliner intensifies the cabin's ambience as it is presented in fine Black leather, handwoven with 1,344 fibre optic lights, reflecting the sky at night and incorporates eight brilliant white shooting stars that dart at random.

Rising out of darkness is the captivating Cherry Red and Black Diamond Dawn, promising a striking encounter like no other Rolls-Royce to date.

A truly beautiful motor car offering the most uncompromised open-top motoring experience in the world, the Rolls-Royce Dawn greets the observer with a striking



yet elegant exterior design with classic appearance and presence.

With a 2:1 wheel height to body height, a long bonnet, short front overhand, a long rear over-

hand, an elegant tapering rear graphic and a high shoulder line, like an athlete Dawn is poised,

taught and ready to go.

The silent lowering of the soft top reveals the stunning interior of Dawn, and stepping into the motor car is to be engulfed by Dawn's Mugello Red and Black luxurious embrace.

An emblem of spontaneity crafted to empower the free spirit, with Dawn, let inspiration guide you.

Standing vividly against the backdrop of this cement playground is none other than Wraith, a unique character defined by power, style and drama. With just a hint of the noir.

In profile, Wraith's sweeping fastback design gives the car its unique character. Bold lines, tension in the panels and a raked rear screen evoke the image of a world class athlete poised in the starting blocks.

Further expression of dynamic intent can be seen in Wraith's deeply recessed grille, wide rear track and dramatic two-tone presentation in Turchese and Arctic White.

Coach doors open to reveal a sumptuous interior complete with softest Phantom-grade leather, expanses of wood called Canadel Panelling and a stunning Arctic White and Turchese colour scheme. The magical interior ambience is complemented by Starlight Headliner, giving the impression of a glittering, starry night sky.

Redefining the notion of true super-luxury and always striving for the exceptional, these remarkable canvases, Black Badge Cullinan, Dawn and Wraith are available at Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Oman.

MEDC concludes awareness sessions

Muscat Electricity Distribution Company (MEDC) recently concluded the awareness sessions on the career development path programme the company created for its employees.

The sessions aimed to introduce the employees to the programme and explain to them how they can benefit from it to improve one's position within the hierarchical structure by meeting the required and desired criteria to move from one position to another.

The sessions also aimed to inspire employees to exploit the various training activities and programmes and advised them on how to manage between those development programmes and their current tasks and responsibilities.

The sessions tapped on raises, promotions, and other topics associated with hierarchical positions, as well as answered the employees' questions and queries on the programme.

Muscat Electricity Distribution Company continuously works towards enabling Omanis to join the company in various administrative and technical positions and encouraging employees to adopt the company's values 'We care', 'We deliver', 'We do better' in the work environment to ensure high productivity and efficiency levels with the aim to deliver safe and reliable electrical services to its customers in Muscat governorate.

MEDC stated that it is working to provide sustainable electricity services for all of its customers, premises in Muscat governorate. 'Our employees, engineers and all field teams are working efficiently with a high degree of safety to ensure providing the service in a safe and effective manner.'

The company said the customers can communicate with it through various channels 24x7 through contact centre 80070008, e-services through website www.medcoman.com or its mobile application.



Etihad Airways launches Global Student offer

Etihad Airways, the national carrier for the UAE, is making it easier for students to travel between university and home or to discover new horizons and cultures, with the launch of its Global Student offer.

Students who book before November 30, 2020, for travel by September 30, 2021, will save up to 10 per cent on Economy tickets and 5 per cent on Business class tickets.

Family members who want to jet off as well can benefit from the same discount provided their tickets are booked under the same reservation and they travel

with the student.

Travellers who book using this promotional fare will have an increased baggage allowance of up to 40kg in Economy and up to 50kg in Business, or one additional checked bag if travelling to/from US or Canada.

One free date change is permitted up to 96 hours prior to travel.

To book visit etihad.com/studentoffer and enter the promo code STU10. Students must present a valid student ID or official university acceptance letter at check-in. This offer excludes departures from India and China.

University of Wollongong in Dubai gives students a head start on degrees

University of Wollongong in Dubai (UOWD), the first international university and the highest-ranked Australian university in the UAE, offered Year 11 and Year 12 students the opportunity to complete one full university subject prior to finishing high school. This initiative, launched by the UAE Ministry of Education, aimed to harness young talent and allow students to earn advance credit for successfully completed subjects. Through a distinctive approach, UOWD supported the Ministry's initiative by offering three courses in the fields of business, computing and engineering that mirrored subjects taught as part of its degree programs, giving high school students a taste of university life.

The COVID-19 pandemic has raised a number of questions about long-held traditions in the education sector, including learning delivery methods. New techniques, such as blended learning – a style of education where students learn via online media as well as traditional face-to-face teaching – have offered innovative solutions for educational institutions and have helped internationalise higher education.



With international flights temporarily suspended, many students found themselves unable to travel abroad to pursue higher education, especially during the summer break.

Professor Mohamed Salem, president of UOWD, said, "As a

forward-thinking educational institution that focuses on supporting the local community, UOWD viewed this initiative as a unique opportunity to help nurture young talent in the country and to provide high school students with a head start on their

university degrees. The leadership of the UAE Ministry of Education on this project is highly appreciated and has filled an important gap in the complementarity between the roles of high schools and universities. As the UAE emerges as a regional hub for the knowledge economy, initiatives such as this one help build the country's credentials as an innovator in the higher education space."

Khaled Issa, a Bachelor of Civil Engineering student at UOWD, said, "The Engineering Design for Sustainability course that I took during the summer gave me valuable insight into what it is like to be a university student. It taught me to examine engineering problems from a different perspective and guided me in my decision to choose a Bachelor of Civil Engineering degree. The best part is that I will begin my studies with six credit points and won't feel as much pressure during the first few weeks of university due to this head start."

UOWD's three courses for high school students focused on business and STEM degrees.

Engineering Design for Sustainability offered an overview of the methods that engineers use to identify and solve problems

whilst incorporating ecological aspects that need to be considered as part of the design process. Using case studies related to sustainability, one of the themes of Expo 2020 Dubai, the course targeted students interested in careers in structural, construction, mechanical and product design engineering.

Principles of Responsible Business provided students with a conceptual tool kit for understanding and practicing responsible and ethical commerce using real case scenarios to optimise decision making. This course was geared towards aspiring students of the Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Business Administration degrees, looking to build their careers as marketing managers, HR consultants, public relations managers, entrepreneurs and accountants.

Programming Fundamentals covered computer programming at the introductory level, including understanding how to program a computer using one of the many programming languages to solve math and science problems or to create apps, games and interactive experiences. UOWD's summer courses drew the participation of 55 students.

DAILY CROSSWORD

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- ACROSS

1 Goya's duchess

5 Often Chinese jewelry

9 Show to a seat?

12 Israel's Eban

16 Doone

18 Sp. seaport

20 Goddess of vegetation

21 Sweet pickle

23 The north wind

24 Time period

25 Eye part

26 Ready to eat

27 Eskimo craft

28 Rouges

30 Skedaddle

31 System of belief

32 Lhasa is its capital

33 Polynesian edible

37 Drone

40 The uppity

41 Rhine tributary

42 ___ and penates

43 According to

44 Opposite of int.

45 ___ Kong

47 Ached

48 Despot

49 Kind of man

52 "Argo" actor Alan

53 Fairy queen

56 Companion of ends

57 On the lookout
- 58 TV's Lorne

59 So soon?

61 Sweethearts of yore

62 More restrained

63 Black alloy

64 Persian rug

65 Largest continent

66 Draft inits.

67 Trades

68 Esteemed animal

69 thymus glands

70 Welk's intro

71 Annual culinary awards

72 Biology or geology prefix

73 Cheese's partner?

76 Truck variety

77 Rich cake

78 Here: Fr.

79 Chocolate chip alternative

81 Silkworm

82 Depression sights

85 Toil

86 City lights

88 Sioux

89 Not that item there

91 Lizard

92 "___ homo!"

94 Where Anna taught

95 Scots. egghead org.

96 Magician's word
- 97 San Francisco treat

101 "To ___ human"

102 Double-fault on the court, e.g.

103 Type of fright

104 Pt. of NAACP

105 Tolkien creation

106 Don

107 Luge

DOWN

1 Einstein and Prince

2 Alsace- ___

3 "Larger than a ___?"

4 Literary collection

5 ___ Fighting Ships

6 Hawkeye, of "M*A*S*H"

7 Jackstone

8 Former Fr. coin

9 Loose

10 Kind of stone

11 Now's companion

12 Eagle's pad

13 Outsize stomachs

14 Nose

15 Nincompoop

17 Grown-ups

19 Roman rooms

20 Astronomer's interest

22 Hail, to Caesar

23 Like certain relationships

24 Too tired to ___
- 29 Liability item

30 "Death Becomes ___"

31 Like bacon or ham

33 Coiffure

34 What Lear does

35 Certain advertisements

36 Attacked

38 Actress Stritch, et al.

39 Word following bread

45 Familiar address

46 ___ 500

47 Kind of home, for short

48 A kid's house?

49 Objectives' partner

50 Precipitated

51 Mixed together: poet.

52 Opera solos

53 Order

54 One transferring property

55 The bill payers

58 Musical scale

inventor

60 ___ Fitzgerald

61 Looked hungrily

62 Mathematical relationships

64 Too tired to ___
- fly

65 Auspices

68 Withers

69 "The Amazing ___"

71 Malay

Archipelago island

73 "Serpico" author

74 Like primates

75 Long time

77 Fastening hardware

78 Cadmus's daughter

79 Scales

80 Like certain cutlets

83 Crop destroyer

84 Roman highways

87 Red dye

89 Links legend

Woods

90 Exclamation of triumph

91 Airport abbreviation

92 Salinger character

93 Two bits, e.g.

94 Fiji capital

96 Pod resident

98 Kind of drop

99 Mine find

100 Grid linemen: abbr.

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YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES

MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Tuesday's skies are relatively low-key. The moon slips into Gemini, ramping up your need for casual exchanges and movement in your neighbourhood. It's an ideal day for working on writing projects or opening up any important conversations that have been waiting in the wings. Luna's early morning square to Venus contrasts your desire for leisure with your obligation to your workload.



LEO

JULY 23-AUGUST 22

You need a firm group of friends who keep your spirits lifted. Today's skies suggest that you're craving some social interaction and are longing to feel involved—as the moon bounces through playful Gemini. The morning hours witness a tense encounter between the moon and Venus, potentially stressing finances and resources. But by afternoon, all loads are lightened.



SAGITTARIUS

NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

You're in need of some TLC. Turn to a trusted friend or partner, as you're craving companionship. You want to be involved in a project or activity with someone else. The moon dances through your opposite sign of quick-witted Gemini, adding playfulness to the air. But Luna's morning square with Venus can have you feeling pulled between career concerns and relationship needs.



TAURUS

APRIL 20-MAY 20

It might be difficult to find your footing. Luna slips into Gemini, turning your thoughts and concerns towards your current set of resources, financial and otherwise. The moon faces a disgruntled meeting with your ruling planet, Venus, likely making you moodier or more sensitive than usual towards romantic involvements. By afternoon, a sense of equilibrium returns.



VIRGO

AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

It's the most public, career-oriented time of the month for you, Virgo. The moon's entrance into storyteller Gemini has all eyes and ears on you, making it an ideal time for pushing your ambitions forward or reaching for positions of authority in your field. Luna spends the morning squabbling with Venus, potentially frustrating your inner needs and public demands.



CAPRICORN

DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Capricorns naturally crave a strong sense of structure in their lives to feel secure. Tuesday's skies work to keep you feeling contained by placing an emphasis on your connection to your work. The moon slips into Gemini, helping you pour your energy towards any productive means. Luna's tussle with Venus can highlight tensions between your job and your vision.



GEMINI

MAY 21-JUNE 21

You tend to spend so much time up in your head, Gemini. It's important to remember to get back into your body! Today's skies focus your energy on just that, as the moon moves through your sign and works to see that you nourish yourself from the ground up. Put yourself first and engage in any activity that has you prioritising self-betterment and individuality.



LIBRA

SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

You require daily doses of beauty. Though it sounds simple, it's actually critical for you to cultivate relaxation through the soothing, tranquil feeling you find in response to art and nature. Try to get out of your comfort zone this afternoon and introduce yourself to things that can help achieve this softness. Refresh your perspective as the moon floats through curious Gemini.



AQUARIUS

JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Clear your schedule. You're not likely to be in the mood to deal with any mundane, work-related areas of your life. What you need is unabashed fun and leisure, and the moon's entrance into Gemini helps hone your focus on the things that bring you joy. Lean into your creative, self-expressive projects. Luna's morning square with Venus may highlight relationship tensions too.



