



SUBARU

Buy with Confidence.
Drive with Confidence.



50th National Day Celebratory Offer

Cash as Gift
from Rial 1900 to Rial 3650

Free Service
5 years/100,000 KMs

Free 1st Year
Registration & Insurance

Trade-In Exchange Bonus Rial 500

Assured Buy Back up to 50%

6 Years Unlimited Mileage
Extended Warranty

CALL TOLL FREE
800 50004

* Terms & Conditions apply. Please contact the showroom manager for the exact offer details.



50
GLORIOUS YEARS

MUSCAT DAILY

AN APEX MEDIA PUBLICATION

TUESDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 2020

20 PAGE ISSUE

www.muscatdaily.com

Email: muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om

27°C/21°C

INNOTECH PIONEERS 3D PRINTING IN THE SULTANATE
 GO TO **PAGE 02 NATION**


Underwater photo exhibition held to honour HM the Sultan

18 divers pledge allegiance to HM the Sultan 7m in the sea in Shinas

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To mark the 50th National Day and pay tribute to the Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, while pledging allegiance to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, divers of the Al Salam Diving Team in the wilayat of Shinas, North Batinah, dived in the waters in Shinas Port with photographs of the two leaders.

The group's objective behind the dive was to raise awareness on the importance of preserving maritime heritage and keeping beach clean.

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Hamed Mohammed al Amri, head of Al Salam Diving Team, said, "On November 13, 18 divers dived in Shinas port carrying photographs of the Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and Sayyid Theyazin bin



(Supplied photo)

Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth."

The exhibition at a depth of 7m-8m, called *Royal Photo Gallery Underwater*, was held by divers for eight hours from 6am to 1pm, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries

and Water Resources, the Public Authority for Civil Defence and Ambulances, and Marafi.

"The exhibition was possible thanks to the help of the people of Shinas and the participating agencies," Amri said.

The dive was also aimed at

promoting tourism sites in Oman and encouraging the sport of diving in the community.

"The sultanate has many beautiful places for diving which attract tourists from all over the world."

Expounding the benefits of

diving, he said that while it's not easy and requires training, it has made him self-confident and helped his decision-making abilities. He urged young people to adhere to safety methods and learn diving in the proper way.

Hope for developing nations as Oxford virus vaccine gets ready for approval

London, UK - Oxford University's novel coronavirus vaccine developed by AstraZeneca has shown an average 70 per cent effectiveness. The level jumped to 90 per cent depending on dosage.

The announcement is seen as a triumph for developing nations and poor countries as the Oxford jab is far cheaper, easier to store and get to every corner of the world than the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines announced last week.

The Oxford vaccine, at a price of around £3, also costs far less than Pfizer's (around £15) or Moderna's (£25) vaccines.

The British drugs group AstraZeneca and the University of Oxford said on Monday they will seek regulatory approval for their vaccine after 'effective' trials, in the latest potential boost to curbing the global outbreak.

Manufacturers Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna last week said trials of their vaccines showed effectiveness above 90 per cent in what was hailed as a breakthrough.

Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson called the announcement 'incredibly exciting'. "There



are still further safety checks ahead but these are fantastic results," he said.

Despite varying outcomes, AstraZeneca chief executive Pascal Soriot insisted his firm's vaccine would have an 'immediate impact'. "AstraZeneca will now immediately prepare regulatory submission of the data to authorities around the world that have a framework in place for conditional or early approval."

The firm said it would look to develop up to 3bn doses of the vaccine in 2021 after passing regulatory hurdles.

Pfizer/BioNTech's vaccine has to be stored at -70°C - much colder than temperatures of a standard freezer. The AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccine could be stored, transported and handled "at normal refrigerated conditions", Soriot said.

Agencies



Congratulations

Sayyida Rawan Ahmed Al Said



Sayyida Rawan Ahmed Al Said
CEO, Takaful Oman Insurance

PRINTING THE FUTURE

InnoTech is among the pioneering 3D printing businesses in the country



Shaddad al Musalmey
Muscat

With the wide usage of 3D printing and the technology increasingly becoming an important pillar of the manufacturing sector, additive manufacturing has proved its potential. Three-dimensional printing is democratising manufacturing - in the architectural, industrial, medical supplies and more fields.

Several industries worldwide are witnessing dramatic developments in 3D printing given the maturation of additive technologies and material supply chains, and Oman has kept pace with global trends as a result of the increasing demand for goods made locally.

InnoTech, which specialises in 3D printing services and produces parts for oil and gas companies, industries, and research and development labs in Oman, is making headway in the field. The start-up recently received a seed investment for its 3D printing activities.

"Mubadara Investment will help us expand the company's business plan, especially in the field of 3D printing in the medical, industrial and architectural fields," Eng Othman al Mandhari, founder and CEO of InnoTech, told *Muscat Daily*.

According to him, just as the COVID-19 pandemic was beginning to paralyse international trade and disrupt supply of goods and services earlier in the year, his company began printing and providing life-saving ventilators and face shields for those on the frontline of the COVID-19 war in Oman.

Eng Mandhari claims InnoTech was the first Omani company to venture into 3D printing, eventually focusing on spare parts for machines and pipelines for businesses and factories in the oil and gas sector.

"COVID-19 gave our business a boost. Earlier, people didn't believe in our technology and we had to conduct demonstrations to show customers. Now, people are convinced that our technology works. We manufactured 40,000 face shields for hospital staff and 40 ventilators using 3D



COVID-19 gave our business a boost. Earlier, people didn't believe in our technology and we had to conduct demonstrations to show customers. Now, people are convinced that our technology works

ENG OTHMAN AL MANDHARI

printing," Mandhari informed.

Local manufacturing using 3D printing technology is the answer to Oman's economic diversification efforts, reduce reliance on imports, create jobs for nationals and build new industries. "As part of our expansion plans, we hope to create more jobs directly or indirectly. This will help us realise our goals in line with Oman Vision 2040," Eng Mandhari said.

"With the seed investment, why not invest in young engineers of whom thousands are looking for jobs in Oman? We hope to educate them, start manufacturing and exporting our products too," he added.

The investment will fund plans for a 3D printing factory, allow clients from around the world to access a platform to upload files with the technical specifications of their products for manufacturing by InnoTech.

"We are also looking to finance the other part of the busi-



(Supplied photos)

ness, Innobox, which has already sold 800 units. But we are embarking on a redesign and expansion into other Gulf and Middle East markets," he said.

In keeping with the global trend in 3D printing businesses, InnoTech is modifying its production to meet increasing demand for medical equipment during the pandemic.

Self-funded, InnoTech was established in 2013. In 2017, venture capital firm Oman Technology Fund invested US\$100,000 in its sister business, Innobox, which makes educational kits used to teach children aged eight years and older about electronics and programming.

Winner of the Riyadh Best Entrepreneur Award Oman in 2017, InnoTech has a core team of ten full-time engineers in Muscat and Sohar.

@shadadm

Call to reopen public parks with holidays set to begin

Shaddad al Musalmi
Muscat

With the National Day holidays starting from Wednesday, parents and children are calling for the reopening of public parks. These were ordered shut in March as part of the precautionary measures announced by the Supreme Committee tasked with dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the closure of parks, and malls being out of bounds for children, parents say their children need some outdoor or social activity to engage in.

"I think the wait has been too long. My children have been complaining of having nowhere to go. They can't go to malls or parks or even beaches. Since most of the other places are reopened now, it should be safe to reopen parks because there is enough space to maintain social distancing," said Sulaiman Mohammed, a father of four children.

The call to reopen parks is not only for children but adults too, who say they need a place to relax away from home because it is risky to travel amidst COVID-19.

"It is not always easy for both adults and children to stay in-



Entrance to Amerat Park (Muscat Daily)

My children have been asking me to take them to a park because they are tired of being indoors. I feel sorry for them but I hope this will end soon

SHAMSA ABDULLAH

doors for long, especially those who live in flats. My children have been asking me to take them to a park because they are tired of being indoors. I feel sorry

for them but I hope this will end soon," said Shamsa Abdullah, a mother of three children, living in a two-bedroom apartment in Amerat.

According to some, many parks in Oman are big enough and chances of COVID-19 infections among visitors is low.

"There was no need to close them. I feel parks are safer than the malls because they are in the open," said Khalfan al Obaidani, a parent of five from Seeb.

The Ministry of Health has advised both citizens and residents to refrain from visiting beaches or parks.

@shadadm

Health insurance mandatory for Omani travellers: MoH

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Omani citizens who are travelling abroad must have valid health insurance that includes COVID-19 coverage and death, says Ministry of Health.

They should also fulfil the requirements of the country they are travelling to such as the necessary checks and the required permits at their own expense.

The ministry said some categories of Omani travellers have been excluded from the health and COVID-19 procedures at land ports. They include Omanis who live or work in neighbouring countries and commute to work daily via borders. Also exempted are Omani families residing at the land borders in the governorates of Musandam, Buraimi and Dhofar (with proof of residence from the Wali's office)



provided they follow all travel procedures - arrivals and departures marked in eMushrif app of the Ministry of Health.

The ministry confirmed that people who come to Oman must have health insurance for coronavirus treatment and should present a negative PCR test conducted within 96 hours of the scheduled time of arrival in Oman. Travellers must download Tarassud+ and eMushrif

applications before arriving in the country.

The quarantine period is seven days from the date of arrival in Oman if the passenger has negative result of a COVID-19 PCR test conducted on arrival and another PCR test conducted on the eighth day. If the passenger does not wish to undertake a PCR test on the eighth day, the quarantine will continue for 14 days from the date of arrival.

MoE launches YouTube channel

Muscat - The Ministry of Education (MoE) launched a new educational channel on YouTube on Monday.

In a statement, the ministry said, 'The channel - Mawred - is aimed at supporting our new pol-

icy of blended education for the academic year 2020-2021, and it comes in line with Oman Vision 2040.'

The channel will publish a wide range of educational programmes conducted by Omani

experts from across the sultanate.

'Access to the channel is allowed to teachers and students only via ministry's website www.edu.moe.om,' the statement added.

EXPLAINED

Is there a need of a medical insurance for COVID-19?

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a video is worth a million. Muscat Daily's video series 'Explained' analyses current issues and fact checks dubious social media buzz. The series also puts readers' questions to experts in the related fields, who explain their point of view



Scan the QR Code to view this 'Explained' video on Muscat Daily social media handles

EXPERT'S VIEW

In this edition, Dr J Retnakumar, an insurance expert, 'Explained' the changing dynamics of the insurance industry when dealing with a pandemic like COVID-19. Dr Retnakumar is optimistic that having an insurance cover will safeguard the interests of many during such a crisis.

EXPLAINED

"Pandemics are normally excluded from medical insurance contracts. However, considering the difficulties and challenges faced by the public, the Government of Oman has advised insurance companies to cover pandemics also under medical policies. So they are now covered under certain guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health. The treatment cost will also be as per the guidelines issued by the ministry."



MESSIKA
BY KATE MOSS

مسكالا
Mistal
Watches | Jewellery | Pens

AL KALBANI BUILDING
NEXT TO BOULEVARD BOUTIQUE MALL
AL QURUM - +968 24646222

MODERN EXCHANGE
الصرافة الحديثة

HAVE YOU TRIED OUR REMITTANCE SERVICE TO INDIA?

86% OF OUR REMITTANCES TO INDIA GOT CREDITED WITHIN 3 MINUTES IN MONTH OF OCTOBER 2020

Service	Percentage of Transactions Credited		
INDIA	Within 3 Minutes	Within 2 Hours	2 Hours to 3 Hours
Bank Transfer	86.00%	10.00%	4.00%

TRANSACTION WITH US AND KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Google play App Store

f t i n

98082703 / 98082705 / 98082709
@modernexchangeoman www.modernexchange.com

50th National Day Celebrations

oman OASIS
BALANCED DRINKING WATER

Oasis Water Co. LLC, PO Box 87, Rusayl 124, Sultanate of Oman.
CALL TOLL-FREE 800 71 222 or GSM: 9275 5522
www.omanoasis.com f OmanOasis @ OmanOasisOfficial

SALEH MIRI, MUSCAT DAILY COLUMNIST, IS AN ARCHITECT WHO CAME TO OMAN IN THE EARLY 1980S



Each country needs to be in charge of its own destiny. Yes, we live in a global world, but our destinies are our own

OPINION

The whole world is following the events in the US. How will this administration accept to leave and at what cost for the people in the US?

The most powerful country seems to be divided. How will it be possible to co-exist with so different opinions?

Pandora's box is an artefact in Greek mythology connected with the myth of Pandora in Hesiod's *Works and Days*. In modern times, an idiom has grown from its meaning: 'Any source of great and unexpected troubles', or alternatively 'A present which seems valuable but which in reality is a curse'.

As the world follows day by day the events in the US, it is astonishing that all other countries are holding back any decision and waiting to see what will happen in the US. Are we so much dependent on the results of an election in the North American continent?

Yes, the dollar is currently the most important currency in the world. Yes, the US is seen as a superpower and yes, it has

an influence over what others are doing to a certain limit.

The new superpowers, replacing those of 1948, are now China, India and the European Union. Others, like Turkey are dreaming of becoming a new Ottoman superpower, but no matter which ones will lead, each country needs to be in charge of its own destiny. Yes, we live in a global world, but our destinies are our own. Suddenly with the information com-

PANDORA'S BOX

ing from the US, the world discovers that even in the US, people are divided and wish opposite things. Isn't it time for us to make our own decisions and care for our people, rather than holding our breath to see how it evolves on the other side of the world?

It is true that we all live in the same world and our interests should be those which are shared by others as well. This applies to climate control, to security, to

global health, etc, but we should also have our own personalities. The world is different in Asia compared to Europe, and Latin America is very different from Russia and yet we share similar values. Depending on the future of one single nation is wrong and in particular when in that country there are two incompatible parties.

The world is different today, and the sooner we realise that our future is in our own hands and not in the hands of those far away from us, the sooner we will understand the path towards our own better world.

Superpowers come and go. We just need to look back at history. What happened to the Roman Empire? What about the superpower of Hitler's Germany? Not to mention the Persians and the Egyptians or the Mongols. Those who survived, are those who managed to look at their own country with their local interests first.

Our dependence on others is a necessity but not a priority. Our people matter more than our financial priorities.

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

Indian School Talent Fest
UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
INDIAN SCHOOLS, SULTANATE OF OMAN
ORGANISED BY
INDIAN SCHOOL AL MAABELA
(ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED INSTITUTION)

GENUINE TALENTS FROM 21 INDIAN SCHOOLS ON VIRTUAL PLATFORMS

UNLIMITED ENTRIES TO ILLUMINE UNLIMITED POTENTIAL!!!

DATES
22, 23, 29 AND 30 JANUARY 2021
AN ARRAY OF 37 EVENTS FOR STUDENTS OF GRADE I TO XII

Dance | Art | Music | IT | Performing Arts | Literary
Colouring Art (Sub Junior I) Drawing & Colouring (Sub Junior II)
SEN | Unique Talent Recognition

REGISTRATION CLOSING ON 26 NOVEMBER 2020
FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT THE RESPECTIVE SCHOOL ISTF COORDINATOR

NAVIGATE
QR code

STAY TUNED WITH
ISAM
YouTube
f

MEDIA PARTNER
MUSCAT DAILY

ADLIFE HOSPITAL CELEBRATES NATIONAL DAY



L-R: Viji Varghese, CEO, Aadil Thomas Alexander, managing director, and Varsha Sarah Roy, finance director of AdLife Hospital, celebrated the 50th National Day in the hospital in Amerat on Monday (Supplied photo)

PASI launches new website

Muscat - The Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI) launched its new website in conjunction with the sultanate's celebration of the 50th National Day.

The authority said the new website aims at continuous development of customer service, with comprehensive quality standards and providing social

insurance services easily.

The PASI website includes integrated information about the authority and its vision of ensuring social protection for the individual, family and society in light of an insurance system based on the principles of justice and social solidarity.

The site also provides infor-

mation and services for all insured customers and business owners, workers abroad, and self-employed people, in addition to the job security system.

'People can access the website through several digital platforms such as smartphones, tablets and computers easily and effectively,' PASI said.

REGIONAL WEATHER

ABU DHABI	DUBAI	MANAMA
Max 26°C Min 18°C	Max 28°C Min 17°C	Max 24°C Min 17°C

DOHA	KUWAIT CITY	RIYADH
Max 26°C Min 17°C	Max 23°C Min 13°C	Max 24°C Min 10°C

PRAYER TIMINGS

	5.08am	11.59am	5.25pm
Fajr			
Sunrise	6.27am	3.04pm	6.39pm
Duhr			
Asr			
Maghrib			
Isha			

oman OASIS

Sifir

SODIUM FREE DRINKING WATER

OMAN'S ONLY
5 IN GALLON BOTTLE

The healthy choice

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

Call Toll-Free 800 71 222 or GSM 9275 5522
f OmanOasis @ OmanOasisOfficial www.omanoasis.com
OASIS WATER COMPANY LLC P.O.Box: 87, P.C: 124, Rusayl, Sultanate of Oman.

C.R. No.: 1/20545/2

Youngsters invited for art residency programme

Muscat - The Arab British Centre, together with the British Council, is calling on young artists in Oman to apply for the winter edition of their digital residency programme.

The Connect ME arts residency pairs creative artists based in the GCC states and the UK to create collaborative digital work over a four-week programme of online mentoring. The programme, which was devised as a response to COVID-19, is a digital continuation of the Arab British Centre's creative exchange programme Making Marks, which promotes creative exchange and international collaboration between 18-30 year olds from the UK and the GCC.

The outcomes of the residency are completely up to the pairs, and applications are welcome from all creative backgrounds – the only stipulation is that the work must be delivered to the public through digital channels and it must be a collaborative work. Four selected participants will benefit from a residency fee of £1,000, guidance and support from the Arab British Centre and a dedicated mentor from a cultural



Rawan al Mahrouqi

organisation. The works created will be featured on the Making Marks website, the digital home of all artworks created under the programme, and participants will benefit from a social media campaign promoting their work globally across both the Arab British Centre and British Council channels.

The summer residency, which ran from July–August 2020, saw four outstanding young artists take part and create collaborative work in pairs, including Omani artist Rawan al Mahrouqi. Rawan is a multidisciplinary contemporary artist, whose work focuses on the female experience

in the Arabian Gulf.

She was paired with Liverpoolian artist Alexis Maxwell, an interdisciplinary artist based in Merseyside who blends spoken word and animation into performance art embracing the fluidity of race and culture. Together they created an art piece called 'Hair, Poetry' a dual-language spoken word animation which explores the artists' relationship to their hair and its role in their identity and autonomy. It offers a timely look into the connections between hair, race and gender for women living in both the UK and the Arab world.

Speaking of their collabora-

tion, Rawan said, "I loved meeting and working with Alexis; it's a really special thing to create an artwork with someone. If I had to give some advice to the next cohort of Connect ME artists, I would say, 'Get to know your partner and you will find something that you both have in common which will make an amazing work of art.'"

