



TOUR OF OMAN: MERLIER, WINNING DAD

Tim Merlier of team Soudal Quick-Step took the honours on Day 1 of Tour of Oman 2023. Merlier is enjoying a great start of the year - he became a father 11 days ago and on Saturday dedicated the victory to his newborn son as he out sprinted his rivals - second placed David Dekker (Arkéa-Samsic) and third Axel Zingle (Cofidis) - in Stage 1 from Rustaq Fort to Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (Supplied photo)

Omani paddler among top 5 players in world

Our Correspondent Muscat

For the first time, an Omani paddler is among the top five in the world table tennis rankings in her age category.

National girls table tennis team member Talia Mounir al Rawahi, nine, is ranked fifth in the International Table Tennis Federation's (ITTF) youth ranking for Under-11.

Speaking to Muscat Daily, Abdullah Bamakhalif, President of Oman Table Tennis Association at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, said, "Talia won a gold medal in the Under-11 category at the Qatar International Youth Table Tennis Championship, held at Lusail Sports Hall in Doha, from January 27 to 30. This resulted in an increase in her points - a total of 35 - and ranking in the international classification for youth for the month of February. This is a new achievement for the sultanate and Table Tennis Association."

He informed that this is the first official achievement for Talia at the international level.

According to Bamakhalif, Talia's achievement encourages the association to develop its



Talia won the Qatar International Youth Table Tennis Championship's U-11 category held in January. This is a new achievement for Oman and Table Tennis Association

ABDULLAH BAMAKHALIF

programmes further to support players, and prepare her well for the future. "Our goal for female players is to qualify for the Olympics from the West Asian region."

Elaborating on the promotion of table tennis in Oman, he informed that in 2014 the ministry started opening centres across governorates to discover talented players. "The centres aim to promote the sport among young people and prepare them to participate in local and international tournaments."

These centres, Bamakhalif informed, are equipped with all the facilities to develop the sport in the country, besides being staffed with professional coaches.

For the past four years, the association has also been organising a school-level championship for boys and girls. Ninety-four tables have been provided for free to winning schools through this programme.

Bamakhalif added that the association and the Ministry of Education signed an agreement in 2022 to include table tennis in the curriculum of Grades 5 to 10 so that children take up the sport early in life.

Royal Decrees appoint Undersecretary for Investment Promotion, envoys

Muscat - His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik issued two Royal Decrees on Thursday.

The first, Royal Decree No 8/2023, appointed an Undersecretary for Investment Promotion in the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

Article 1 appoints Ibtisam Ahmed Said al Farooji as Undersecretary for Investment Promotion in the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

Article 2 states that this decree will be published in the Official

Gazette and enforced on its date of issue.

The second, Royal Decree No 9/2023, appointed non-resident ambassadors as follows:

Article 1 appoints Ali bin Suleiman bin Said al Darmaki, the Sultanate of Oman's ambassador to the Republic of Sudan, as Oman's non-resident ambassador to the Republic of Chad.

Article 2 appoints Saud bin Hilal bin Saal Shithani, the Sultanate of Oman's ambassador to the United Republic of Tanzania, as Oman's non-resident ambassa-

dor to the Union of the Comoros, the Republic of Zambia, the Republic of Burundi and the Republic of Seychelles.

Article 3 appoints Ru'aa bint Issa bin Ashraf al Zadjali, the Sultanate of Oman's ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium, as Oman's non-resident ambassador to the European Union and the European Commission.

Article 4 states that this decree will be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from its date of issue.

ONA



مهاجر الدقم
DUQM QUARRIES

Tender Announcement

Duqm Quarries SAOC is pleased to announce the following tender:

Tender No	Tender Name	Last date for Collecting Documents	Last Date for Submission of Tender	Tender Document Price
DQ/01/2023	Supply and Lease Heavy Machinery Equipment to Al Duqm (Freezone)	16/02/2023	21/02/2023	100 OMR

Tender Conditions:

1- Obtaining tender documents from the Department of Administrative Affairs at the company's headquarters located in Airport Heights - DHL Building, Fifth Floor - from 9:00 AM in the morning until 01:00 PM afternoon during official working days.

2- Offers shall be submitted in envelopes sealed with red wax and addressed to the Honorable Audit Committee Chairman at Duqm Quarries Company. The number and name of the tender shall be written on the outside, provided that the name of the bidder or what he refers to is not written on the envelope.

3- A bank guarantee or certified cheque from one of the banks operating in the Sultanate shall be attached to the bid, at a value of 1% of the value of the bid, and it shall be valid for 90 days. Bids that do not meet the guarantee will not be considered.

4- The company is not obligated to accept the lowest or any other bid. The company has the right to accept or reject any bid without stating the reason.

5- Contact: tenders@duqmquarries.om

RAFO continues relief flights to Turkey, Syria

Our Correspondent Muscat

Following the Royal Orders of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Oman Charitable Organization, in cooperation with Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO), operated relief flights to quake-hit areas of Syria on Friday and Turkey on Saturday. The death toll in the two countries has crossed the 25,000 mark.

The flights were operated by military transport aircraft of RAFO, carrying relief material and essential needs.

"These relief flights will continue over the coming days, in solidarity with Syria and Turkey.



This is being done through an air corridor established for the purpose," ONA stated.

On Wednesday, RAFO sent personnel from the National Search and Rescue Team of the Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority (CDAA) to help in search and rescue operations in Turkey.

Col Mubarak bin Salem al Arai, Director General of Operations and Training at CDAA and general supervisor of the team, said the despatched personnel have set up a camp in the city of Hatay, in coordination with the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority of

Turkey. "The team has carried out several search operations for survivors in different locations using advanced devices and equipment, in addition to providing medical care."

He added that despite the challenges faced by the international rescue teams, including kilometres-long traffic jams and freezing cold, the team continues to provide assistance and humanitarian services to the affected.

Oman Charitable Organization, Dar al Atta'a and the Embassy of Turkey in Muscat have called for donations to send aid to those affected in the earthquake in Syria and Turkey.

Five agreements signed to boost industrial sector



Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) signed five agreements to boost the industrial sector on Thursday.

Celebrating Omani Industry Day, which focused this year on promoting local content and the initiatives of the manufacturing industries' laboratory, the event also saw the launch of the Omani Product Logo and Oman Barcoding Centre.

HE Dr Saleh Said Massan, Undersecretary for Commerce and Industry in MoCIIP, said that by launching the international numbering system (barcode) for Omani goods and products, the ministry seeks to raise the efficiency of the supply chain, facilitate the sale and marketing of Omani products, unify the marketing identity of national prod-

This year, Omani Industry Day focused on promoting local content and the initiatives of the manufacturing industries' laboratory

ucts and encourage Omani industrial establishments to target new markets and raise local and foreign consumer awareness.

Among the pacts inked on Thursday was one MoCIIP signed with Al Baraka Petrochemical Salts for annual production of about 4mn tonnes of salt in the Al Lukbi region in Al Wusta. The project, spread on an area of 187.23 hectares, will increase total output to 7mn tonnes per annum in the final stage.

The second is a memorandum of understanding between OQ Group and the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates - Madayn - for development of an area to make semi-finished and fully manufactured plastic products. The unit will be part of the Plastics Complex.

Madayn also signed a cooperation programme with the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development for establishment of a project known as Prefabricated Factories Complex. The cooperation, aimed at supporting SMEs, will offer a variety of incentives within the complex and designated suitable sites for SMEs in all industrial cities.

The fourth pact was signed by MoCIIP and the Industrial Innovation Academy on a programme to empower Omani factories with technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). It provides for analysis of the status of

some factories, financing equipment and the latest technologies related to automation and building a team of experts, and an incubator for 4IR applications to establish real value models for factories in various industrial fields.

The last agreement is for implementation of a 'Green Smart Industrial Cities Initiative', signed by Madayn and Oman Investment and Development Holding Company.

It will see the establishment of an efficient, balanced and flexible system to protect the environment and sustain its natural resources. The initiative provides support for the national economy by applying the concept of circular economy and building smart industrial cities using various types of renewable energy. The initiative will contribute to cost reduction in productive sectors.

MHUP offered 161 plots for investments in 2022

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning (MHUP) offered 161 plots of land via public auction to boost investments in the sultanate in 2022.

A statement issued by MHUP said, 'The 161 land plots offered for investments were provided with all services and are located in areas with large population density. The ministry signed 500 contracts and received fees of more than RO7.5mn for these in 2022.'

The initiative aimed to support growth of the GDP, boost economic output through manufacturing, commercial and other industrial activities, fuel socio-economic development and support the strategic goals of Oman Vision 2040.

The ministry is currently offer-



ing 41 plots of land, between 150sqm to 2,000sqm, and 15 investment sites, between 3,113sqm and 108,000sqm, via public auction in several governorates to develop the real estate sector and stimulate investments.

Of the 41 plots, 17 are in Dakhliyah, 14 in Musandam, five in Dhofar and the remaining in Muscat.

The plots offered are not re-

stricted for any particular purpose and are located in areas with large population density.

Of the 15 investment sites, eight are in Dakhliyah, three each in Dhofar and Musandam and one in Muscat.

To bid for sites, interested parties must be registered with the Real Estate Development Services Centre using their ID or commercial register number.

International conference on quality, value engineering on Feb 21-22

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Secretariat General of the Tender Board, in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour, will organise the 4th International Conference on Quality and Value Engineering on February 21. The two-day event themed 'Value Engineering in the Age of Uncertainty' will be held at Grand Millennium Muscat.

This year's theme has been prompted by the global chal-

lenges faced by countries, as well as institutions and companies. These challenges, particularly of the economy, require institutions to reconsider many factors, including raising production capacity, and improving performance and quality level, while maintaining financial efficiency and reducing costs.

The event aims at raising awareness on the importance of value engineering, and consolidation of the culture of value en-

gineering, the importance of using it to improve quality and raise efficiency.

The conference will discuss several topics, most significantly how to manage time and cost as essential elements in value engineering and the importance of teamwork for successful value engineering projects, as well as applying engineering in strategic projects in the water sector in Oman and in big data projects in the oil and gas exploration and production.