CANCER

JUNE 22-JULY 22

Cancers need regular breaks from being involved in the demands of society. Indulge yourself "hermit style" today by withdrawing into your own inner world with little social contact from others. Luna's morning square to bond-building Venus can help you get blocked feelings off your chest. But overall, the day is low-key and beckons you toward spirituality, surrender, and quiet.



SCORPIO

OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Scorpios are fearless when it comes to probing the depths of others. But when it comes to facing your own shadows, you tend to freeze up. The moon slips into Gemini, summoning you into the world of intimate relationships. Luna spends the morning in a harsh interaction with Venus, stressing shared goals. But by afternoon, it's easier to sync back up and share yourself honestly.



PISCES

FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Let yourself unwind and pull away from the world for a bit. The moon slides into Gemini, calling you homeward to focus on family matters and your emotional foundation for deeper nurturing. The moon spends the morning arguing with Venus, potentially stirring up stresses between your home life and relationship. But by afternoon, things smooth over.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. ESCAP stands for

a. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific

b. European Society Council for Africa and Pacific

c. Economic and Social Commission for Africa and Pacific

d. None of the above

2. Firdausi was

a. a poet

b. well known for his epic 'Shahnama'

c. Both option A and B

d. None of the above

3. Himalayan Mountaineering Institute is at

a. Darjeeling

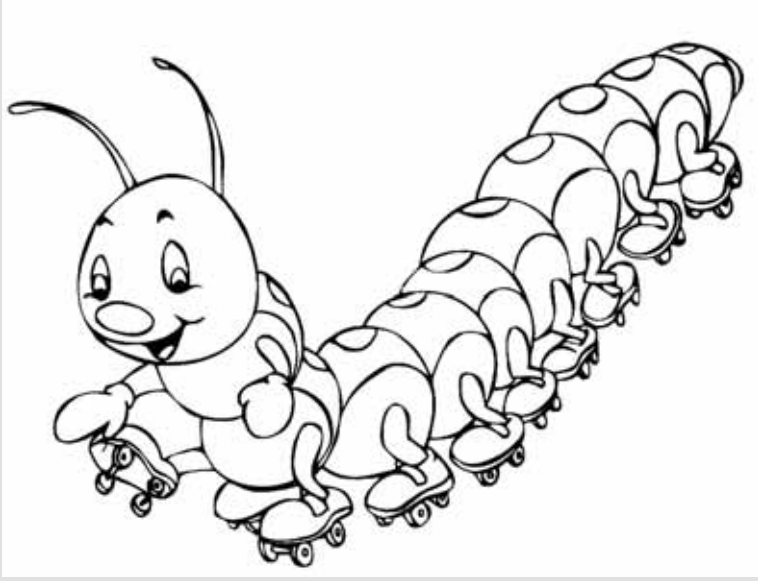
b. Dehradun

c. Marmago

d. Dispur

Answers: 1: a, 2: c, 3: a

KIDS COLOURING



DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

BOGGLER

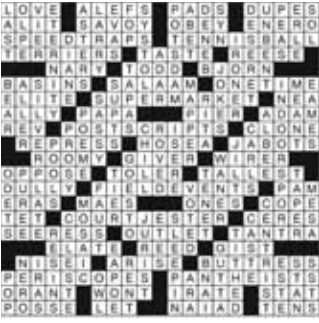
E	Y	U	I
S	E	D	L
T	F	R	X
F	L	A	I

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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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



WORD BUILDER

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

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



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FOOTBALL ROUND-UP

We lost the plot: Klopp

Aston Villa pulverise English Premier League champions Liverpool 7-2 at Villa Park

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE
Birmingham, UK - Jurgen Klopp admitted Liverpool lost their composure after conceding early to Aston Villa as the English Premier League (EPL) champions were smashed 7-2 in an EPL game on Sunday night.

Ollie Watkins scored a first-half hat-trick as the Reds conceded seven goals in a game for the first time since 1963. Watkins also become the first player in a decade to score a hat-trick against Liverpool. Liverpool's back-up goal-keeper Adrian had a night to forget as his mistake allowed Watkins to open the floodgates. "The first goal had an impact, but it shouldn't. Adrian made a mistake but we conceded goals like this in the past. We lost the plot then," said Klopp. "When Aston Villa won the ball, our protection was under average." "It was unexpected but it happened tonight," added Klopp. "We put all our rubbish things and mistakes in one game and hopefully we can start again."

Despite a change of system and personnel after half-time, Liverpool still could not stem the flow of Villa exposing their high line as deflected goals from John McGinn and Ross Barkley and Jack Grealish's double rounded off a remarkable scoreline. "We had still good moments but our good moments led to nothing and their good moments led always to a chance or a goal," added Klopp. "They were flying and we



Aston Villa's Ollie Watkins (right) celebrates with his teammates after scoring against Liverpool during the English Premier League match at Villa Park in Birmingham, UK, on Sunday

were pretty open. All the things you should not do in a football game, we did tonight." Liverpool are not in action again for another two weeks due to the international break, but they face a huge challenge on their return when they travel to top-of-the-table Everton in the Merseyside derby. "I would love to have a

training session tomorrow and Tuesday and to talk about it, but the boys go back off to international duty," said Klopp. "Hopefully they come back healthy and we use the two days to prepare for Everton." Liverpool defender Virgil van Dijk said, "Overall we're all disappointed, we shouldn't have lost with the numbers that we

did but it's about sticking together and making sure it doesn't happen again." Liverpool's high line was torn apart by Villa's counter-attack, while the absence of goalkeeper Alisson Becker to injury and Sadio Mane due to a positive coronavirus test was notable. The Reds were not beaten until their 28th league game in

romping to the title last season and had won their opening three games of the new campaign. **'Wow'** "When Jurgen Klopp says 'wow' to you, you know you've done something right," said Villa boss Dean Smith. "The lads were superb, they executed the game plan perfectly. We

were at our best today." "We won't get complacent but we'll enjoy tonight because results like that don't come around too often," added Smith. Earlier on Sunday, Tottenham hit Manchester United for a six with a 6-1 win as two of England's most successful clubs suffered humiliation. Former United defender Gary



Liverpool's Jurgen Klopp

Neville, now a TV pundit, described United performance as 'an absolute shambles' as they matched their 6-1 loss to Manchester City in 2011. Club captain Harry Maguire apologised to fans in an Instagram post, saying the performance was 'unacceptable' and Marcus Rashford said there were no excuses. Ole Gunnar Solskjaer took the blame for the humiliation, which once again raises major questions about whether he is the man to restore the club to their former glories. "It's a horrible feeling, the worst day I've had as a Manchester United manager and player," said the Norwegian manager. "It's nowhere near good enough. I hold my hands up. It's my decision to pick the team I did. Also as a squad, that's not good enough for Manchester United." AFP

QUICK RUN

England's Abraham, Sancho 'flout' virus rules at party
Chelsea's Tammy Abraham has apologised after footage emerged of him attending a party with England teammates Ben Chilwell and Jadon Sancho in an apparent breach of national coronavirus rules. The Sun newspaper published the video, which appears to show the three players at a gathering in London with more than six people present on Saturday. The Sun reports that the FA has seen footage of the party and quotes a spokesman as saying: "There will be no change to the England team at this stage." The England squad is due to assemble ahead of a friendly against Wales on Thursday and Nations League matches against Belgium and Denmark.

Everton sign Norwich's Godfrey
Everton have signed defender Ben Godfrey from Norwich on a five-year contract for an initial fee reported to be around US\$32mn in the first major move of transfer deadline day. The Canaries announced on Monday they had received a club-record fee for the 22 year old, whose new deal ties him to Carlo Ancelotti's side until 2025. Godfrey made 30 appearances for relegated Norwich in the Premier League last season, and had been linked with a number of top-flight clubs during transfer window. AFP

Barca held by Sevilla

SPANISH LEAGUE
Madrid, Spain - Barcelona dropped their first points of the season on Sunday as Sevilla made a statement of intent in La Liga's title race by drawing 1-1 at Camp Nou. Luuk de Jong gave Sevilla an early lead and while Philippe Coutinho levelled two minutes later, the visitors were arguably the better side in a frantic contest. The draw brings an end to Ronald Koeman's perfect start as Barca coach but he might not be too displeased with a point, even if his team also had chances to snatch a winner. "We were less energetic than in the first two games but that also depends on the opposition," said Koeman. "They have defended well." Real Madrid are three points ahead of Barcelona but having played a game more, after their



Barcelona's Philippe Coutinho (right) scores against Sevilla during the Spanish League match at the Camp Nou stadium on Sunday

2-0 win over Levante earlier on Sunday sent them to the top of the table. De Jong put Sevilla in front after eight minutes as Barcelona failed to react to a short corner

and then failed to clear, the ball sitting up nicely for the striker to smash in. But the lead lasted less than two minutes, a brilliant, curved ball over the top by Lionel Messi

causing panic in the Sevilla defence, where Jesus Navas slid to intercept but only teed up the resurgent Coutinho to finish. Messi sent a bending shot past the far post and Ansu Fati hit straight at the goalkeeper but Sevilla were the ones in the ascendancy. Barcelona struggled to get out from the back under pressure from Sevilla's high press and Ronald Araujo almost scored an own goal, spared by the post after Youssef En-Nesyri's run down the left. Trincao and Pedri were both thrown on by Koeman and Trincao might have won it after being put through by Messi late on. But Sevilla goalkeeper Bono made the stop to earn his team a deserved point. In another game, Cadiz drew with Granada 1-1 at home. AFP

Napoli risk forfeit for Juve no-show

ITALIAN LEAGUE
Milan, Italy - Napoli risk a 3-0 forfeit for failing to turn up for their Serie A clash against Juventus amid a row over coronavirus protocol in Italy on Sunday, allowing title rivals Atalanta and AC Milan move top of Serie A ahead of Inter Milan who were held at Lazio. Gennaro Gattuso's Napoli had been top of the league going into weekend's action with two wins in as many games as they target a third Serie A title and first in 30 years. But Elif Elmas and Piotr Zielinski's positive coronavirus tests forced the southerners into home isolation on the instructions of health authorities in the Campania region. The Lega Serie A insisted

all the health protocols were in place for the match to safely go ahead as scheduled for Turin at 1845 GMT. Amid the turmoil, Andrea Pirlo's champions prepared their game as usual, naming a starting list, despite solid indications of a Napoli no-show for the game. The Juventus bus pulled into the Allianz Stadium an hour beforehand, with the players remaining in their tracksuits on the pitch, along with referees and a handful of supporters under the rain. The match was eventually abandoned 45 minutes after its scheduled start time, with Napoli's fate now depending on a meeting of Italian league officials on Tuesday. AFP

Lewandowski hits four as Bayern win seven-goal thriller

GERMAN LEAGUE
Berlin, Germany - Robert Lewandowski netted four goals - including the decisive added-time penalty - as defending Bundesliga champions Bayern Munich survived a fight-back by Hertha Berlin to seal a nervy 4-3 win on Sunday. Lewandowski, voted European footballer of the year on Friday, scored twice to put Bayern 2-0 up early in the second half only for Hertha to score three times to make it 3-3 with time almost up. However, the Poland hot-shot then converted a 93rd-minute spot kick to seal the win which lifts Bayern to fourth in the table. The victory got Bayern back to

winning ways after their record 23-match winning streak was ended by a 4-1 defeat at Hoffenheim last Sunday. Fresh from their 3-2 victory over Borussia Dortmund on Wednesday in the German Super Cup, Bayern gave a first start to US junior international Chris Richards, 20, at right-back. In the build-up, Bayern announced the signing of defensive midfielder Marc Roca from Espanyol. Lewandowski first struck on 40 minutes when he fired home the rebound after Hertha goalkeeper Alexander Schlowow had saved his initial header. It was Lewandowski's 100th



Bayern Munich's forward Robert Lewandowski celebrates after scoring his fourth goal against Hertha Berlin in Munich on Sunday

Bundesliga goal for Bayern at Munich's Allianz Arena. It was 1-0 at the break, but the

Poland star doubled his tally six minutes into the second half when he turned through 180

degrees to fire home after Richard's pass. Hertha pulled a goal back when Cordoba struck with a header on 59 minutes from a free-kick by Matheus Cunha, who has been called up by Brazil. The 21 year old Cunha then made it 2-2 after dribbling past Jerome Boateng, then beat David Alaba and Benjamin Pavard before firing past Neuer on 71 minutes. Bayern again pulled ahead when Mueller met Alaba's free-kick and served up a tap-in for Lewandowski on 85 minutes. There was still time for Hertha replacement Jessic Ngankam to header an equaliser

past Neuer on 88 minutes. However, Lewandowski netted the decisive spot kick just before the whistle after being pulled down by Berlin defender Maximilian Mittelstaedt. Earlier, second-placed Augsburg missed the chance to top the table as they were held to a goalless draw at Wolfsburg, who had a first-half goal disallowed. **OTHER RESULTS:**
FRENCH LEAGUE: Sunday: Lyon 1 Marseille 1, Montpellier 0 Nimes 1, Bordeaux 3 Dijon 0, Brest 1 Monaco 0, Metz 3 Lorient 1, Strasbourg 0 Lille 3, Rennes 2 Reims 2. AFP



IPL 2020



QUOTE OF THE DAY
Look it's hard being on the losing side for so many games. There's no rocket science, we know where we're going wrong. The execution part's been bad.