Alexis said, "This residency was unique in allowing me to explore my culture in parallel to another artist. The open theme allowed us to find the roots of our individual practices and explore the way these narratives could tangle. It's a rare opportunity to work closely with an artist you otherwise may never have crossed paths with and produce something unique to your blend of lived experience and culture."

The Connect ME Winter Residency Open Call is open now to artists 18-30 years old, of all disciplines, based in the UK and the GCC. Applications must be submitted by November 29.

For more information or to apply, visit www.makingmarks.uk. Applications can be submitted in English or Arabic.



(Supplied photo)

Tilal al Irfan art contest winners announced

Muscat - Muhammad al Timami has been crowned winner of Tilal al Irfan's first National Art Competition. He was followed by Reem al Hashmi in second place and Mohammed Qamar in third place.

The announcement was made under the patronage of H E Sayyid Said bin Sultan al Busaidi, Undersecretary in the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth.

Oman's largest and most ambitious lifestyle destination, Tilal al Irfan is a partnership between Omran and Majid al Futtaim Properties which is transforming 550,000sqm of land in the heart of Madinat al Irfan into the City of the Future.

Timami was one of over a hundred Oman-based artists who submitted designs for a sculpture that would be built within the development's landscape. Tilal al Irfan is already a destination and is inspiring authentic connections.

The competition ran for two months from September to October, and was open to nationals and residents, who could enter either as an individual or as a team of up to five members. As well as the accolade of winning and the opportunity to have their work seen by thousands of people, there were financial awards

too, for both the winner and two runners-up.

Timami's winning entry was chosen by an esteemed panel of judges made up of Hawazen Esber, CEO of Majid al Futtaim – Communities, Peter Walichowski, CEO of Omran, Hassan Meer, arts and culture manager at Omran and owner of Stal Gallery, Dr Bader al Maamari, head of the Art Faculty at Sultan

passion and enthusiasm of artists living and working in Oman.

"Art is a key pillar within Majid al Futtaim's place making philosophy and this initiative is one of many that will bring this philosophy alive at Tilal al Irfan. The designs were all impressive and it was a difficult process narrowing them down to decide on a winner. But Muhammad al Timami's concept stood out as exceptional and we know that once the sculpture has been created and is standing pride of place outside of the completed Sales and Experience Centre, it will enhance what is set to be an architecturally striking space offering something to every resident and visitor."

The wining sculpture will be the first of many prime examples showcasing the design talent in the sultanate and a testimony to Tilal al Irfan's cultural and artistic pillars. Tilal al Irfan will continue to build on this initiative and work with local artists to provide them with a platform to challenge their creativity.

Built on an ambitious, contemporary design which features a floating roof, once complete in early 2021, the Sales and Experience Centre will take centre stage opposite the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Art is a key pillar within Majid al Futtaim's place making philosophy and this initiative is one of many that will bring this philosophy alive at Tilal al Irfan

HAWAZEN ESBER

Qaboos University, and Sarah al Ulaqi, artist and founder of Cure8art Gallery.

Commenting on the selection, Esber said, "We were overwhelmed with the positive response to this competition where both the originality and the variety of the entries, clearly reflected the incredible talent,

Worldwide Italian cuisine week begins

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Embassy of Italy in Muscat has joined the world in celebrating the fifth edition of 'The Italian Cuisine Week in the World' which is being held from November 23 to 29.

The event is being held under the theme 'Knowledge and flavours of Italian lands, 200 years after the birth of Pellegrino Artusi'. It is an initiative promoted each year by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and aims at raising awareness of Italy's culture and tradition of gastronomy and focus on quality.

"The Italian Cuisine Week in the World is an opportunity to celebrate the variety and authenticity of Italian cuisine and reach the general public of the sultanate at a time when precautionary measures do not allow convivial events and live tastings," said H E Federica Favi, Am-



(Supplied photo)

bassador of Italy in Muscat.

"We want to take Italy directly to the homes of our Omani friends at this difficult time when the pandemic prevents us from moving around and travelling. We are sure to entice them to visit Italy as soon as possible."

The pandemic does not stop the promotion of Italian cuisine in Oman, and therefore, the Embassy of Italy in Muscat is offering till November 29 a course of seven online lessons with the

Italian Chef Alessandro Battisti on traditional Italian recipes that can be followed free of charge in English and Arabic by the general public of the sultanate.

"We want to share with our Omani friends the importance of the quality of the ingredients, a fundamental element of a cuisine that aims to enhance the individual flavours," said Chef Battisti.

He added, "Traditional recipes tell us how from a few elements, all very fresh, you can create

dishes able to satisfy every palate in the name of a healthy and balanced diet like the Mediterranean one, embedded in the intangible cultural heritage of humanity."

Italian food lovers will be able to shop the most authentic Italian products in town at Carrefour in Qurm City Centre.

This year's edition also celebrates the 200th anniversary of the great gastronome Pellegrino Artusi (1820-1911), who is considered the father of Italian cuisine. His masterpiece *Science in the Kitchen and the Art of Eating Well*, published in 1891, is a collection of traditional recipes from all the regions of Italy which highlighted the variety of preparations, ingredients and traditions of the country.

The week also gives an opportunity to highlight the importance of consumers' information and the role of labelling in helping people choose a sustainable lifestyle.

HOTLINES

24-hour pharmacies

Scientific Pharmacy: Qurm
24566601, Ruwi 24702850
Muscat Pharmacy: Ruwi
24702542, Salalah 23291635
Al Hashar Pharmacy: Ruwi
24783334

Hospitals and Clinics

Al Hayat International
Hospital, Al Ghubra-
22004000, 94267068 /
97049520
94442000 (Emergency)
Al Raffah Hospital: Muscat -
24618900/1/2/3
Sohar - 26704639/49/50
Apollo Hospital Muscat,
Hamriya: 24787766,
24782666, 24787780
Abeer Hospital, Ruwi, Muscat
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
Lama Polyclinic: CBD
24799077, 24788881,
24788577, 24707566,
24799655, Al Khuwayer
24478817, 24478818,
Sohar 26751128

National University of Science and Technology S.A.O.C

Invitation to attend the Extraordinary General Meeting of National University of Science and Technology S.A.O.C

The Board of Directors of National University of Science and Technology S.A.O.C invites all Shareholders to attend the Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM), which will be held on Thursday 10th of December 2020 at 10 AM, at the headquarters of National University, Boushar. In the event that the quorum for the first EGM is not met, Wednesday, the 16th of December 2020, will be the date of the second meeting, at the same location and time set for the first EGM to consider the following agenda:

1. To approve the increase in the authorized capital of the Company from RO 15,000,000 (Rials Omani Fifteen Million) to RO 26,635,073 (Rials Omani Twenty Six Million Six Hundred Thirty Five Thousand and Seventy Three), and the increase in the issued share capital of the Company from RO 500,000 (Rials Omani Five Hundred Thousand) to RO 26,635,073 (Rials Omani Twenty Six Million Six Hundred Thirty Five Thousand and Seventy Three) and amend Article (5) of the Articles of Association.
2. To approve the allocation of shares resulting from the capital increase to Caledonian College of Engineering SAOC and Oman Medical College SAOC (the "Merged Entities") in accordance with the provisions of the merger agreement entered into by the Company and the Merged Entities.

Each Shareholder is entitled to give a written proxy to another person, who need not be a Shareholder, to attend the meeting and vote on his/her behalf at the EGM

For further information, please contact Mr. Juma Saleh Juma Al Mukhaini on telephone +968 99355270

MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No. 53 /2020

Muscat Municipality invites interested companies to the following bidding :

Serial	Bidding No.	Bidding Description	Document Fee	Deadline for inquires submission	Deadline for obtaining Bidding Docs	Deadline for Submission
1	RE- Bidding AB/9/2019	Promoting & Selling of the book "Cities for people"	30/- OMR	13/12/2020	20/12/2020	21/12/2020

Registered companies with Muscat Municipality are invited to participate in the above bidding as the following:

1. Pay the specified document fee for the requested bid via bank deposit to MM's Bank account (0423010702710024) Bank Muscat.
2. A copy of the transaction's receipt MUST be send to the following e-mail (MM.PC@mm.gov.om), provided with the company data (name and bid number, delegate name, phone number, mobile number, email address approved by company).
3. The tender form will be provided to the company via email.
4. Submitted offers must be accompanied with a bond mentioned in the tender form valid for a period not less than (120) days issued by any local bank in Oman addressed to Muscat Municipality. Bidding that do not meet the required bond **will not be accepted**.

Documents must be enclosed in a plain envelope sealed with red wax (without any company information). In a box located in Third floor at Directorate General of Quantity Surveying and Contracts in Muscat Municipality, Head Office, Darsait

NOTES:

1. Companies which not registered in MM or their registration has been expired shall register through the municipality's website (www.mm.gov.om). For technical support, please contact Muscat Municipality through email (crm@mm.gov.om).
2. **10:00 AM** on the above mentioned date, is the last timing for receiving bids. Offers submitted after the above mentioned date & Time shall not be accepted for any reason.
3. Muscat Municipality has the right to accept or reject any offer without assigning any reason.

Website: www.mm.gov.om

NBO pledges support to female entrepreneurs

Marking the sultanate's 50th National Day, and under the theme 'From the Nation's Bank, to the Nation', National Bank of Oman (NBO) has pledged its support for a series of programmes focusing on empowering women.

The projects aim to provide female artisans with the tools to turn traditional handicrafts into viable businesses, thereby increasing the social and economic development for themselves and their communities. They are among a number of initiatives the bank has been involved with as it continues to champion women, while acknowledging their valuable contribution to the advancement of the nation.

Abdullah al Hinai, chief executive officer of NBO, said, "It is with great pride that we join the nation in celebrating National Day, looking back on the country's tremendous progress over the last 50 years. As the sultanate's first and national bank, we are delighted to have been a part of its remarkable journey and are committed to helping our community members, particularly women. Through



projects like this we aim to take away the obstacles that inhibit them and provide them with the building blocks they need to reach their full potential, thus allowing

them to play a vital role in the socio-economic development of the country."

In Masirah, NBO is collaborating with the United Nation's Food

and Agricultural Organization, on a project designed to empower a number of women in the fisheries sector. Falling under the umbrella of the Omani Women's Association in Masirah, the project will support approximately 52 women who are actively involved in coastal activities, which include harvesting and collecting oysters for household consumption and selling the surplus product. By increasing their access to resources, assets, services, technologies and economic opportunities, they will be a key driving force for the long-term socio-economic development of the women and their communities.

The second project, founded by Buraimi native Ahlam al Muqbali and called Bayt al Banat, provides a one-of-a-kind incubation centre for women to be taught how to turn their traditional skills, which include handicrafts, dressmaking and cooking, into fully-fledged businesses. With the bank's help the project will be able to continue to provide the necessary venue and tools for women to be able to grow their start-ups.

DR KAVITHA'S TANJORE PAINTING FOR NATIONAL DAY



Dr Kavitha Ramakrishna presented a Tanjore painting depicting Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos and His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to Sayyida Basma al Said on the occasion of Oman's 50th National Day. Dr Kavitha said her inspiration for doing Omani artefacts in Tanjore art is to exhibit the Indo-Oman relationship and her personal gratitude for this wonderful nation which epitomises harmony and peace

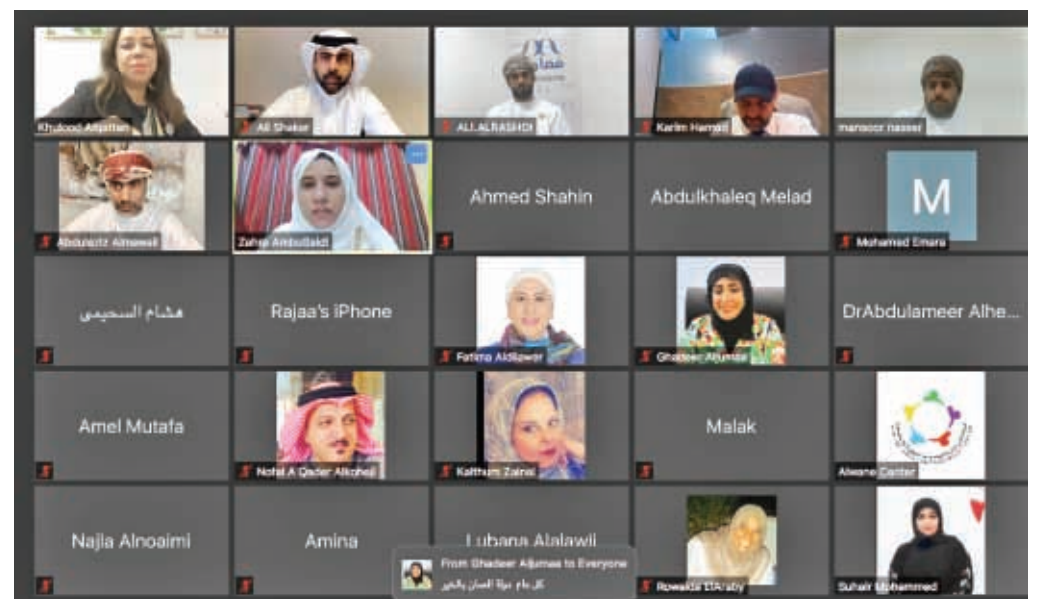
Zubair SEC participates in GCC Business Incubators and Accelerators Conference

Zubair Small Enterprises Centre (Zubair SEC) represented by senior advisors and four members, participated in the third GCC Business Incubators and Accelerators Conference held virtually. The third edition of the conference was held online due to the COVID-19 related travel restrictions.

The theme for this year's conference was 'SMEs' Ecosystem challenges and opportunities alongside the pandemic'. Bahrain SMEs Development Society organised the conference to highlight the current situation for SMEs. Four Zubair SEC members shared and discussed their learnings and experiences in Oman with other participants from all over GCC.

Abdul Aziz Saleh Ahmed al Mawali, founder of Smartech Solutions, Mansoor Nasser al Rahbi, owner of Abraj al Zahira (AZ Medcare), Ali Said Abdullah al Rashdi, owner of Muaawana and Zahra Mohammed Saif Ambu Saidi, founder of Shiyaka Photography are the members who participated in the conference. All these members are part of the Zubair SEC's flagship Direct Support Programme (DSP). They shared their experiences and journey through the pandemic, with fellow entrepreneurs from the GCC.

Business incubators, accelerators, and young entrepreneurs from across the GCC including



Oman, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain plus Egypt as a guest country, participated and presented their experiences at the conference.

The annual conference was an ideal platform to learn and exchange ideas, skills, updates and find solutions to overcome common challenges in the region. The conference was especially significant since all SMEs share the same market conditions, difficulties, and opportunities.

Ali Shaker, advisor, Business Development and Strategic Partnerships, Zubair SEC who represented the centre at the conference said, "We were happy to be invited to participate in this important conference. We are pleased to have been the only

support entity representing Oman in this GCC conference, and that confirms the trust, reputation, and appreciation that Zubair SEC enjoys. It also acknowledges the contribution of the centre to Oman's entrepreneurship's ecosystem development. I hope all participants have taken valuable lessons and experiences from each other. As a centre, it was a great opportunity for us to learn from other support initiatives in the region, especially regarding their responses in to the challenging situation that COVID-19 posed."

In 2018, Zubair SEC and Bahrain Small and Medium Enterprises Development Society signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed to

jointly explore entrepreneurship development in the two countries and support cooperation between Omani and Bahraini SMEs.

Zubair SEC had participated in the first and second editions of the conference previously. Last year, Zubair SEC along with its advisors and three members had participated in the GCC Business Incubators and Accelerators Conference. Zubair SEC was extended a special invitation by the Bahraini conference organisers in recognition of the support the centre has been rendering to the development of the SME sector in Oman. Participating in the conference was an opportunity to share expertise and insight on the various entrepreneurial journeys.



'Horrible Science' comes to A'soud Global School virtually

A'soud Global School (AGS) treated students to an exciting educational experience filled with scientific research and experiments. Students from Grade 4 to Grade 9, through AGS's digital learning platform, welcomed world-renowned author Nick Arnold from Cambridge, UK to their virtual campus on November 11. The virtual event comprised of interactive experiments, quizzes and readings from Nick's famously gruesome book *Disgusting Digestion*.

Nick, who has written a tremendous amount of books on the subject of science; leaving in all the gory details, invoked students' inner scientists by show-

ing them a fantastically gruesome video followed by some brilliantly disgusting quizzes and a reading from his gruesome book. Students participated in exhilarating experiments facilitated by Nick on inertia, which involved a hippopotamus, a bunny, and a wide array of ancient books! The interactive event offered students the opportunity to meet Nick 'live' during a question-and-answer session; followed by a quiz with students and teachers learning fascinating facts about the wonders of the human brain.

The 'Horrible Science' event came to a close as students were surprised by a guest appearance

by Mrs Tiggles! - Nick's pet toy tiger, and the world-famous author recited a hilarious yet profound poem on why you should not own a pet tiger.

Lee Davies, headmaster of A'soud Global School, expressed his excitement. "It was an honour to have Nick join us virtually for an informative and thought-provoking session. Students and teachers were eager to learn from Nick's perspective and had a fabulous time. This invigorating virtual event was made possible through the implementation of technology at AGS and we are looking forward to welcoming many more authors in the future!"

Infiniti Oman extends National Day greetings to customers

Infiniti Oman extended special greetings to its customers and members of the community on the special occasion of 50th National Day.

A senior spokesperson at Infiniti Oman, said, "We would like to congratulate and extend our sincere and heartfelt congratulations to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, on this momentous occasion of the 50th National Day, as he leads us to the path of advancement and progress. Under his wise and visionary leadership, Oman continues to make remarkable progress. We wish him lasting

health and happiness.

"We also remember Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the farsighted builder of this nation who laid a resilient road to help this journey of progress. We wish the people of Oman progress, prosperity and lots of success."

The spokesperson added, "As we celebrate this glorious milestone, let us draw attention to the achievements, progress and advancement achieved in all the sectors and feel proud about the successful journey of this incredible nation."

He said, "We would also like



to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation and gratitude to our customers for their brand loyalty over the years. We would like to wish our customers a very Happy National Day with lots of success, opportunities and prosperity."

SBA is largely committed to supporting Infiniti Oman's growth in the sultanate through major emphasis on customer satisfaction and by providing world-class after-sales services in Oman.

With a national network of more than 40 showrooms, service centers and parts outlets,

SBA has further built upon its legacy of trust, excellent customer service and providing value for money to each of its customers.

Infiniti Motor Company Ltd is headquartered in Hong Kong with representations in 50 markets around the world.

The Infiniti brand was launched in 1989. Its range of premium automobiles is currently built in manufacturing facilities in Japan, the United States, United Kingdom and China. Infiniti design studios are located in Atsugi-Shi near Yokohama, London, San Diego

and Beijing.