Al Kawthar Islamic Shariah Compliant Fund			
“Value added exposure to GCC Markets”			
BOARD OF DIRECTOR REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31ST, 2022.			
Dear Unitholders,			
On behalf of the board, I am pleased to present the results of Al Kawthar Fund (Shariah Compliant) for the Year ended 31 st December, 2022.			
The implications of global inflation and the steps taken by the global central banks to combat inflation by hiking the interest rates had affected the global markets adversely in 2022. Further, the sanctions on Russia in 2022 worsened the performance of stock markets across the globe.			
The Fund ended the year 2022 in line with the benchmark, despite the volatility of the GCC stock markets. Furthermore, the Fund has given an annualized 3-year return of 7.66%. The Fund value at the end of the period was RO. 5.98mn and the Net Asset Value per unit stood at RO 1.080.			
Market Performance			
Period	Al Kawthar	Benchmark	
Full Year 2022	-7.10%	-6.78%	
Full Year 2021	27.32%	30.02%	
Full Year 2020	5.49%	2.48%	
Last 3 Years Annualized	7.66%	7.50%	
Global growth slowed through 2022 on monetary tightening. China's Covid restrictions and property slump, and the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war. GCC equity markets once again outperformed their global peers during 2022 by posting a smaller decline during the year as compared to double digit declines for most major global markets. Brent Oil Prices were very volatile during the year, it reached the highest level in March 2022 at \$127.98/ barrel and ended the year at \$ 85.91/barrel. The performance of the GCC was mixed during the year 2022 after demonstrating one of the biggest gains globally in 2021, it outperformed global peers during 2022. Abu Dhabi was the best performing market in the GCC for the second consecutive year, ending with 20.3% gains, followed by MSX which gained 17.6% YTD. Bahrain and Dubai Markets ended the year with 5.5% and 4.4% gain respectively, while the Kuwait all shares index gained 3.5% for the year. Qatar market was the biggest decliner in the GCC with a decline of 8.1% followed by a 7.1% drop in Saudi market.			
Brief Summary of Accounts			
Particulars	31st Dec 2022 RO	31st Dec 2021 RO	
Revenues	(185,142)	1,821,312	
Total Comprehensive Income	(425,886)	1,463,824	
Net Asset Value	5,980,688	6,515,186	
Fund Capital	5,537,963	5,408,457	
NAV per unit	1.080	1.205	
Outlook			
The outlook for GCC markets remains buoyant. Oil prices are expected to remain range bound in the \$80 to \$90/barrel, which will be supportive for Government budgets. Saudi Giga Projects (NEOM etc) and improving consumption trends coupled with Qatar's LNG expansion remain drivers for 2022. Improved liquidity in the UAE, driven by windfall hydrocarbon revenues is driving spending on projects including green projects approximating USD 160 Billion. However, the introduction of corporate taxation in June 23 may weigh on equities in the short term. Qatar's LNG production is expected to increase by 64% to 126 million tons per annum by 2027 (approximately USD 30 Billion). Activity around the expansion is expected to benefit banking, shipping, and construction stocks. Further, a new Mortgage Law coupled with infrastructure projects in Kuwait bode well for banks.			
China's recent reopening which marks a departure from its 'Zero-Covid Policy' has paved the way for supportive Oil prices in the medium term. OPEC's unusually proactive market management coupled with an anticipated return to 2019 levels of aviation demand would add ~2 mtd to global demand.			
Nevertheless, global risks of further interest rates hike in the US and the war in Ukraine continue to weigh on the outlook for economic activity in the United States and Europe and consequently on Oil Market sentiment. Therefore, we maintain a cautious view on the markets and believe our approach of stock selection and portfolio management shall ensure steady and positive returns over the medium to long term.			
We pay our tributes to His Majesty, Haitham Bin Tarik, for his inspiring leadership and vision that will continue to lead us further on the path to greater prosperity.			
On behalf of the members of the Board of Directors, I would like to acknowledge and thank his Majesty government and our valued unit holders for their continued support.			
Rawan Ahmed Al Said Chairperson			
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022			
	31 December 2022	31 December 2021	
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Investments at fair value through profit or loss	5,150,405	6,064,160	
Receivables	428,028	310,794	
Cash and cash equivalents	485,742	391,954	
Total assets	6,064,175	6,766,908	
UNITHOLDERS' FUNDS			
Fund capital	5,537,963	5,408,300	
Retained earnings	442,724	1,106,885	
Total Unitholders' funds	5,980,687	6,515,185	
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Accruals and other payables	39,622	35,208	
Due to a related party	43,866	216,515	
Total liabilities	83,488	251,723	
TOTAL UNITHOLDERS' FUNDS AND LIABILITIES	6,064,175	6,766,908	
Net asset value per unit	1.080	1.205	
STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022			
	Year ended 31 December 2022	Year ended 31 December 2021	
INCOME			
Dividend income from financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	200,612	183,471	
Realised gain on sale of financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	340,961	889,444	
Unrealised (loss)/gain on financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	(723,704)	743,746	
Foreign exchange (loss)/gain	(3,011)	4,651	
	(185,142)	1,821,312	
EXPENSES			
Management, performance, custodian and fund administration fees	(142,009)	(299,804)	
General and administrative expenses	(98,735)	(57,684)	
	(240,744)	(357,488)	
Net (loss)/ profit for the year	(425,886)	1,463,824	
(Loss)/earnings per unit	(0.078)	0.271	

TATHMEER TANMIA GCC Diversified Fund			
BOARD OF DIRECTOR REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31ST, 2022.			
Dear Unitholders,			
On behalf of the board, I am pleased to present the report for the quarter ended 31 st December 2022 of TANMIA GCC Diversified Equity Fund (TATHMEER).			
The implications of global inflation and the steps taken by the global central banks to combat inflation by hiking the interest rates had affected the global markets adversely in 2022. Further, the sanctions on Russia in 2022 worsened the performance of stock markets across the globe.			
Despite the higher volatility in the market, the Fund continues to outperform its benchmark on a YTD basis. Furthermore, the Fund has given an annualized 3-year return of 9.10%. The Fund value at the end of the period was USD 21.96mn and the Net Asset Value per unit stood at USD 1.18.			
Performance			
Period	TANMIA GCC Fund	Benchmark	
Full Year 2022	-4.73%	-6.84%	
Full Year 2021	32.90%	31.45%	
Full Year 2020	2.56%	-2.46%	
Last 3 Years Annualized	9.10%	6.10%	
Global growth slowed through 2022 on monetary tightening. China's Covid restrictions and property slump, and the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war. GCC equity markets once again outperformed their global peers during 2022 by posting a smaller decline during the year as compared to double digit declines for most major global markets. Brent Oil Prices were very volatile during the year, it reached the highest level in March 2022 at \$127.98/ barrel and ended the year at \$ 85.91/barrel.			
The performance of the GCC was mixed during the year 2022 after demonstrating one of the biggest gains globally in 2021, it outperformed global peers during 2022. Abu Dhabi was the best performing market in the GCC for the second consecutive year, ending with 20.3% gains, followed by MSX which gained 17.6% YTD. Bahrain and Dubai Markets ended the year with 5.5% and 4.4% gain respectively, while the Kuwait all shares index gained 3.5% for the year. Qatar market was the biggest decliner in the GCC with a decline of 8.1% followed by a 7.1% drop in Saudi market.			
Brief Summary of Accounts			
Particulars	For the Year ended 31 Dec 2022 (USD)	For the Year ended 31 Dec 2021 (USD)	
Revenue for the period	(304,339)	7,424,338	
Total Comprehensive Income/ (loss) for the period	(901,993)	6,833,349	
Net Asset Value	21,963,833	23,827,235	
Fund Capital	18,674,905	18,476,036	
Net Asset Value per unit	1.18	1.29	
Outlook			
The outlook for GCC markets remains buoyant. Oil prices are expected to remain range bound in the \$80 to \$90/barrel, which will be supportive for Government budgets. Saudi Giga Projects (NEOM etc) and improving consumption trends coupled with Qatar's LNG expansion remain drivers for 2022. Improved liquidity in the UAE, driven by windfall hydrocarbon revenues is driving spending on projects including green projects approximating USD 160 Billion. However, the introduction of corporate taxation in June 23 may weigh on equities in the short term. Qatar's LNG production is expected to increase by 64% to 126 million tons per annum by 2027 (approximately USD 30 Billion). Activity around the expansion is expected to benefit banking, shipping, and construction stocks. Further, a new Mortgage Law coupled with infrastructure projects in Kuwait bode well for banks.			
China's recent reopening which marks a departure from its 'Zero-Covid Policy' has paved the way for supportive Oil prices in the medium term. OPEC's unusually proactive market management coupled with an anticipated return to 2019 levels of aviation demand would add ~2 mtd to global demand.			
Nevertheless, global risks of further interest rates hike in the US and the war in Ukraine continue to weigh on the outlook for economic activity in the United States and Europe and consequently on Oil Market sentiment. Therefore, we maintain a cautious view on the markets and believe our approach of stock selection and portfolio management shall ensure steady and positive returns over the medium to long term.			
We pay our tributes to His Majesty, Haitham Bin Tarik, for his inspiring leadership and vision that will continue to lead us further on the path to greater prosperity.			
On behalf of the members of the Board of Directors, I would like to acknowledge and thank his Majesty government and our valued unit holders for their continued support.			
Rawan Ahmed Al Said Chairperson			
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022			
	2021 RO	2022 RO	
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Investments at fair value through profit or loss	8,219,622	7,077,886	18,384,118
Receivables	792,395	861,052	2,236,499
Cash and cash equivalents	258,780	564,084	1,465,154
Total assets	9,270,797	8,503,022	22,085,771
UNIT HOLDERS' FUNDS			
Fund capital	7,113,274	7,189,850	18,674,935
Retained earnings	2,060,212	1,266,214	3,288,868
Total Unit holders' funds	9,173,486	8,456,064	21,963,803
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Accruals and other payables	55,490	8,169	21,217
Amount due to a related party	41,821	38,789	100,751
Total liabilities	97,311	46,958	121,968
Total unit holders' funds and liabilities	9,270,797	8,503,022	22,085,771
Net asset value per unit	0.50	0.45	1.18
STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022			
	2021 RO	2022 RO	
INCOME			
Dividend income on financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	249,032	283,628	7,36,697
Realised gain on sale of financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	1,637,564	369,783	9,60,475
Unrealised (loss)/gain on financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	989,016	(751,533)	(1,952,033)
Foreign exchange loss	(17,739)	(24,563)	(63,800)
Finance income	496	5,514	14,322
	2,858,369	(117,171)	(304,339)
EXPENSES			
Management and custodian fees	(164,442)	(166,651)	(432,861)
General and administrative expenses	(63,069)	(63,445)	(164,793)
Net (loss) / profit for the year	(227,531)	(230,096)	(597,654)
(Loss) / earnings per unit	2,630,838	(347,267)	(901,993)
	0.13	(0.02)	(0.05)

OO Group

A Promising Investment Opportunity

ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES

Initial Public Offering of 377,398,000 Shares

Category I Subscription Price Range: Bzs 242 to Bzs 249 per Share

Category II Subscription Price: Discounted Maximum Price of Bzs 224 per Share, calculated as the Maximum Price of Bzs 249 less a discount of 10 per cent.

Category I Offer Period: 20 February 2023 to 2 March 2023

Category II Offer Period: 20 February 2023 to 1 March 2023

This summary has been extracted from the unofficial translation of the original Prospectus prepared in Arabic and approved by the CMA in accordance with Administrative Decision No. KH/8/2023 dated 9 February 2023. This does not constitute an offer to sell or invitation by or on behalf of the Issuer to subscribe to any of the Shares in any jurisdiction outside of Oman where such distribution is, or may be, unlawful.

General Information on the Offer and the Company

Name	Abraj Energy Services SAOG (under transformation)
Commercial registration number	1844355
Date of registration	28 May 2006
Registered office	P.O. Box 1156, Postal Code 130 South Al Ghubra, Boushar, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
Principal place of business	Sultanate of Oman
Duration	Unlimited
Issued and paid-up share capital	OMR 77020,000 divided into 770,200,000 Shares with a nominal value of 100 Bzs per Share
Issue Manager(s)	Ahli Bank SAOG PO Box 545, Postal Code 116 Mina Al Fahal, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman Tel: +968 24577830 Website: www.ahlibank.com National Bank of Oman SAOG PO Box 781, Postal Code 112 Ruwi, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman Tel: +968 24778762 Website: www.nbo.om

Articles of Association

The principal objectives for which the Company is established are for providing drilling, workover, fracturing, cementing & other well services and well engineering solutions to the oil & gas sector in the Sultanate of Oman. A copy of the Memorandum and Articles is available for perusal at the head office of the Company during business hours on any business day at MOC Pension Fund Building, Fourth Floor, Building No. 420, Plot No. 944, Block No. 11 TH, Way No1005, Al Mawaleh, Sultanate of Oman.

Shareholding Pattern

Name of Shareholder	Number of Shares held	% of Total	Aggregate Value of Shares held (OMR)
OO Exploration and Production LLC	693,180,000	90.00%	69,318,000
OOCEP Holdings Limited	7702,298	9.99%	770,129,800
Musandam Gas Plant LLC	7702	0.001	770.20
Total	770,200,000	100.00%	770,200,000

Brief profile of the Selling Shareholders:

OO Exploration and Production LLC (OO EP) is a wholly owned subsidiary of OO SAOG (together with its subsidiaries, the OO Group), which in turn is 100 per cent. owned by the Oman Investment Authority. OO EP undertakes the OO Group's oil and gas exploration, development and production business.

OOCEP Holdings Limited (OOCEP HL), a wholly owned subsidiary of OO EP, was established solely for investment in the oil and gas sector in Oman.

Musandam Gas Plant LLC, a subsidiary of OO EP and OOCEP HL, was established solely for investment in the oil and gas sector in Oman.

Further information about the OO Group and its subsidiaries is available at <https://www.ooc.com>.

Anchor Investors

The Company has received irrevocable commitments from the Anchor Investors to subscribe to the Offer at the Maximum Price. The following table provides details of the Offer Shares to be allotted to each Anchor Investor:

Name of Anchor Investor	Number of Shares Subscribed for at the Maximum Price (OMR)	Subscription Amount at the Maximum Price (OMR)	% of Offer
Saudi Omari Investment Company ⁽¹⁾	75,478,600	18,794,420	20%
Royal Court Affairs	37738,800	9,397,210	10%
Slumberger Oman & Co LLC	37738,800	9,397,210	10%
Total	150,996,200	37,588,840	40%

(1) Saudi Omari Investment Company is a wholly owned entity of the Public Investment Fund of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Please refer to "Chapter XIX-Subscription and Sale - Anchor Investors" of the Prospectus for more details on the Anchor Investors.