KL Rahul
Kings XI Punjab skipper, after his team's defeat to Chennai, on Sunday



TODAY'S MATCH

ABU DHABI, 6PM



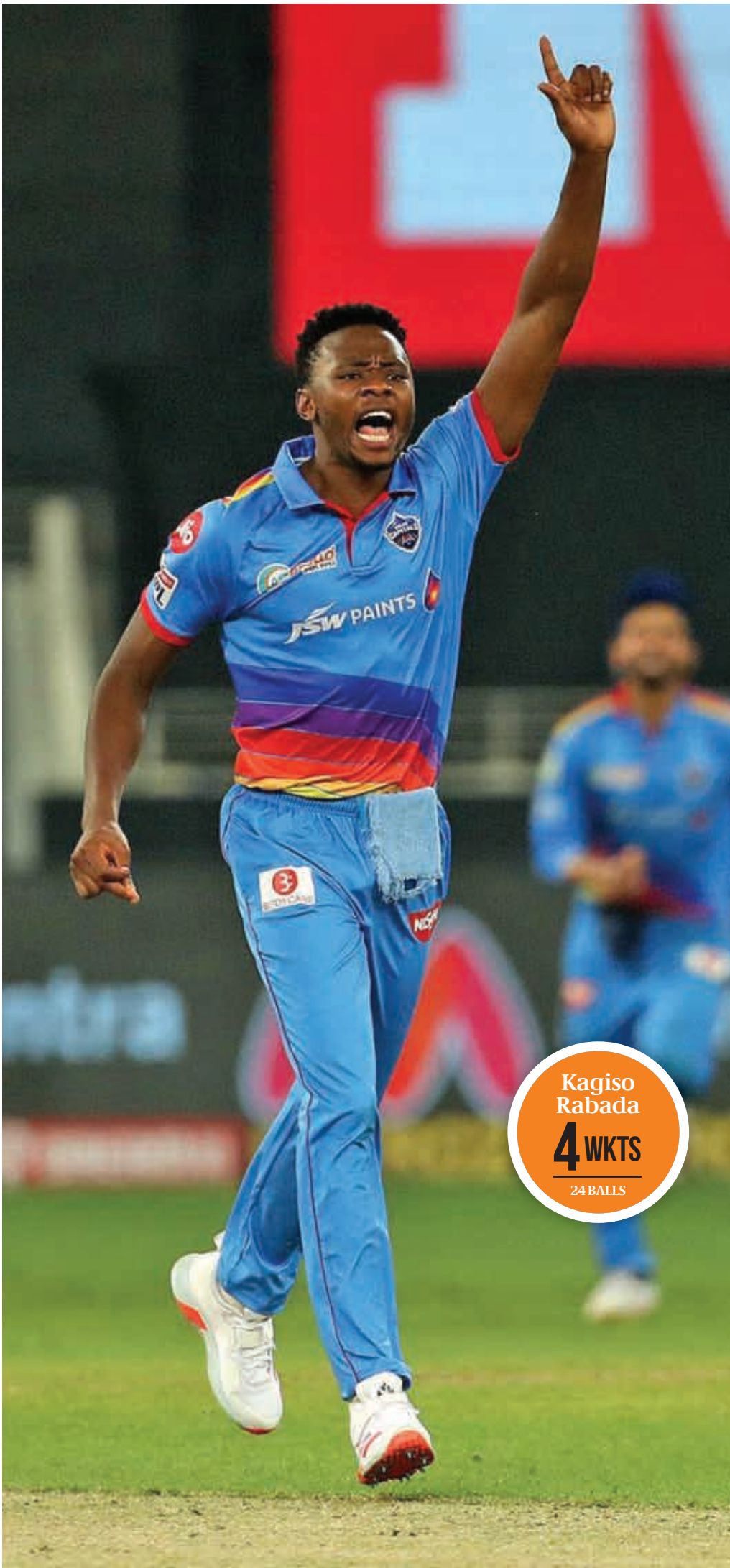
POINTS TABLE

TEAMS	P	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
DC	5	4	1	0	8	+1.060
MI	5	3	2	0	6	+1.214
RCB	5	3	2	0	6	-1.355
KKR	4	2	2	0	4	-0.121
RR	4	2	2	0	4	-0.317
CSK	5	2	3	0	4	-0.342
SRH	5	2	3	0	4	-0.417
KXIP	5	1	4	0	2	-0.178

P: Played, **W:** Won, **L:** Lost, **NR:** No Result, **PTS:** Points, **NRR:** Net Run-Rate

CSK: Chennai Super Kings
RCB: Royal Challengers Bangalore
DC: Delhi Capitals
KKR: Kolkata Knight Riders
MI: Mumbai Indians
RR: Rajasthan Royals
SRH: Sunrisers Hyderabad

RABADA AND STOINIS STAR IN CAPITALS' ROUT OF RCB



Kagiso Rabada
4 WKTS
24 BALLS

Delhi Capitals' Kagiso Rabada celebrates after dismissing a Royal Challengers Bangalore batsman on Monday

Dubai, UAE - Just when the Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) were started to think they were getting their combinations and players' roles right this IPL, they were beaten comprehensively by the Delhi Capitals, one of the most balanced sides who lead the points table with four wins out of five games, on Monday.

After posting a challenging 196 with the help of their openers and Marcus Stoinis' unbeaten 53 off 26 balls, the Capitals' well-oiled bowling attack strangled the Royal Challengers chase with precise and economical bowling that led to regular wickets. Virat Kohli tried stretching the chase even as the asking rate surged after the fall of Devdutt Padikkal, Aaron Finch and AB de Villiers inside the powerplay.

Pace sensation Kagiso Rabada then returned for his second over - the 14th of the chase - to have his opposition captain caught behind. The Royal Challengers needed a stiff 100 from 36 balls at the end of the over, and the required rate headed only in one direction as Rabada closed the chase out with figures of four for 24 - the best of this tournament - after being on a hat-trick in the 18th over.

Capitals' skillful bowling attack

A silver lining of Amit Mishra being out of the tournament was that the Capitals could bring their economical bowler Axar Patel back. After his first ball was driven beautifully for four by Kohli, Patel extracted turn to beat his outside edge two balls later, and slowed down the ball further on the last ball to have Finch

caught behind for a scratchy 13. This, after Finch had been warned by R Ashwin while backing up too far at the non-striker's end in the previous over.

Some more drama was left for the sixth over when de Villiers sent Kohli back for a quick single after pushing the ball to mid-on but Rabada couldn't get a direct hit. Next ball de Villiers whipped Anrich Nortje over mid-off with his supple wrists but the quick bowler replied immediately with his compatriots' wicket as de Villiers top-edged a 150km delivery that Shikhar Dhawan pounced. Rabada had earlier conceded only five in the first over and put down a simple return catch of Finch, but the Capitals have clear plans for the pace spearhead: keep at least two of his overs for the end.

That the boundaries dried up for over five overs after the seventh, with Axar Patel taking the pace off and Ashwin mixing up his offbreaks with carrom balls and flatter deliveries, only helped Rabada's second over. The scoreboard pressure meant Moeen Ali holed out off Axar to deep midwicket for 11 off 13 and Rabada had his eyes on one man. With 106 to get from 42, the onus was on Kohli and he took on a Rabada short ball but only edged it behind for 43. Five down for 94, Bangalore weren't going to recover from that against Rabada and Nortje, who kept breaching the 150kmh mark.

Birthday boy Washington Sundar impressed briefly with some off-side hits off Rabada before being deceived by a slower bouncer, and Shivam Dube soon missed a slog to lose his stumps. Cricinfo

SCOREBOARD

DELHI CAPITALS		
P Shaw	c de Villiers b Siraj	42 (23)
S Dhawan	c Moeen b Udana	32 (28)
S Iyer	c Padikkal b Moeen Ali	11 (13)
R Pant	b Siraj	37 (25)
M Stoinis	not out	53 (26)
S Hetmyer	not out	11 (7)
Extras	(lb 4, nb 2, w 4)	10

TOTAL: 196 for four

Fall of wickets: 1-68, 2-82, 3-90, 4-179
Bowling: I Udana 4-0-40-1, W Sundar 4-0-20-0, N Saini 3-0-48-0, Y Chahal 3-0-29-0, M Siraj 4-0-34-2, Moeen Ali 2-0-21-1

ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE

D Padikkal	c Stoinis b Ashwin	4 (6)
A Finch	c Pant b Axar Patel	13 (14)
V Kohli	c Pant b Rabada	43 (39)
AB de Villiers	c Dhawan b Nortje	9 (6)
Moeen Ali	c Hetmyer b Axar	11 (13)
W Sundar	c Ashwin b Rabada	17 (19)
S Dube	b Rabada	11 (12)
I Udana	c Iyer b Rabada	1 (3)
N Saini	not out	12 (12)
M Siraj	b Nortje	5 (4)
Y Chahal	not out	0 (0)
Extras	(lb 4, w 7)	11

TOTAL: 137 for nine

Fall of wickets: 1-20, 2-27, 3-43, 4-75, 5-94, 6-115, 7-118, 8-119, 9-127

Bowling: K Rabada 4-0-24-4, A Nortje 4-0-22-2, R Ashwin 4-0-26-1, Axar Patel 4-0-18-2, Harshal Patel 4-0-43-0,



Marcus Stoinis of Delhi Capitals plays a shot against RCB on Monday

Allround Krunal brings anarchy to the IPL

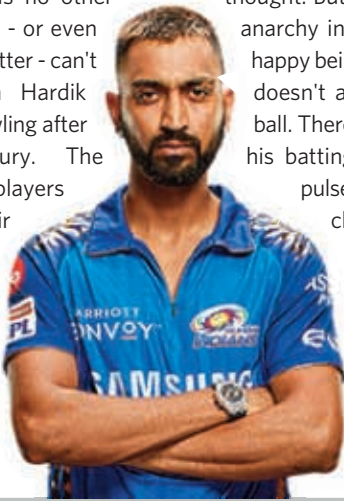
Sharjah, UAE - David Warner is set. It has taken him a while to get here. But finally, he is hitting a cricket ball so hard you wince watching it all happen. Imagine what it would take to beat him. To confound him to such an extent that he is bent over at the crease, held up by his bat, all of his power made totally redundant. This was a wide yorker of the finest quality. It had pace. It was accurate. And, best of all, it was the last thing the batsman expected... because it was bowled by a spinner.

Krunal Pandya punched the air with a real sense of purpose. He had given away only nine runs in the over, the 15th of the innings, and he had taken a wicket, leaving the Sunrisers with an improbable task: 70 to win off only 30 balls - 12 of which would be shot out of the cannon that Jasprit Bumrah calls a right hand.

Mumbai owed a lot of their victory on Sunday to Krunal.

Krunal began his spell in the powerplay, where only two fielders are allowed on the boundary, which in Sharjah is barely 70m. He also had to deal with bowling into the hitting arc of the left-handed Warner. All of this points to a high degree of difficulty that the bowler has to negotiate and Krunal did beautifully. Dude hit four boundaries off four balls, but gave away only three in 24.

And he'll have to finish his full quota more often than not because there is no other option. Mumbai - or even India for that matter - can't afford to rush Hardik Pandya into bowling after his back injury. The international players will be off on their tour of Australia immediately after the IPL. They can't afford to go without their



premier allrounder again.

So Krunal is adapting to his new role. He only wobbles the ball now because he knows his pace (often exceeding 100kph) and his accuracy are his best bets to making a batsman hit where he wants. Krunal is so invested in this that he even experimented with a round-arm action to mess with Warner's batting. Anything to gain an edge.