Infiniti is in the middle of a major product offensive. The brand has been widely acclaimed for its daring design and innovative driver-assistance technologies. From the 2016 season, Infiniti is a technical partner of the Renault Sport Formula One team, contributing its expertise in hybrid performance.

More information about Infiniti and its industry leading technologies can be found at www.infiniti.com. You can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and see all our latest videos on YouTube.

2021 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 launched

For enthusiasts who crave soul-stirring, legendary off-road performance and a new level of on-road performance, Jeep introduced the V-8-powered 2021 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 for customers in the North American market.

The most-capable, quickest, most-powerful Wrangler carries the 6.4lt V-8, rated at 470 horsepower and 470 lb.-ft (637 Nm) of torque. Mated to the crisp-shifting TorqueFlite eight-speed automatic transmission and Selec-Trac full-time active transfer case, the powertrain rockets the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 from 0-60 mph (0-96 km/h) in 4.5 seconds and the quarter-mile in 13.0 seconds. Plus, this potent combination comes with a factory-backed warranty.

Away from the pavement, the Trail Rated Wrangler Rubicon 392's potent powertrain meshes with heavy-duty wide track Dana 44 axles, a 3.73 final drive ratio, transmission torque converter lockup control, a 2-inch (5 cm) lift and standard 33-inch tires on 17-inch beadlock-capable wheels. The result is the most-capable Jeep Wrangler ever with 10.3 inches of ground clearance, improved suspension articulation and maneuverability, approach/breakover/departure angles of 44.5/22.6/37.5 degrees and the ability to traverse up to 32.5 inches (82.5cm) of water.

Jeep engineers put it to the test: The 2021 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 confidently climbs up and down steep grades with minimal throttle and brake input. "This is the most-powerful,



quickest, most-capable Jeep Wrangler we've ever built," says Jim Morrison, head of Jeep Brand - FCA North America. "The factory lift and abundant low-end torque from the V-8 makes the Rubicon 392 the king of the hills, whether you're rock crawling at low speeds or powering up an incline. And when pavement replaces dirt, Rubicon 392 makes quick work of the road."

The 2021 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 revealed today goes on sale in North America in the first quarter of 2021.

Peak power, plenty of torque

The addition of the 6.4lt (392 cubic inches) engine marks the

first time in nearly 40 years a V-8 has been a factory option for the Wrangler.

Tuned specifically for the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 and its functional hood scoop, the engine is rated at 470 hp and 470 lb.-ft. (637 Nm) of torque.

Critical to performance on-road and off, nearly 75 per cent of the Wrangler Rubicon 392's peak torque is available just above engine idle speed. This delivers exciting performance, whether enabling a 4.5-second 0-60 mph (0-96 km/h) time or crawling up steep grades.

The performance of the 6.4lt V-8 is based on a cast iron cylinder block and aluminum heads, accented with an active intake

manifold, variable camshaft timing, twin spark plugs per cylinder, sodium-filled exhaust valves, hollow-stem intake valves and piston oil cooling jets. The Wrangler Rubicon 392 engine is fitted with a rear-sump oil pan, high-mount alternator and free-flowing exhaust manifolds.

Fuel Saver Technology with cylinder deactivation seamlessly shifts to smooth, high-fuel-economy four-cylinder mode when engine loads are light, such as cruising on the highway. A tank-mounted high-performance pump keeps the V-8 fueled under even the most demanding conditions.

A functional hood scoop feeds the Wrangler Rubicon 392's en-

gine with cool, denser, outside air, which leads to enhanced performance.

Jeep engineers ensured the Wrangler Rubicon 392's V-8 gets fresh air, regardless of the terrain and weather.

The Wrangler Rubicon 392's Hydro-Guide air intake system includes a tri-level ducting system with a series of drains, including a one-way drain in the air box that separates water - up to 15 gallons (56lt) per minute - away from the engine's incoming air. This enables the Wrangler Rubicon 392 to traverse water up to 32.5 inches (82.5cm) deep worry free, even if a bow wake washes over the hood.

Should the Wrangler Rubicon

392's functional hood scoop become restricted by snow/mud/debris, a secondary air path within the hood structure feeds the engine, making it possible for the Wrangler Rubicon 392 to reach top speed even with a fully blocked primary air path.

An active dual-mode exhaust is standard to deliver an exhilarating and unmistakable sound. The system engages automatically, opening valves in the exhaust system, under higher engine loads to reduce exhaust back pressure.

The driver can also activate the system with the press of a button.

The dual-pipe performance

exhaust system is finished off with unique quad exhaust tailpipes.

Geared for performance

A high-torque capacity TorqueFlite 8HP75 eight-speed automatic transmission delivers quick, crisp gear changes during both normal and performance driving conditions. This transmission also enables the driver to change gears via the new steering-wheel-mounted aluminum paddle shifters, a first for the Jeep Wrangler, or the Electronic Range Select shifter.

The fully electronic, eight-speed automatic transmission features on-the-fly shift-map changing. The sophisticated transmission software relies on several input parameters to determine the appropriate driving conditions and adjusts shift pattern in response. The result is automatic shifting ideally attuned to the performance requirements of almost any driving demand.

The transmission's gear ratios afford the right response at the right time, from crawling over obstructions on the trail to smooth power delivery at highway speeds, a product of smaller ratio steps between the gears.

Colours

The 2021 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 392 is available in nine exterior colors: Black, Bright White, Firecracker Red, Granite Crystal Metallic, Punk 'n Metallic, Sarge Green Metallic, Snazberry Metallic, Sting-Gray Metallic and Billet Silver Metallic, all with a Black interior.

Desert Nights Camp recognised as Best Luxury Desert Resort 2020

Popular boutique holiday experience, Desert Nights Camp Oman was accoladed as the Best Luxury Desert Resort 2020 by the prestigious World Luxury Hotel Awards at a recently concluded event.

The only luxury desert camp in Oman, Dessert Night Camp provides a unique Arabian experience, bringing to life the perfect Arabian sojourn of your dreams. With 53 tastefully designed Bedouin-style luxury tents spread across 10-acres of silken land and the spectacular craggy mountains and endless dunes and crystalline wadi in the distance, the resort takes on an enchanted form for guests from across the world.

Vying for the award among top contenders from world over,



the award is a reiteration of the uniqueness of the resort and its superlative services offered. Known as the pinnacle of achievement in the luxury hotel industry, the World Luxury Hotel Awards is given to the very best within the industry as recognised by guests, travelers and industry players alike. Over 300,000 in-

ternational travelers vote each year, during a four-week period to select the winners.

Owned by Oman Hotels SAOC and managed by Aitken Spence Hotels (part of the Sri Lankan blue-chip conglomerate Aitken Spence PLC), the camp is an ideal base for your Arabian Desert adventure.

Oman Women's Sport Committee organises discussion session

Oman Women's Sport Committee on Monday morning organised at Oman Olympic Academy, a discussion session entitled 'Development of women's sports in Oman' within the framework of the committee's endeavour to promote women's sport and improve its participation in various events by developing effective strategic programmes and plans.

It was held in the presence of Sayyida Sanaa bint Hamad al Busaidiya, chairperson of the committee, Sayyida Naela bint Hamad al Busaidiya, chairperson of Oman Sports for Deafs Committee, and Saada bint Salem al Ismailia, vice president of Oman Women's Sport Committee, and a number of the committee's members and attendees from the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and sports associations, Omani coaches and players, as well as various media.

The session included three enriching axes, where Sayyida Sana and Saada al Ismailia presented the first axis in its two parts, 'Promoting Competitive Women's Sports' and 'The Relationship between the Committee and the Associations and Sports Clubs'. During this axis, the specialisations carried out by the committee since its establishment in 2005 and the developments that occurred in the roles implemented by the committee were discussed and not limited to the theoretical framework only, but included the executive framework as well. In addition to the objectives that the committee seeks to achieve during the next stage, most notably competition and achieving titles in various external events.



Also discussed was development of strategic plans that can be implemented in effective partnership with all the authorities and institutions concerned with sports in the sultanate and private sector institutions to overcome the existing challenges.

The importance of the presence of women as members in sports federations and committees was also emphasised to work together to develop women's sports and activate their participation in the Gulf, Arab and international championships.

The second axis was presented by Fatima bint Ibrahim al Fazariya, a sports activity specialist in North Batinah Education - chairperson of Al Masaa Company for organising events and conferences. She touched on the management of events and conferences and its role in developing women's sport and creating a female sports community practicing sports, and the steps of managing and organising sports tournaments. She reviewed a number of films about the activities carried out by the company, and the effective partnership between the committee and Oman Sports for Deafs Committee.

As for the last topic, it was presented by Laila bint Khalfan al Rajibi - a journalist at Al Watan newspaper, during which she spoke about the women's sports media and the qualitative shift witnessed in various media fields, the role they play in the championships and activities for women's sport, the challenges, the existing obstacles and the mechanisms to overcome them.

The dialogue session was concluded with the opening of the door for discussion and the presentation of opinions.

Alibaba Cloud unveils 'magic' behind online shopping fest

Alibaba Cloud, the digital technology and intelligence backbone of Alibaba Group, revealed the cutting-edge technologies rolled out in support of the 2020 11.11 Global Shopping Festival.

This year's 11.11, which generated RMB498.2bn (US\$74.1bn) in GMV over an 11-day period, was made possible by Alibaba Cloud infrastructure upgrades. Right after midnight on November 11, for example, just 26 seconds after shopping began, peak orders hit 583,000 per second - 1,400 times peak volume at the festival's debut 12 years ago on November 11, 2009.

"We were very proud to support 800mn consumers and 250,000 brands during the world's largest shopping festival," said Li CHENG, chief technology officer of Alibaba Group.



"From the robust digital infrastructure supporting zero downtime operation, to cloud-native offerings for developers' efficiencies and consumer-facing applications for creating some of smoothest engagement experiences, Alibaba's technologies

have once again passed the toughest tests with flying colors."

Alibaba's real-time computing platform, powered by Apache Flink, processed data streams totaling 4bn items per second during peak time.

Ajmal Perfumes opens store in South Mawaleh

Ajmal Perfumes opened a new store in South Mawaleh in Muscat, in celebration of Oman's 50th National Day.

The soft opening of the store took place on November 18. The new Ajmal store represents the latest generation design of the Ajmal Crafting Memories Concept, boasting an elegant contemporary design aesthetic aimed at creating the ultimate customer perfumery experience. The new Mawaleh store is the

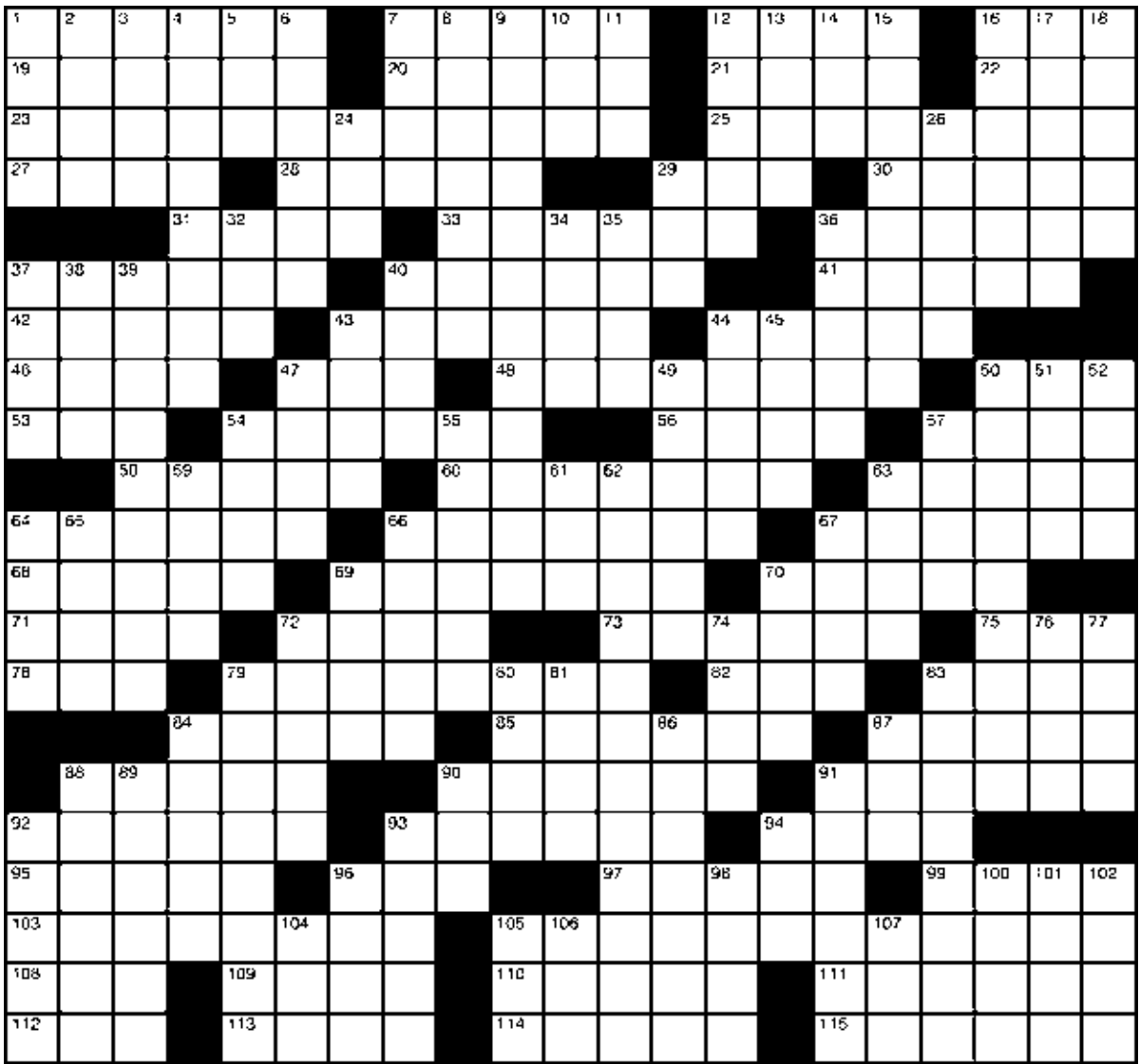


26th branch of Ajmal Perfumes in the Sultanate of Oman, aiming to enhance and extend our reach within the sultanate.

In celebration of the 50th Omani National Day, Ajmal Perfumes Oman launched exclusive 50th National Day products, specially curated and designed to commemorate this glorious occasion.

A raffle draw for three Audi cars will also be held for three lucky winners.

DAILY CROSSWORD



©2020 Tribune Content Agency, LLC All rights reserved

ACROSS

- 1 Where the sirocco blows
7 Mea ____
12 Salt's salute
16 Latin l word
19 Unshut
20 Big Mac topper
21 Unique
22 Pool length
23 Ante up
25 Five in a row, in Vegas
27 Wheel support
28 Choose
29 Gatos or Altos start
30 Purloined
31 Feudal bomdman
33 Polypropylene, e.g.
36 Looked at fixedly
37 Mathematical transformation
40 Institute in Philly
41 Certain runner
42 Fits of pique
43 Invalidate
44 Mattress name
46 Foot part
47 Stately tree
48 In a shrewd way
50 Short farewell
53 Building build-on
54 Trolley sounds
56 Invalid
57 Jughead
58 AWOL from school

- 60 Lime trees
63 Dig find
64 Bikini, and its kind
66 Least robust
67 Gummy
68 "I ____ Write a Book"
69 River at Mount Vernon
70 Press agent, sl.
71 Bonheur of art
72 Dispense
73 More forbidding
75 Rocky's right?
78 ____ out a living
79 Unit of radiation
82 Role for George Burns
83 Supernatural force
84 Largest asteroid
85 Wise saying or sayer
87 Treaties
88 Behaved like a bee
90 By and large
91 Cold sufferer's need
92 Not thickly spread
93 Nun of note
94 Wish-bringer's prop
95 Kind of column
96 Deface
97 Employer

- 99 Down with, at the Bastille
103 Mixed bag, in Vegas
105 Five gems, in Vegas
108 Brewed beverage
109 Ticklish toy
110 Bancroft and Archer
111 Muse of astronomy
112 Med. country
113 Memorandum
114 Film hero's foe
115 Time to feel flush

DOWN

- 1 Davenport
2 Pinnacle
3 Cad
4 Fine grained volcanic rock
5 Soak flax, e.g.
6 Stick by
7 Soft drink
8 Horned horse of fable
9 Small betting parlor
10 Where antes go
11 Whichever
12 Firebug's felony
13 Porkpies, e.g.
14 Bobby of hockey
15 With exuberance
16 Contender in 2000

- 17 Composer Gustav
18 Made a choice
24 North Pole helper
26 Where the Po flows
29 Diamond ____
32 USNA grad
34 Crosses (out)
35 Sensed
36 Fry or potatoes lead-in
37 Church section
38 Trick
39 A pair and a trio, in Vegas
40 "____ Yankees"
43 Court surface
44 Feat of daring
45 Sniggler's prey
47 Deer relations
49 World org. for ed. and culture
50 Twenty-one, in Vegas
51 Cooper's sergeant
52 Whirlpool
54 Word with war or wave
55 Body sculptors' targets
57 Smart
59 Spicy stew
61 Game played with counters
62 Wild Bill Hickok's last cards
63 Lead, usually

- 64 Area measure
65 Confiscated
66 Counts votes
67 Husky's haul
69 North or South?
70 Cleaving tool
72 Funeral lament
74 Unightly
76 Against
77 Dastardly
79 Admirable people: Yiddish
80 Laugh loudly
81 Lake where Perry met the enemy
83 "On the road to ____": Kipling
84 Madame of radium fame
86 Demanded
87 A Darling friend
88 Winners' take
89 Leather maker
90 La Mediterranee
91 In need
92 Moses' Mount
93 Sierra Nevada feature
94 Skin blemish
96 Bus. VIPs
98 Happy hue
100 League: Ger.
101 Minor site?
102 Open carriage: var.
104 UN org.
105 Small amount
106 ____ pinch: if needed
107 Friar from Firenze

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

The pep is returning to your step! The moon glides into your sign, providing a fresh burst of energy to your self-expression and a deepened awareness around your physical health, appearance, and individuality. Tuesday's skies are jubilant and well-balanced, as the sun and moon form a constructive pact. Any activity requiring you to put your best foot forward is benefitted.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

Aim to stretch your horizons. Tuesday's skies instil a playful and eager desire to move into new territory, as the moon slides into excitable Aries and aligns supportively with the sun. Shake things up in whatever way feelings comfortable—perhaps by embarking on a little adventure or getting lost in a good book! You're in need of a mental refresh, so don't keep it mundane.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

It's hard not to feel good with today's cosmic landscape! The moon bursts into Aries, re-vitalising your drive to tackle personal creative projects and engage in playful forms of self-expression. Save your workload for a later date; your need for good times is prioritised now. The sun and moon form a supportive pact too, increasing your charisma and making you look effortlessly good.