Description of Abraj and Business Overview

Established in 2006, Abraj is the leading provider of onshore drilling services in Oman, as measured by the number of contracted operating drilling rigs as at 30 June 2022. Through its two business segments, (i) Drilling and Workover Services and (ii) Well Services, the Company provides a wide range of complementary onshore oil and gas field services. The Company's vision is to be the market leading provider of oil and gas field services in Oman, as well as one of the leading providers of these services in the region.

Competitive Strengths

The Company's competitive strengths include:

- being a leading onshore oil and gas field services provider in Oman, with a wide service offering including drilling, workover and well services
- favourable market and sector fundamentals
- possessing a well-invested fleet of modern, built-for-purpose rigs
- revenue volatility that reflects long standing relationships with a diverse customer base that drives a healthy backlog with a long contract duration
- a business that benefits from high barriers to entry in Oman
- robust financial performance characterized by strong growth margins and cash flow generation capabilities
- a strong health, safety and environment culture
- a highly experienced management team with a proven track record of growing the business and creating value, coupled with a committed shareholder base

The Company's strategies include:

- further growing its leading domestic drilling market position and achieving further growth in other segments by capitalising on:
 - new build rig opportunities in the market, which will be driven by leading IOCs with whom the Company already has strong relationships; and
 - replacement of ageing rigs in the local market
- establishing a market position in the MENA region by seeking to capture opportunities where the Company already has pre-qualifications, with a particular focus on Kuwait.

Risk Factors

Prior to investing in Offer Shares, prospective Applicants should carefully consider the risk factors relating to Abraj's business and industry described in "Chapter IV - Risk Factors" together with all other information contained in the Prospectus, including the financial information set out in "Chapter XII - Selected Financial Information", "Chapter XIII - Operating and Financial Review" and "Chapter XXIV - Historical Financial Statements" of the Prospectus, before making any investment decision relating to the Offer Shares. These risks and uncertainties are not the only issues that Abraj faces; additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to Abraj (or that Abraj currently believes to be immaterial) may also have a material adverse or beneficial effect on its financial condition or business success. The occurrence of any or a combination of the events mentioned in "Chapter IV - Risk Factors" of the Prospectus could have a material adverse or beneficial effect on Abraj's business, results of operations, financial condition and prospects and cause the market price of the Shares to fall significantly and investors to lose all or part of their investment. Unless otherwise stated in the relevant risk factors set out in the Prospectus, Abraj is not in a position to specify or quantify the financial or other risks mentioned therein.

Board of Directors

The current composition of the Board of Directors, in accordance with Article 6 of the Articles is as follows:

Name	Representing	Independent / Non-Independent
Mr. Ayad Al Bolukhi	MGP	Non-Independent
Mr. Ahmed Al Azkawi	OO EP	Non-Independent
Mr. Ashraf Al Momari	OOCEP HL	Non-Independent
Mr. Khamsi Al Soadi	Personal Capacity	Independent
Mr. Muhsin Abdul Mujeed Raja Al Rusom	Personal Capacity	Independent
Dr. Amer Al Rowas	Personal Capacity	Independent
Ms. Moshael Moosa	Personal Capacity	Non-Independent

Senior Management Team

The current composition of the Management is as follows:

Name	Position
Mr. Saif Al Homrani	Chief Executive Officer
Mr. Lukshmi Rajan	Chief Financial Officer
Mr. Salah Al Harthy	Business Development Director
Dr. Abdulla Allobi	General Counsel
Mr. Saif Al Hussaini	Director - Drilling and Workover

Subscription Conditions and Procedures

The Offer entails two categories, i.e. (a) Category I Offer, and (b) Category II Offer. Based on the Price Range, this Offer is being offered to Category I Investors through a bookbuild offering (as described in more detail in "Chapter XX-Bookbuilding Process") and to Category II Investors at the Discounted Maximum Price. All investors will be allotted Shares at the Offer Price. The Offer Price is the final price at which Shares will be issued and allotted pursuant to the terms of this Prospectus. The Offer Price will be decided by the Selling Shareholders in consultation with the Joint Global Coordinators and the CMA on the Pricing Date.

The Category I Offer process shall be conducted through the E-PO Mechanism. For further information on the subscription conditions and procedures applicable to both the Category I Offer and Category II Offer, please see "Chapter XVIII - Subscription Conditions and Procedures" of the Prospectus.

Offer Structure for Category I and Category II

	Category I Investors (Large Investors)	Category II Investors (Small Investors)
No. of Equity Shares	245,306,700 to 320,768,300 Shares	56,609,700 to 132,069,300 Shares
Percentage of Offer Size	65 to 85 per cent. The aggregate allocation to Category I Investors may be reduced to a maximum of 65 per cent. of the Offer size if there is excess demand in Category II; if the aggregate demand in Category II is less than 15 per cent. of the Offer size and there is excess demand in Category I, then after full allocation to Category II Investors, the balance of the Shares will be made available to Category I Investors for allocation at the Offer Price.	15 to 35 per cent. If there is excess demand in Category II, the allocation to Category II Investors may be increased up to a maximum of 35 per cent. of the Offer size. If the aggregate demand in Category II is less than 15 per cent. of the Offer size, then after full allocation to Category II Investors, the balance of the Shares will be made available to Category I Investors for allocation at the Offer Price. If there is oversubscription in Category I.
Basis of Allotment	Determined by the Selling Shareholders in consultation with the Joint Global Coordinators and CMA	Proportionate The CMA may decide to distribute a minimum number of Shares offered for subscription to all subscribers equally, with the remainder of the Shares being distributed as set out above
Minimum Subscription	803,300 Shares and in multiples of 100 Shares thereafter	1,000 Shares and in multiples of 100 Shares thereafter
Maximum Subscription	37739,800 Shares, which is equal to 10 per cent. of the Offer size (not applicable to Anchor Investors)	803,200 Shares

Terms of Payment	Investors must make payment to the designated bank account of the Collection Agents, and the Collection Agents will transfer the subscription proceeds, at least one business day prior to the Settlement Date to the designated bank account of the Issue Managers	100 per cent. of the Category II Application Money to be paid at the time of submission of the Application to the relevant Collection Agent(s)
Other Conditions	Applications to be submitted to any of the Collection Agents on or before 2 March 2023	Applications to be submitted to any of the Collection Agents on or before 1 March 2023
Offer Period	20 February 2023 to 2 March 2023	20 February 2023 to 1 March 2023

For additional details on the circumstances under which the allocations between Category I Investors and Category II Investors could change see "Chapter XVIII - Subscription Conditions and Procedures - Basis of Allotment" of the Prospectus.

Eligibility for the Subscription of Offer Shares

The Offer will be open in Oman to Omani and non-Omani individuals and juristic persons who have their accounts with MDCD. All individuals and juristic persons who are nationals of or registered in (as applicable) the countries comprising the Gulf Cooperation Council are treated as Omani individuals and juristic persons for the purpose of owning shares in Omani SAOGs. No single person shall by themselves, or through a related person up to the second degree, hold or purchase more than 10 per cent. of the Offer size, except with the explicit written approval of the CMA as per the applicable regulations.

Prohibitions with regard to the Applications for subscription

In accordance with the Capital Market Law of Oman issued by Royal Decree 80/1998, as repealed and superseded by the Securities Law, the following persons shall not be permitted to subscribe to the Offer:

- Sole proprietorship establishments: the owners of sole proprietorship establishments may only submit Applications in their personal names;
- Trust accounts: Investors registered under trust accounts may only submit Applications in their personal names (except as detailed below);
- Multiple Applications: an investor may not submit more than one Application;
- Joint Applications: investors may not submit applications in the name of more than one individual (including on behalf of legal heirs);
- Founding Shareholders: the founding shareholders of the Company may not submit any Applications; and
- Related Parties: the related parties of the Company cannot participate in the Category I Offer except where such relationship is due to common shareholding or control exercised by the administrative apparatuses of the Government.

Any Applications not complying with the above criteria may be rejected without contacting the investor, although Applications by Trust Accounts may be accepted in the Offer, at the discretion of the Joint Global Coordinators or the Collection Agents (as applicable). If they are notified that none of the underlying subscribers applying through such Trust Accounts have also applied through their names or their personal establishments, The Joint Global Coordinators or Collection Agents (as applicable) may reject such Application if they become aware that there are multiple applications from such investors applying through Trust Accounts. The acceptance by the Joint Global Coordinators or Collection Agents (as applicable) of Applications by Trust Accounts will require issuance of an undertaking signed by the investor providing further details of the underlying Investors/beneficiaries on whose behalf the Application has been made. The Joint Global Coordinators or Collection Agents (as applicable) will clearly communicate to each investor that in case of multiple Applications by a Trust Account and its underlying investor(s) in their or their personal establishment's name, all Applications may be rejected at the discretion of the Joint Global Coordinators or Collection Agents (as applicable).

Subscription on behalf of minor children

For the purpose of this Offer, any person under 18 years of age on the date of submission of an Application will be defined as a minor. Only a father may subscribe on behalf of his minor children. If an Application is made on behalf of a minor by any person other than the minor's father, the person submitting the Application will be required to attach a valid Shar'a (Legal) Power of Attorney issued by the competent authorities authorising him or her to deal in the funds of the minor through sale, purchase and investment.

Investor's Investor Number with MDCD

Any investor who subscribes for the Offer Shares must have an account and investor number with the MDCD. Any investor may apply to obtain an investor number and open an account by completing the MDCD Application. This may be obtained from and submitted to the MDCDGs head office at PO Box 952, Postal Code 112, Ruwi, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, or its website at www.mdcg.gov.om, or from brokerage companies licensed by the CMA.

Offer Period

The Category I Offer Period will commence on 20 February 2023 and end on 2 March 2023.

The Category II Offer Period will commence on 20 February 2023 and end on 1 March 2023.

CATEGORY I OFFER (LARGE INVESTORS)

Subscription and Application Process for Category I Applicants

Maximum Limit of Subscription

The maximum number of Shares that may be purchased pursuant to an Application for Category I Investors (not applicable to Anchor Investors) is equivalent to 10 per cent. of the total Offer size, or 37739,800 Shares. An investor in Category I may not subscribe for more than 10 per cent. of the total Offer size as a single person, either directly or through a related person up to the second degree, hold or purchase Shares equivalent to more than 10 per cent. of the Offer size, except with the explicit written approval of the CMA as per the applicable regulations. The maximum number of Shares that may be purchased in the Offer by Anchor Investors in aggregate is equivalent to 40 per cent. of the total Offer size, or 150,959,200 Shares, and any individual Anchor investor may purchase up to 20 per cent. of the total Offer size, or 75,478,600 Shares. The Company, in consultation with the CMA, has determined to limit the size of Applications for Category II Investors to 803,300 Shares. Each investor is advised to ensure that its Application for Shares does not exceed:

- 37738,800 Shares for Category I Investors (not applicable to Anchor Investors); and
- 803,200 Shares for Category I Investors.

None of the Company, the Selling Shareholders, the Issue Managers, the Joint Global Coordinators or the Collection Agents are liable for any changes in applicable laws or regulations that occur after the date of this Prospectus. Investors are advised to make their own independent investigations to ensure that their Applications comply with prevailing laws and regulations.

Price Range

The Price Range has been fixed at Bzs 242 to Bzs 249 per Share, with Bzs 242 being the minimum price and Bzs 249 being the maximum price. The Price Range has been determined through an investor education process, in which the Joint Global Coordinators gathered information on the views on their views on the pricing of the Offer Shares, the Company's strengths and weaknesses and the valuation of the Company. This was done both through the research analyst reports and directly by each Joint Global Coordinator. The Selling Shareholders evaluated the information collected during this stage with the CMA and the Joint Global Coordinators to determine the Price Range.

Subscription Process for Category I Investors

Category I Investors may place Applications with any of the Collection Agents during official banking hours prior to or on the Category I Offer Closing Date. Applications, once submitted, are binding and can only be modified once by submitting an Application Revision Form for a higher quantity of Shares, a higher price or both, on or before the Category I Offer Closing Date.

Applications shall contain a maximum of three price and quantity combinations (bids). Each Collection Agent shall be responsible for verifying if the Application complies with the instructions set out in this Prospectus.