Krunal's bowling showcased intelligence and clarity of thought. But there is a bit of anarchy in it as well. He's happy being a spinner who doesn't actually spin the ball. There was anarchy in his batting as well. Pure, pulse-pounding anarchy. In most of Mumbai's matches, shots of their dugout late in the innings would reveal him in

full gear and with a fearsome expression. He wanted in. He was ready to take on the world's best death bowlers and put them into the stands. He had extra incentive to do that in Sharjah.

Siddharth Kaul had just mercilessly yorked his little brother Hardik. You don't mess with family like that. And so, big brother took strike, deep in his crease, his knees bent, his body in a crouch and set to spring on anything loose.

Like a length ball. Krunal made it disappear over long-on. The strike was so pure that even cameraman lost track of the ball. This routine continued as Mumbai shot from 187 to 208 in the space of four balls - 6, 4, 4, 6.

No batsman who has got to face at least two balls after having walked into bat in the 20th over in the IPL, has struck at a higher rate than Krunal's 500 (FIVE HUNDRED!). Cricinfo

Amit Mishra ruled out of IPL 2020 with finger injury

Dubai, UAE - India leg-spinner Amit Mishra has been ruled out of the IPL with a finger injury, dealing a significant blow to the Delhi Capitals.

Mishra sustained a flexor tendon injury to the ring finger of his bowling hand while attempting a return catch in the Capitals' last match against the Kolkata Knight Riders on October 3.

Mishra was the third-highest wicket-taker for the Capitals in the IPL.

He had taken just three wickets but at an economy rate of 7.20. All his three wickets were top order batsmen, including David Warner and Manish Pandey against the Sunrisers Hyderabad, and Shubman Gill in the match against the where he bowled just two overs before leaving the field with the injury. Mishra was one of the two wrist-spinners in the Capitals' squad along with Nepal leg-spinner Sandeep Lamichhane. Cricinfo



DJOKOVIC SAILS INTO QUARTERS

Kvitova books spot in last-eight after eight years

Paris, France - Novak Djokovic racked up his 35th win of 2020 and a place in the Roland Garros quarterfinals for the 14th time with a 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 win over Russia's Karen Khachanov on Monday.

The world No 1, chasing a second title in Paris and 18th career Grand Slam, goes on to face either Spain's Pablo Carreno Busta or unseeded Daniel Altmaier of Germany for a place in the semifinals. Djokovic, who hit 44 winners, has yet to drop a set in the tournament, losing just 25 games in four rounds.

"It was a tight match and I am happy to win in straight sets," said the Serbian who has now reached 47 quarterfinals at the Slams. It will also be his 11th in a row in Paris.

He had a heart-stopping moment in the first set when he stretched for a forehand and was unable to avoid seeing the ball accidentally hit a line judge. The incident came just weeks after he was defaulted at the US Open for swiping at a ball which felled a line judge standing behind him.

Djokovic is aiming to become the first man in half a century to win all four Grand Slam titles twice.

Also on Monday, Petra Kvitova returned to the French Open quarterfinals for the first time in eight years.

Two-time Wimbledon champion Kvitova is through to the last-eight at Roland Garros for just the second time. Her best run in Paris came when she reached the semifinals in 2012.

Seventh seed Kvitova, who missed last year's tournament due to an arm injury, defeated China's Zhang Shuai 6-2, 6-4 and will next play German veteran Laura Siegemund.

"After eight years to be in the quarterfinal again, it's great. I'm really happy for that, that I'm still



Czech Republic's Petra Kvitova returns the ball to China's Zhang Shuai during their fourth-round match on Monday

able to play on all surfaces," said Kvitova.

"When the roof is closed it's like being indoors and I really love to play."

"I got a bit emotional last two points of my match. I really started to think still about the match because in tennis we really never know when it's the end," she said.

Court Philippe Chatrier holds special memories for Kvitova, as the site of her comeback in 2017 six months after a knife attack that almost ended her career.

Kvitova, now 30, suffered serious injuries to her left playing hand when she fought off a knife-wielding burglar at her home in Prostějov in December 2016.

"Happy memories, when I made my comeback here 2017, when I step on the Philippe Chatrier, I couldn't really imagine me to be in the quarterfinal of this Slam," she said.

"Everything just came back to

me. When I'm talking, I'm getting emotional again. It's been a long ride definitely. Everything came to my mind when I had my whole family, people who I loved to helped me through the tough, tough time."

In the men's action, Stefanos Tsitsipas overcame an eye problem to become the first Greek man to reach the last-eight of the French Open with a 6-3, 7-6 (11-9), 6-2 win over Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria.

The 22 year old will now take on Andrey Rublev in a repeat of the recent Hamburg final which was won by the Russian.

Fifth seed Tsitsipas has won 12 successive sets at the tournament having been two sets down to Jaume Munar in the opening round.

"I had a problem with my eye so that's why I had to call the doctor. It happened in my earlier matches too. It's still red and irritated," he explained.

He saved three set points in

the second set tie-breaker while frustrating 18th seed Dimitrov by saving the only three break points he faced.

"The tie-break was where the money was," said Tsitsipas who fell in a five-setter to former champion Stan Wawrinka in the last-16 in 2019.

Rublev, the 13th seed, also advanced to the quarterfinals for the first time after battling past Marton Fucsovics of Hungary 6-7 (4-7), 7-5, 6-4, 7-6 (7-3).

In a match which featured 12 breaks of serve, the 22 year old Rublev had been a break down in the second and third sets. He also had to save three set points in the fourth.

"I knew it would be tough," said Rublev who arrived in Paris having reached his second US Open quarterfinal last month.

"I had a little bit of luck today. There was a lot of wind so you are going to lose your serve a lot in those conditions."

AFP



Serbia's Novak Djokovic celebrates after winning against Russia's Karen Khachanov in Paris on Monday (AFP)



Germany's Laura Siegemund eats meal courtside during her match against Spain's Paula Badosa on Monday

Food fault! Siegemund eats meal courtside at Roland Garros

Paris, France - Germany's world No 66 Laura Siegemund reached her first Grand Slam quarterfinal on Monday after ordering a plate of food to be delivered to her on court.

The 32 year old said she had found it difficult to find anything to eat before her match against Spain's Paula Badosa despite being in Paris, one of the world's greatest culinary centres.

"I was trying to get some

carbs in. I tried the bar. Couldn't get it down really. I tried," said Siegemund after her 7-5, 6-2 win over Badosa on Court Simonne-Mathieu.

She had the food delivered to her chair while her opponent was taking a medical time out and as she waited, she eagerly tucked in with fork in hand.

"I asked my physio to bring me something else. I just wanted to get some carb,

some potato or rice. "Probably looks weird having a fork and eating like that, but better than low sugar anyway. I preferred to try to get some energy back in the body."

Siegemund has made the second week of a Slam for the first time in 16 attempts in singles although she did lift the US Open doubles title last month.

On Monday, energised by her food intake, she won ten of the

last 12 games to set up a quarterfinal clash against two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova.

She became the fourth unseeded player to make the last-eight this year, joining Iga Swiatek, Nadia Podoroska and Martina Trevisan. Siegemund won last month's US Open women's doubles titles alongside Vera Zvonareva.

AFP

Zverev says he shouldn't have played

Paris, France - Alexander Zverev said he 'should not have played' after his French Open last-16 loss on Sunday to Italian teenager Jannik Sinner and complained of feeling 'completely sick'.

The sixth seed summoned the doctor to ask for a cold spray during the first set of a 3-6, 3-6, 6-4, 3-6 loss and later claimed he had a fever.

Zverev, 23, was up to date with his tournament-mandated COVID-19 tests, the French tennis federation (FFT) said in a statement. His last one was on September 29.

However, the FFT added that the German 'did not consult the tournament doctors

I am completely sick after the match with Cecchinato in the night. I can't really breathe, as you can hear by my voice

ALEXANDER ZVEREV



before his match'.

The US Open runner-up raised questions over whether he should have been allowed to play when he told reporters he had a temperature of 38°C (100.4 Fahrenheit) following his win over Marco Cecchinato on Friday.

"I am completely sick after the match with Cecchinato in the

night. I can't really breathe, as you can hear by my voice," Zverev said after his Roland Garros exit.

"I had fever, you know, as well. Yeah, I'm not in the best physical state," said Zverev, who made 47 unforced errors and just 20 winners.

"To be honest, I warmed up today. I shouldn't have played.

But I was hoping maybe for a three-set win or something like that."

Zverev was criticised in the summer after he was spotted partying despite vowing to self-isolate following Novak Djokovic's Adria Tour, during which a number of players tested positive for coronavirus.

The FFT said Zverev's previous coronavirus test was negative. The result was received on September 30.

"Today (Sunday) he received a reminder for his next test, to be carried out within five days of the previous results," the FFT added.

AFP



Germany's Alexander Zverev reacts during his match against Italy's Jannik Sinner in Paris on Sunday (AFP)



FONTERRA SELLS CHINA FARMS
New Zealand's Fonterra said on Monday it has agreed to sell its farms in China for a total of US\$368mn as the dairy producer continues to focus on the domestic market and reduce debt

BUSINESS

MARKET WATCH

MSM30	3,592.69
BSE Sensex	38,973.70

FOREX RATES
(RO1 equals)

Indian Rs	190.08
Pakistani Rs	428.08
Bangladeshi Taka	220.29
Philippine Peso	125.77
Sri Lankan Rs	480.24

*Rates as on October 05
Source: xe.com

BRIEFS

Argentina President hopes for IMF deal 'as soon as possible'
Argentina President Alberto Fernandez said he hoped to reach an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to refinance a US\$44bn loan 'as soon as possible'.
His announcement comes ahead of the arrival on Tuesday of an IMF mission to focus on the country's debt restructuring.
"I have had many conversations in this time with Kristalina Georgieva," Fernandez told the newspaper *Clarin*, referring to the IMF chief. "I have the impression that she sees better than anyone the difficulties that exist in Argentina."
Fernandez said an agreement with the Washington-based crisis lender is 'basically necessary to give the economy predictability'.

US hotels have lost 5mn jobs since Feb
The hotel industry of the US has seen a loss of 5mn jobs since February, as one of the results of the COVID-19 pandemic which has claimed nearly 210,000 lives in the country, according to the latest statistics.
The hotel room occupancy rate in August in the US stood at 48.6 per cent, down by 31.7 per cent over the same period last year, and the rate went further down to 48.5 per cent during the second week of September, said STR, a private entity that provides data benchmarking, analytics and marketplace insights for global hospitality sectors.
Meanwhile, according to Associated Luxury Hotels International (ALHI), only 38 per cent of people in the US plan to be on vacation within 2020, in comparison with 70 per cent in a regular year.
Around three-fourths of the American hotels are prepared to lay off more staff members during the pandemic, if no further relief is issued by the government in time, said ALHI.

OECD area annual inflation stable at 1.2% in August
Consumer prices in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) area remained stable with 1.2 per cent in August, the organisation said on Monday.
Energy prices continued to fall in the month by 7.1 per cent, but at a slower pace than in July (8.4 per cent), while food price inflation picked up slightly to 3.9 per cent, compared with 3.8 per cent in July, it said.
On the other hand, OECD annual inflation excluding food and energy decreased slightly, to 1.6 per cent in August, compared with 1.7 per cent in July.
Inflation in the Euro area fell sharply to [minus] 0.2 per cent, from 0.4 per cent in July.

Oman awards oil Block 70 to Swedish energy firm

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman has awarded the exploration and development rights for the concession Block 70 to the Swedish oil exploration and production company Maha Energy.

The Ministry of Energy and Minerals on Monday signed a new exploration and production sharing agreement (EPSA) with Swedish Maha Energy (Oman) Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Maha Energy. The agreement was signed in Muscat by H E Mohammed Hamed al Rumhi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, and Talal Saif al Subhi, representative of Maha Energy in Oman, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Energy and Minerals.

The commitment of the Swedish company under the agreement is obtaining geological and geophysical studies, re-process 3D seismic and drill appraisal and pilot wells to evaluate and produce the heavy oil in Mafrag field in Block 70.

'The Ministry of Energy and Minerals wishes that the company's efforts will be crowned with success in discovering hydrocarbons which will increase the reserves and the production rates in the country,' the ministry's statement said.

The Block 70, which occupies an overall area of 639 sq km, is an onshore block in Oman that includes the shallow undeveloped Mafrag heavy oil field. The block is located in the middle of the prolific and oil-producing Ghaba Salt Basin in the central part of the sultanate.

In a recently issued press statement, Jonas Lindvall, president and CEO of Maha Energy, said, "To be allowed an opportunity to explore and develop the Mafrag oil field is an exceptional opportunity to add value to Maha Energy and the people of



Mafrag field is estimated by third parties to contain between 185mn-280mn barrels of original oil in place. The productive reservoir is shallow, at approximately 430m below the ground level.