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

It's time to put the brakes on your recent increase in socialisation. The moon bounces into individualistic Aries first thing, investing your attention back towards yourself. Your need for uninterrupted alone time is critical, as you find yourself needing to mull over any recent events. The moon's fortifying link to the sun makes it easy to digest your feelings.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Intimacy is an inherently complex world. You're hungry to dive deeper into relationship dynamics and explore having vulnerable conversations that stir up from the bottom of your soul, as the courageous Aries moon aligns with the sun. Tuesday's skies are pleasant and well-supported all around, but you're likely to be in a psychologically strong headspace.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Part of your evolution involves choosing an intimidatingly ambitious path to pursue. One thing is certain: The seeds of those goals must originate in your true interests. Today's Aries moon calls you homeward to revisit your foundations, family connections, and to deepen your link to your emotions. All this is so you can continue reaching upward on your path to success.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

Your extroverted twin is primed and ready to play! The moon slips into Aries, channeling your energy towards community efforts and your network of friends. Tuesday's skies are amicable and socially pleasant, as the sun and moon form a supportive pact. So, don't be afraid to put yourself out there and make the right connections, or simply let off steam with your friends.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

You're always working to strike a balance in the various arenas of your life. Though it sounds painfully cliché, you do tend to swing between extremes of behaviour before eventually finding steady ground. Tuesday's cosmos test your ability to create an equilibrium between individuality and partnership needs, as the self-interested Aries moon unites with the sun.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

You're in need of a little adventure. The moon pops into Aries, revving your energies for movement and meaningful exchanges. Luna's stable link to the sun promises a warm day of pleasant social involvement in which your voice is centred. This makes it an ideal time for compromises. Local excursions appeal to you now too, if you rather get out of the house and keep to yourself.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

People tend to think Cancers are these weepy homebodies that only focus their energy on home and family. While that's not untrue, it completely leaves out the fact that you're here creating a supportive environment in order to securely climb the career ladder. Tuesday's skies ring home this need to make moves in your profession, as the eager Aries moon aligns with the sun.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Tuesday's skies help you hit the ground running with productive efforts. The moon bounces into Aries, channeling your attention towards your job, current workload, or your level of efficiency. Work to make moves that firm up your organisational skills or further hone your skills—as the sun and moon's harmonious alignment make it easy for you to sink into a steady flow.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

You have a wealth of creative energy and imaginative skills at your disposal. Your ability to actualise your potential is strong, as the moon dives into Aries and aligns sturdily with the sun. This supportive pact makes for pleasant moods, increased ambitions, and the energy to engage with your natural resources. Get cracking on your craft today and reap the rewards!



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Study of life in outer space is known as

- a. endbiology
b. exobiology
c. enterbiology
d. neobiology

2. Recession is

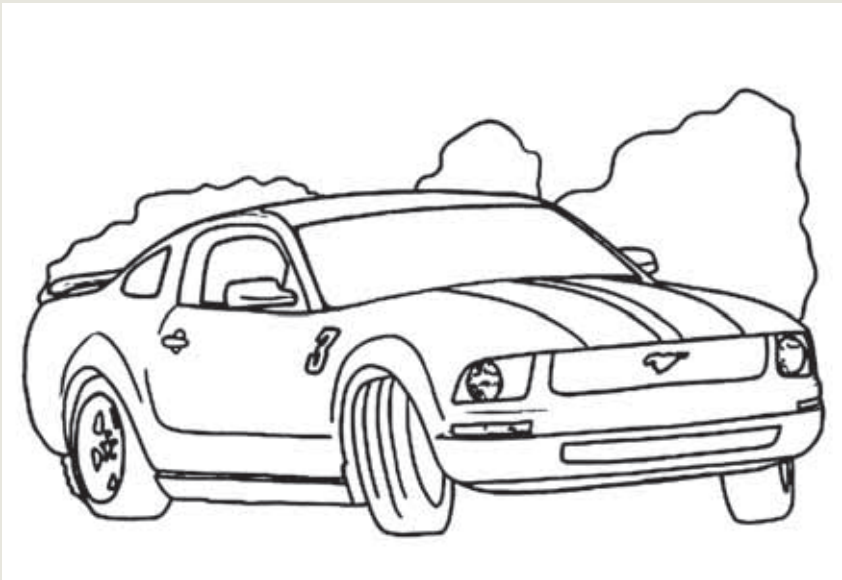
- a. slowing down of economic activity over a limited period
b. period during which unemployment may rise and demand and output may fall, leading to slump in trade
c. period that results from accumulation of unsold goods, owing to fall in demand
d. All of the above

3. Pythagoras was first to ____ the universal validity of geometrical theorem.

- a. give
b. prove
c. both
d. None of the above

Answers: 1. b 2. d 3. b

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

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

BOGGLER

E	S	S	A
A	L	S	Qu
U	R	S	I
E	B	L	A

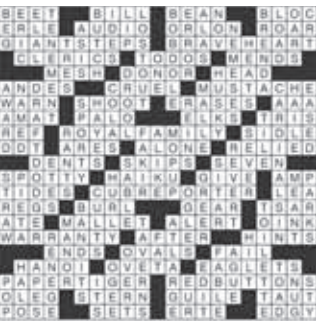
Each game will present you with a matrix filled with letters. The objective is to form words by linking adjacent letters - to the left, right, on top, bottom, or diagonal to each other. The Boggles Classic game uses a 4 x 4 matrix. Words are valued at one point for each letter in excess of two letters. 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

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

DAILY CROSSWORD ANSWERS (NOVEMBER 23)



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

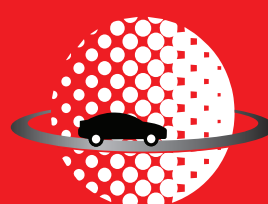


WJ Towell Group Company

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

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

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



أوربت
ORBIT

Car Rental & Lease

Free Accounting Services for 1st year (SMEs)

Value Added Tax Services (VAT)
Online/offline
Free expert financial advice
All related services & Payroll software service

Contact +968 7918 6697/ 72089950
E mail: asha.alnuha@gmail.com

*conditions apply

Send your request for
Birthday/Anniversary
wishes to
wish@apexmedia.co.om
with your resident card copy
(It's free of cost)

• RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • OFFICE

DISINFECTION SERVICES for COVID 19

30 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN OMAN

For ENQUIRIES call
94021502 • 95437921 • 98400408

We only use Electro Chemically Activated Solution/disinfectant which is safe and certified.

- ♦ FREE ESTIMATES
- ♦ 24x7 AVAILABILITY
- ♦ PROFESSIONAL TEAM
- ♦ EMERGENCY SERVICES

MODERN CLEANING SERVICES AND TRADING LLC
A Subsidiary Unit of W.J. Towell & Co.

EDUCATION FURNITURE

uniQue CITY TRADING

LABOUR CAMP FURNITURE

OUTDOOR SHADES

Contact: 9611 5353 / 9611 5252 Email: mybusinessoman@gmail.com

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



SHAJI AND SUSAN
November 27

Dear Dada and Mama, we have been thinking what is the best gift we could give you. So here is a bunch of our wishes to say "love you always" May God bless you both! Happy wedding anniversary! Sharon, Sherin, and Sherill

BIRTHDAY WISHES



SUBASH
November 25

Happy Birthday dear Subash. Be always blessed with good health, wealth & happiness. From, Rajesh, Kani, Akash Narayanasamy & Saraswathy

SITUATION WANTED

Looking for driving jobs. Contact 91103996

Mechanical Engineer looking for opportunity. Experience 2 years in Sales Oman. 2 years as an Application Engineer (Technical) - NAFFCO Qatar. Driver's License: India & Oman. Mail: ajesh92prince@gmail.com
Contact: +968-99534733

TO ADVERTISE IN
MUSCAT DAILY
CLASSIFIEDS
CALL 99104346
OR E-MAIL
dailyclassifieds@apexmedia.co.om

BIRTHDAY WISHES



AVANISH P S
November 25

Wishing many more happy returns to you dear Avanih. Wishing you happy and healthy long years. With love... Amma, Appa, Athi and Patti

BIRTHDAY WISHES



AYERA SAGAR
November 25

May this year bring you plenty of reasons to smile, and endless opportunities to make you happier! My girl, you were born to be a star! Happy Birthday! Love Mama, Daddy and Aarav

BIRTHDAY WISHES



JESWIN
November 24

Have a wonderful and joyful birthday now and forever. Happy Birthday !! With love: Appa, Amma & Chettai

BIRTHDAY WISHES



BURHAN
November 25

I wish you love, hope and everlasting joy and happiness. Thank you for being my best friend! Love Aarav

Insta-News for Oman

Click on [Ink.bio/muscatdaily/](https://www.instagram.com/muscatdaily/)

GET YOUR LATEST NEWS UPDATE

FREE CLASSIFIED LISTING

Muscat Daily now offers free classified listings for individuals in the following categories: **Situations Wanted/ Accommodation Wanted or Available/Sale of Household Items/ Car for Sale or Wanted/Matrimonial Alliances (Word limit is 35)** Please email your listing to dailyclassifieds@apexmedia.co.om or call 99104346

Medvedev claims ATP Finals title



Russia's Daniil Medvedev poses with the trophy after winning the ATP Tour Finals in London on Sunday (AFP)

London, UK - Daniil Medvedev came from behind to beat US Open champion Dominic Thiem in a gripping encounter and win the biggest title of his career at the ATP Finals in London on Sunday.

The Russian fourth seed was second best for large periods at the empty O2 Arena but found a way back into the contest and prevailed 4-6, 7-6 (7-2), 6-4.

Medvedev, who beat five-time champion Novak Djokovic and world No 2 Rafael Nadal earlier in the week, is the first man to beat all three of the world's top-ranked players at the season finale.

The giant Russian, 24, has now won ten consecutive matches following his title earlier this month at the Paris Masters and his victory will taste sweet a year after a winless debut in London.

But it is a painful defeat for Thiem, who also lost in the final of the elite eight-man event last year, to Stefanos Tsitsipas.

"What a match," said Medvedev. "One of my best victories, two hours and 42

One of my best victories, two hours and 42 minutes, three sets against an amazing player

DANIIL MEDVEDEV



minutes, three sets against an amazing player.

"Dominic, congratulations already for what you achieved in your career. Your name is already in the history of tennis books.

"It is amazing. You won a Grand Slam this year. You are playing unbelievable. I hope we are going to have many more matches to come on the big occasions like this."

Thiem pressure

Thiem weathered early pressure from Medvedev and secured the first break of the match in the



Dominic Thiem gestures during the final against Daniil Medvedev

fifth game, when the Russian served a double fault.

He sealed the set in fortunate fashion when his forehand clipped the net and looped over Medvedev's racket.

Medvedev, who came from a set down against Nadal in Saturday's last-four contest, made a solid start to the second set.

But Thiem held to love in the fourth game, looking comfortable as the giant Russian sought a way back into the match.

The 27 year old third seed had chances to earn a potentially decisive break but they slipped by and he yelled in frustration as he squandered his opportunities.

The Austrian took a tumble onto the blue court at the start of the eighth game and found himself break point down but toughed it out, with Medvedev looking stronger as the set wore on.

The second set went to a tie-break. Having recovered from 0-4 to win the deciding tie-break against Djokovic on Saturday, Thiem got a taste of his own

medicine as Medvedev turned a 0-2 deficit into a 7-2 victory.

The Austrian appeared to be struggling to cope with the punishing pace in the third set and Medvedev did not give him the rhythm to get his big groundstrokes flowing.

He finally cracked in the fifth game, when the Russian produced a volley at the net to break.

Thiem remained under pressure and had to battle hard to avoid going down another break. But all Medvedev now had to do was keep his nerve. He did so as he served out for victory.

"Of course, I am disappointed, but at the same time I am also proud of the performance of all the week," said Thiem. "Daniil really deserved it. It was an amazing match."

Medvedev is the first Russian to win the ATP Finals since 2009, when Nikolay Davydenko triumphed at the first edition of the season finale held in London. Next year, the tournament moves to Turin in Italy.

AFP



Wales rugby legend Prosser dies

London, UK - Former Wales and British and Irish Lions prop Ray Prosser, who enjoyed a highly successful coaching career with Pontypool, has died at the age of 93, the club announced on Monday.

Prosser was capped 22 times between 1956 and 1961, and also toured with the Lions in 1959, starting when they won the fourth Test against New Zealand.

He absorbed lessons he learned on that tour and introduced them when he took over Pontypool in 1969, turning them into the dominant force in Welsh club rugby.

He guided Pontypool, in the days before leagues, to five unofficial Welsh championship crowns including a hat-trick of titles 1984-86 during an 18-year tenure.

Prosser was responsible for developing a rich seam of talent including Terry Cobner, Jeff Squire and Eddie Butler, who all captained Wales and became Lions players.

He also helped create the legendary 'Pontypool Front Row', of Graham Price, Bobby Windsor and Charlie Faulkner, with the three players representing Wales on 19 occasions.

The trio only tasted defeat in four Tests.

Pontypool said Prosser 'will be forever regarded as the most influential figure in Pontypool RFC history'.

AFP

Nishad's ton powers Zawawi Powertech to massive win

LOCAL CRICKET

A superb century by Nishad K S powered Zawawi Powertech to a huge 141-run over Basta CT in an Oman Cricket A Division (50 overs) game at Al Amerat on Saturday.

The victory maintained Zawawi Powertech's unbeaten run in the season.

Batting first, Nishad's knock of 124 laid the foundation of a massive score as Zawawi Powertech posted 323 for seven. Giving good company to Nishad were Natarajan Kalairasan (50 n.o.) and Suhil Kanagaraj, who scored an unbeaten 42.

Basta started well and were 102 for three but a dramatic collapse saw them fold for 182 in the 44th over. Najeeb Shaheer top-scored with 75.

Earlier on Friday, SARCO routed ACT by 161 runs in another A Division match. Sandip Patel was the star performer for the winning team as he hit an unbeaten 78 and later claimed four wickets.

BRIEF SCORES:

A Division: Zawawi Powertech 323-7 (Nishad 124, Kalairasan 50 n.o., Kanagaraj 42 n.o., Nalaka Pathum 38; Nazish Mohammed 2-32, Prasad Peruli 2-60) beat Basta CT 182 in 43.1 overs (Shaheer 75; Pathum 2-15, Ashwin Yagnik 2-22, Kannan Prabhakaran 2-37).



Nishad K S of Zawawi Powertech celebrates after his match-winning ton

A Division: SARCO 263-6 (Sandip Patel 78 n.o., Ajay Menon 55, Murad Khan 37; Devashya Rajesh 4-34) beat ACT 102 in 21.3 overs (Ilyas Afreedi 34; Patel 4-28, Hafiz Zahid 3-33, Sriial Dileepa 2-5).

OTHER RESULTS:

B Division (30 overs): Bank Muscat 206-5 (Asghar Khan 80, Abbas al Balushi 50 n.o.) beat OCT Al Hail-A 147 in 26.3 overs (Adil al Balushi 38 n.o., Waleed al Balushi 35; Ajay Hirlekar 2-11, Mohammed Zeeshan 2-24, Zeeshan Tufail



Dhiyab al Zadjali Adnan ul Haq

2-27, Ashish Gupta 2-27).

B Division: PDORC 225 in 29.2 overs (Abdul Naveed 104, Nadeem Ahmed 31; Mubashar Iqbal 4-38, Ruwan Sighe 2-32) lost to Zubair CT 226-5 in 28.2

overs (Mustansar Hussain 56 n.o., Naveed Khan 54, Jagath Chandana 40 n.o.; Abdul Naveed 2-38).

C Division (T20): Maniz Azad International 275-6 (Adnan ul Haq 74, Ali Tahir 43, Ahmad Klair Adnan 36; Said Haider 3-35, Sulaiman Haider 2-55) beat OCT Al Amerat 93-6 (Salim Haider 21; Yasir Mohammed 2-7, Zaheer Abbas 2-12, Adnan ul Haq 2-21).

C Division: Al Waad Trading 146-8 (Muniyasamy Muthumugan 34; Rajender Kumar 2-14, Mohammed Dawood 2-17, Viplav Kumar 2-27) lost to Douglas OHI 147-6 in 18.5 overs (Waleed Rahim 39, Ismail Ghulam 36; Shine NV 3-31).

D Division (T20): OCT Al Mabela 169-9 (Zafarullah al Balushi 54, Warith al Balushi 51, Khalid Salim 38; Raniz Mohammed 3-21, Ayyitta Valappil 3-23, Abou P C 2-28) beat Al Rehwan 141 in 17.4 overs (Valappil 33, Kunnumpurath Jibin 30, Shiraj Abdulla 30; Dhiyab al Zadjali 5-6, Arif al Balushi 2-17).

D Division: Al Jadidi Engineering 220-3 (Feroz Vazhayil 98, Mohammed Rizwan 88) beat Ideal Technology 182-5 (Sundar Biji 60, Latha Vijesh 47; Mohammed Shafeeq 2-33, Rizwan 2-34).



ICAO's Ibraheem Rao emerged overall winner at the competition, which featured 36 participants from both teams

ICAO defeat French club in online chess competition

Our Correspondent Muscat

Muscat-based International Chess Academy of Oman (ICAO) defeated Saint-Ouen USMA, a French club side, during an online competition held recently.

ICAO team scored a total of 158 points while their counterparts could score only 90. The event was held on popular online chess platform, lichess.org, on Saturday and featured 36 players from both teams.

ICAO's Ibraheem Rao emerged overall winner followed



Ayoub al Riyami

by Aida Tayebipour (runner-up) and Shlok Babariya took the third place. All the three players are students of ICAO head coach

and International Master (IM) Ismail Karim.

Karim has been at the helm of the ICAO since the inception in 2013 and have also coached the national team of Oman for two Chess Olympiads (Norway 2014 and Georgia 2018).

Seven year old and talented Omani boy Ayoub al Riyami managed to finish 12th with a score of six out of ten.

Chess has seen a sharp increase in popularity during the coronavirus pandemic and the ICAO continues to offer online classes and games to be played on lichess.org.

INDIA TOUR OF AUSTRALIA

Will try not to engage in verbal volleys: Warner



A file photo of Australia's David Warner (second from right) and India's Virat Kohli exchanging words during a Test

Sydney, Australia - Last time when India toured Australia, there was a lot of on-field chatter between the players but David Warner says this time Australia may adopt a different approach.

Instead of engaging Indian players in verbal volleys, they will try to keep their emotions in check and fight it out on skills.

However, he also hinted that once Virat Kohli leaves after the first Test, to be with his wife for the birth of their first child, and Ajinkya Rahane takes over the captaincy, Australia may re-consider their strategy.

"For me, personally it's about getting in the contest, so that's basically when you're out there, you're trying to feel for something," Warner said.

"Last summer, I was coming off the back of the England tour, so I really had to knuckle down and try and concentrate as much as I could, and try and get into a

battle out there and contest with the opposition. I managed to find that in a different way and it worked, and for me, it's about trying to find that balance again when I'm out in the middle.