Payment for the Shares purchased by Category I Investors shall be made in Omani Rials. Purchasers will be required to make full payment for the Shares to the designated bank account of the Collection Agents, and the Collection Agents will transfer the subscription proceeds, at least one business day prior to the Settlement Date to the designated bank account of the Issue Managers in accordance with the provisions of "Chapter XVII - Subscription Conditions and Procedures - Terms of Payment for Category I". In the event of a failure to make timely payment, purchasers of the Shares may incur significant charges and/or enforcement action against them.

Price Discovery and Determination of Offer Price and Allocation

After the Category I Offer Closing Date and once all Applications have been submitted to the Issue Managers by the Collection Agents, the Joint Global Coordinators will collectively analyse the demand generated by the Category I Investors at various price levels and discuss pricing strategy with the Selling Shareholders. The Selling Shareholders in consultation with the Joint Global Coordinators and the CMA will determine the Offer Price, which will be within the Price Range. The allocation of Shares to Category I Investors will be determined by the Selling Shareholders in consultation with the Joint Global Coordinators and the CMA. Factors that may be considered by the Joint Global Coordinators and the Selling Shareholders and that will be discussed with the CMA when determining the allocations between prospective Category I Investors may include participation in the marketing process for the Offer, holding behaviour in previous offerings, holdings in similar companies and other factors that the Joint Global Coordinators and the Selling Shareholders may deem relevant. If there is undersubscription in Category I (such that it comprises less than 15 per cent. of the Offer Size) and provided that there is oversubscription in Category I, the Selling Shareholders will make any unsubscribed Shares of Category II available for allocation to the Category I Investors. If the demand from Category I Investors is less than the Shares offered for Category I, the Offer size may be reduced or the Offer may be withdrawn, in consultation with the CMA.

If Category I receives demand above the allocated 15 per cent. of the Offer size, the allocation of Shares to Category II Investors shall be increased to such levels as are required to meet such excess demand, up to a maximum of 35 per cent. of the total Offer size. Any increase in the Category II Offer size due to excess demand will result in a corresponding reduction in the allocation to Category I Investors.

On the next working day after receiving CMA approval of the proposed allotment, (i) the Offer Price will be announced by the Company on the MSX and (ii) the Issue Managers will send the investor allocation details to the MDCD and the Joint Global Coordinators, and the Joint Global Coordinators and/or the MDCD, as applicable, will notify Category I investors of their allocations.

Terms of Payment for Category I

Each Collection Agent will open an escrow account entitled the "Abraj IPO - Category I" account for the collection of the Category I Application Money.

The Issue Managers will open an escrow account entitled the "Abraj IPO - Category I" account to receive the subscription proceeds from the Collection Agents at least one business day prior to Settlement Date. This account will be managed by each Issue Manager for Category I. After deduction of all applicable fees and VAT, each Issue Manager for Category I will transfer the net proceeds in such account to the escrow account of the MDCD on the Settlement Date.

Each Category I Investor shall be required to make full payment for their subscribed Shares to the designated bank account of the Collection Agents, and the Collection Agents will transfer the subscription proceeds at least one business day prior to the Settlement Date, to the designated bank account of the Issue Managers. In the event of failure to make timely payment, the concerned Category I Investor may incur significant charges and/or enforcement action against them. Investors can pay for their subscription by drawing a demand draft issued by a bank in Oman or by instructing an account transfer for the amount payable at the time stated above.

Delivery of the Offer Shares is expected to be made on the Settlement Date to the accounts of the Category I Investors through the book-entry facilities operated by the MDCD.

CATEGORY II OFFER (SMALL INVESTORS)

Subscription and Application Process for Category II Applicants

Initially, 15 per cent. of the Offer (56,609,700 Shares) will be available for subscription by and allocation to Category II Investors, although this may be increased to a maximum of 35 per cent. of the Offer (132,069,300 Shares) if there are sufficient Applications from Category II Investors.

Mode of Application

The Category II Offer process will be conducted through the E-PO Mechanism.

Collection Agent E-PO Platform

Investors will be able to submit Applications to the Collection Agents during official banking working hours on or before the Category II Offer Closing Date. Investors will need to contact a Collection Agent for further guidance on the E-PO channel provided by the respective Collection Agent.

The investor will be required, before completing the Application through E-PO, to carefully read this Prospectus, including the conditions and procedures governing the E-PO Application. Copies of this Prospectus will be available to investors through the Collection Agents, on the Company's IPO microsite or can be downloaded from the websites of the CMA and MSX, as follows: www.cma.gov.om and www.msx.om, respectively.

The Category II Application Money will be paid by the Investor as per the terms of the E-PO Mechanism used by each Collection Agent.

MDCD E-PO Platform

Investors can provide their particulars in the E-PO Platform on the MDCD website (www.mdcg.gov.om). After verifying all the particulars, the investor will need to print the E-PO Application. The investor needs to submit the E-PO Application along with supporting documents and Category II Application Money to one of the Collection Agents. The investor will need to contact a Collection Agent for further guidance on the E-PO channel provided by the respective Collection Agent. The Category II Application Money will be paid by the investor as per the terms of the E-PO collection process utilised by each Collection Agent. The Collection Agent will, after verifying the supporting documents and confirming the receipt of the Category II Application Money, validate the E-PO Application in the E-PO Platform and share a copy of the acknowledgement of the E-PO Application with each investor. The investor needs to ensure that they receive a copy of the acknowledgement from the Collection Agent as a valid proof of their Application.

Application Money

Along with submission of the Application, all Category II Investors must make a payment of 100 per cent. of the subscription amount, calculated as the total number of Shares applied for multiplied by the Discounted Maximum Price, which is Bzs 224 per Share (the "Category II Application Money").

Refunds

Any refunds due to Category II Investors will be calculated based on the difference between (i) the Discounted Maximum Price of Bzs 224 per Share and (ii) the Offer Price less a discount of 10 per cent. The Offer Price will be determined by the outcome of the bookbuild offering to Category I Investors. All investors will be allotted Shares at the same Offer Price.

Applications

The Application must be completed in full in accordance with the instructions contained in this Prospectus and in the Application form. Incomplete Applications may be rejected. Investors may only use the specified Application for the purpose of making a subscription for the Offer.

Each investor is eligible to submit only one Application. Submission of a second Application to either the same or to another Collection Agent will be treated as such investor having submitted multiple applications and may result in all Applications submitted by the investor being rejected at any point in time prior to the allotment of Shares in the Offer.

Terms of Payment for Category II

The Collection Agents will open an escrow account for the collection of the Category I Application Money.

This account will be managed by each Collection Agent, who will within the next working day after the receipt of Category II Application Money transfer the collection proceeds to the common escrow account maintained by the MDCD.

Each Category II Investor can pay by cash, drawing a demand draft issued by a bank in Oman or instruct an account transfer for the amount payable at the time of submission of the Application.

Basis of Allotment

Applications received from Category II Investors will be grouped together to determine the total demand under Category II. The allotment to all Category II Investors will be made at the Offer Price.

If the aggregate demand in Category II is less than or equal to 15 per cent. of the Offer (56,609,700 Shares), full allotment will be made to the Category II Investors up to the number of shares of their valid Applications. If the aggregate demand in Category II is less than 15 per cent. of the Offer, then after full allocation as above, the balance of the Shares shall be made available to Category I Investors for allocation at the Offer Price if there is oversubscription in Category I.

If the aggregate demand in Category II is greater than 15 per cent. of the Offer (56,609,700 Shares), then the allotment to Category II Investors will be increased up to a maximum of 35 per cent. of the Offer, and the Category I Offer will be reduced accordingly. If the aggregate demand in Category II is greater than 35 per cent. of the Offer (132,069,300 Shares), then allotments will be scaled back and made on a proportionate basis in consultation with the CMA.

Allotment Confirmation and Refund of Money for Category II

The MDCD will send an SMS to investors who have been allotted Shares to their mobile number registered with the MDCD after the end of the Category II Offer Period following receipt of the approval of the CMA on the proposed allotments. The MDCD is also expected to commence refunds of any excess money to eligible investors within three days maximum after receiving the approval of the CMA on the proposed allotments.

Particulars of the Bank Account of the Investors

In accordance with the instructions of the CMA, each Applicant will need to verify the details of the bank account listed in the records of the MDCD. The bank account listed in the records of the MDCD will be used for the transfer of refunds. For Category II Investors, the investor takes a leverage facility for the IPO from a Collection Agent, the refund will be made into the investor's loan account with the respective Collection Agent.

Documentation Required

A copy of a valid power of attorney duly endorsed by the competent legal authorities is required if the subscription is on behalf of another person (with the exception of a subscription made by a father on behalf of his minor children). For applications by juristic persons (non-individuals) which are signed by a person in his or her capacity as an authorised signatory, a copy of adequate and valid documentation should be attached.

Collecting Agents Receiving the Applications

The Collection Agent receiving the Applications is required to accept the Application, after confirmation of the Application's compliance with the procedures set out in the Prospectus. The Collection Agent must instruct the Applicants to comply and fulfil any Applications set out in the Application. Applicants must submit an Application to one of the Collection Agents on or before the closing of the relevant Offer Period. The Collection Agent shall refuse any Application received after the end of official working hours on Closing Date.

Acceptance of the Applications

The Issue Managers or the Collection Agents may not accept the Applications if:

- the Application does not bear the signature of the investor;
- the Application Money is not paid by the investor in accordance with the conditions set out in this Prospectus;
- the Application does not include the investor's Investor Number registered with the MDCD;
- the Application is submitted in joint names;

19,000sqm artificial lake to be built in Buraimi

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Buraimi is planning several projects to boost investment and job opportunities in the governorate. Among the projects envisaged is a 19,000sqm artificial lake, which is going to be the centrepiece of a major tourism project.

In an interview with Oman TV, Sayyid Hamad bin Ahmed bin Saud al Busaidi, Governor of Buraimi, said the governorate will launch several projects for investment with the aim of providing job opportunities to its people, stimulating commercial activity and increasing national income. "The governorate has al-

ready floated a tender to build an artificial lake on an area of 19,000sqm. Specialised international companies have shown interest in it."

He added the lake project will include a sandy beach, chalets, water games for children, and a conference centre to hold events.

"We are working to promote Buraimi by taking advantage of its strategic location and highlighting its tourist sites to support domestic tourism and also attract tourists from around the world," said Busaidi.

According to the governor, an integrated centre for innovation is under construction in the governorate, which will be a major venue to host events for youths



We are working to promote Buraimi by taking advantage of its strategic location and highlighting its tourist sites

SAYYID HAMAD AL BUSAIDI



and startups, funded by the private sector and supervised by the Ministry of Education.

"The governorate, in cooperation with competent authorities, seeks to provide facilities to businessmen and packages of exemptions to attract more investments. We have a programme to stimulate the economy by organising events in the governorate."

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism inaugurated the Buraimi Carnival on Wednesday, which will end on Sunday. The event's activities include a wide range of eateries serving local and international cuisine, entertainment shows like theatrical performances, and competitions.

EA eliminates 35,154 birds of invasive species in Dhofar



Our Correspondent
Muscat

As part of its efforts to combat invasive birds, the Environment Authority (EA) eliminated 35,154 invasive birds in Dhofar.

A statement issued by EA said, 'A team participating in the National Campaign on Combating Invasive Birds removed 35,154 invasive birds between December 13, 2022 and February 1, 2023.'

Elaborating further, it informed that 25,786 mynas and 9,368 house crows were eliminated. EA also reported the sighting of 57 species of invasive birds that were not reported earlier.

The national campaign was launched in Dhofar and will continue for several months covering other governorates, including Muscat and North Batinah.

Invasive birds influence the ecosystem in a negative way. They cause biological imbalance by disrupting the natural food chain. They also transmit diseases, like bird flu, and destroy agricultural crops, fruits and orchards.

In April 2022, EA formed a team to conduct a study on checking the spread of invasive species and developing a national strategy. The authority has onboarded an international ornithologist and prepared an integrated plan to

confront these birds.

The myna, originating from India, China, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal and Indonesia, belong to the starling family. These birds are 22-25cm long with wingspans of 36.5cm. They affect the food chain in the areas of their existence.

Mynas attack other birds' nests and kill the young ones. In 2000, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) declared the bird among '100 of the World's Most Invasive Species'.

EA's campaign in Dhofar was termed a success, as it met its target of restoring balance to the natural ecosystem.

Motorists spread awareness on traffic safety, tourism in Muscat

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ten members of Oman EVO Club, in cooperation with Royal Oman Police, organised a drive recently from Muscat to Jabal al Sifah.