The company added that the Block 70 is covered by both 2D and 3D seismic data that has been acquired by previous operators and has been made available to Maha Energy.

Maha Energy operates four oil fields globally: Tartaruga and Tie in Brazil, Powder River (LAK Ranch) and Illinois basins in the United States.

Oman's oil output declines 7.5% in first 8 months

Muscat - The sultanate's oil production, including condensates, stood at 233.57mn barrels during the first eight months of 2020, according to the latest data released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

Of the total production, crude oil production fell by 7.5 per cent at 190.91mn barrels in the January-August period of 2020, while condensates production rose 45.2 per cent to touch 42.66mn barrels.

Oman recorded a daily average crude oil production of 957,300 barrels at the end of August, against 970,500 barrels over the same period of 2019, the NCSI report added.

However, the average price of Oman crude fell 26.3 per cent at US\$47.7 per barrel for the first eight months of 2020 against US\$64.7 per barrel in the same period of 2019.

In the full year 2019, Oman had produced 354.3mn barrels of oil and exported 310.3mn barrels. Besides, the country's daily oil production last year stood at 970,900 barrels.

With regard to the gas sector, Oman's natural gas production and imports fell 1.3 per cent to 30,348mn cubic metres in the first eight months of 2020 from 30,737mn cubic metres



for the same period of 2019. Of this, non-associated gas and imports rose by 1.3 per cent to 25,587mn cubic metres and associated gas production fell 13 per cent to 4,760mn cubic metres, added the National Centre for Statistics and Information report.

The use of natural gas in industrial projects fell by 6 per cent to 18,095mn cubic metres at the end of August 2020, against 19,251mn cubic metres for the same period of 2019. As much as 7,158mn cubic metres of natural gas was used in oil fields, against 6,229mn cubic metres units consumed for the same period of 2019.

ONA

Sohar International to host 'Viewpoints' on October 19

Muscat - The 3rd virtual session and 8th edition of Viewpoints - Sohar International chairman's forum, will take place on October 19 and will be streamed live via the bank's YouTube channel.

Carrying forward its legacy of hosting the best of international experts as speakers, the latest edition will explore strategies for family businesses to keep pace in a fast-changing economic landscape.

Hosted by Mohammed Mahfoudh al Ardhi, chairman of Sohar International, the session's guest speaker, Dr Reinhard Christian Zinkann, will offer insights on building a resilient brand and leadership culture based on his experience, as a fourth-generation executive director and co-proprietor

at the 121-years old Miele Group.

In addition to being locally relevant, the topic will deep dive into offering tangible solutions on managing family businesses successfully, from one generation to the other.

In a press release, Ardhi said, "After two successful virtual sessions, it gives me immense pleasure to announce the third virtual session and eighth edition of Viewpoints. Staying true to its purpose of serving as an ideal platform to provide the local population with valuable inputs through engagement with eminent international leaders, Viewpoints continues to share experiences, knowledge, and ideas from a global perspective."

"We hope to bring the

best of the global learning with an aim to enable our listeners to adopt these into their personal and professional lives and therefore have a positive impact on the society and the nation at large," he said.

"In the upcoming session, we are proud to have with us Dr Reinhard Christian Zinkann, as the guest speaker for this session, who brings with him several years of experience and expertise in managing and carrying forward the legacy of a successful family business. As always, this insightful and thought-provoking forum is intended to be an interesting interaction, centred around The Miele Case: How to Run A Family Business Over Generations and Grow the Brand," Ardhi added.

Bank Nizwa CEO named 'Global Islamic Finance CEO'

Muscat - The CEO of Bank Nizwa, Khalid al Kayed has been named as 'Global Islamic Finance CEO of the Year 2020' at the 10th edition of the Global Islamic Finance Awards (GIFA) 2020.

The award aimed at recognising Kayed's pivotal role in leading Bank Nizwa to unprecedented growth, and in helping promote Sharia'a-compliant banking in the sultanate.

Commenting upon receiving the prestigious award, Khalid, in a press release, said, "I am truly delighted to receive this award from one of the world's most respected forums for Islamic banking. I am convinced that this is the result of teamwork. I consider this recognition from GIFA 2020 as a testament to the dedicated support from the board



Khalid al Kayed

members and the hard work of my colleagues at Bank Nizwa. The recognition is gratifying as it comes at a time when, as a team, we have delivered a landmark performance for Bank Nizwa during an especially challenging

period."

In the prevailing economic climate, Bank Nizwa recorded 37 per cent growth in net profit - the highest in the banking sector in the sultanate. The bank also booked a 14 per cent increase in total assets and grown shareholders' equity by 9 per cent.

Kayed's stewardship of the executive management team, under the guidance of the board of directors, has led Oman's first Islamic bank to record retained profits for the first time, amortising total accumulated losses since inception, the press release said.

A financial industry veteran with over 25 years of experience, Kayed has served as acting CEO and chief financial officer at Bank Nizwa.

Occidental Oman launches 'Dot NXT' programme

Muscat - Occidental Oman recently signed an agreement with Emerging Global Technologies Company (ETCO) to develop a national educational and entrepreneurial programme focusing on frontier technologies. The programme, named Dot NXT (.nxt), will be developed and implemented by ETCO and targets higher education students, job seekers, and graduates across the country.

The agreement was signed by Stephen Kelly, president and general manager of Occidental Oman and Eng Azzan bin Abdullah al Mamari, acting CEO of ETCO.

The .nxt programme is comprised of two main tracks, one of



which is directed at students studying in institutions of higher education in technical specialisations. The track aims to provide the students with additional skills in frontier technologies and entrepreneurship, through

short workshops and online education.

The second track is directed at fresh graduates, in order to bridge the gap between their academic knowledge. This will be done through skill-building work-

shops and online technical courses.

The programme culminates with an intensive summer boot camp where selected participants from both tracks receive further training, coaching and

mentoring while competing as groups with business ideas in frontier technologies. The programme also aims to attract and sponsor innovative projects locally and internationally.

"We are proud to sponsor this

one-of-a-kind programme, which aims to equip college students, graduates, and job seekers across the sultanate with cutting-edge knowledge and skills in frontier technologies. Occidental Oman places innovation as a fundamental pillar of our social responsibility goals, and we believe that investing in youth development is key to advancing economic growth in the country," Kelly said.

"The programme builds on the company's existing commitment to national capacity development, as we continue to support job seekers with internship programmes, on-the-job training, and other specialised programmes," he added.

Global stock markets rebound on Trump health, stimulus hope

London, UK - Stock markets bounced back on Monday on reports suggesting US President Donald Trump's health is improving after the President tested positive for the coronavirus, with traders also cheered by signs that American lawmakers were edging towards agreement on a new stimulus package.

Global equities had sunk on Friday after the White House announced Trump's diagnosis, which fanned fresh uncertainty a month before the November 3 presidential election, with some commentators questioning whether the vote would actually take place.

Britain's FTSE 100 index and France's CAC 40 benchmark were up 0.7 per cent each, while Germany's DAX 30 index was up by 0.6 per cent on Monday. Euro Stoxx 50 gained 0.6 per cent.

In Asian markets, Hong Kong's Hang Seng jumped 1.3 per cent at the close, while Japan's Nikkei index closed 1.2 per cent higher on Monday. China's Shanghai stock exchange was closed for a holiday.

Oil prices also began staging a recovery after last week's heavy losses, while the dollar traded mixed.

After spending the weekend in hospital - with conflicting reports about the severity of his condition - Trump's medical team said he had 'continued to improve' and could return home as early as Monday.

"Stock markets in Europe are showing respectable gains... on the back of the optimism surrounding the health of President Trump," said CMC Markets analyst David Madden.



A pedestrian walks past an electronic quotation board displaying share prices of the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo, Japan on Monday (AFP)

analyst David Madden.

"At the end of last week, it was announced that the US leader tested positive for COVID-19 and that hurt market confidence. In a video, Trump said he was receiving 'great reports from the doctors', and that has encouraged traders to buy back into the market.

"Over the weekend, Trump expressed his desire for Republicans and Democrats to compromise and make a deal with

respect to the proposed coronavirus relief package."

Analysts said the episode could help jolt congressional leaders to up their efforts for a second economic rescue package, with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi saying, "This kind of changes the dynamic."

Trump urged lawmakers to reach a deal, tweeting from hospital, "Our great USA wants and needs a stimulus. Work together and get it done! Thank You!"

Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin have held a series of talks aimed at matching up their spending plans, with the Democrats' US\$2.2tn proposal around US\$600bn more than what Republicans are willing to stump up.

Even Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who has often been hostile to most Democrat moves, offered a hopeful tone on Friday, saying, "I think we're closer to getting an outcome."

The need for a fresh package was highlighted on Friday by data showing the US economy created fewer jobs than expected in September as the recovery enjoyed through summer stutters.

"The dramatic turn of events may be a catalyst for a stimulus agreement - or it may not; we wait for bills to be put to Congress and votes to be taken," wrote BTIG strategist Julian Emanuel.

"With key economic data extending its run of disappointments versus expectations and high-profile corporate layoffs, additional aid would seem imperative."

Observers said markets are largely pricing in a Joe Biden victory over Trump next month and a clean sweep for Democrats in House and Senate polls, despite expectations of higher taxes and regulations.

AFP

US warns of potential harm from Brexit bill

London, UK - US President Donald Trump's special envoy for Northern Ireland said that British Brexit legislation could endanger peace in the province and a UK-US trade deal, but backed London's efforts to resolve the issue.

Speaking in London after trips to Dublin and Belfast, Mick Mulvaney said the United States had invested 'blood, sweat and tears' in the Good Friday Agreement and wanted no return of a hard border on the island of Ireland.

Britain's new Internal Market Bill strips the European Union of the right to intercede to regulate its trade with Northern Ireland after Brexit takes full effect next year, sparking a legal dispute and warnings that the 1998 peace pact could unravel.

"Maybe under certain circumstances it (the legislation) might create a challenge to the Good Friday Agreement, but we're not there yet," Mulvaney said at the Policy Exchange, a UK thinktank.

He added the UK government has publicly committed to ensure that no hard border returns. For Washington, how London and Brussels chart their future relationship was 'none of our business'.

The US administration was intent only on upholding the peace agreement, he said, adding, "Hopefully it will work out."

Leading Democrats in Washington have warned that a US-UK trade agreement currently being negotiated by the Trump administration will have no chance of passing through Congress if London violates its Good Friday Agreement obligations.

Trump himself has been a vocal backer of Brexit and wants the UK to adopt closer trading ties to Washington.

AFP

Eurozone retail trade volume up in August



Istanbul, Turkey - The euro area retail trade volume rose 4.4 per cent in August on a monthly basis due to some relaxation in the COVID-19 measures, the EU's statistical authority said on Monday.

The retail trade volume also improved by 3.8 per cent in the EU in August versus July, Eurostat noted.

In July, the volume decreased 1.8 per cent in the eurozone and 1.2 per cent in the EU.

The eurozone/euro area or EA19 represents member states that use the single currency - euro - while the EU27 includes all member countries of the bloc.

The volume of retail trade was up 6.1 per cent for non-food products, 2.4 per cent for food-drinks-tobacco, and 2.1 per cent for automotive fuels.

In the EU-19, the volume of

retail trade expanded 5.1 per cent for non-food products, 2.2 per cent for food-drinks-tobacco, and 2.1 per cent for automotive fuels.

Retail trade via mail order and the Internet rose 12.4 per cent in the eurozone and 10.5 per cent in the EU in August versus July.

Demand for the online shopping platforms increased significantly during the pandemic period, when people chose or were forced to stay home.

"Among member states for which data are available, the highest increases in the total retail trade volume were registered in Belgium (9.6 per cent), France (6.2 per cent) and Germany (3.1 per cent)," Eurostat said.

Romania and Slovenia (both minus 1.6 per cent) and Portugal (minus 1.4 per cent) posted largest drops month-on-month in August.

"In August 2020, compared with August 2019, the calendar adjusted retail sales index increased by 3.7 per cent in the euro area and by 3.5 per cent in the EU," Eurostat said.

On a yearly basis, the volume of retail trade was up 5.9 per cent for non-food products, 3.2 per cent for food-drinks-tobacco, and down 4.9 per cent for fuels in the eurozone, while it rose 6 per cent for non-food products, 2.6 per cent for food-drinks-tobacco, and dropped 4.8 per cent for fuels in the EU.

Belgium (12.9 per cent), Ireland (9.8 per cent), and the Netherlands (8.3 per cent) posted largest annual rises while Bulgaria, Malta, and Slovenia saw the worst falls, minus 12.2 per cent, minus 7.5 per cent, and minus 6.6 per cent, respectively.