"[It's] different this year. We start with a white-ball series against India, generally the other way around, which is going to be exciting, and Virat is only playing seven of the ten games, so for us, it's about going out there as a team and trying to control our emotions and play them on skill."

But how will he react if Indian players have some words to say to him? "I'll always draw from that, mate. To try and get engaged, that's the way they like to play as well. We saw that last time when we toured India. They really engaged us like that.

"We're learning over time and trying not to engage in that. Probably try and reverse the effect by trying and ignoring it,

trying to take it on board and using it against them by using your bat. It's probably something I've learnt over time. And you don't know the effect it can have on your team-mates as well.

but he's obviously passionate, aggressive, he plays with that fight when you're out there.

"Jinks is calm, collected, measured. It's like chalk and cheese with two of them two and

For me, personally it's about getting in the contest, so that's basically when you're out there, you're trying to feel for something

DAVID WARNER

You've got to be a bit more humble in that respect.

"Obviously with Virat missing, and well done to him to go home and be by his partner's side for the birth of his first child... he's a great guy, Jinks [Rahane].

"He's calm and very measured in his approach. He's got a very good cricket brain. When you take Virat out of there, I don't want to say this the wrong way,

as a player to try and engage him on the field, as we're talking about engaging, and getting into that contest as players, we obviously got to think about how to do that especially with Ajinkya as captain.

"The great thing from India's perspective is that you've got three if not four very good players who could captain the team at any time. With him, he'll

bring a calm and measured approach with his nature."

While Kohli will not be available for the last three Tests, India will be without Rohit Sharma for the white-ball leg. Rohit is currently recovering from a hamstring injury he suffered during IPL 2020 and has been included only in the Test squad.

Warner believes Rohit's absence is a big loss for the visitors, but at the same time, he also thinks the visitors have got enough in-form replacements.

"He's a big piece of their team they're going to be missing, but they've got great in-form guys, KL Rahul, Shikhar Dhawan and Mayank [Agarwal]," Warner said.

"These guys played in the IPL, so you've got guys in good touch and great talent and depth in Indian cricket to take that position of Rohit. He's a big hole in their team up the top, but you've got guys who can replace him who are in form that will do a good enough job, if not better, as we saw in India."

Warner himself had a successful outing in the IPL despite a slow start to the season. In the first ten games, he scored 335 runs at a strike rate of 124.07. It was then he decided to open up his front leg and give it a whack. The next six matches brought him 213 runs at 155.47.

"Yeah, definitely," he said when asked if he would continue in the same aggressive manner in T20Is. "What do you want to see? 100 off ten overs or something? (laughs). In the one-day stuff, I'll still come out and play the way I normally do. There's probably going to be no change to that. And the T20 stuff is what people saw there.

Cricinfo



Zaman ruled out of New Zealand tour

Lahore, Pakistan - Fakhar Zaman will miss Pakistan's tour of New Zealand, with the Pakistan batsman dropped from the touring party as a precautionary measure after developing potential COVID-19 symptoms. The PCB announced in a press release that Zaman had tested negative as recently as Saturday, but after developing a fever while isolating with the rest of the team at a hotel in Lahore, he was left out as a precautionary measure.

"Fakhar's COVID test report was received on Saturday which came out negative but today he picked up fever. As soon as his condition was reported, he was isolated from the rest of the squad in the team hotel. We are constantly monitoring his condition and remain hopeful of his quick recovery; however he is not fit to travel with the squad and as such has been withdrawn from

the touring party," Pakistan team doctor Sohail Saleem said.

The practical implication of Zaman's absence means Pakistan will need a replacement at the top of the order for the three T20Is they are scheduled to play against New Zealand; the left-handed opener is not currently a contender for a Test slot. Zaman's international form, particularly in the shortest format, has been something of a lingering concern for Pakistan; he has scored more than 25 runs in an innings only once for more than two years.

Pakistan will not name a replacement for Zaman. Abdullah Shafique and Haider Ali, both of whom batted in the top order at some point during the T20I series against Zimbabwe, are likely to be frontrunners to partner captain Babar Azam at the top.

Cricinfo

'Rohit, Ishant need to fly to Australia in four-five days'

Sydney, Australia - For Rohit Sharma and Ishant Sharma to feature in India's Test series against Australia, they'll have to fly out to the country in less than a week, according to India coach Ravi Shastri. Both Rohit and Ishant are at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru at present, undergoing strengthening and rehab as they work their way back to full fitness after injuries sustained in IPL 2020.

"He's going through some tests at the NCA and they're obviously going to decide [for] how long he needs to take a break," Shastri said of Rohit, speaking to ABC Sport. "But things could get difficult if he's asked to wait for too long, [because] then you're talking of the quarantine again, which might make it really tough for even him to come just in time for the Test series."

A 14-day quarantine is currently mandated in Australia due to COVID-19. The first Test,



Rohit Sharma (left) and Ishant Sharma



Ravi Shastri

a day-night pink-ball affair at Adelaide, starts on December 17, but India are also slated to play a three-day warm-up match on December 11 before that. For Ishant and Rohit to be out of quarantine by December 10, they would have to land in Australia on November 26.

"He was never going to play the white-ball series, they were just looking to see how long he needed the rest, because you can't afford to be resting for too

long," Shastri said on Rohit not being part of the limited-overs squads. "If you need to play in the Test series or any red-ball cricket, you've got to be on the flight in the next three or four days. If you aren't, then it's going to be tough."

Rohit had also stated he didn't opt for the white-ball leg of the Australia tour due to the packed schedule, but that his hamstring was 'feeling absolutely fine' at the NCA. Ishant, who has

already begun bowling for longish stints off a full run-up, is also slated to join the Indian team if his recovery is complete.

"It's a similar case to Rohit," Shastri said. "You don't really know how quickly he'll be available to fly out. Like I said, if anyone has to play in the Test series, he has to be on the flight in the next four or five days. Otherwise, it's very difficult."

The other challenge India will have to deal with in the Tests is

that Virat Kohli will only be available for the first game of the four-match series. He will then fly back for the birth of his first child, a decision that Shastri said was the right one. While admitting that the team would miss its 'driving force', Shastri said it opened up an opportunity for someone else too.

"I think it's the right decision he's taking," Shastri said. "These moments don't come time and time again. He has the opportunity, he's going back, and I think he'll be happier for that."

"If you see where India have gone in the last five-six years, there's no doubt in absolutely anyone's mind that he's the driving force and the man behind it (India's success). So he obviously would be missed. But like I say, in adversity comes opportunity. There are lot of young guys in the side and it's an opportunity for them."

Cricinfo



FOOTBALL ROUND-UP

FIFA bans African football chief Ahmad for five years



Ahmad Ahmad, head of African football

Lausanne, Switzerland - The head of African football Ahmad Ahmad has been suspended by FIFA for five years for corruption, the global governing body announced on Monday.

Ahmad, from Madagascar, has been president of the Confederation of African Football (CAF) since March 2017 and was standing for re-election in 2021 when FIFA banned him for 'governance issues'.

In their statement, FIFA said Ahmad had 'breached his duty of loyalty, offered gifts and other benefits, mismanaged funds and abused his position as the CAF President'. Ahmad has also been fined US\$220,000 by FIFA for the misdeeds, which related to 'the organisation and financing of an Umrah pilgrimage to Mecca' and his involvement in CAF's dealings with a sports equipment company.

The 60 year old, who last week stood down from his post for 20 days after testing positive for coronavirus, can appeal the ban 'from all football-related activity' at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

In April 2019 he was accused of a series of offences by former CAF official Amr Fahmy, who informed FIFA in a letter that Ahmad had paid bribes to directors, made personal use of

CAF funds and sexually harassed a number of employees.

Two months later he was arrested in Paris while at the FIFA Congress ahead of that year's women's World Cup as part of a probe into corruption, but was released a day later without charge.

Ahmad's bid to remain head of CAF was being challenged by Augustin Senghor, the president of the Senegalese Football Feder-

ation. Mauritania's Ahmed Yahya, Ivory Coast's Jacques Anouma and South African billionaire Patrice Motsepe have also thrown their hats in the ring.

Last month former CAF senior vice-president Kwesi Nyantakyi had his lifetime ban from football for breaking FIFA bribery and corruption rules reduced to 15 years.

AFP

Liverpool respond in style to injury crisis



Liverpool's striker Diogo Jota celebrates after scoring against Leicester City at Anfield in Liverpool, UK, on Sunday (AFP)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Liverpool, UK - Jurgen Klopp hailed Liverpool's response to an injury crisis that left him without eight first-team regulars as a dominant 3-0 win over Leicester moved the English champions level on points with English Premier League (EPL) leaders Tottenham.

Klopp was without Virgil van Dijk, Joe Gomez, Trent Alexander-Arnold, Jordan Henderson, Thiago Alcantara, Xherdan Shaqiri and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain through

injury, while top scorer Mohamed Salah was absent due to a positive coronavirus test.

However, the Reds swept aside a Leicester team who had started the weekend on top of the table to set a new club record of 64 league games unbeaten at Anfield.

"Very (satisfying), because we deserved it 100 per cent," said Klopp. "The boys played an incredible game against a top opponent.

"Playing them like that tonight, I do not take for granted.

The boys were on fire."

James Milner again proved his worth as a utility man as the 34 year old filled in at right-back and midfield after another injury to Naby Keita in the second-half.

Milner also provided two assists from corners as from his delivery Jonny Evans's own goal opened the floodgates.

Diogo Jota then became the first Liverpool player to score in his first four home league games when he headed home Andy Robertson's inch-perfect cross. Kasper Schmeichel in the

Leicester goal kept the score down as he made a series of second-half saves, notably from Sadio Mane and Jota, while Evans had a lucky escape as the post prevented him from scoring a second own goal.

Roberto Firmino thought he had been denied just his third league goal in 24 games when the Brazilian's shot came back off the post and his follow-up was cleared by Marc Albrighton with just ten millimetres of the ball not over the line.

But Firmino rounded off a bril-

liant team performance by rising highest to meet another Milner corner.

"What people say about him is ridiculous," said Klopp, responding to calls for Firmino to be dropped for Jota when Salah returns.

"You cannot be closer to the goal than he was tonight. It was exactly the right goalscorer. We were so happy for him, he played outstanding tonight."

Another muscle injury suffered by Keita was the only negative for Klopp on a night when his side showed they will not give up their title easily despite losing centrebacks Van Dijk and Gomez for the rest of the season.

The end to a six-game winning run sees Leicester fall back to fourth, two points off the top.

Before kick-off Liverpool paid tribute to former goalkeeper Ray Clemence, who died aged 72 after a long battle with prostate cancer this week.

Alisson Becker wore a replica of Clemence's jersey from the 1981 European Cup final win over Real Madrid in the warm-up, while his former teammates Kenny Dalglish and Ian Rush paid their respects from the stands.

Klopp's men remain unbeaten at Anfield in the Premier League since April 2017.

AFP



Arsenal's manager Mikel Arteta during the EPL match on Sunday

Arteta alarmed by growing Arsenal injury list after draw

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

London, UK - Mikel Arteta is frustrated at Arsenal's growing injury list after losing two more players in their goalless draw at Leeds as his team prepares for six matches in the next three weeks.

With Thomas Partey, Pablo Mari and Gabriel Martinelli all sidelined heading into Sunday's game, winger Willian and Bukayo Saka failed to finish the contest after respectively picking up a muscular problem and what appeared to be a knee injury.

Mohamed Elneny and Sead Kolasinac were also unavailable at Elland Road after testing positive for COVID-19 on international duty, while Nicolas Pepe was sent off for an apparent headbutt which

could lead to a three-match suspension.

"We had it really difficult for different reasons because we lost two players on international duty," said Arteta.

"We have now lost two players to injury and one through suspension and we have an incredible amount of games coming up."

Arsenal begin their packed schedule - a run which also includes a north London derby with EPL leaders Tottenham Hotspur - with a Europa League game away at Norwegian side Molde on Thursday.

The Gunners are 11th in the Premier League following Sunday's stalemate, seven points behind Spurs and reigning champions Liverpool.

AFP

It's useless to be top after ten games: Sociedad coach



Real Sociedad's forward Alexander Isak celebrates after scoring against Cadiz during their Spanish League match in Cadiz on Sunday

SPANISH LEAGUE

Madrid, Spain - Real Sociedad coach Imanol Alguacil insisted the table means nothing, despite his team moving three points clear at the top of La Liga after beating Cadiz 1-0 on Sunday.

Alexander Isak headed in Adnan Januzaj's cross shortly after the hour mark at the Ramon Carranza stadium in Cadiz to secure a sixth consecu-

tive league victory for La Real.

An excellent start to the season shows no sign of abating, with Imanol's side now three points clear of second-placed Atletico Madrid, albeit having played two games more.

They have scored an impressive 21 goals from their opening ten matches, the highest tally in the league, and conceded only four.



"I certainly won't be getting vertigo because I don't think about winning six games in a row, I think about the next one," said Imanol.

"The statistics suggest the team is doing well but it's not enough. We want to achieve something great so we have to keep going.

"It's useless to be top after ten games, even more so with teams having games in hand. The table doesn't tell me anything."

"It's normal for a forward to want to score, especially when they have chances," added Imanol.

"I told him the important thing is to have chances, that the goals would come, and so it proved today."

After travelling to AZ Alkmaar in the Europa League on Thursday, Real Sociedad play at home to Villarreal, who sit third and are the league's other surprise high-fliers. Defeat means Cadiz sit fifth, just above Sevilla after a strong start for the newly-promoted side.

Valencia had to come from two goals down to draw away 2-2 at Alaves. Valencia are eighth and Alaves sit in 14th place.

OTHER RESULTS:

FRENCH LEAGUE: Sunday: Lille 4 Lorient 0.

GERMAN LEAGUE: Sunday: Cologne 1 Union Berlin 2.

AFP



AC Milan's Zlatan Ibrahimovic heads the ball into the Napoli goal during their Italian League match on Sunday

Ibrahimovic on target twice, limps off as Milan stay top

ITALIAN LEAGUE

Milan, Italy - Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored twice to bring his tally to ten league goals this season before limping off with a muscle strain as AC Milan stayed top in Serie A on Sunday with a 3-1 win at ten-man Napoli. Milan move back two points ahead of Sassuolo with Roma third.

"For me Zlatan is stronger now than 10-12 years ago," said Napoli coach Gennaro Gattuso of his former Milan teammate.

"Milan strongly believes in

ibra, his teammates trust him 100 per cent. In my opinion, their team is not the strongest but they have the mentality. We play well but lose as soon as it gets difficult."

Ibrahimovic continued his fine form, heading in a Theo Hernandez cross after 20 minutes, sending in the second with his knee nine minutes after the break. But the 39 year old pulled up clutching his left hamstring and was substituted after 79 minutes. The Swede has scored in all six

games he has played this season, having missed two after contracting coronavirus.

Napoli played the final half an hour a man down after Tiemoue Bakayoko was sent off for two yellow cards, just after Dries Mertens had pulled a goal back for the hosts.

Norwegian Jens Petter Hauge completed the scoring five minutes into injury time, the 21 year old getting his first Serie A goal.

AFP



SNAPCHAT CHALLENGES TIKTOK

Snapchat on Monday unveiled a new curated short-form video feed called Spotlight in a stepped up challenge to social media rivals like TikTok

BUSINESS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2020 | MUSCAT DAILY | 13

Omani technology firm iNNOVATEQ all set for global expansion

INTERVIEW

Our Correspondent
Muscat

iNNOVATEQ, an Omani technology firm, was established two years ago to commercialise the Nibras platform, a digital transformation solution designed to help petroleum companies manage their assets optimally. With Nibras platform's proven track record and long experience at Petroleum Development Oman (PDO), iNNOVATEQ is now planning to expand into other markets by taking its unique digital transformation platform global.

iNNOVATEQ has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Oman LNG as the company is looking to offer its expertise for downstream industries in the future.

In an interview, Dr Riyadh Moosa, CEO of iNNOVATEQ, explained the uniqueness of Nibras platform, its experience with PDO and the company's plans for international expansion.

iNNOVATEQ is just a two years old company but Nibras platform has been with PDO for many years. How did iNNOVATEQ start and who owns this company presently?

iNNOVATEQ's birth was a result of PDO's digital transformation programme, targeting operational challenges that couldn't be addressed with off the shelf products and solutions tailoring. Our digital oilfield platform Nibras was initially built as an in-house initiative in PDO and later this platform was spun out and became a product of the new entity

which is iNNOVATEQ. At PDO, Nibras was designed to optimise operations and maintenance of oil and gas assets.

The idea of commercialising Nibras and starting up iNNOVATEQ was born when many major petroleum companies visited PDO and commended the uniqueness and efficiency of Nibras. This inspired the PDO management to draw a plan for the creation of a company to commercialise Nibras and generate in-country value from it. The company was established to offer oil and gas companies the culmination of two decades of expertise in achieving significant and sustainable business transformation through digital transformation.

iNNOVATEQ today is completely a separate company from PDO. We can say it's a company in which a majority of stakes are owned by well established public entities, Oman National Investments Development Company (TANMIA) and Innovation Development Oman (IDO Investments).

Who are the major clients of iNNOVATEQ and how about expansion outside Oman?

PDO is our largest client in Oman and we will continue to support PDO in future. Now we are also looking for growth and expansion within Oman and globally by forming relationships in both upstream and downstream industries.

We have signed the MoU with Oman LNG. We are already serving a couple of clients outside the Sultanate. And we are also on the verge of signing with few major clients outside Oman, which we hope will be



DR RIYADH MOOSA, CEO OF INNOVATEQ



iNNOVATEQ has already started operations in South East Asia, Central Asia, and soon expects to expand its reach locally and to more internationally recognised energy companies

Dr Riyadh Moosa

announced soon.

I can say that we are fully geared up to go international with Nibras platform. Since we have already established operations outside Oman i.e. Kazakhstan, we are gearing up to launch operations in other parts of the world.

Is iNNOVATEQ the only firm in

unique not only in Oman but also across the world. With oil and gas sector being the largest industry in Oman, Nibras is an essential tool in ensuring efficiencies and increasing productivity.

In your view, what makes Nibras so unique?

At iNNOVATEQ we pride ourselves for coming from a petroleum operator background. For us, customer focus means fitting our solution to customer needs, not the other way round. What we offer our clients is practical asset management solutions that fit their organisation's purpose and business drivers; tailored to their assets and staff.

There are a few things which make Nibras unique. This platform does not need us to push the technology and insist our clients that they should do things our way, instead we enable their way through this platform. Nibras is based on a Lean methodology that had completely transformed PDO. This Lean methodology enables the connections between various business drivers.

Nibras is built with an open architecture to connect to the client's corporate databases. Our smart algorithms transform the data into actionable insight prioritised by value. These insights trigger lean digitised business processes which enable the staff and management to better understand their assets and make informed decisions about them.

As far as the end-to-end business transformation is concerned, I would like to say that Nibras is a globally unique solution platform; it is an exceptional digital innovation that will enable oil and gas industry operations

to overcome many production and operational related challenges. Our biggest achievement at PDO was that we were able to impact their business and increase productivity tremendously.