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Haitham al Mahmoudi, head of Oman EVO Club, said, "The ten motorists from different governorates drove 100km, starting from Burj al Sahwa to Jabal al Sifah."

According to Mahmoudi, the drive aimed to raise awareness on tourist sites, the significance of sports - especially motor-



sports - and traffic safety.

"Our club consists of 17 members. On this drive, we visited a

few sites, including Qurm, Wadi Kabir, Qantab and Jabal al Sifah Resort. The team took pictures of

the beautiful scenery along the way and promoted these on social media."

The club has an annual plan to organise 12 events to stimulate domestic tourism, promote motorsports and spread awareness on traffic safety among community members.

In March, the team will organise a drive to Dakhliah and visit Jabal Akhdar, Nizwa Souq, Samail Fort and Jabal Hat.

"I hope that the youth follow traffic rules and safety measures. They should join official clubs to help them practise motorsports in the correct way," Mahmoudi said.

OMAN-UAE JOINT MILITARY DRILL CONTINUES IN ABU DHABI



A joint Oman-UAE military exercise, codenamed 'Cooperation-3', continues in Abu Dhabi. The 11-day drill, which concludes on February 16, is seeing the participation of a force from Muscat Regiment, 23rd Infantry Brigade of Royal Army of Oman and its support divisions, as well as aircraft from Royal Air Force of Oman and vessels from Royal Navy of Oman. From the UAE side, units from the land, air and naval forces are taking part (ONA)



OMAN CRICKET CLUB (OCC)

Invitation to attend the general body Meeting of the Club for the year 2023

The Board of Management of the Oman Cricket Club (OCC) will be holding its Annual General Meeting of the club for the year 2023. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, 14th March, 2023 commencing at 6.00 pm at the Oman Cricket Academy. All Members wishing to attend this meeting and whose membership may have expired are requested to proceed with renewal of the membership with effect from the date of this announcement. The last date for renewal of membership is Sunday, 5th March, 2023 before 5.00 pm.

As per Article No.29 of the Statute of the Sports Clubs No 124/2008, the meeting will be considered valid in the presence of an absolute majority of members of the club who are entitled to attend (half + one). If the required number of members are unavailable at 6.30 pm., the meeting could be postponed to another date within 15 days from the date of the first meeting, or be held on the same day at 7.00 pm.

The second meeting held on the same day will be considered valid in the presence of (quarter) of working members. Agenda will be available at OCC office before 7 days of the scheduled meeting.

**Secretary of the Club
Chairman of the Board of Directors**

National Museum exhibits perfume bottles presented by Sultan Qaboos to guests

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Highlighting the historical value of the frankincense tree, the National Museum is displaying a collection of perfume bottles dating back to 1983 made of crystal, gold (24 karat) and silver at its Land of Frankincense Gallery. The collection is the first aromatic innovation of Amouage Perfumes.

The perfumes were presented by the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said to his guests. The three fragrant flasks represent three great natural treasures of Oman - frankincense, rose and amber. Frankincense was and still is a bridge of communication and highly regarded globally.



One of the perfume bottle's shape was inspired by the Omani dagger. Another bottle is in the shape of a cube, plated with gold and engraved with delicate decorations, while a bottle cap design was inspired by a mosque dome.

The museum is also exhibiting a perfume bottle shaped like a Lily of the Valley from 1931, made of crystal and designed by Rene Lalique in Paris. The bottles will be on display at the museum for six months.

Oman joins launch of WHO report on trans-fat ban

Muscat - The sultanate, represented by the Ministry of Health, participated in the launch of a World Health Organization report on trans-fat elimination, which was held virtually under the chairmanship of Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of WHO.

The fourth annual report monitors global progress towards the 2023 goal of eliminating industrially produced trans-fatty acids, and highlights the achievements over the past year.

The sultanate took measures and issued a decision banning the use of trans-fat in April 2022.

Oman shared its experience during the meeting as one of the countries that applied best practices alongside Argentina and Nigeria.

Abraj IPO to open for subscription on Feb 20

Company plans to raise up to RO93.97mn via initial public offering

Abraj has brought in Saudi wealth fund, Schlumberger as anchor investors

Offer is expected to run from February 20, 2023 to March 2, 2023

Listing of shares on Muscat Stock Exchange is expected on or around March 14

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Abraj Energy Services, an indirectly wholly-owned subsidiary of Oman's global integrated energy group OQ, announced that the subscription period for its initial public offering (IPO) will commence on February 20, 2023.

OQ (the selling shareholder) is offering up to 377,398,000 shares, equivalent to 49 per cent of the total issued share capital of Abraj, in the IPO. Based on the offer price range the total IPO size is expected to be between RO91.33mn to RO93.97mn, implying a market capitalisation at listing of between RO186.39mn and RO191.78mn.

Abraj, the leading provider of onshore drilling and well services in Oman, has announced the publication of the IPO prospectus and details of the subscription period and process for its initial public offering on the MSX.

In a press statement, Saif al Hamhami, CEO of Abraj, said, "As one of the leading providers of onshore oilfield drilling and well services in Oman, we are confident in our leading domestic position and strong regional growth opportunities. Since announcing our intention to float on the MSX, we are extremely pleased to have received strong interest from investors. Amid robust sector fundamentals, a favourable market and with our diverse service offerings, including drilling, workover and well services, we believe that Abraj presents an attractive proposi-



Abraj Energy Services is the leading provider of oilfield drilling and well services in Oman

tion for investors."

Biggest Oman IPO since 2010

Abraj's initial public offering will be the biggest IPO in Oman since 2010, when Nawras (Omani Qatari Telecommunications Company) - now known as Ooredoo Oman - raised RO182mn via a book-building process IPO.

Abraj said its IPO will be offered in a parallel offering for Category I and Category II investors. The Category I offer (large investors) represents a maximum of 85 per cent of the total offering and will be made

available to eligible large and institutional investors in Oman and eligible international institutional investors outside the United States.

The Category I subscription price range for the offering has been set at between 242bz and 249bz per share. The offer for this category is expected to run from February 20 to March 2, 2023.

The Category II offer (small investors) represents a minimum of 15 per cent of the total offering, and will be made to eligible retail investors in Oman. The Category II subscription price is the discounted maximum

Category I offer (large investors) represents a maximum 85% of total offering and subscription price range for Category I offer has been set at between 242bz and 249bz per share

price of 224bz per share, calculated as the maximum price of 249bz per share less a discount of 10 per cent.

The Category II offer for retail

investors is expected to run from February 20 to March 1, 2023.

If there is excess demand in Category II, the allocation to Category II investors may be increased up to a maximum of 35 per cent of the offer size. If the aggregate demand in Category II is less than 15 per cent of the offer size, then after full allocation to Category II Investors, the balance of the shares will be made available to Category I investors for allocation at the offer price, if there is oversubscription in Category I.

All shares will be issued and allotted to investors at the same offer price, which will be deter-

mined based on the Category I book-building process. The offer price will be decided by the selling shareholders in consultation with the joint global coordinators and the Capital Market Authority (CMA) on the pricing date, expected to be on or around March 6, 2023.

Any refunds due to Category II investors will be calculated based on the difference between (i) the discounted maximum price and (ii) the offer price less a discount of 10 per cent.

The admission of the shares to listing and trading on the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) is expected on or around March 14,

2023.

Anchor investors

OQ has brought in Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund and global energy services giant Schlumberger as anchor investors for the Abraj IPO.

On February 7, Abraj entered into anchor investment agreements with the Saudi Omani Investment Company (a wholly owned entity of the Public Investment Fund), Royal Court Affairs and Schlumberger Oman & Co (together, the anchor investors).

In aggregate, the anchor investors have committed RO37.58mn to the IPO, representing 40 per cent of the offer size, with their shares subject to a 90 day lock-up arrangement, following admission.

In 2023, Abraj intends to pay a dividend of RO15.4mn for the year ended December 31, 2022, or 20bz per share. In 2024, the company intends to pay a dividend which is the higher of 85 per cent of net profit for 2023 or a six per cent increase on the dividend paid in 2023.

In 2025, the company intends to pay a dividend which is the higher of 85 per cent of net profit for 2024 or a six per cent increase on the dividend paid in 2024.

Ahli Bank, EFG-Hermes UAE Limited and National Bank of Oman have been appointed as joint global coordinators, and Ahli Bank and National Bank of Oman have been appointed as issue managers for the Abraj IPO.

Russia to slash oil output over Western price cap

London, UK - Russia announced Friday it will slash crude oil output by five per cent next month after Western countries imposed a price cap over its invasion of Ukraine.

International crude prices surged after Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said that Russia would "voluntarily" reduce production by 500,000 barrels per day in March.

"This will help restore market relations," Novak said, according to Russian news agencies, adding that the decision was taken by Moscow unilaterally.

He said the price cap was an "interference in the market and a continuation of the destructive energy policy of the countries of the collective West".



The West has imposed a slew of sanctions against Russia since the nearly year-old conflict erupted.

The oil measures aim to strip Russia, one of the world's top energy producers, of a major source of revenue as the war in Ukraine sent prices soaring last year.

An EU-wide ban on Russian oil products - like diesel, gasoline and jet fuel - came into effect Sunday alongside a Group of Seven price cap on the same items.

There are two price cap levels, US\$100 per barrel for more expensive fuel like diesel and US\$45 on lower-quality products such as fuel oil.

That expanded on an EU embargo on seaborne oil deliveries introduced in December - when it also established with G7 partners a US\$60-dollar-per-barrel

cap for exports around the world.

Russia retaliated with a decree banning oil sales to countries and companies that comply with the price ceiling.

European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen estimates that the oil price cap costs Moscow 160mn euros (US\$170mn) per day in lost revenue.

OPEC talks

News of Russia's cut to output gave strength to world oil prices Friday.

The international benchmark, Brent North Sea crude, and the New York contract WTI, which had been down earlier in the day, jumped by more than two per cent. Brent was 1.9 per cent higher at US\$86.07 in afternoon deals in Europe while WTI rose 1.7 per cent to US\$79.37.

Oil prices had already gained

support in recent weeks as the economy of top consumer China reopens following the end of almost three years of severe Covid restrictions.

Russia is part of the 23-nation OPEC+ crude cartel - which includes Saudi Arabia - that already agreed in October to reduce output by two million barrels per day until the end of this year.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said there were "conversations with a certain number of OPEC+ members" before Moscow decided on its own production cut on Friday.

"We believe the decision is not completely a voluntary one - despite the official claiming otherwise - as market factors likely forced the Russian side to make this decision," said UBS bank analyst Giovanni Staunovo.

AFP

Huawei to invest \$400mn to set up cloud region in Saudi Arabia

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia - During the LEAP 2023 event in Riyadh, Chinese technology giant Huawei announced it would launch a cloud region in Saudi Arabia to boost the country's digital economy and enable access to more advanced and secure cloud services for government, corporate and individuals.

Huawei Cloud followed this with a recent announcement to bolster digital transformation in the kingdom by investing US\$400mn in the next five years, the company said in a press release.



This renewed focus is based on the realisation that cloud is the foundation of digital transformation and the driver of a dynamic digital world. Cloud provides the building blocks of advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, IoT, Blockchain, and more.

To help customers migrate

to the cloud smoothly and derive maximum value from it, give them quick access to leading technologies on the cloud, and support its mission to unleash the power of digital, Huawei Cloud advocates an Everything-as-a-Service vision, which includes Infrastructure-as-a-Service, Technology-as-a-Service, and Expertise-as-a-Service.

With years of steady investment in AI, Huawei Cloud has launched a range of leading AI products, such as the AI development pipeline ModelArts, large pre-trained Pangu models,

digital human, and spatiotemporal computing services.

Huawei Cloud, with 29 regions and over 240 innovative cloud services, now serves more than 170 countries. The recent investment commits Huawei to promote the adoption and implementation of cloud and AI technologies in Saudi Arabia for all industries, serving customers in government and public service, finance, telecom, utility, oil and gas, transportation, retail, manufacture, entertainment and startups to accelerate their digital transformation and intelligent upgrade.

SALE ANNOUNCEMENT

The legal liquidator of a company announces the sale of the factory related to the UPVC industries [doors and windows] located in Rusayl Industrial City. The sale includes all the machines and buildings built on the site, owned by others, with the possibility of transferring the land lease contract.