Anadolu Agency

Greece and Microsoft announce €1bn worth cloud investment

Athens, Greece - Greece and Microsoft on Monday announced an investment deal worth up to a €1bn to build cloud storage infrastructure in the country.

The announcement comes as Greece's pro-business government plans to gradually shift the country's notoriously bureaucratic civil service online.

"We are bringing data centres to Greece. We're going to create a new region that will include Greece as well as [neighbouring countries]," Microsoft president Brad Smith told the project launch in Athens.

"This is a new opportunity for every small business in Greece... with cloud services, you pay for what you use, and you pay only



Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis (left) and Microsoft president Brad Smith talk as they attend a ceremony in Athens on Monday (AFP)

when you use it," said Smith, adding companies would no longer need to invest in buying

and maintaining servers.

The project foresees three data centres in the greater

Athens area.

Microsoft currently has data centres in Germany, France, the Netherlands and Ireland, and is building more in Poland, Italy and Spain.

The Microsoft agreement also envisages training programmes for 100,000 Greeks.

Microsoft is also designing an augmented reality website promoting Ancient Olympia, birthplace of the Olympic Games, to be released in 2021.

Through a cellphone application, visitors 'will see in 3D the monuments and life in ancient Olympia exactly as it was 2.5 millennia ago', said Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

AFP

German bourse mulls adding 10 more firms

Frankfurt, Germany - German stock exchange operator Deutsche Boerse on Monday proposed adding ten more companies to the prestigious DAX 30 index as part of an overhaul spurred by the collapse of fraud-hit payments provider Wirecard.

Deutsche Boerse said it was launching a market consultation asking investors to weigh in on suggested reforms, including expanding the blue-chip DAX from 30 to 40 members.

Under the same proposal, the mid-size MDAX would be reduced from 60 to 50 listings.

"It's no secret that I personally would welcome the expansion of

the DAX 30 to a DAX 40," said Deutsche Boerse CEO Theodor Weimer in a statement.

The change could improve the diversity of an index dominated by heavyweights in the auto and chemical sectors, observers said.

Comdirect Bank analyst Andreas Lipkow said a larger DAX 'could be especially interesting' for tech firms that are currently missing from the mix.

Growing the club would also give Germany's benchmark index a greater total market capitalisation, 'increasing its importance to institutional investors', Lipkow told AFP.

The results of the consultation

will be announced on November 23.

Investors are also being asked to give their opinion on tougher entry requirements for future DAX hopefuls.

Deutsche Boerse is proposing that would-be members 'must prove their profitability' and must have 'an audit committee on the supervisory board'.

DAX-listed companies should also be required to publish their quarterly results at the agreed times, risking a possible 'fast exit' from the index if they fail to comply.

The proposals come as Germany is still reeling from the Wirecard drama that erupted

after the once-booming digital payments company was forced to admit in June that €1.9bn was missing from its accounts.

Soon after, Wirecard became the first DAX-listed company to go bankrupt and several of its top executives have been arrested for fraud.

In the wake of the scandal, Deutsche Boerse announced a rule change allowing it to more quickly eject insolvent companies like Wirecard from the index.

The move came into effect in August, with food delivery company Delivery Hero replacing disgraced Wirecard.

AFP

Fears grow for civilians in Karabakh

Goris, Armenia - Clashes between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces were raging over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region on Monday as fears grew for civilians after the two sides shelled major cities.

Separatist forces in Karabakh - an ethnic Armenian enclave that broke away from Azerbaijan in the 1990s - reported firefights along the frontline with the regional capital Stepanakert under heavy artillery fire.

Azerbaijan's Defence Ministry said Armenian forces were shelling three of its towns, after hitting the country's second-largest city Ganja on Sunday.

Increasing artillery fire on urban areas has raised concerns of mass civilian casualties if the fierce fighting, which has already killed more than 240 people, continues to escalate.

The clashes broke out on September 27, re-igniting a decades-old conflict between the ex-Soviet neighbours over Karabakh and threatening to draw in regional powers like Russia and Turkey.

Neither side has shown any sign of backing down, ignoring international calls for a ceasefire and a return to long-stalled negotiations on the region.

Stepanakert, a city of some 50,000 in the heart of the mountainous region, has been under steady artillery fire since Friday, with residents cramming in to underground shelters and many



A building burns after shelling during the ongoing fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh region, in the disputed region's main city of Stepanakert early on Sunday (AFP)

leaving.

The separatists' foreign ministry said on Monday that shelling of Stepanakert had resumed at 6.30am, with four shells hitting the city.

It released video footage of repeated bursts of heavy shelling and of debris from seriously damaged blocks of flats, claiming Azerbaijan had used cluster munitions.

Azerbaijan said Armenian forces were shelling the towns of Beylagan, Barda, and Terter.

The two sides have reported 244 deaths since the fighting erupted, including 42 civilians, but the real total is expected to be much higher as both sides are claiming to have inflicted heavy military casualties.

The International Committee of the Red Cross on Sunday condemned the reports of 'indiscriminate shelling and other alleged unlawful attacks using explosive weaponry in cities, towns and other populated areas'.

In cathedral

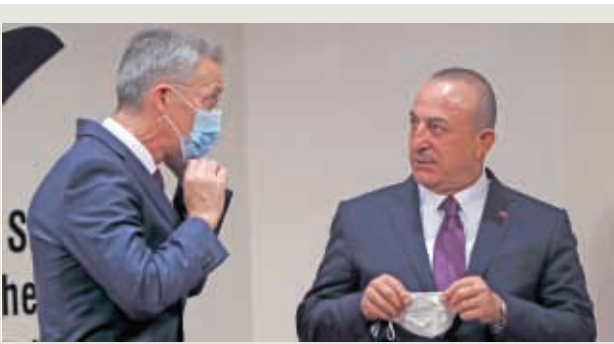
Civilians huddled on Sunday in the basement of Stepanakert's stone-walled Holy Mother of God cathedral, AFP journalists saw, seeking refuge as explosions and air raid warnings sounded.

Azerbaijan said on Sunday that two civilians had been killed in shelling on the southern town of Beylagan, where a journalist working with AFP saw residents picking through the rubble of destroyed homes.

Each side accused the other of targeting civilian areas.

In a fiery address to the nation on Sunday, Azerbaijani President Aliyev set conditions for a halt to the fighting that would be near impossible for Armenia to accept. He said Armenian forces 'must leave our territories, not in words but in deeds', provide a timetable for a full withdrawal, apologise to the Azerbaijani people and recognise the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

AFP



NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg (left) and Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu arrive for a press conference at the Foreign Ministry building in Ankara, on Monday (AFP)

NATO chief says expects Turkey to calm conflict

Ankara, Turkey - The head of NATO said on Monday he expected Turkey - a key ally of Azerbaijan - to use its 'considerable' influence to calm the conflict in the Armenian separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's comments after talks with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu came as fighting between Azerbaijani and Armenian separatist forces entered its second week with nearly 250 people killed.

"We are deeply concerned by the escalation of hostilities. All sides should immediately cease fighting and find a way forward towards a peaceful resolution," Stoltenberg said

at a joint press appearance with Cavusoglu.

"And I expect Turkey to use its considerable influence to calm tensions."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has urged fellow Muslim Azerbaijan to press on with its campaign until it reclaims lands it lost in an early 1990s war that claimed 30,000 lives as the Soviet Union fell apart.

Cavusoglu said NATO should approach the escalation 'in a balanced fashion'.

"Everyone, particularly NATO, should call on Armenia to withdraw in order for there to be a solution to this problem within the frame of international law," Cavusoglu said.

AFP

Egyptian reporter arrested after protest coverage

Cairo, Egypt - Egyptian police arrested a journalist who had been covering a crackdown in the aftermath of small-scale protests near the southern city of Luxor, her employer and lawyer said.

Basma Mostafa was brought before prosecutors on Sunday after she had gone missing the day before while reporting on unrest in the village of Al-Awamya.

She had been arrested while reporting on the alleged killing of a man by police during the demonstrations, according to her employer, the Al-Manassa news website.

'The prosecution ordered that she remains in jail for 15 days pending an investigation over charges of joining a terrorist group and spreading false news,' her lawyer Hala Doma wrote on Facebook late on Sunday.

Dozens of Egyptians took to the streets in several villages across the Egypt in September, according to videos shared widely on social media, espe-



Basma Mostafa, a journalist for Al-Manassa news website

cially by sympathisers of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood movement.

The demonstrations coincided with mounting anger, particularly in rural and low-income areas, over sweeping government campaigns against illegal construction, which have forced people to pay fines to legalise home ownership.

They came after exiled businessman Mohamed Ali, who has emerged as a vocal critic of President Abdel Fattah al Sisi since

last year, called for protests against the government.

On Friday, London-based rights group Amnesty International said Egypt had arrested hundreds of people, and that security forces had killed at least two during the demonstrations.

Sisi on Sunday warned against attempts to stoke instability in the country, and said the government was carrying out the campaign against illegal construction as part of reforms.

Egypt has increasingly targeted journalists in an ongoing crackdown on dissent since the 2013 military ouster of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi.

The clampdown has swept up thousands of Islamist supporters of the late Morsi as well as secular activists, lawyers and academics.

Egypt ranks 166th out of 180 countries in media watchdog Reporters Without Borders' 2020 world press freedom index.

AFP

8 killed in attack on Afghan governor

Jalalabad, Afghanistan - A suicide attack targeting an Afghan provincial governor killed at least eight people on Monday, officials said, as the President travelled to Qatar where peace talks with the Taliban have stalled.

Twenty eight people were wounded when the attacker rammed his explosives-filled vehicle into the convoy of Rahmatullah Yarmal, the governor of eastern Laghman province.

"The governor was driving to his office when his car was hit. Four of his bodyguards and four civilians were killed, 28 wounded," the governor's spokesman Assadullah Daulatzai told AFP, adding that the governor was unhurt.

Interior Ministry spokesman Tareq Arian confirmed the attack and said most of the wounded were civilians.

It comes as President Ashraf Ghani on Monday left for Doha to meet with Qatari officials, three weeks after the launch of landmark peace talks between the Afghan government and the



Security personnel inspect the site of a car bomb attack that targeted a government building in Ghani Khel district of Nangarhar province (AFP)

Taliban.

Ghani will first stop in Kuwait to offer condolences over the death of emir Sheikh Sabah al

Ahmad al Sabah, his spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said.

Talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government ne-

gotiators, aimed at ending Afghanistan's 19 year conflict, have stalled over disagreements on how to frame a code of conduct that will guide the broader talks.

The Taliban, who are Sunni hardliners, are insisting on adherence to the Hanafi school of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence, but the government negotiators say this could be used to discriminate against Hazaras, who are predominantly Shiite, and other minorities in the country.

Another contentious topic is how the US-Taliban deal will shape a future peace deal and how it will be referred to.

No one has so far claimed responsibility for the Laghman attack, but the Taliban are active in the region.

On Saturday, a suicide bomber detonated a vehicle full of explosives at the entrance an administrative building in eastern Nangarhar province, killing 15 people, mostly civilians, officials said.

AFP

Wildfires raze dozens of homes in New Zealand

Wellington, New Zealand - Wildfires have destroyed up to 50 homes in New Zealand, authorities announced on Monday, saying it was a miracle no one was hurt as 'a wall of orange' razed most of a remote South Island village.

The blaze began in a mountain forest early on Sunday morning and, fanned by strong winds, swept through the village of Lake Ohau, forcing residents to flee for their lives.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) said the unpredictable winds made fighting the fire 'challenging' and by Monday afternoon it had burned 4,600 hectares of land.

Waitaki District mayor Gary Kircher said the tiny Lake Ohau community had been devastated.

"Of the 60 or 70 houses, we



This handout photo shows damage caused by the South Island wildfires in Lake Ohau on Monday (AFP)

believe that the majority have gone," he told Radio New Zealand. "The reality is that it's a minor miracle no one has been harmed. If it had been another 15-20 minutes it would have been a very different story."

Kircher described how residents awoke to find an inferno bearing down on them. "I talked to a gentleman who got up to his dog (barking) in the early hours, opened his door and there was this wall of orange," he said.

"He was the one that set off the town fire alarm and helped to wake people... there's certainly some scary tales about how close it came to being an absolute disaster with fatalities."

Wildfires are relatively com-

mon on the South Island at this time of the year but the scale and intensity of the Ohau fire have been unusual.