Can you tell more about the new MoU with Oman LNG?

This MoU is the beginning of our relationship and long-term partnership with Oman LNG. Our experience with PDO would enable us to create value for Oman LNG in future. Our intention is to translate this MoU into a long-term partnership with Oman LNG and enable this major organisation on their digital transformation journey.

Do you expect more such ties up with Oman-based oil and gas operators?

Yes, we will continue to look for tie-ups with oil and gas companies in the same way we had with PDO and now our partnership with Oman LNG. We are very much in talks with other companies. Our current focus is still on oil and gas upstream, but we are also talking to companies in other industries and we are getting positive responses from them.

Where do you see iNNOVATEQ in the next few years?

Going forward, our focus would not only be on the Omani market, we would focus to take Nibras global. We will get in touch with potential clients across the world. Nibras is a very unique platform across the world if we consider the end-to-end value streams integrations in digital transformation. We believe that with the right efforts and right support we can become one of the industry standards in the upstream oil and gas industry.

ADVERTORIAL



DRIVE THE PRIDE

Choose your favourite Nissan from the exciting range and get it with amazing offers & easy installment options.



0% INTEREST UP TO 3 YEARS*

OR

1.99% INTEREST FOR 4 YEARS*

OR

2.49% INTEREST FOR 5 YEARS*

OR

2.99% INTEREST FOR 6 YEARS*

(Applicable on select Kicks, X-Trail, Altima, Pathfinder)

ASSURED CASH GIFT
FROM OMR 1200 TO OMR 4500**

FREE SERVICE
3 YEARS / 60,000 KMS*

FREE INSURANCE
FOR 1ST YEAR ONLY*

FREE FUEL
FROM OMR 500 TO OMR 1000**

FREE REGISTRATION
FOR 1ST YEAR ONLY*

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS
ON PURCHASE OF 2ND NISSAN VEHICLE IN THE FAMILY**

Offer valid from 17th November 2020 to 16th January 2021 on applicable models purchased for personal use. Offer not available for vehicles purchased for Commercial use, Rent-a-car, Taxi, Government and Driving School. **Applicable on select models only. Through Fuel Card. Fuel Card amount varies between models, model variants, model year & manufacturing year. For details please contact your nearest Nissan Showroom. **Assured Cash Gift applicable on all models except GTR, 370Z, Civitan. Cash Gift amount varies between models, model variants, model year & manufacturing year. For details please contact your nearest Nissan Showroom. *Periodic Maintenance Service only. Whichever is earlier. Applicable on all models except GTR, 370Z, Civitan. Offer includes only 10,000 km service intervals on all models. @1st year Oman & UAE only. * For 1st year only. @ & *Applicable on all models except GTR, 370Z, Urvan & Civitan. Applicable for Private registrations only. For Commercial registrations, additional amount needs to be borne by the customer. *@Additional PWS Service for new car, exclusive discount on labor charges, parts & trade-in benefits. Second car purchase should be either in the name of existing Nissan owner or his/her immediate family member (Wife/Husband/Son/Daughter/Brother/Sister) to avail additional benefits under the scheme. Conditions apply. *Applicable on select 19MY / 20MY stocks of Kicks, X-Trail, Altima & Pathfinder only. For all tenures beyond 6 years, normal interest rates will apply for the full tenure of the loan. This rate is applicable for individual purchase with private registration only and is subject to Finance / Credit approval. Customers can opt for only one of the interest rate options. EMIs will be highest for 0% for 3 years scheme. This benefit will be applicable for Financing through select Finance companies only. Customers purchasing in Cash, LPO, Credit will not be eligible for Special Interest Rate benefit.

Bahwan International Group



Suhail Bahwan Automobiles LLC

SHOWROOMS • Qurum • Barka • Buraimi • Ibra • Ibra • Mabella • Nizwa • Salalah • Sinaw • Sohar • Sur • Khasab
For Company Enquiries : 96330762
E-mail us at : customerfirst@sbigh.com



CEN 1079616

MSM rises 0.41% on improved activity

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The benchmark index of the Muscat Securities Market (MSM) rose 0.41 per cent to close at 3,627.39 points on Monday.

Trading activity improved from the previous session as turnover rose by 14.75 per cent to RO758,320 and volumes increased 35.38 per cent to 4.15mn shares.

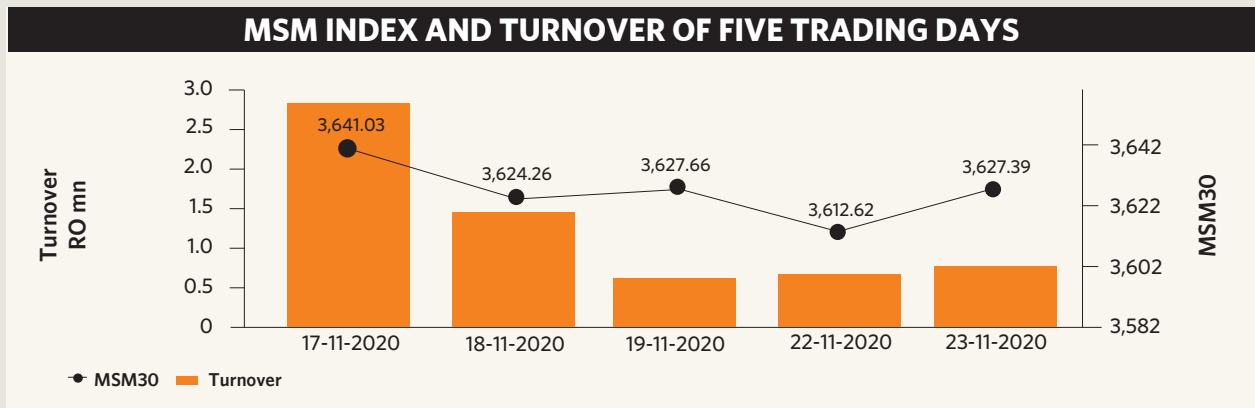
The gains in the main index were supported by all the subindices. Financial index rose 0.16 per cent, Industrial index climbed 0.09 per cent and Services index rose 0.3 per cent.

The MSM Shariah Index closed up by 0.05 per cent to close at 516.66 points.

Market breadth remained positive as ten companies closed up, while eight



companies closed down. The rest 22 traded stocks closed flat for the day. Top gainers were Galfar Engineering & Contracting (2.5 per cent), Omantel (1.92 per cent), Al Batinah Power (1.85 per cent) and Al Suwadi Power (1.82 per cent). Top losers were Gulf Investment Services (-3.9 per cent), Aman Real Estate Investment Fund (-3.88 per cent), Tajeer Finance (-3.41 per cent) and National Gas (-3.23 per cent).



Oman's economy to improve in 2021: HSBC



Our Correspondent
Muscat

Global banking giant HSBC expects Oman's economy to start improving from next year. HSBC's Global Economic Outlook virtual roadshow came to the sultanate on Monday, with more than 100 of HSBC Bank Oman's clients attending the online event.

Simon Williams, HSBC's chief economist for Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa; Stephen King, senior economic advisor at HSBC; and Paul Mackel, head of emerging market FX research at HSBC, gave their views on the impact of COVID-19 on the global economy and explored various factors influencing macroeconomic trends, fiscal policy, as well as oil and foreign exchange markets. They also addressed the challenges and opportunities awaiting Oman and the wider region in 2021.

The event was held at a criti-

Oman's resilient spirit is serving it well in these uncertain times for the global economy

MELIKA BETLEY

cal time for the global economy, with countries around the world heading into the end of the year with increasing COVID-19 cases and global consumer confidence, which had shown signs of strengthening, starting to wane. In the GCC, oil exporters have faced the additional challenge of low oil prices.

Melika Betley, CEO of HSBC Oman, said, "Oman's resilient spirit is serving it well in these uncertain times for the global economy. As we look to build back with even more purpose than before, I am inspired by the

ideas, entrepreneurialism and partnerships that are helping foster recovery and growth in Oman. We were delighted to host so many friends of HSBC at our Global Economic Outlook virtual event and I'd like to thank all of them for their continued support."

Williams said, "Across the GCC, we are seeing signs of states taking assertive policy action to manage the impact of the energy price slump and put public finances on a more sustainable footing. In the long-term, high deficits, muted economic growth and rapid increases in the working-age population mean that the well-recognised need for economic diversification is even more acute."

The HSBC Global Economist Outlook roadshow is an annual event, which sees HSBC economists presenting in markets around the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey, giving an update on their outlook on the global and regional economies.

UAE aviation authority assessing return to service of Boeing's 737 Max aircraft

Abu Dhabi, UAE - The UAE's General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) has established a Return to Service Committee on Boeing 737 Max that includes specialists from the required areas who are working with their counterparts in the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).

In a statement, GCAA said, "We will continue to work closely with FAA and EASA on the recertification process. The GCAA will issue a safety decision stipulating technical requirements to ensure a safe return to service of the Max aircraft and we will also announce our certification timelines in due course."

US regulators last week cleared the Boeing 737 Max to



return to the skies, ending its 20-month grounding after two fatal crashes that plunged the company into crisis.

The FAA said the approval followed 'an unprecedented level of collaborative and independent reviews by aviation authorities around the world'.

In a video that accompanied

the announcement, FAA administrator Steve Dickson said he was '100 per cent comfortable' with having his family fly in the jet. Dickson piloted test flights during the approval process.

The plane was grounded after two crashes that killed a total of 346 people in 2018 and 2019.

Both Boeing and the FAA have come under fire in the wake of the crisis, with critics saying Boeing sacrificed safety for profit and that the FAA was too deferential to the private giant.

A principal cause of the two crashes was identified as a faulty flight handling system that was supposed to keep the plane from stalling as it ascended but instead forced the nose of the plane downward. The FAA required Boeing to upgrade this system to address the flaw.

Boeing applauded the FAA's approval as an 'important milestone' in the company's journey to restoring its reputation and said it would 'never forget the lives lost in the two tragic accidents'.

Agencies

Britain's business activity shrinks in Nov

London, UK - Britain's private sector economic activity shrank in November to a four-month low on fresh coronavirus restrictions, a key survey showed on Monday, sparking talk of a double dip recession.

The composite purchasing managers' index (PMI) sank to 47.4 points in November, compilers IHS Markit and the Char-

tered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) said in a statement.

The shift below 50 - indicating contraction - compared with a reading of 52.1 in October.

The decline coincided with fresh closures of hospitality, leisure and much of the retail sector across the UK.

"A double-dip [recession] is

indicated by the November survey data, with lockdown measures once again causing business activity to collapse across large swathes of the economy," said IHS Markit chief business economist Chris Williamson.

"As expected, hospitality businesses have been the hardest hit."

AFP

Omani-Saudi JV to establish seven factories in Khazaen Economic City

Muscat - Khazaen Economic City has announced the signing of three new tenancy agreements valued at nearly RO3mn. These agreements were signed recently with United Vision for Investment and Development, and Al Maha Food Industries LLC, an Omani-Saudi joint venture (JV) to establish several manufacturing units in the economic city.

Under the three agreements, Khazaen will lease about 27,000 sqm to United Vision for Investment and Development, and to Al Maha Food Industries LLC, to build seven manufacturing units for bottling drinking water, ice production, manufacturing of water bottles, a sweets factory, production of tomato ketchup and baby-related products, in addition to a factory for plastic related products.

The agreements were signed by Khalid Awadh al Balushi, CEO of Khazaen Economic City, Khalifa al Kindi, CEO of United Vision for Investment and Development, and a representative from Al Maha Food Industries LLC.

Khazaen has recently completed the first phase of its



infrastructure works, laying the ground for more companies to access its modern facilities. The latest joint venture underlines the city's strengths in terms of incentives, location, convenience and value on investment.

"The signing of these agreements constitutes a strong addition to the projects already being set up at Khazaen. It also affirms the confidence of local and foreign investors in Khazaen as an ideal and new destination for various businesses. It also reflects the efforts made by Khazaen to attract more investments,

especially after the recent completion of the first phase of the infrastructure works," Balushi said.

Kindi said "Khazaen Economic City is a unique destination for us as investors due to key advantages it provides such as its strategic location and proximity to the main road networks, seaports and various land ports. The company, in collaboration with its partners from Saudi Arabia, plans to commence operations of the planned factories before the end of next year."

United Vision Company for Investment and Development

and Al Maha Food Industries LLC are among the leading groups in the field of investment and food-related industries. The companies are active in varied fields, the most important of which are production of materials, consumer goods and various food-related supplies.

Khazaen has rolled out a package of incentives earlier this year to stimulate further investments despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. These incentives include exemption from rental fees for certain periods and waiver from some administrative fees. Investors and companies interested in investing in Khazaen have still the opportunity to avail for these benefits until the end of 2020.

Khazaen is Oman's most new integrated economic city being developed in Barka. The new integrated economic city will be the home of Oman's new dry port, besides multi-mix residential units, entertainment facilities, retail outlets, international schools and modern health care centres.

ONA

ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS FOR AIR CONDITIONERS - COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL

GENETCO PROVIDES ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS FOR ALL BRANDS AND ALL TYPES

- Genuine Spare Parts
- Fast Response
- Competitive Pricing
- Modern Call Center
- Skilled Technical Team

Maintaining your air conditioner is very important to guarantee performance, efficiency & Longer Life

ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS

- Periodic preventive maintenance service by our expert service team
- Well equipped mobile team to take care of breakdown calls
- On call Service team available during Holidays / Emergencies

Genetco
GENERAL ELECTRIC & TRADING CO. LLC
C.R. No. 1009680

Dayaseelan: **95183505**
Riyas: **96740302**
Email: kgdayas@genetco.net, riyas@genetco.net

G20 leaders hesitate on poor countries' debt time bomb

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia - The G20 promised to tackle the explosive issue of developing-nation debt, but failed to stake out any clear action, infuriating campaigners warning of a looming crisis.

The leaders of the world's 20 richest nations reiterated their commitment to a moratorium agreed in April and extended in October allowing poorer countries to temporarily stop servicing eligible debt to focus their resources on combatting the coronavirus crisis.

The so-called Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) will be extended through to June 30, 2021, the final statement confirmed.

Currently 46 out of 73 eligible nations have benefited from a suspension of interest payments to the tune of US\$5.7bn.

Though Saudi Finance Minister Mohammed al Jadaan called it 'a major breakthrough', it is a drop in the ocean compared to the US\$11tn the G20 nations have spent to combat the economic effects of the pandemic.

"While the G20's reaction in April was rapid, it's currently lacking urgency," said Oxfam France spokesman Louis-Nicolas Jandeaux.

The UN had hoped that the extension would run to the end of 2021, but instead the G20 said its foreign ministers would review the situation in the spring.

Painfully aware that the DSSI alone will not be enough for some countries, the G20 has agreed a common framework to



A photomontage of G20 Leaders is projected at the historic site of al-Tarif in Diriyah district, on the outskirts Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

restructure the debt of certain nations.

That framework has been called 'historic' because for the first time it includes private creditors and China, the world's leading creditor to poorer countries, accounting for 63 per cent of all such loans extended by G20 nations at the end of 2019.

'Draining out the Titanic'

"[But] it only considers debt forgiveness as a final option - and it isn't binding," warned Jandeaux.

"There is a lack of participation from private creditors, and we strongly encourage them to par-

ticipate on comparable terms when requested by eligible countries,' the final statement said. But time is running out.

On Wednesday Zambia, facing a refusal by private lenders to temporarily freeze its debt repayments, defaulted.

It is the first African nation to do so during the novel coronavirus pandemic.

The same day, Bolivia said it expected to temporarily stop servicing its debts until its economic condition had improved.

Fears are growing that debt crises in developing nations could hamstring their ability to vaccinate their people.

In March, panicked investors pulled out US\$82bn of capital from developing nations in a matter of days.

Since then, they have fallen foul of a vicious cycle of increasing costs to combat the pandemic coupled with diminished income.

Remittances by migrant workers have been particularly hard hit.

As a result, developing nations will this year have access to US\$700bn less of external financing than in 2019, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

The DSSI is like 'draining out the Titanic with a bucket' according to the European Network on Debt and Development.

The 46 beneficiary nations had a combined debt pile of US\$71.5bn at the end of 2018.

"The list of countries involved is too small," said Oxfam France's Jandeaux.

Middle-income countries like Lebanon are excluded, while others such as Kenya have declined to seek DSSI relief for fear of a credit rating downgrade that would see their borrowing costs increase, as happened in Cameroon.

AFP

IMF chief urges G20 to maintain policy support

Washington, US - International Monetary Fund (IMF) managing director Kristalina Georgieva urged the Group of 20 (G20) leaders to maintain policy support and reinforce the economic bridge to recovery as the global economy is 'not out of the woods'.

"I commended the G20 countries as a whole for taking unprecedented actions to mitigate the impact of COVID19 - including fiscal and monetary measures - that have helped to prevent massive bankruptcies and an even deeper crisis," Georgieva said in a statement following a virtual meeting of G20 Leaders' Summit hosted by Saudi Arabia.

"I also emphasised that the world is not out of the woods yet in terms of this crisis. Cooperation is going to be even more important going forward," Georgieva said, urging G20 leaders to maintain macroeconomic policy support to businesses and workers 'until we exit the health crisis'.

"There must be no premature withdrawal. It is also time now to prepare for a synchronised green and digital infrastructure investment push to invigorate growth, to limit scarring, and address climate goals," she said.

With vaccines on the horizon, Georgieva noted that "We must ensure they reach everyone, everywhere," which could add almost US\$9tn to global income by 2025, according to the IMF's estimate.

The IMF chief also said the



Kristalina Georgieva

most consequential uncertainty facing us today is 'how we can use the momentum of disruption caused by this crisis to build a better economy for all'.

Georgieva called on G20 leaders to revitalise the international trading system, foster an international system of taxation where everyone pays their fair share, and accelerate the transition to the new climate economy.

"The IMF will continue to count on the G20's support to have all the necessary resources to best serve our member countries, and especially those who need our assistance the most," she said.

In its World Economic Outlook report released last month, the IMF revised up the 2020 forecast for global economy to a contraction of 4.4 per cent. Despite the upward revision, the IMF said the ascent out of this crisis is likely to be 'long, uneven and highly uncertain'.

Xinhua

Eurozone economy in 'downturn' as virus lockdowns resurge

Brussels, Belgium - Eurozone economic activity plunged in November, a key survey showed on Monday, due to a resurgence of lockdowns across Europe as the second wave of the coronavirus tightened its grip.

"The eurozone economy has plunged back into a severe decline in November amid renewed efforts to quash the rising tide of COVID-19 infections," said Chris Williamson, chief economist at IHS Markit.

The firm's closely watched PMI index plummeted to 45.1 points from 50 points in October, well below the key 50-point level which indicates growth.

IHS Markit said this offered a clear indication that the economy in the 19-member single currency area would stumble back into recession in the fourth quarter, erasing any gains seen over the middle of the year.