For more details, please contact 71555163

SALE ANNOUNCEMENT

The official liquidator of a company announce the sale of a well running, well maintained and spacious restaurant for sale on prime location at The Walk, Al Mouj, the Wave. It includes with all equipment and accessories, staff available, spacious 7 tables (indoor- 26 covers but can be added more), spacious 5 tables (outdoor- 20 covers), one big kitchen, one store room, KST area, staff rest room, ample parking available, Including 2 cars & 1 bike.

Interested buyers can please contact 9942 4421

MEDRC, British Embassy sign MoU for training youth

MEDRC and British Embassy in Muscat have signed an agreement, to train a batch of young Omanis for self employment in the water treatment sector, during a ceremony held under the patronage of H E Dr Rahma al Mahrooqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation at MEDRC's office.

The agreement was signed by James Goldman, Charge d'Affaires of the British Embassy and Ciarán Ó Cuinn, MEDRC's center director, a press release said.

Under the agreement, MEDRC will deliver an intensive 9-week training programme in solar wastewater treatment. The programme will prepare 20 young Omanis for self-employment in the water treatment sector with the goal of boosting job creation and economic growth. Through the programme, the trainees will learn how to design, procure, build, and install small-scale solar grey treatment plants, meeting the needs of a variety of consumers.

H E Goldman said, "We are proud to sponsor REROM SME'S programme, providing vocational training to 20 young Omanis in



order to support them gain employment in the green economy building a more sustainable future. Innovation and entrepreneurship are critical to both UK and Oman which is why we are partnering with the Government of Oman on a range of initiatives to support the development of

SMEs in Oman. Alongside REROM, in the last 12 months, we have also helped accelerate over tech 20 companies and worked with the SME Authority on producing strategies to support their long term development across a diverse range of fields." Ó Cuinn added, "We are de-

lighted to partner with the British Embassy on this important project. Our joint programme will support Oman's focus on renewables and the green economy while also boosting jobs. The presence of H E Mahrooqi underlines the strategic importance of these activities."



ISM shines at 24th CBSE National Games 2022-23

Indian School Muscat students performed admirably well in the 24th CBSE National Games, 2022-23 held at various venues across India in December 2022, and January and February 2023.

The highly spirited contenders in various games converged from the CBSE-affiliated schools in India and the Arabian Gulf, at venues across India. Earlier they had qualified at various cluster meets conducted in several locations during the second half of 2022, a press release said.

In the Chess Championship held at Brookfield International School, Chandigarh (Punjab), the wizards of Indian School Muscat

brought glory to the school, winning more than 85 teams and 650 players. Shybi Binoj of Class IX won the gold medal and was crowned the Individual Champion title in the U-17 category for girls.

The winning streak continued with prizes for the Best Players. Ekansh Goel of Class X and Shybi Binoj of Class IX won the Best Player Award in the U-17 category for boys and girls respectively. The stunning performance of Darsan Rajmohan of Class VII won him the Best Player title in the U-14 category for boys.

In Athletics, at Sant Atulanand Convent School, Varanasi

(Uttar Pradesh), ISM presented a record number of athletes who made a mark. For the first time in the history of participation in the nationals, ISM sent 5 qualified relay teams - two boys' teams, and 3 girls' teams belonging to U19, U17, and U14 categories.

The U14 girls' team outshone all other worthy contestants, bagging a gold medal in the 4x100 relay. Namia Najeeb, Sree Nidhuna, P Nair, Manha Mariyam, and Evelia Achsah are the golden girls who received gold medals. This athletic team also won the most coveted Overall Team Championship Trophy in U14 Girls' category.



شركة التغليف المحدودة (ش.م.ع.ع) Packaging Co Ltd. (SAOG)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we present the Chairman's Report of "Packaging Co Ltd (SAOG)" for the year ended on 31st December 2022

The year ended with revenue of RO. 10,562,150/- and net loss of RO.168,514/- (after tax) as against revenue of RO. 9,538,597/- and net profit of RO.252,556/- (after tax) in the same period of previous year 2021. The profit before depreciation is RO.428,734/- (after tax) for the year 2022, compared to profit before depreciation of RO.788,144/- (after tax) in the previous year 2021.

The paper prices were highly volatile and increased to unprecedented levels, this has impacted company's profitability as company was not able to pass increased paper prices to its customers fully and resulted in loss, We would like to place on record our thanks to all our employees for their dedication and hard work.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to all of you for the patience and confidence reposed in the company. We also thank the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Muscat Securities Market for their support.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq bin Taimur for his vision and growth oriented policies aimed at bringing about a prosperous national economy.

Chairman of the Board of Directors

Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022

	2022 RO	2021 RO (restated)
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	5,478,729	6,047,222
Current assets		
Inventories	3,022,364	2,393,586
Trade and other receivables	3,813,348	3,546,886
Bank balances and cash	14,519	7,448
Total current assets	6,850,231	5,947,920
Total assets	12,328,960	11,995,142
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		
Equity		
Share capital	3,000,000	3,000,000
Share premium	90,811	90,811
Legal reserve	539,548	539,548
General reserve	53,378	53,378
Revaluation Reserve	581,608	666,608
Retained earnings	423,943	592,457
Total equity	4,689,288	4,942,802
LIABILITIES		
Non-current liabilities		
Longterm portion of term loan	687,952	845,832
Employees end of service benefits	20,591	129,021
Deferred tax liability	243,560	288,095
Total non-current liabilities	952,103	1,262,948
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Current portion of term loan	157,880	157,880
Trade and other payables	2,585,021	2,975,096
Bank borrowings	3,394,668	2,556,416
Loan from a related party	550,000	100,000
Total liabilities	7,639,672	7,052,392
Total equity and liabilities	12,328,960	11,995,142
Net assets per share	1.563	1.648

Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 Statement of comprehensive income

	2022 RO	2021 RO
INCOME		
Revenue from contracts with customers	10,562,150	9,538,597
Direct costs	(9,970,582)	(8,442,109)
Gross Profit	591,568	1,096,488
Other income	288,150	426,821
Other income	879,718	1,523,309
EXPENSES		
General and administration	510,963	656,956
Selling and distribution	365,677	392,194
Finance Charges	201,127	176,833
(Loss) / profit before taxation	1,077,767	1,225,983
Deferred tax credit / (charge)	(198,049)	297,326
Net (loss) / profit for the year	29,535	(44,770)
Other comprehensive income:	(168,514)	252,556
Not reclassifiable to income statement:		
Loss on revaluation of freehold land	(100,000)	-
Deferred tax release on revaluation decrease	15,000	-
Other comprehensive loss for the year	(85,000)	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	(253,514)	252,556
Basic earning per share	(0.056)	0.084
* Income tax will be provided at the year end		

Note : The Complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder who request them either in Arabic or English within 7 days of the receipt of the request at the company's address at PO Box No 2818, Ruwi, Postal Code 112, Sultanate of Oman.

ISG students attend Model UN Conference



Around 15 delegates from Indian School Al Ghubra attended the prestigious Harvard Model United Nations Conference in New York from January 23 to 31.

The ISG delegation from Indian School Al Ghubra consisted of Michelle Rose, Eyden Binu Koshy, Sanjana Karunanidhi, Akshitha Santhosh, Mark Muthalali, Padmapriya Vijayanand, Niran-

jan Sunil, Aayra Amit Malhotra, Chitrangada Siddharth Chaturvedi, Alisha Afaq Ali, Sarah Mustafa Mukadam, Vaibhavi Ashok Shetty, Keith Yogesh Maniar, Nithin Krishnan Muthukrishnan and Devansh Parash Kumar Navin Shah.

The ISG students, accompanied by Maleka Ariwala, the MUN coordinator of ISG, were

immersed in the world of International Relations with 3,758 delegates. The HMUNC experience created a learning environment that stretches well beyond the confines of the traditional classroom, through guided experiences that integrate spaces, places and people.

The conference enabled the transformation of young stu-

dents into global citizens, capable of taking on the world's biggest challenges and translating them into opportunities through innovative solutions.

Having interacted with diplomats and youth from more than 41 countries, the ISG students returned with renewed determination to make a difference and carry their experiences forward.

KPMG launches new Centre of Excellence for Metaverse

KPMG, a leading provider of audit, tax and advisory services announced the establishment of its Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Metaverse and Digital Twins.

KPMG is bringing together a broad collective, with Microsoft, leveraging infrastructure and gaming platform, Ericsson for their 5G technology and network, and MetaKey as the technical partner to develop 3D objects. The objective of the CoE is to expedite Metaverse and Digital Twin application in Saudi Arabia and the wider region, a press release said.

KPMG launched the new Center of Excellence on the side lines of the LEAP Conference 2023, a four-day annual tech convention held in Riyadh. LEAP attracted more than 100,000 tech innovators and leading experts from around the world.

"We have seen an immense commitment from the govern-



ment to invest in Metaverse and to explore the public utility of the technology. With the launch of the Centre of Excellence, we are proud to bring together a team of experts and organisations to really drive these initiatives forward," commented Maz Hussain, head of Digital Light-house at KPMG in Saudi Arabia.

"A digital-first principle is to be applied across all the services to be delivered from this CoE, which means that the CoE will

provide an incubation function to several technology capabilities that will be required to deliver a differentiated offering to the market," he added. "Metaverse will help make Saudi firms more competitive and open up global opportunities."

Digital Twin is the digital counterpart of real-world physical product, system or process in, for example Metaverse, and can be used for practical purposes like simulation, monitoring, etc.

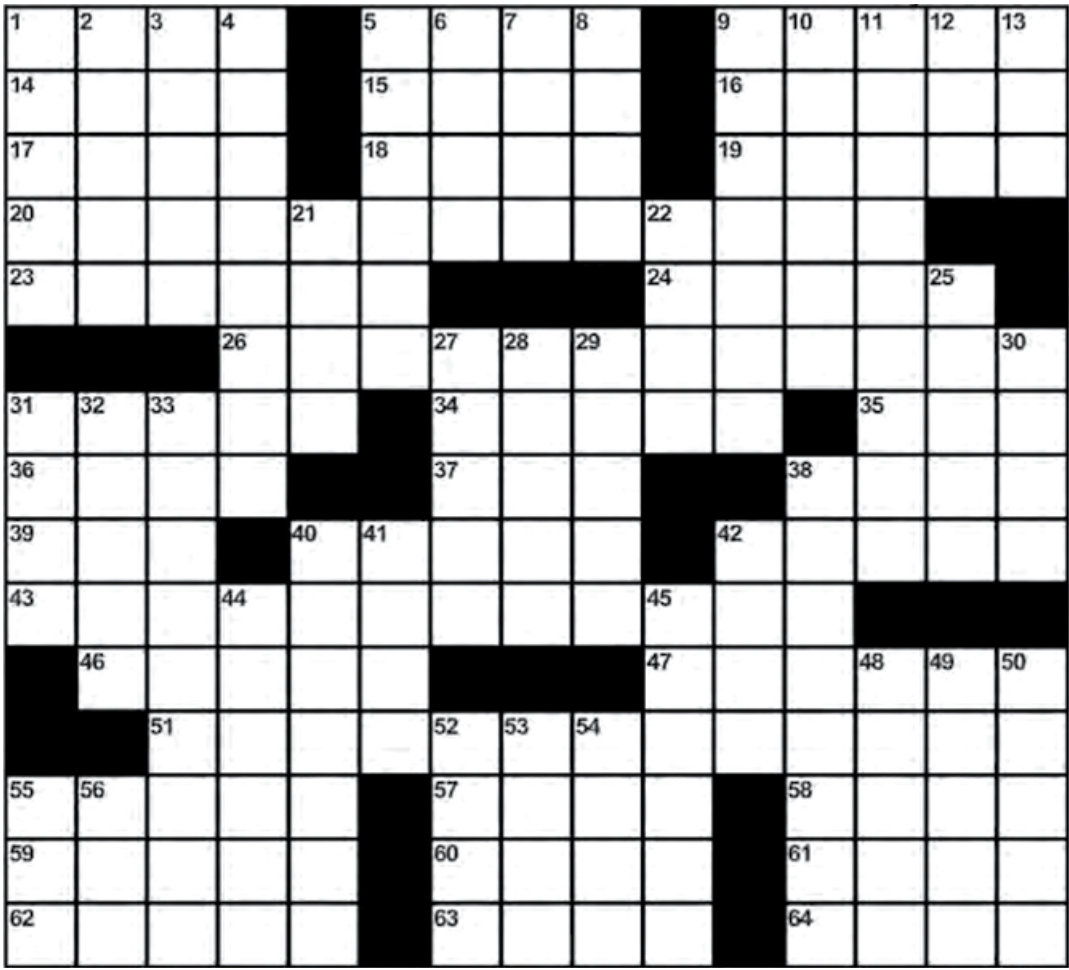
WHO Executive Board meet concludes

The 152nd session of the Executive Board (EB) of the World Health Organization (WHO), in which the Sultanate of Oman took part with a delegation led by H E Dr Hilal bin Ali al Sabti, Minister of Health, concluded in Geneva, Switzerland, last weekend.