Village resident Hugh Spiers, who lost his home, said the ferocious blaze was 'surreal' and more akin to the huge bushfires that regularly erupt in Australia than a regular New Zealand blaze. "The wind was so strong and the flames and the smoke and the sparks and the embers, it was just like what you see in the bush fires in Australia," he said.

By Monday afternoon the fire front had moved far enough from the village to allow evacuated residents a brief trip back to assess the damage.

Civil Defence Minister Peeni Henare, who accompanied them, described seeing burned out cars and gutted homes.

AFP

Turkey pledges 'full solidarity' with Libya

Istanbul, Turkey - President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday expressed 'full solidarity' with Libya's UN-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) during a meeting in Istanbul, his office said.

Erdogan met with the head of the Tripoli-based government, Fayez al Sarraj, who last month announced plans to step down within six weeks as part of efforts to broker a peace agreement.

Turkey backs the GNA, providing military support following an April 2019 offensive on Tripoli by rival strongman Khalifa Haftar, and helped turn the tide in the conflict earlier this year.

The GNA earlier this year repelled a deadly offensive on Tripoli by Haftar.

Haftar has enjoyed support

from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Russia.

The North African country descended into chaos after a Western-backed uprising toppled dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

"President Erdogan stated that Turkey would continue to stand by Libya in full solidarity and strengthen relations with the Government of National Accord, the only legitimate representative of Libya," the presidency said.

The last meeting in Istanbul came less than a month ago when Sarraj visited Istanbul on September 6. The Tripoli-based government and a parliament in the eastern city of Tobruk linked to Haftar agreed in August on a ceasefire and elections by March.

AFP

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Backlash as Trump leaves hospital to greet people

Washington, US - US President Donald Trump sparked an angry backlash from the medical community on Sunday with a protocol-breaking visit to his supporters outside the hospital where he is being treated for the highly-infectious, potentially deadly new coronavirus.

He was masked as he waved from inside his bulletproof vehicle during the short trip outside Walter Reed National Military Medical Center near Washington, which appeared designed to take back the narrative on his improving health after a weekend of muddled messaging from his doctors.

The last-minute limousine outing came with Trump's doctors satisfied enough about his progress to suggest the possibility of his being discharged on Monday.

But experts complained that the outing broke his own government's public health guidelines requiring patients to isolate while they are in treatment and still shedding virus - and endangered his Secret Service protection.

Trump, who has been repeatedly rebuked for flouting public health guidelines and spreading misinformation on the pandemic, said in a video that dropped on Twitter just before the appearance that he had



US President Trump waves from his car moving in a motorcade outside of Walter Reed medical centre in Bethesda, Maryland on Monday (AFP)

'learned a lot about COVID' by 'really going to school' as he has battled the virus.

But health experts took to the airwaves and social media to criticize the 'stunt', which they said demonstrated that he had learned nothing at all.

"Every single person in the vehicle during that completely

unnecessary Presidential 'drive-by' just now has to be quarantined for 14 days," said James Phillips, chief of disaster medicine at George Washington University. "They might get sick. They may die. For political theater. Commanded by Trump to put their lives at risk for theater. This is insanity."

White House spokesman Judd Deere said 'appropriate' precautions had been taken to protect Trump and his support staff, including protective gear. "The movement was cleared by the medical team as safe to do."

But Zeke Emanuel, chair of the Department of Medical Ethics and Health Policy at the

University of Pennsylvania and regular TV pundit, described the appearance as 'shameful'.

'Making his Secret Service agents drive with a COVID-19 patient, with windows up no less, put them needlessly at risk for infection. And for what? A PR stunt', he tweeted.

AFP

Britain passes 500,000 coronavirus cases

London, UK - The United Kingdom passed 500,000 confirmed coronavirus infections on Sunday, official figures showed, in the latest grim milestone for the European country worst-hit by the pandemic.

Health authorities blamed a technical glitch for

a sudden spike in cases announced in evening figures that had kept several thousand cases from the last week of September off the official tally. Sunday's numbers showed 22,961 cases for the day, a rise of more than 10,000 on Saturday's figures.

New York for shutdown in 9 neighbourhoods

New York, US - New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said on Sunday that he planned to reimpose restrictions on nine neighbourhoods as COVID-19 cases rise in parts of the city.

The proposal, which must be approved by state Governor Andrew Cuomo, marks a major setback for

America's largest city since it was hit hard in March by the coronavirus. The city has lost almost 24,000 people to the virus. "Today, unfortunately, is not a day for celebration," de Blasio said, announcing he would ask to close non-essential businesses and all schools in nine neighbourhoods.

103 year old woman said to survive virus

Mexico City, Mexico - A 103 year old Mexican woman suffering from a chronic pulmonary disease has survived a bout of COVID-19, the Mexican Social Security Institute announced.

The institute (IMSS), which is part of the Mexican healthcare system, said the woman, identified only as

Dona Maria, had been hospitalized for 11 days.

She had tested positive for the virus but, despite her pulmonary problems, did not have other aggravating factors such as diabetes, obesity or high blood pressure. 'That's what contributed to her treatment,' the IMSS said in a statement.

We beat the virus again, says New Zealand PM

Wellington, New Zealand - Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern declared on Monday New Zealand 'beat the virus again' and announced restrictions in the country's largest city would be eased, after a second COVID-19 wave was contained.

The virus was believed to have been eradicated in late May after a strict national lockdown led to New Zealanders enjoying 102 days without community transmission.

But a new cluster emerged in Auckland in August, forcing the city of 1.5mn into lockdown for almost three weeks.

With no new confirmed cases in Auckland for 12 days, Ardern said on Monday the virus was now under control and congratulated residents for enduring the second lockdown.

"It felt longer and dragged on in what was already starting to feel like a very long year,"



New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern (AFP)

she said. "But despite this, Aucklanders and New Zealanders stuck to the plan that has worked twice now, and beat the virus again."

Ardern said from late Wednesday Auckland would join the rest of New Zealand on level one, the lowest rating on the government's four-tier virus alert system.

Under the change, there are no restrictions on social gatherings, allowing the second

Bledisloe Cup Test in Auckland on October 18 to be played in front of a full stadium at Eden Park.

"This is positive news that (Auckland fans) will be able to enjoy Test match rugby," New Zealand Rugby said in a statement.

New Zealand has recorded just 25 COVID-19 deaths in a population of five million, with 40 active cases in the country on Monday.

But Ardern, who faces a general election on October 17, warned success could not be taken for granted.

She pointed to a decline in the use of the official COVID-19 tracing app and falling virus test numbers.

"A resurgence of the virus is not our only worry, resurgence of complacency is right up there too," Ardern said.

AFP

Maduro says son to join vaccine trial

Caracas, Venezuela - Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro said on Sunday his son will join trials of Sputnik V, the coronavirus vaccine which was met with caution when Russia announced it was the world's first to be approved.

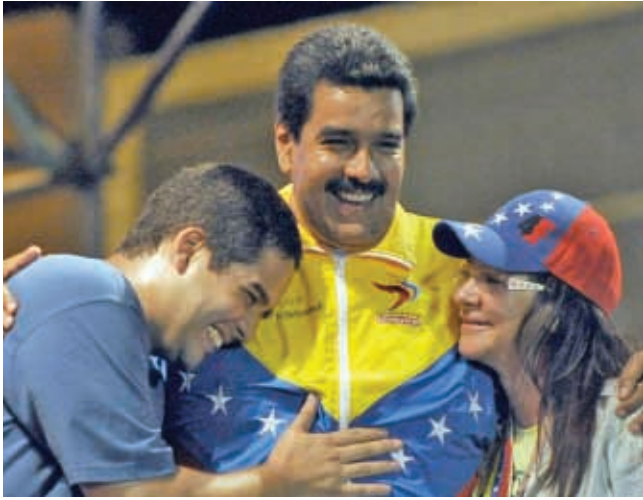
An initial batch of the vaccine arrived in Venezuela on Friday, the government announced, and 2,000 residents will participate in the trials.

"In this clinical trial phase, my son, Nicolas Ernesto Maduro Guerra, told me of his decision to be vaccinated with the Russian vaccine, to join the trial. I think it is very good," the socialist leader said in a speech on state television network VTV.

Maduro's sister is also a volunteer for the clinical trials.

Maduro Guerra (30) is also a politician and a member of his father's governing United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV).

Named 'Sputnik V' after the



This 2013 file photo shows Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro with his wife Cilia Flores and son Nicolas Maduro (AFP)

historic Soviet-era satellite, the vaccine was met with scepticism from the global medical community.

Russia in August declared itself the first country to approve a coronavirus vaccine, although it is still undergoing large-scale clinical trials after promising results. The drug is currently in

Phase 3, the human testing state, and according to Moscow, more than 40,000 volunteers have been inoculated during the process.

"When the entire scientific, clinical and testing phase is closed, voluntary vaccination will come... As soon as we start mass vaccination, I am going to

be the first one to get it," Maduro said.

Russia has been one of Maduro's main backers in the face of international pressure led by Washington, which seeks to displace him from power because it considers his reelection to have been fraudulent.

The US, as well as some 50 other countries, recognize Maduro's opponent, National Assembly speaker Juan Guaido, as Venezuela's interim president. Guaido slammed the decision to participate in the Russian trials, saying, "They use our people as guinea pigs."

According to official figures, as of Saturday, Venezuela has registered 77,646 cases of COVID-19 out of the entire 30 million population, and 649 deaths. These numbers are disputed by the country's opposition and international organisations such as Human Rights Watch.

AFP

Cineworld temporarily shuts cinemas on virus impact

London, UK - British cinema chain Cineworld announced on Monday that is temporarily shutting cinemas in Britain and the United States, as coronavirus pandemic delays major new films like the latest James Bond spy blockbuster.

The company said in a statement that it will suspend its 127 Cineworld and Picturehouse theatres in Britain from Thursday, and 536 Regal theatres in the US. The news confirmed weekend media speculation over the temporary closures at the group, which employs around 45,000 staff in its two main markets.

'In response to an increasingly challenging theatrical land-

scape and sustained key market closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Cineworld confirms that it will be temporarily suspending operations [in the two countries],' it said.

'As major US markets, mainly New York, remained closed and without guidance on reopening timing, studios have been reluctant to release their pipeline of new films.'

'In turn, without these new releases, Cineworld cannot provide customers in both the US and the UK - the company's primary markets - with the breadth of strong commercial films necessary for them to consider coming back to theatres against the backdrop of



Two people take shelter from the rain under an umbrella outside a Cineworld cinema in Leicester Square in central London on Sunday (AFP)

COVID-19.'

The announcement comes just days after the makers of the new James Bond movie - which has already had its release date pushed back once due to the pandemic - said it would not now be released until April 2021.

'No Time to Die', the 25th instalment of the fictional British spy saga, sees Bond drawn out of retirement in Jamaica and is expected to be actor Daniel Craig's last outing as 007.

'This is not a decision we made lightly,' Cineworld CEO Mooky Greidinger added regarding the closures in Monday's statement.

'We did everything in our

power to support safe and sustainable reopenings in all of our markets - including meeting, and often exceeding, local health and safety guidelines in our theatres and working constructively with regulators and industry bodies to restore public confidence in our industry.'

'Cineworld will continue to monitor the situation closely and will communicate any future plans to resume operations in these markets at the appropriate time, when key markets have more concrete guidance on their reopening status and, in turn, studios are able to bring their pipeline of major releases back to the big screen.'

AFP

NOBEL PRIZE RELEVANCE

Has Nobel team lost touch with the way modern science is conducted?

Paris, France - With the 2020 Nobel prizes this week comes a recurrent question: Has the world's most prestigious awards for physics, chemistry and medicine - first conferred in 1901 - lost touch with the way modern science is conducted?

A century ago, landmark discoveries took place mostly in the mind or laboratory of a single individual.

More recently, big breakthroughs in the hard sciences are generally collaborations involving dozens, sometimes hundreds of researchers working in separate but interlocking fields.

Two teams totalling 1,500 scientists, for example, were behind the landmark detection earlier this year of a so-called intermediate mass black hole.

Major advances in science have also become hugely reliant on technology, which is sometimes used - especially in physics - to detect phenomena theorised to exist before today's scientists were even born.

"The Nobel Committee's refusal to make an award to more than three people had led to more than manifest injustices," Martin Rees, Britain's Astronomer Royal since 1995 and former president of the Royal Society, told AFP.

Indeed, the recent history of the Nobels is littered with what some have called 'deserving losers', a fourth man or woman who would have likely shared in the prize without that limitation.

Rees cited the late Tom Kibble for his work on the elusive sub-atomic particle that came to be known as the Higgs boson.