Importantly, "The further downturn of the economy... represents a major set-back to the region's health and extends the recovery period," Williamson said.

All was not bleak, with survey results demonstrating emerging optimism for a better recovery next year on the back of signs effective vaccines were close at

hand.

Still, IHS Markit said it forecast the eurozone economy would contract by a historic 7.4 per cent in 2020 and expected a recovery of just 3.7 per cent in 2021.

IHS Markit said the downturn in November was broad but would hit the service sectors the hardest, especially those most constrained by the partial lockdowns.

France, the bloc's second-biggest economy, was particularly hard-hit with a result of just 39.9 points on the PMI, indicating a very deep downturn.

The eurozone's number one economy, Germany, managed to show expansion in the period, probably buoyed by factory exports to Asia and a relatively lower rate of coronavirus infections.

AFP

Canada PM Trudeau refuses to commit to Huawei 5G decision timetable

Ottawa, Canada - Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau - under pressure from the opposition to ban Huawei from the country's 5G networks - refused to say on Tuesday when he might make his decision, or if it would come before year's end.

The Conservatives filed a motion in the House of Commons seeking to force Trudeau's Liberal government to announce its decision in the next 30 days, after years of review.

The Chinese telecoms group has faced bans and heightened scrutiny in recent months over fears that Beijing could use their technology to spy on foreign citizens.

Beijing has furiously protested and says its companies are being unfairly targeted for commercial reasons.



Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (AFP)

The dispute has taken on an added dimension as Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou, the daughter of company founder Ren Zhengfei, is under house arrest in Canada and awaiting possible extradition to the US on

fraud and conspiracy charges.

A few days later, China detained two Canadians on suspicion of espionage.

When asked about the possible 5G ban at a press conference, Trudeau told reporters that he

did not want to commit to a specific timetable.

"We will continue to trust our security agencies and experts when it comes to making this important decision on how to protect Canadians and our businesses in an increasingly interconnected world," he said.

"We have worked with our allies, we have consulted broadly, and I can tell you that the decision we will make will be based on the recommendations of our security agencies."

The United States, Australia, Britain, Japan and Sweden have blocked or placed restrictions on the use of Huawei technology in their 5G networks.

"When it comes to China, this government is out of step with our allies," Conservative leader Erin O'Toole told lawmakers.

AFP

Germany steams ahead with new hydrogen-powered train

Berlin, Germany - Germany will trial a new hydrogen-powered train, its state-owned rail company said on Monday, signalling a transition away from gas-guzzling diesel engines as it aims for a carbon-neutral future.

Developed with German industrial giant Siemens, Deutsche Bahn said it will build a newly developed train and a 'gas station' for 2024 that will for the first time fuel hydrogen trains in just 15 minutes - as fast as conventional diesel engines.

"The fact that we... will refuel the train as quickly as a diesel train shows that the climate-friendly transport transition is possible," said Sabina Jeschke, a



member of Deutsche Bahn's board.

The national rail company in-

tends to reduce carbon emissions to zero by 2050, meaning 1,300 diesel units will have to be

replaced.

"We have to bring fossil fuel consumption to zero... Then we

will not run a single vehicle with conventional diesel," Jeschke added.

Around 39 per cent of the German network has no overhead power lines, where trains require their own onboard fuel - such as diesel - to run.

A one-year trial run of the renewable-energy powered train is planned in the Tuebingen area of southern Germany, based on a range of 600km.

The Siemens train will save around 330 tonnes of CO₂ a year, Deutsche Bahn said, and have a top speed of 160km an hour.

Siemens remains well behind its perennial French rival Alstom when it comes to hydrogen trains.

Alstom rolled out the world's first hydrogen-powered train in

the northern German state of Lower Saxony in 2018, running a 100km route previously served by diesel trains.

The TGV-maker has since received 41 orders from Germany for its Coradia iLint train, which also began service in Austria in September.

Hydrogen engines work through a reaction of hydrogen and oxygen to create electricity, leaving only steam and water as byproducts.

As part of the country's coronavirus stimulus package, Berlin announced a US\$11bn fund to develop the role of green hydrogen and with the aim of ending use of coal by 2038.

AFP

European air quality improves but still detrimental to health: Report

Copenhagen, Denmark - Air quality has improved significantly across Europe over the past ten years, but pollution still contributes to significant numbers of premature deaths, the European Environment Agency (EEA) said on Monday.

According to a new EEA study, European urban areas especially suffer health impacts including fatal respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.

In 2018, 34 per cent of urban inhabitants of the 27 EU countries and the UK were breathing

ground-level ozone particles at concentrations above EU health target levels.

And 15 per cent were breathing so called PM10 particles (particulate matter with a diameter of ten micrometres or less) at levels above the EU daily limit.

European criteria are also less strict than the guidelines issued by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Some 99 per cent of European city dwellers were exposed to ozone levels above the WHO's recommended thresh-

old, and 48 per cent when it comes to PM10 particles.

However, much progress has been made over the past ten years across Europe and the Copenhagen-based EEA estimates that some 400,000 premature deaths have been avoided.

Since 2000, it has recorded decreases in emissions of several key air pollutants, especially sulphur and nitrogen oxides.

The EEA also noted an 'absolute decoupling' of emissions from economic activity, mean-



EU Commissioner for Environment and Oceans Virginijus Sinkevicius at a press conference at EU headquarters in Brussels on Monday (AFP)

ing emissions went down even as economic activity increased.

Multiple factors including 'increased regulation and policy implementation, fuel switching, technological improvements and improvements in energy or process efficiencies' could be behind the drop, the EEA said.

'It is good news that air quality is improving thanks to the environmental and climate policies that we have been implementing,' Virginijus Sinkevicius, European Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fish-

eries, said in a statement.

'But we can't ignore the downside - the number of premature deaths in Europe due to air pollution is still far too high.'

Across 41 European countries in 2018, some 60,000 fewer people died prematurely from fine matter air pollution (particles smaller than 2.5 micrometres) than in 2009.

Exposure to fine particle matter is still estimated to have caused about 417,000 premature deaths in 2018.

AFP

Reports say PM met Saudi crown prince, Riyadh denies

Jerusalem - Israeli media reports and a government source said Monday Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had met for landmark talks in Saudi Arabia with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, but Riyadh denied that the meeting took place.

The reports fuelled speculation that the Jewish state may be getting closer to normalising ties with the biggest Gulf power after its recent historic US-brokered deals with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

Israeli public broadcaster Kan and other media said Netanyahu and Mossad spy agency chief Yosef Meir Cohen had met Saudi de facto ruler Prince Mohammed, together with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, in the futuristic Red Sea city of NEOM on Sunday.

An Israeli government source who requested anonymity confirmed the reports to AFP.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan then strongly denied the report that suggested Saudi Arabia was moving away from its decades-old stance of refusing dialogue with the Jewish state until the Palestinian conflict is resolved.

'I have seen press reports about a purported meeting between HRH the Crown Prince and Israeli officials during the recent visit by @SecPompeo,' Prince Faisal tweeted.

'No such meeting occurred. The only officials present were American and Saudi.'



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (left) and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (AFP)

I have seen press reports about a purported meeting between HRH the Crown Prince and Israeli officials during the visit by @SecPompeo. No such meeting occurred.

PRINCE FAISAL

Pompeo has confirmed he was in NEOM as part of a Middle East Tour and met with Prince Mohammed, who is widely known by his initials MBS. The US State Department declined to confirm a trilateral meeting.

Netanyahu, asked about the Saudi trip during a public meeting Monday of his Likud party, said: 'I have never commented

on these things and I do not intend to start now.'

Abraham accords

Israel's normalisation deals with UAE and Bahrain, known as the Abraham Accords, were brokered under US President Donald Trump, who leaves office in less than two months.

Sudan has also agreed in prin-

ciple to normalise ties with Israel.

There has been speculation Washington may push for other Arab states to join the accords before President-elect Joe Biden is sworn in.

While Israel has hailed the accords as historic diplomatic agreements, the Palestinians have condemned them and urged Arab states to hold firm until Israel ends its occupation of Palestinian territory and agrees to the creation of a Palestinian state.

Saudi Arabia - a close US ally and oil-rich buyer of military goods - has publicly insisted it will stick to the decades-old Arab League position of not having ties with Israel until it reaches a

peace deal with the Palestinians.

But some experts have said that Biden's upcoming inauguration may have created urgency in Riyadh, which has dealt discreetly with Israel over a joint desire to contain common foe Iran.

Late night talks

Prominent Israeli diplomatic correspondent Barak Ravid of Walla News and Axios reported that Netanyahu and Cohen flew on a plane belonging to Israeli businessman Udi Angel.

Ravid cited flight tracker data showing Angel's plane leaving Israel at 8:00pm on Sunday, heading to NEOM and returning to Israel five hours later.

Prior to the Abraham Accords, Israel only had peace treaties with two Arab nations, its neighbours Egypt and Jordan.

But in late August, Netanyahu said Israel was holding 'unpublished meetings with Arab and Muslim leaders to normalise relations with the state of Israel', without naming any countries.

Amid speculation that smaller Arab states were also interested in a deal, Saudi Arabi has stood out as the key target for Israel, given the kingdom's wealth and influence.

Sunni Arab states and especially Israel worry that Biden may seek to revive the Iran nuclear deal agreed between Tehran and world powers during Barack Obama's presidency, which was scrapped by Trump.

AFP

Taliban rigging drones to drop bombs, says Afghan spy chief

Kabul, Afghanistan - The Taliban have deployed small drones to drop bombs on government forces in some recent attacks, Afghanistan's spy chief said on Monday, illustrating a new fighting method used by the insurgents.

Ahmad Zia Shiraj, who heads the National Directorate of Security (NDS), said Taliban fighters were using hobby drones and rigging them with explosives.

'The drones they are using are sold in the market. They are basically camera drones,' Shiraj said in an address to parliament, adding the NDS wants to stop the import of the popular devices.

In late October, the Taliban reportedly used a drone to bomb the compound of the governor of Kunduz province.

Shiraj did not confirm the report, but he noted that the Taliban have used drones in Kunduz and Paktia provinces.

While the technique is new to the Taliban, Islamic State (IS) extremists operating in Iraq and Syria started using toy planes and hobby drones in 2016 to carry explosives. IS maintain a small but deadly presence in Afghanistan and have resisted years-long efforts by the US and Afghan forces to wipe them out.

'We have destroyed their leadership circle but their second layer are young are still active,' Shiraj said.



The drones they are using are sold in the market. They are basically camera drones. We have destroyed their leadership but their second layer is still active

AHMAD ZIA SHIRAJ

IS claimed three deadly attacks in recent weeks in Kabul that killed scores of people, including a rocket attack Saturday.

The Taliban and Washington signed a deal in February paving the way for foreign forces to leave Afghanistan entirely by May 2021. In return, the insurgent group pledged to prevent groups such as Al-Qaeda and IS operating inside Afghanistan.

AFP

'World must not turn away from Afghanistan'

Geneva, Switzerland - The international community must continue aiding Afghanistan or face the risk of 'disastrous consequences', UN refugee chief Filippo Grandi urged ahead of a donors conference that started on Monday.

Grandi's appeal also comes after his visit to the Asian nation that is struggling with growing violence, a US pullout and flagging peace talks.

Grandi said the future of millions of Afghans depends on the outcome of peace negotiations and on the international community's commitment to develop the country, including at the two-day donors conference in Geneva.

'Failure on either account would see Afghanistan slide backwards with disastrous consequences, including further displacement possibly on a large scale,' Grandi warned in a statement. He said the nearly 300,000 Afghans who have been displaced inside the country because of conflict this year remain in 'acute need' of human-



Filippo Grandi

itarian support.

The same goes for the nearly 3mn previously displaced and the nine million people who have lost their livelihoods due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Grandi also said it was urgent to conclude peace negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban, which are fighting to topple it and retake the power they lost during the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.

The peace talks are flagging and a withdrawal of some of the US forces that the Trump administration announced this week are further weakening the Kabul government.

AFP

A decade on, Gadhafi's cousin Ahmed Kadhaf sees Arab Spring as Western plot

Cairo, Egypt - From his lavish Cairo apartment overlooking the Nile, Ahmed Kadhaf al Dam reminisces fondly about the iron-fisted rule of Libya by his cousin Moammar Gadhafi, nearly a decade after his ouster.

With his dark, bushy hair, Kadhaf al Dam cuts an uncannily similar figure to the late dictator, who rose to power in a 1969 military coup.

As if echoing Gadhafi's words beyond the grave, the 68 year old maintains that the Arab Spring was a hoax, engineered to cause instability in the region.

'There wasn't a revolution,' Kadhaf al Dam argued. 'There was an attack to kill Gadhafi.'

Gadhafi's killing in October 2011 heralded the North African country's descent into chaos as militias battled for control.

'Libya was a safe haven in North Africa and the Mediterranean,' the former top-ranking advisor to Gadhafi insisted, as he gathered up his long and flowing traditional robes.

Since the 2011 NATO-backed



Ahmed Kadhaf al Dam at his home in Cairo on November 2 (AFP)

uprising that toppled the veteran dictator, Libya has been riven by conflict, with multiple militias filling the power vacuum and civilian authorities struggling to impose their authority.

Libya has become a key embarkation point for migrants attempting to make the potentially deadly sea voyage to Europe, as well as a base for extremist mili-

tants.

'There was no terrorism or extremists, or people going hungry,' Kadhaf al Dam claimed, painting a rosy picture of Libya before the conflict.

'The Western intervention in Libya led to this.'

Today, two rival administrations are vying for control of the country - a UN-recognised unity

government in Tripoli that emerged from talks in 2015 and an eastern-based administration elected the year before.

In 2019, eastern strongman Khalifa Haftar, backed by Egypt, Russia and the United Arab Emirates, launched an offensive to seize Tripoli.

But after Haftar fought his way westwards to the very outskirts of the capital, Turkish-backed pro-unity forces pushed back.

That led to a formal ceasefire deal last month.

Kadhaf al Dam pins the blame for the years of conflict squarely on former French president Nicolas Sarkozy and former US secretary of state Hillary Clinton for a decade of 'famine, poverty and destruction'.

A former soldier and Gadhafi's envoy to Egypt during president Hosni Mubarak's rule, he blamed Western military adventurism for the rise of extremist fighters.

That includes the extremist forces of the Islamic State (IS)

group, which gained a foothold in Libya.

But for Kadhaf al Dam, the extremists of IS and Al Qaeda are forces manufactured by the West.

'How can you blame us, saying that Islam is the reason behind extremism?' he said. 'This is your religion that you've created in the West.'

From his point of view, the Arab Spring resulted in failure.

Only Tunisia, where the revolutions began, is the one success, he concedes.

'People came out with clear demands and the president was ousted,' he said. 'But conditions are still unstable today,' he added, pointing out attacks by IS gunmen in recent years.

As for Egypt, where the ex-diplomat lives in luxurious exile, he believes that Cairo dodged a bullet. Mubarak's successor, elected Islamist president Mohamed Morsi, was overthrown in 2013 by current President Abdel Fattah el Sisi.

AFP

Biden to start naming Cabinet picks from today as Trump resists change

Washington, US - US President-elect Joe Biden will name his first cabinet picks on Tuesday, his chief of staff said, even as Donald Trump clung to unsubstantiated claims of fraud despite growing dissent from within his own party.

Biden has pushed ahead with preparations to assume the presidency on January 20, regardless of Trump's bid to undo the results of the November vote.

"You are going to see the first of the president-elect's Cabinet picks on Tuesday," Biden's chief of staff, Ron Klain, told ABC's *This Week* on Sunday.

Several US news organisations, including Bloomberg and *The New York Times*, reported that the president-elect will nominate seasoned diplomat and long-time aide Antony Blinken as secretary of state.

Biden also said last week he had already decided his pick for the key position of Treasury Secretary.

US media also widely reported he will name Linda Thomas-Greenfield, who served as assistant secretary of state for Africa under President Barack Obama, as his UN ambassador.

A growing number of Republicans have either recognised Biden's victory or at least urged the General Services Administration - the usually low-profile agency that manages the federal bureaucracy - to release federal funds for the Biden transition.



This file photo shows US President-elect Joe Biden speaking after a meeting with governors in Wilmington, Delaware, on November 19 (AFP)

With Trump refusing to acknowledge the election outcome, Biden and his top aides have been denied briefings on sensitive domestic and foreign policy issues - most urgently the coronavirus pandemic battering the

country.

Former New Jersey governor Chris Christie, who in 2016 advised the Trump transition, said on ABC that the president's legal team was a 'national embarrassment'.

Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, another prominent Republican, told CNN that Trump was making the country look like a 'banana republic', later tweeting the president should 'stop golfing and concede'.

Trump has golfed on every weekend day since the election, though he took part virtually in the conference of the G20 leading economies this weekend - skipping a Saturday session on the pandemic.

And even Representative Devin Nunes, an ardent Trump loyalist, conceded backhandedly on Fox News that Biden had 'run a successful campaign from a basement'.

Trump again tweeted on Sunday about 'massive numbers of fraudulent ballots', a claim dismissed by a long list of judges in several states.

Appearances by Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani have drawn mockery, as have claims by another former member of his

Brann's ruling paved the way for Pennsylvania to certify Biden's victory in the state.

Biden won the state-by-state Electoral College votes that ultimately decide who takes the White House by 306 to 232.

The Electoral College is due to formally vote on December 14, with state certifications to take place beforehand.

State certification of popular vote results in presidential elections is usually routine.

But Trump's refusal to con-

News organisations such as Bloomberg and The New York Times reported that the president-elect will nominate seasoned diplomat and long-time aide Antony Blinken as Secretary of State

legal team, Sidney Powell.

Powell has alleged baseless conspiracy theories involving a possible hack of the election, earning her widespread derision but also praise from some of Trump's most ardent supporters.

Giuliani announced on Sunday that Powell had been dropped from the team.

Trump's latest legal setback came Saturday, when Pennsylvania judge Matthew Brann threw out the president's fraud claims in a scathing judgment.

Pennsylvania was a must-win state, and flipped to Biden after backing Trump in 2016.

cede has raised concerns that he could cause long-term damage to public trust in the voting system that underlies US democracy.

The judgment in Pennsylvania came hours after Republicans also requested a delay in certification in Michigan, another battleground state won by Biden.

They requested a two-week delay to allow a full audit of results in Wayne County - home to majority-black Detroit, which overwhelmingly voted for Biden.

Michigan's board of canvassers is due to meet soon to certify the results.

AFP

At least 13 die in two Colombia massacres

Bogota, Colombia - At least 13 people died in two massacres in different parts of Colombia, authorities there said on Sunday.

The killings took place in Antioquia department in the northwest and Cauca in the southwest, areas hit hard by violence this year.

Since January, Colombia has suffered dozens of massacres - defined as attacks in which at least three people die - making 2020 the worst year since the signing in 2016 of a peace agreement with the former guerrillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

In the Antioquia town of Betania, five coffee growers and three other people were killed in an overnight attack at a farm, the authorities said.