Throughout the meeting, Oman delivered 12 speeches as a State Member of the WHO, as well as a representative of the Eastern Mediterranean Region of the WHO Executive Board.

After a three-year effective term of leading an active role in the Executive Board (EB), the Sultanate of Oman's membership came to an end during this meeting in Geneva.

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1) Type of shake
5) Father-and-daughter box-ers
9) Musical "repeat" sign
14) "The Godfather" scorer Nino
15) _ Valley, Calif.
16) "I think that I shall never see, "
17) At one time, at one time
18) Furnace output
19) _ Janeiro
20) Put a humorist in the opening day lineup?
23) John Wayne film set in Africa
24) Companionless
26) Win over a country singer?
31) Dealt with one's problems
34) Cropped up
35) Day-_ (fluorescent paint)
36) Aces, sometimes
37) A Bobsey
38) Start of a break-in?
39) New York transit org.
40) Deep-sea explorer William

42) Prefix for "mural" or "galactic"
43) Forgive a Dodger Hall of Fame pitcher?
46) Dress fold
47) Paper clip alternative
51) Deceive a legendary singer/pianist?
55) Unprocessed, as oil
57) Start of a string of 13 popes
58) Sheet of matted cotton
59) Food-cubing gadget
60) "The Wizard of Oz" actor
61) Words with "This one's" or "Don't tread"
62) "Land_ alive!"
63) Word with "put," "glass" or "clock"
64) Martha of Old Holly-wood

DOWN

1) Not canned or frozen
2) It comes from the heart
3) Where (hot spot)
4) Exhausting routines
5) Cinder holder
6) In _ of (replacing)

7) Old Apple computer
8) "Revenge of the_" ("Star Wars" film)
9) Nobody doesn't like her
10) Novel ending (Var.)
11) Words spoken late in the evening
12) Beatty or Kelly
13) Where to 'ang one's 'at?
21) Walked heavily
22) Female WWII service personnel
25) Aunt in "Oklahoma!"
27) Wind direction finders
28) Onetime pitcher Hideki
29) Octet plus one
30)_ Linda, Calif.
31) Provide for free, informally
32) Like draft beer
33) "The Good Earth" author
38) Where Wolverines play
40) Stiff straw hats
41)_acte (intermission)
42) Teeny bit
44) Clinton press secretary Myers
45) Popular souvenir item
48) First choice of schemes
49) "_ people go"

50) Cosmetics queen Lauder
52) Start of a Shakespearean title
53) Nope alternative
54) Type of salmon
55) Fixed-term bank accts.
56) Narrow inlet

NOTE PAD

T	A	L	C	M	O	L	T	A	M	A	H	S					
O	R	E	O	A	C	E	R	B	A	N	A	L					
P	I	N	O	C	C	H	I	O	R	T	H	O					
S	A	D	H	E	R	T	I	D	I	Y	I	N	G				
				W	A	R	E	S	R	E	P						
				E	D	I	T	S	T	W	O	S	O	M	E	S	
				S	P	E	C	S	B	R	A	N	P	O	M	E	
				P	O	R	K	Q	U	E	R	Y	P	I	M	A	
				A	C	M	E	U	S	E	S	M	I	R	E	S	
				S	H	A	D	I	E	S	T	J	A	N	E	T	
								W	T	S	S	T	E	N	S		
				A	D	D	I	C	T	S	O	K	S	A	F	T	
				N	E	A	T	H	O	L	D	Y	E	L	L	E	R
				N	A	N	C	E	S	A	I	L	I	S	L	E	
				A	N	K	H	S	A	B	E	L	P	O	L	K	

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

 **ARIES** MARCH 21-APRIL 19

If you have an urge to tell a particularly rude person what you think of them, don't suppress it. Vent it! Someone in your life who rarely (if ever) considers other people's feelings is in desperate need of a wake-up call today, and you are the perfect person to dial their number. Your wit coupled with your tact and a huge dose of truth will combine to create an effective sally that puts them in their place without making you look harsh.

 **LEO** JULY 23-AUGUST 22

Don't let any false modesty rob you of the right to be proud of what you've accomplished! Go on and demand (nicely) the praise you know that you're due. No one is going to fault you for it. Take a bow and bask in the knowledge that while you were a part of a team effort, this goal couldn't have been met without you. You were the key ingredient. Being in touch with your importance is relevant to your entire day. You have key roles in the lives of many people.

 **SAGITTARIUS** NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Follow any and all moods you have today. If you feel the urge to take some alone time, do it. Sure, there are a lot of fun social things going on right now, but you don't have to get involved in every single one of them! Listen to what your heart is telling you to do and then do it. Politely say no, and don't feel guilty about letting anyone down. They just want you to be happy. If you need some hibernation time, they should support that.

 **TAURUS** APRIL 20-MAY 20

You might find it hard to accurately communicate your feelings right now. This is probably a sign that you don't quite know how you're feeling! If you're in a mood to hide from the world, then hide from the world. You're in a good frame of mind to make the most of your alone time to figure things out. You need to tell someone something, and you need this time to figure out how to say it. A new hobby is in the earliest stages of development. Keep plugging away and don't give up on it.

 **VIRGO** AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Your emotions are a strong asset, and you haven't been using as much as you should be. Are you afraid that if you led with your feelings that you wouldn't be taken as seriously as you would be if you led with the facts? Not so. Today, integrate how you feel into more conversations and debate situations. It will help other people understand how you think, and it will also help someone new feel a lot closer to you. Your emotions are what truly make you who you are.

 **CAPRICORN** DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

The needling issues at hand today will be plentiful, but thankfully they'll also be quite minor. Don't let this become a situation where you suffer a death by a thousand cuts, though! Be sure you start the day perky and ready for action. Make doubly sure you have a healthy breakfast and dress comfortably! You'll need to feel relaxed and at ease physically in order to best allow your mental energy to take on whatever kinds of little vicissitudes are tossed your way and do it with panache!

 **GEMINI** MAY 21-JUNE 21

Some great news could be coming down from on high today. An authority figure could inform you of a changing situation, one from which you'll benefit greatly. This adjustment may even enable you to free up some extra money in your currently tight budget! When that happens, you should make a long overdue upgrade involving your Internet service, phone, or computer. Technology advances quickly, and you're falling behind. Use your growing resources to keep up.

 **LIBRA** SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

A warm smile from a stranger will send more electricity through your body than the loudest rock concert ever could today. You're entering a phase where it's the smaller things in life you appreciate most. So turn down the volume on your life and take a look around you. Look again. There are things you never noticed before that hold a great deal of intrigue and reward. Many treasures are there for you to find. You just have to look for them a bit more closely.

 **AQUARIUS** JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Have you been getting enough exercise lately? Well, if you've been feeling a bit down in the dumps, then the answer is definitely no. Getting yourself moving is one of the very best ways to cheer yourself up. To get to feeling better about what's going on in your life, go to the gym or go for a long walk or bike ride. Exercise is also a great way to remind yourself how much power you have in your life. You can change your body and change your attitude!

 **CANCER** JUNE 22-JULY 22

You need to start paying more attention to yourself and less to what other people want or expect. It's wonderful that you're concerned about the health and well-being of the people in your life, but there is only so much you can do to help them. You need to remind yourself just how much you can change in your own life. What are you most unhappy about right now? Take tiny steps toward healing yourself. You'll let yourself know just how very important you are.

 **SCORPIO** OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

You're usually the one who is pushing for things to go further faster, but right now speed isn't a high priority for you. Things are going well, so why rush through the good times to get to the finish line? That's your attitude, and it's an attitude you should spread around to other, more fidgety folks. Deep conversations about patience and hope will help your friends see the long-term benefit of short-term actions. Do what you can to help other people be patient and enjoy themselves!

 **PISCES** FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Looking to have some fun today? Look no further than into the nearest mirror. You are a great source of entertainment and joy right now, believe it or not. All you need to do is loosen up and stop being so hard on yourself! People like to be around you most when you aren't letting life's little problems get to you. Rise above all the pettiness and you'll find yourself happier than you've been in a very long while. Say goodbye to the people who are talking trash.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

01. Who was the head of an international sporting body who once suggested that women players (in that sport) should wear tighter shorts and lowcut shirts to make their game more appealing?
- A. Colin Cowdrey
B. Juan Samaranch
C. Max Mosley
D. Sepp Blatter
02. In the Netflix film which won Best Documentary in the 2021 Oscars, where was the documentary filmed?
- A. Camp Jened, a summer camp in New York
B. Silicon Valley
C. In an underwater kelp forest near Cape Town, South Africa
D. 100m below the surface of the North Sea
03. What is the currency of Trinidad and Tobago?
- A. Trinidad and Tobago dollar (TTD)
B. Quetzal
C. Pound
D. Euro
- Answers: 1.D 2.C 3.A

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

L	L	O	E
E	C	A	S
R	L	T	A
A	R	E	C

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

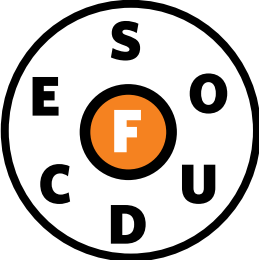
Solution 20-25 words: Excellent, 15-20 words: Very good, 10-15 words: Good, 5-10 words: Average

DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

WORD BUILDER



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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

An appreciation of the support, sponsorship and stimulus programmes enjoyed by the manufacturing industries

The meeting with the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion is an opportunity to highlight the sector's requirements and to seek solutions for the challenges

38 pro
were a
produ
'607' v
numb

The industrial sector is one of the most important sectors of economic diversification and an engine for the growth of the other economic sectors



The industrial strategy is based on Oman Vision 2040, while it is considered as a pillar for the future industrial development

● The Future Industries

The outputs of the discussion in the hub of the future industries have come out of highlighting the importance of developing green industrial cities and smart cities. The initiative to implement the concept of circular economy in industrial cities by defining an industrial city to become a model, raising energy efficiency in these cities, and developing them by promoting

The new identity and location of the association come to keep pace with the government's efforts to promote the industrial sector

HILAL AL HINAI
Chairman of the Board of
Directors of the Omani
Industrialists Association

smart city applications and circular economy initiatives, addressing the challenges facing factories in the targeted industrial sectors by reducing their operational costs, in addition to enabling and supporting them in addressing some of the challenges they face in exporting to foreign markets, which impose fees and taxes on these companies in the event that the energy used in the operations is not green.

The same hub also included the importance of enabling factories towards keeping up with the fourth industrial revolution by finding new production lines, reducing production costs and raising the efficiency of factories, which will contribute to focusing on supporting Omani exports and enhancing the trade balance, raising the efficiency of the local product and enhancing Omani exports, as well as reducing dependence on unskilled labor and replacing them with creating new job opportunities for Omani youth, which to be linked to modern technologies.

● **Five agreements to enhance the industrial sector, signed**

As part of the outputs of The Manufacturing Industries and Future Industries Laboratory, the celebration ceremony by the Omani Industry Day also included signing of five agreement to enhance the industrial sector in the Sultanate of Oman. These agreements included the Establishing a salt production plant, between

MANUFACTURERS PRAISE GROWTH OF THE SECTOR

Investment projects and investment opportunities are announced, the identity of the Omani product was launched and, the number 607 was identified as a unified barcode number for Omani products

Five agreements were signed during the celebration of Omani Industry Day to enhance the industrial sector



the Ministry of Commerce , Industry and Investment Promotion and Al-Baraka Petrochemical Salts Company to extract salt from the Al-Lakbi area in Al-Wusta Governorate, with a production capacity of (4) million tons, to rise to (7) million tons of salts annually. The project area is estimated at 187.23 hectares. This agreement was signed by HE Dr. Saleh bin Said Masan, Undersecretary of MoCIIP for Commerce and Industry, on the Ministry's side, and Abdul-Ridha Mohamad Haramati, CEO of Al-Baraka Petrochemical Salts Company.