Others lament the failure to recognise American virologist Robert Gallo for his contribution to the discovery of HIV, Rosalind Franklin for her pioneering work on DNA, and Italian physicist Adalberto Giazotto for his role in detecting gravitational waves.

Giazotto died a month after



This file photo shows a worker riding a bicycle in the tunnel of the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN) Large Hadron Collider (LHC), during maintenance work, in Meyrin, near Geneva in July 2013

the prize for that discovery was handed out in 2017.

Three's the limit

"It has also given a misleading impression of how 'big science' actually advances," added Rees, who notes the prize has excluded 'large tracts of science', including mathematics and the environmental sciences.

Even the most ardent defenders of Nobel Prize and its arguably archaic rules acknowledge that science has shifted dramatically since the era of Einstein, Monsieur and Madame Curie, and Karl Landsteiner, the Austrian biologist who figured out in the 1920s that we have blood types.

"There has been an enormous

The Nobel Committee's refusal to make an award to more than three people led to manifest injustices. It has given a misleading impression of how 'big science' advances

MARTIN REES

change since the early 1900s," Erling Norrby, a Swedish virologist and long-time pillar of the Nobel establishment, told AFP by phone.

"It is true that in modern science you often have very large groups of people interacting," added Norrby, who helped confer Nobels in medicine for 25 years, and has cast votes for the prizes in physics and chemistry since the early 1980s.

"But the question is whether we can identify the one or two leaders. I think we can see who has taken the initiative."

To some extent, faculty from the Karolinska Institute, which grants the Nobel for medicine, and the Royal Swedish Academy of Science, which does the same for physics and chemistry, have shifted with the times.

From 1920 to 1930, 23 of 30 awards were given to an individual scientist, and in the decade after World War II solo winners numbered 19.

In the first twenty years of this century, that has only happened on four occasions, with three-way awards given out 41 times.

In medicine, the number of possible recipients was expanded to three in 1934 (for the discovery of the B12 vitamin), with the first three-way prizes for chemistry and physics in 1946 and 1956, respectively.

'Dilute the impact'

But the rules have evolved no further, which means the Nobels cannot directly recompense the large, international experiments that have become

the backbone of so much modern science.

Norrby conceded that Europe's CERN - which runs the world's largest particle physics laboratory and conducted the experiments to detect the Higgs boson - would probably have shared in that Nobel if the rules had allowed, as they do for the Peace Prize.

More recent science awards have done a better job in highlighting these large collaborations, said Rees.

"The Breakthrough and Gruber prizes - which honoured the discovery of gravitational waves before the Nobel Committee did - took a fairer approach in highlighting the leaders but explicitly recognising the whole

team, [including monetarily]," he noted.

"Their approach also gave a better impression of how this project actually achieved its amazing success."

Stavros Katsanevas, director of the European Gravitational Observatory, whose Virgo gravitational wave antenna played a key role in the science behind the 2017 physics prize, is of two minds about the Nobels.

"It is difficult to identify key contributors in such global networks, this is true," he told AFP.

"But I'm afraid that if you just give the prize to an experiment and the person leading it at the moment, you will dilute the impact," he said. AFP



Thomas Perlmann (right), the Secretary of the Nobel Committee, announces the winners of the 2020 Nobel Prize in Medicine (AFP)

Trio wins Medicine Prize for Hepatitis C discovery

Stockholm, Sweden - Americans Harvey Alter and Charles Rice together with Briton Michael Houghton won the Nobel Medicine Prize on Monday for the discovery of the Hepatitis C virus, the Nobel jury said.

The three were honoured for their 'decisive contribution to the fight against blood-borne hepatitis, a major global health problem that causes cirrhosis and liver cancer in people around the world', the jury said.

The World Health Organization estimates there to be around 70mn Hepatitis C infections globally, causing around 400,000 deaths each year. Thanks to their discovery, highly sensitive blood tests for the virus are

now available and these have 'essentially eliminated post-transfusion hepatitis in many parts of the world, greatly improving global health', the Nobel committee said.

Their discovery also allowed the rapid development of antiviral drugs directed at Hepatitis C.

"For the first time in history, the disease can now be cured, raising hopes of eradicating Hepatitis C virus from the world population," the jury said.

Prior to the trio's work, the discovery of the Hepatitis A and B viruses had seen critical steps forward, but the majority of blood-borne hepatitis cases remained unexplained.

AFP

Sir Alfred Nobel: The creator of dynamite and high-minded prizes

Stockholm, Sweden - Swedish inventor and scholar Alfred Nobel, who made a vast fortune from his invention of dynamite in 1866, ordered the creation of the famous Nobel prizes in his will.

His 1895 testament stipulated that his fortune was to be placed in a fund destined to honour 'those who, during the preceding year, shall have conferred the greatest benefit on mankind'.

He died a year later in San Remo, Italy.

Nobel had decreed that the bulk of his estate should be invested in 'safe securities' and, as a result, about 31mn Swedish kronor, equivalent today to about US\$265mn, were used to create the Nobel Foundation.

The will specified that equal prizes should be given for the 'most important discovery' in physics, chemistry and medicine, as well as the 'most outstanding work in an ideal direction' in the world of literature.

A fifth prize would be for peace, 'to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between na-



A bust of Alfred Nobel is photographed prior to the announcement of the winners of the 2020 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden, on Monday (AFP)

tions, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses'.

Since 1901, the year the first Nobel prizes were awarded, the Nobel Foundation has funded the awards.

This year's laureates will receive 10mn kronor (US\$1.1mn

approx) per award, to be shared if there are several winners in one discipline.

The Nobel Prize for Economics, the only award not included in Nobel's will, is funded by the Swedish Central Bank, which created the prize to mark its 300th anniversary in 1968. It was first awarded in 1969.

Surprise and resistance

When Nobel died childless and the will was read, the contents surprised many, including his own family.

Two nephews tried to have it nullified, and even King Oscar II of Sweden opposed Nobel's wishes, saying they were not

'patriotic minded' and should have been reserved for Swedes.

Nobel insisted in his will that the peace prize be awarded by a Norwegian committee, as Norway was linked to Sweden in a union at the time.

Adding to the confusion, Nobel had not appointed an executor for the testament, nor had he consulted the various institutions he had assigned to award the prizes to ensure that they were willing to undertake the task.

After more than three years of haggling, the Nobel Foundation was created to manage the capital in the inventor's estate, and four institutions agreed to award the prizes as Nobel had wished.

In Stockholm, the Nobel Assembly at the Karolinska Institute awards the Medicine Prize, the Swedish Academy handles Literature, and the Royal Academy of Sciences is responsible for Physics, Chemistry and Economics.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee, meanwhile, awards the Peace Prize.

AFP

FALL FASHION

Fall 2020 comes with many new trends for the fashion conscious. Despite the bane of COVID-19, people who are into looking good and fashionable always find ways of being in step with the times. From fancy handbags to padded headbands, chunky boots to embellished face masks, there are many trends in vogue. According to *The Trend Setter*, here's what you'll see around town this year:



Chunky boots

As cooler climes approach, it's essential to keep your feet warm and dry. This season, when choosing a pair of shoes for the temperature, you can't look past chunky boots. They're perfect for a night out in the town or a walk through the park.

Bucket bags

What's better than having a handbag that holds all of your goods? A stylish one! These bucket bags have never really gone out of style, but they're coming in stronger. From a soft silhouette by Louis Vuitton to a Barbie-esque design by Chanel, this is a much needed accessory.



Large chain necklaces

It's no different in 2020, as large chain necklaces make their way to the forefront of the season. From oversized and chunky designs to a delicate yet statement piece, these accessories are an easy way to tie an outfit together and keep the glamour quotient alive.

Soft clutches

The soft clutch is the ultimate bag of the season. Initially designed by Bottega Veneta, this is an oversized and plush accessory that looks stunning on any occasion. Easy to carry and with an abundance of room inside, these gorgeous handbags are a dream option for then style-conscious.



Wide belts

Wide belts create an instant hourglass shape and complete your attire. This is a versatile accessory that will be on everyone this season - wear it with a dress, skirt, or pants; there are no rules. It is an item that will never go out of style, even beyond fall.

Padded headbands

Turn every bad hair day into a good one with one of these trending padded headbands. It isn't anything new, but Prada helped make them hot again this year. These accessories look fantastic in the centre of the head or even pushed back. The common headbands are in velvet and wool.



Coloured framed sunglasses

Featuring vibrant frames, these sunglasses instantly add drama to your existing outfit and jazz up your ensemble. Choose from a design featuring a bright outer and traditional inner, keep it monochrome with the same shade throughout the whole accessory.

Fancy face masks

Whether you view decorative masks as acceptable or not, there seems to be a psychological element at play. Designer face masks are now commonplace but people have started embellishing their masks with lace, motifs, beads and crystals.



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Sodium Free
Drinking
Water



The healthy choice

It is beneficial to limit sodium intake
if you have blood pressure,
diabetes, heart or kidney disease.



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HAIR CARE

HAIR RAISING FACTS

If you always craved for a head full of long, thick hair and did not know where to start, it might be helpful to come face to face with some hair raising facts – how to develop and maintain long, flowy tresses!

Very often, we pay more attention on remedies than on care which should be a natural routine. Regular care goes a long way in avoiding the need for remedies and, therefore, is the key to the solution you are seeking. Consider these facts:

Diet impacts your hair

It should all begin with taking care of yourself from the inside. Yes, the nutrients you put into your body on a daily basis directly impact the state of your hair. If you're aiming for shiny, healthy hair, here are some foods you'll want to add to your diet for improved hair health - eggs for breakfast, a great source of protein that aids hair growth, orange juice or citrus fruits which are excellent for boosting collagen, an essential nutrient for healthy hair. Nuts, too, are full of omega 3 fatty acids which are great for developing thick hair. Spinach is also god for boosting iron which is very important for nourishing your follicles. Spinach also contains sebum

which acts as a natural conditioner for your hair. And if you love fish, salmon it is for healthy hair.

Wash well

One might have washed one's hair countless times but here's the deal: there is a proper way to wash your hair and, may be, you're not doing it right. Lathering on the shampoo and conditioner is not good enough.

For getting your hair squeaky clean,

here are some tips:

Remember, hair certainly doesn't appreciate a hot water, though you might like it very much. Use lukewarm or cold water when washing your hair. Just as applying heat tools to your hair is damaging, hot water, too, is bad. It can result in dehydrated hair and split ends.

When using conditioner, concentrate the product to the ends of your hair. While it might seem natural to apply the product all over, your scalp really doesn't need that much conditioner.

When you brush your hair just out of the shower, avoid tugging and pulling.

It's time to rectify that by simply combing through your hair while you're in the shower. Start from your ends, and comb gently, so as not to pull out any hair. Do so when you still have conditioner in for the easiest brushing.

Show your hair some love

Lastly, it's time to show your hair some love beyond just your regular shampoo and conditioner. If you really want your hair to look its best, you have to give it the attention it deserves.

Switch over to a silk pillowcase. It might seem a bit over-the-top to sleep on silk, but when you're tossing and turning throughout the night, your hair will appreciate the slippery nature of silk. With a cotton pillowcase, your hair is much more prone to abrasion and damage.

When adding hair products into your routine, it's all about finding the right balance between too much and too little. When you use too many products, your hair will feel weighed down, and you'll likely experience a buildup of product. On the other hand, when you're just relying on shampoo and conditioner, your hair will likely crave a little extra attention. Occasionally, use hair masks, heat protectants, and leave in conditioners.



Home remedies for dry and damaged hair

The answers to dry and damaged hair does not always lie in a salon. Sometimes, home remedies work wonders when others fail.

Try these simple remedies with stuff from your kitchen:



Repair damage with an avocado

Mash a ripe avocado with one egg, then apply this home remedy to wet hair. Avocados are rich in vitamins, essential fatty acids, and minerals that will help restore lustre to your hair. Leave on for about 15 minutes, then wash with warm water.



Massage in butter

Try this home remedy: treat dry, brittle hair with a small amount of butter for a glossy shine. Massage it into your dry hair, then cover your hair with a shower cap for about half an hour. After this, shampoo as usual, and rinse all the butter out. Your hair will develop a pleasant sheen.



Condition with olive oil

Put the moisture back into dry hair by warming up 1/2 cup olive oil (do not boil it), and then rubbing it into your hair. Cover tresses with a plastic bag, then wrap in a towel. Leave it on for 45 minutes, then shampoo and completely rinse.



Rinse with tea

Use a mug of warm, unsweetened tea (freshly brewed) as a final rinse after your regular shampoo. Tea enhances hair colour, so make sure to use a tea that suits your hair colour. Blondes should use chamomile tea, brunettes should use black tea to enrich colour and sheen.