Some 'ten heavily armed men... entered a dormitory at the Gabriela farm' and 'fired indiscriminately', Betania mayor Carlos Villada told AFP.

The killings were believed to be linked to drug trafficking.

Meantime, in the small town of Argelia in Cauca department, at least five people died and two were wounded in attacks by the same man in a pool hall, a bar and a discotheque.

Leftist rebels of the National Liberation Army; dissident members of FARC, the guerrilla group that became a political party; and narco-traffickers clashed in the area over revenues.

AFP

Hong Kong activists taken into custody after pleading guilty

Hong Kong, China - Three young Hong Kong dissidents including Joshua Wong were remanded into custody on Monday after pleading guilty to inciting a rally during last year's pro-democracy protests, deepening the crack-down against Beijing's critics.

Hong Kong was convulsed by seven straight months of huge and often violent democracy rallies last year in which millions took to the streets.

Beijing and local authorities have refused demands for free elections and have pursued democracy supporters with criminal cases and a sweeping new national security law.

Wong (24) was prosecuted alongside fellow activists Ivan Lam and Agnes Chow over a protest which took place last summer outside the city police headquarters.

"We will continue to fight for freedom - and now is not the time for us to kowtow to Beijing and surrender," Wong told reporters before the trial began.

"We have no regrets," added Lam (26).



L-R: Pro-democracy activists Agnes Chow, Ivan Lam and Joshua Wong arrive for their trial at West Kowloon Magistrates Court in Hong Kong on Monday (AFP)

Inside court Wong pleaded guilty to inciting and organising an illegal assembly. Lam pleaded guilty to incitement while Chow (23) admitted inciting and joining the protest.

All three were remanded into custody pending sentencing on December 2, meaning a jail term is all but guaranteed.

The maximum sentence a magistrate's court can hand down is three years.

As he was led away Wong shouted: "Everyone hang in there. I know it's tougher for you to remain out there. Add oil!"

Add oil is a popular phrase of encouragement in Cantonese. Police became a target for

demonstrators after tear gas and rubber bullets were routinely used to clear crowds when rallies kicked off last June.

The force's headquarters was besieged on multiple occasions with crowds hurling eggs and daubing its walls with graffiti.

AFP

Singapore activist charged for protest

Singapore - A Singaporean activist was charged on Monday with staging an illegal one-man protest after he stood outside a police station holding a sign bearing a smiley face.

The tightly controlled city-state has tough laws against dissent that make it illegal for even one person to hold a demonstration without a police permit.

Jolovan Wham, who has had numerous run-ins with the authorities, posted a photo of himself on social media in March holding the cardboard sign with the roughly drawn face.

He said he took the photo to support a climate activist who was questioned by police for taking a picture in the same spot holding a sign that read: 'SG is better than oil'.

Wham (40) was charged in public assembly without a permit.

The activist posted a photo on social media of himself on his way to court wearing a t-shirt and a face mask with a smiley face printed on them.

"My guilt is plain for all to see," he said.



A file photo of Jolovan Wham (AFP)

He was also charged for holding up a sign in 2018 outside court calling on the government to drop defamation charges against two men over an online article that alleged corruption among officials.

Wham faces a fine of up to S\$5,000 (US\$3,700) for each offence if he is found guilty, according to charge sheets.

The activist served a 10-day jail term earlier this year for organising an illegal event in 2016.

AFP

US Ice Bucket Challenge activist Patrick Quinn dies aged 37

Washington, US - An American man who helped drive the global phenomenon known as the Ice Bucket Challenge to tackle a deadly neurodegenerative disease has died at the age of 37, his team said on Sunday.

Patrick Quinn, from New York state, was diagnosed with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, in 2013.

'It is with great sadness that we must share the passing of Patrick early this morning,' his team wrote in a post in Quinn's ALS advocacy Facebook group,

'Quinn for the Win'.

'We will always remember him for his inspiration and courage in his tireless fight against ALS.'

Quinn did not start the Ice Bucket Challenge, which took social media by storm in 2014, but he and his family and friends helped it become a global phenomenon.

Millions took up the challenge, which involved dousing themselves with a bucket of ice cold water and posting the video online, before making a donation to



Patrick Quinn from New York state was diagnosed with ALS in 2013

medical research and daring others to do the same.

A galaxy of celebrities, high-profile personalities and entire sports teams took part in the challenge, including Tom Cruise, Steven Spielberg, Bill Gates and even former US president George W Bush.

The campaign has reportedly raised US\$220mn to fund research into ALS, whose sufferers' bodies slowly shut down as their nervous systems degenerate.

In a statement, the ALS Association thanked Quinn for co-

founding the Ice Bucket Challenge and mourned his death.

'Pat fought ALS with positivity and bravery and inspired all around him.'

'Those of us who knew him are devastated but grateful for all he did to advance the fight against ALS,' it added.

The condition, officially known as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, is also known as Lou Gehrig's disease after a baseball player who died of it in 1941.

AFP

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

UK vaccine news gives hope as US plans mass rollout

London, UK - The developers of a coronavirus vaccine in Britain on Monday claimed success after mass testing, as the United States announced plans to give jabs to 20mn people before the end of the year to combat surging infections.

AstraZeneca and Oxford University said their drug had proved on average 70 per cent effective at stopping the virus after trying it on 23,000 people, days after tests of two other drugs suggested they had more than 90 per cent effectiveness.

The bright news on vaccines comes as Europe and the Americas battle rising caseloads that are pushing health systems to the brink, forcing governments to issue stay at home orders and close businesses even as the crucial Christmas period approaches.

Canada's biggest city Toronto will become the latest area to shut down later on Monday, as officials ban private indoor gatherings and limit the size of weddings and funerals - similar to measures already in place in France and other European countries.

"We can't risk overwhelming our hospitals," said Doug Ford, premier of Ontario province, earlier this week.

At the other end of the confinement cycle, Australia's second-largest city Melbourne continued to emerge from a gruelling four-month lockdown with authorities lifting a ban on travel across state borders.

"When I went across the border I beeped the horn, 'Yahoo!'," said Melbourne resident Margaret Forster after being allowed to drive from Victoria into New South Wales for the first time since June.



A policewoman explains to pupils, with the help of an automatic hand washing unit, the required barrier gesture and preventive measures to curb the spread of COVID-19, in an elementary school in France's capital Paris on Monday (AFP)

Canada's biggest city Toronto has become the latest area to shut down, as officials ban private indoor gatherings and limit the size of weddings and funerals - measures already in place in France

The virus has killed almost 1.4mn people worldwide since emerging in China late last year.

The latest vaccine results are particularly important as the Oxford drug can be transported easily at normal refrigerator temperatures - unlike some of the other candidates, which need extremely cold storage.

AstraZeneca chief executive Pascal Soriot said despite the

vaccine's lower effectiveness compared with the other candidate drugs, it would still be highly effective and would have an 'immediate impact'.

The firm said it planned to develop up to 3bn doses of the vaccine in 2021 if it passes the remaining regulatory hurdles.

Two other leading candidates - one by Pfizer and German partner BioNTech and

another by US firm Moderna - reported 95 per cent effectiveness in trials.

The European Union said it could approve vaccines for use by the end of the year, following a statement from US officials that a vaccination programme could be started as soon as next month.

'Preparing for the worst'

Chinese officials were also facing a renewed threat, with a small outbreak at Shanghai's largest international airport.

All employees at the airport will now have to undergo testing after the cluster was linked to cargo handlers.

China has largely succeeded at tamping down its outbreak thanks to harsh lockdowns and rigorous test and trace programmes.

The country has also rolled out an experimental vaccine but its effectiveness is unclear.

Andreas Plemmenos, boss of a hospital near the Greek capital Athens, told AFP the latest wave of cases had arrived faster than expected.

"At the beginning, we only had three or four cases in this ward, but now it is full," he said of his dedicated 24-bed Covid-19 ward, which now has ten new beds. "We are preparing for the worst."

AFP



A health worker takes a nasal and oral swab from a woman for a COVID-19 test, at a health centre in Siliguri on Monday (AFP)

Coronavirus death toll about 1.4mn

Paris, France - The novel coronavirus has killed at least 1,388,590 people since the outbreak emerged in China last December, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP at 1100 GMT on Monday.

At least 58,647,610 cases of coronavirus have been registered. Of these, at least 37,298,300 are now considered recovered.

The tallies, using data collected by AFP from national authorities and information from the World Health Organization (WHO), probably reflect only a fraction of the actual number of infections.

Many countries are testing only symptomatic or the most serious cases.

On Sunday, 7,157 new deaths and 511,144 new cases were recorded worldwide.

Based on latest reports, the countries with the most new deaths were the United States with 925 new deaths, followed by Italy with 562 and India with 511.

The United States is the

worst-affected country with 256,798 deaths from 12,249,198 cases. At least 4,526,513 people have been declared recovered.

After the US, the hardest-hit countries are Brazil with 169,183 deaths from 6,071,401 cases, India with 133,738 deaths from 9,139,865 cases, Mexico with 101,676 deaths from 1,041,875 cases, and the United Kingdom with 55,024 deaths from 1,512,045 cases.

The country with the highest number of deaths compared to its population is Belgium with 135 fatalities per 100,000 inhabitants, followed by Peru with 108, Spain 91, Italy 82. China - excluding Hong Kong and Macau - has to date declared 86,442 cases, including 4,634 deaths and 81,493 recoveries.

Asia has reported 188,409 deaths from 11,916,898 cases, the Middle East 74,169 deaths from 3,131,313 cases, and Africa 49,714 deaths from 2,071,937 cases.

AFP

Seven dead after drinking hand sanitiser in Russia

Moscow, Russia - Seven people in Russia's Far East republic of Yakutia have died and two were in a coma on Monday after consuming diluted hand sanitiser widely available during the pandemic.

A statement published by Russian investigators on Saturday said a group of nine locals fell violently ill in the village of Tomtor after consuming diluted hand sanitiser that they had purchased at a local shop.

Investigators said they found an unlabelled five-litre canister at the scene.

Tests of its contents revealed that it contained 69 per cent methanol, an industrial non-drinking type of alcohol.

The first three victims died on the spot, while six others

were flown by medical aircraft to the regional capital Yakutsk. Four died in hospital.

Doctors are currently fighting to save the lives of the remaining two - a 48 year old woman and a 32 year old man, both of whom are in a coma and on ventilators, health authorities said on Monday.

Yakutia's health authorities on Sunday banned the sale of the methanol-based hand sanitiser.

A criminal case has been launched over the 'infliction of death by negligence'.

In 2016, more than 100 people were poisoned in Siberia's Irkutsk region after consuming a hawthorn-infused bath lotion, and 78 of them died.

AFP

UK to launch mass virus testing programme

London, UK - British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is all set to announce a major testing programme in areas with the highest coronavirus infection rates as the country re-enters a system of tiered restrictions.

The Prime Minister was set to announce in parliament that regions classed as very high risk would be able to bring in the army to help with mass testing as part of the government's Covid Winter Plan.

This comes after the city of Liverpool this month held England's first city-wide testing, which the government hailed as a success leading to a 'substantial fall' in cases.

The city in northwest England is now set to trial a new system of testing where contacts of those who have tested



UK Parliament's annual Christmas Tree, donated by Forestry England from Kielder Forest, is being installed in the grounds of the Palace of Westminster, in London on Saturday (AFP)

positive can take a test every day for a week and only have to isolate if they test positive, instead of immediately quarantining.

If successful, this system

could be used across the country's state-run National Health Service (NHS), in care homes

and by the whole population from January, Downing Street said.

It said new measures will also focus on care home residents, who are unable to have visitors indoors due to social distancing rules.

It said that a pilot programme to test visitors in 20 care homes could roll out nationwide next month, allowing residents to have physical contact with visitors.

England is to return to a system of tiered anti-coronavirus restrictions after the latest lockdown ends on December 2.

Downing Street has said these will be similar to the system in place before the lockdown but more restrictive in some areas.

AFP

World's top surgical glove maker shuts factories due to coronavirus

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - A Malaysian company that is the world's biggest manufacturer of surgical gloves will close over half of its factories after a surge in coronavirus cases among workers, authorities said on Monday.

Top Glove has seen a huge jump in demand since the start of the pandemic as countries scrambled to stock up on protective equipment, pushing up both its profits and share price.

But there has been a cluster

of virus outbreaks among Top Glove employees - many of whom are low-paid migrant workers - at factories in an industrial area near the capital, Kuala Lumpur. More than 1,000 cases were recorded on Monday, prompting the government to order the plants to close.

"Based on advice from the ministry of health, it was agreed at a special meeting today to shut down 28 Top Glove factories... in stages to allow the workers to undergo tests and



A worker inspects disposable gloves at the Top Glove factory in Shah Alam on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur (AFP)

It was agreed at a special meeting on Monday to shut down 28 Top Glove factories... in stages to allow the workers to undergo tests and quarantine

ISMAIL SABRI YAAKOB

quarantine," said Defence Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

Top Glove said in a statement it would 'cooperate fully with the relevant authorities to implement the temporary stoppage', and plant closures had begun.

About 5,700 workers have already been screened and the rest will also undergo tests, it said. Top Glove did not say how the closures would affect its ability to meet orders.

The company operates 47 factories - 41 in Malaysia - and

many of its workers are from Nepal and live in crowded dormitory complexes.

The company can produce more than 70bn gloves a year and is a major global supplier.

Malaysia is battling a resurgent outbreak of the coronavirus which has infected more than 56,000 people and killed 337.

The country's glove manufacturers have long been accused of mistreating migrant workers.

AFP



With all the changes that have occurred this year, it's not surprising that women everywhere have been reassessing their skincare routines. Spending more time at home has spurred a focus on overall skin health and rituals to smooth out lines and wrinkles - and they want convenient solutions that get the job done but don't cost a fortune.

A new poll from RoC Skincare and Poshly surveyed 1,000 beauty shoppers to understand if women have shifted skincare habits since the pandemic. Results showed that while 71% had to make changes to their budget, they still want to maintain an effective routine.

Whether they are rethinking high-end anti-aging treatments, skipping in-office visits or simply being more conservative with spending, women are turning to options found right in the drugstore aisle: 1 in 4 reported they have stopped getting injectables or professional skincare treatments and started using retinol and drugstore products.

Fortunately, there are inexpensive practices and products out there like OTC retinol (a vitamin A derivative) that are effective at keeping skin looking bright, smooth and youthful, according to board-certified celebrity dermatologist Dr Anna Guanche. "While some of my best advice to my patients may seem simple," she says, "it's also all too easy to neglect the basics that really make a difference to protect and improve your skin."

Dr Guanche shares her top anti-aging tips that involve either no cost or affordable items found online and at your local store.

(BPT)



1 GO EASY ON THE HOT WATER
Hot water can strip your skin of its natural oils, which can lead to dryness and the appearance of premature aging. Keep the water temperature from getting too hot (you can even set your water heater to a lower default temp).

Pro tip: Apply moisturiser right out of the bath or shower, and immediately after washing your face.



2 LOOK TO RETINOL AT NIGHT
Retinol is an anti-aging mainstay, and choosing one has never been easier because of the new Retinol Correxion Night Serum Capsules from RoC - the brand that discovered how to stabilise this superpower ingredient. This treatment in particular rivals prescription skincare options and it works - clinical testing showed 97% had visibly reduced lines and wrinkles after one night.

"What I love about these capsules is the satisfaction you get with overnight line smoothing benefits and how the results keep getting better overtime if you make them a regular part of your nighttime routine," says Dr Guanche.



3 PRIORITISE SLEEP
While you're letting your skin absorb a retinol like RoC, make sure you're sleeping a good eight hours per night, if possible. Keeping your room cooler and darker at night will help ensure you'll not only fall asleep more easily, but stay asleep longer, for the rest your body and face need.

Pro tip: Launder your bedding regularly, especially your pillowcases. That way you know you're helping to keep your skin clean while you're getting your beauty rest.



4 STOCK UP ON VITAMINS
"Keeping your skin looking and feeling its best is also a question of feeding it from within," says Dr Guanche. Taking daily supplements containing vitamins such as C, E, D and K will help nourish your skin from the inside out.

Eating foods rich in vitamins, like colourful vegetables and fruits, is also a vital - and delicious - way to "feed" your skin well.



5 LIMIT SUN EXPOSURE
While getting a little vitamin D from sunshine is a good thing, too much time under UV rays can prematurely age your skin - and put your skin at risk. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends using a facial moisturizer or sunscreen containing at least 30 SPF for the best protection against sunburn and skin cancer.

Pro tip: Keep sunscreen near the door or in your bag so you'll remember to apply before going out.

Sticking to these tips daily will make a big difference in how your skin looks and feels. Try a couple until they become habit, then try more.

EAT RIGHT, LOOK GOOD

Foods that beautify

If you've been doing the rounds of pharmacies and beauty stores to get the best products in town that will beautify your skin, you might want to redefine your hunt. The fact might be quite the contrary to what you think – it is what we put into our body that decides our complexion or quality of skin. What we consume does affect our health and the aging of our skin. Here are some foods that can have a beautifying effect on your skin:



Pomegranates

Are rich in antioxidants which provide sun protection and may help repair existing skin damage.



Fatty Fish: salmon, mackerel and herring

These are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which are important for maintaining skin health. They keep skin thick, toned and moisturised which helps those suffering from dry skin. They also help in reducing inflammation for those with sensitive and acneic skin.



Walnuts

Walnuts are a good source of essential fatty acids, which are fats that your body cannot make itself. They contain small amounts of the antioxidants vitamin E and vitamin C which helps your skin stay healthy.



Broccoli

Broccoli is full of zinc, vitamin A and vitamin C which are vital for achieving healthy skin. It contains lutein which protects your skin from being too dry. May help with some types of skin cancer.



Dark chocolate

Dark chocolate is high in flavanol which helps protect the skin from sun damage. It also helps improve skin hydration, thickness and smoothness.



Avocados

High in healthy fats, avocados help nourish, hydrate, and plump the skin by protecting the health of the cell membrane. They are a good source of vitamin E, C, K and B6 which is an important antioxidant that helps fight free radical damage.



Red/yellow bell peppers

These are a great sources of beta-carotene, which your body converts into vitamin A. Also, an excellent source of vitamin C which helps to keep skin firm and strong.



Cinnamon

Cinnamon helps to increase collagen production, which may lead to increased skin firmness and elasticity. The anti-fungal, antioxidant and anti-bacterial properties of cinnamon helps with acne.



Ginger

Ginger contains gingerol; a compound with anti-inflammatory effects that may help prevent age spots.



Sweet Potatoes

Sweet potatoes contain beta-carotene to protect your skin from sun damage. It may help prevent sunburn and dry, wrinkled skin. High amounts of beta-carotene add a warm, orange colour to your skin, almost like a tan.

Sunflower Seeds

Sunflower seeds are an excellent source of nutrients, including vitamin E, which is an important antioxidant for the skin.



Extra virgin olive oil

It's anti-inflammatory effects on the skin help protect the skin from sun damage.