A memorandum of understanding was also signed between OQ company the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) to develop an area for the manufacturing of semi-finished and fully manufactured plastic products (plastic complex) with high added value . This agreement was signed by Hamad bin Hamoud Al Qassabi, CEO of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), and Hilal bin Ali Al Kharusi, Chief Executive Commercial & Downstream at OQ.

The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority and the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) signed a cooperation program to set prefabricated factory complex project. The cooperation program aims at supporting small and medium enterprises, providing facilities and incentives for them in the project, and allocating suitable sites for the project in all industrial and linked cities. This agreement was signed by Hamad bin Hamoud Al-Qasabi, CEO of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) and Abdulaziz Al Risi, Vice President of SME Authority

An agreement on a program to empower the Omani factories with the technologies of Fourth Industrial Revolution was signed between the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion and the Industrial Innovation Academy. The program aims at analyzing the status of some factories and financing them to add production lines equipped with the latest advanced technologies and modern methods related to the automation of processes and manufacturing, and building a house of expertise and an incubator for the applications of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, in order to achieve real value on models of factories in various industrial fields. This agreement signed by HE Saleh bin Said Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry on the Ministry's side. And Dr. Ayman bin Abdullah Al-Fudaili, CEO of the Industrial In-



This step will strengthen the capabilities of Omani products to reach various global markets and will contribute to increase in exports and sale of the products of those companies

BADR BIN SAIF AL AMIRI
CEO of Oman Barcoding Centre

novation Academy.

An agreement on the Green smart industrial cities initiative was signed between the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates "Madayn" and the Oman Investment and Development Holding Company , in order to find effective, balanced and flexible systems to protect the environment and sustain its natural resources and to support the national economy by applying the concept of circular economy and creating smart industrial cities with green and sustainable energy, through using various types of renewable energy that contribute to cost reduction in productive sectors. This agreement was signed by Hamad bin Hamoud Al Qassabi, CEO of (Madayn), and Mustafa bin Maqbool Al Lawati, CEO of Oman Investment and Development Holding Company (Mubadara).

Unified number for Omani products

The celebration ceremony of the Omani Industry Day also included the launching of the launching of Oman Barcoding Centre (GSI Oman) , which obtained the membership of the Global Organization

for Barcoding GSI, where the number of 607 was identified as a unified barcode number for Omani products

Commenting on this event , Badr bin Saif Al-Amiri, CEO of Oman Barcoding Centre, said: The operations at (GSI Oman) began on the first of last August to increase the in -Country added value of products, and raising the competitiveness of factories, whether in the local or global markets, since most countries require a "barcode" for the products to enter their markets. So this step will strengthen the capabilities of Omani products to reach various global markets and will contribute to increase exports and a sale of the products of those companies in a way that enhances the Omani national economy, as well as it is in line with Oman's vision 2040."

Badr Al-Amiri added that the barcoding numbering system is an important system, as it contributes to facilitate the sales process, both by providing data on the consumption of products and enabling the seller to cover his needs of goods in warehouses faster and easier through the statistics provided by the numbering on the quantity of sales and supplies as well as facilitating the process of accounting and calculating prices when purchasing for the consumer.

Praising the progress and growth achieved by the industrial sector

In coinciding with the Sultanate of Oman's celebration by the Omani Industry Day, a number of businessmen in the industrial sector praised the progress and growth achieved by the industrial sector, while they appreciated the supportive policies, which aim at enhancing the sector's revenues, within the framework of plans to maximize dependence on non-oil revenues.

They stressed that the industrial sector in the Sultanate of Oman was able over the past years of the blessed renaissance, to achieve various gains, as a result of the direct and indirect support that the sector received from the concerned government authorities.

Officials and businessmen emphasized that, these achievements considered as part of the results of the initiatives and the simulative programs adopted by the government to encourage the sector to achieve distinguished levels of development and growth in terms of quality, achieving spread and competitiveness, and adopting technical solutions in all stages of production, which led to raising contributions of the sector in the gross domestic product.

Eng. Salim bin Nasser Al-Burtamani, CEO of REEJ Vegetable Oils & Derivatives SAOC, said that the celebration of the Omani Industry Day has a great importance for the manufactures in the Sultanate of Oman, while it is considered as a forum for discussing the development of the sector and the challenges it faces within the framework of the keenness of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion to find solutions to these challenges through consulting with the manufacturers, experts and specialists in the sector.

He added that the importance of this day increases with the position occupied by the industrial sector in the national economy, since the sector is one of the tributaries of economic diversification policies in Oman's vision 2040 , in addition to the role that the sector plays in re-

83
Participated
entities

168
Participants

More than 30
working hours

24
Investment
projects

14
Investment
opportunities

10
Empowering
initiatives

THE AGREEMENTS

Agreement to develop an area for manufacturing of semi-finished and fully manufactured plastic products

Agreement to develop an area for manufacturing of semi-finished and fully manufactured plastic products

Agreement to establish a salt production plant

Agreement to set prefabricated factory complex project

An agreement to empower the factories with the technologies of Fourth Industrial Revolution

An agreement on the Green Smart Industrial Cities initiative

Clinics to solve the problems of the manufacturing sector

Investment opportunities

Updating of the manufacturing strategies

The future industries

THE MAIN HUBS

The initiative of the Manufacturing Industries and Future Industries Laboratory

1 The hub of the clinics to solve the problems of the manufacturing sector

- Enhancing the competitiveness of the Omani product
- Launching of Oman Barcoding Centre (GSI Oman)
- Issuing and updating legislation and laws (National Product Identity Regulations, Laboratories Registration Regulations, Commercial Complexes and Centers Regulations, Consumer Cooperatives Regulations)
- Integrating of the outputs of vocational education and the needs of the industrial
- Facilitate access to soft financing from banks
- Developing the financial and administrative capabilities of entrepreneurs
- Increasing support for industrial projects through the Oman Development Bank
- Clarifying the stages of investment and create a guide to link all investment-related platforms
- Establishment of specialized industrial complexes

2 Hub of updating the manufacturing strategy

- The number of entities linked to the manufacturing strategy reached 16 entities
- 30 sub-sectors
- The main programs of the manufacturing strategy initiatives 2040
- The program for establishing industrial clusters based on new and knowledge-based companies
- Entrepreneurship and industrial innovation program
- The industrial development and modernization program
- The governance and industrial development management program.

3 The hub of the investment opportunities

38 projects and investment opportunities, 24 investment projects and 14 investment opportunities , including the medical supplies, plastics, mining, metallic minerals, non-metallic minerals, petrochemicals, and others.

- 14 investment opportunities in the sectors of health, services, waste management and minerals
- 24 investment projects, of 12 which are ready and 12 are under development

12 projects ready

Magnesium compounds factory
Sodium sulfate factory
Industrial salt purification plant
Food salt purification plant
Magnesium compounds factory
Sodium sulfate plant
Bromine plant
lithium compounds factory
Pcompounds factory
Fish farming factory
Sodium carbonate factory
Establishing of a water bottling plant

4 The outputs of the discussion in the hub of the future industries

- The initiative of developing green industrial cities and smart cities
- Coating an effective , balanced and flexible systems
- The initiative to implement the concept of circular economy
- Adopting the transition approach towards a green economy

Sultanate of Omanسلطنة عُمان

وزارة التجارة والصناعة وترويج الاستثمار

Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Investment Promotion

Biden, Lula vow to defend democracy in Americas

Washington, US - President Joe Biden and his Brazilian counterpart Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said Friday at the White House that the two biggest countries in the Americas have successfully seen off attacks on their democracies and will now work together on fighting the climate crisis.

"Both our nations' strong democracies have been tested," Biden told Lula, and "both in the United States and Brazil, democracy prevailed."

Meeting in the Oval Office, Biden and Lula expressed solidarity over their similar paths.

Biden defeated Donald Trump in 2020, but two months later, a mob of Trump supporters stormed Congress believing his conspiracy theory that he'd been the real election winner.

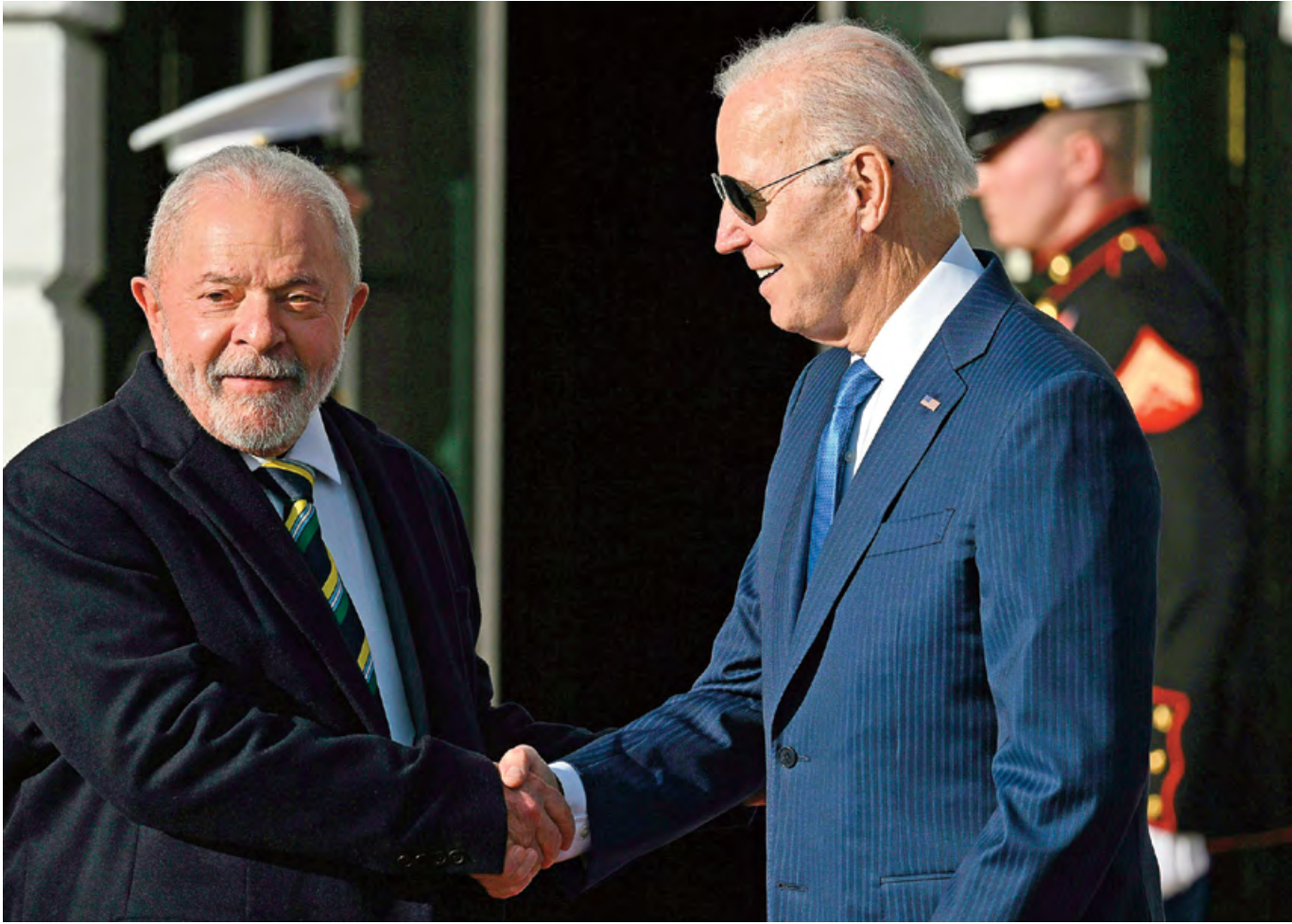
In Brazil, Lula defeated right-winger Jair Bolsonaro and took office this January, but a mob of Bolsonaro supporters stormed government buildings shortly after.

"We have some issues on which we can work together," Lula told Biden. "First is to never again allow" the anti-democratic mob attacks.

Touting Brazil's return to the international arena, Lula said his predecessor's "world started and ended with fake news - in the morning, afternoon and at night. It seemed that he despised international relations."

Biden, referring to Trump, quickly answered: "Sounds familiar."

Amazon financing - Biden and Lula stressed their mutual commitment to saving the



US President Joe Biden welcomes Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva to the White House in Washington, DC, on February 10 (AFP)

We have some issues on which we can work together. First is to never again allow the anti-democratic mob attacks. My predecessor's world started and ended with fake news

LUIZ INACIO LULA DA SILVA

Amazon rainforest and fighting global warming - efforts that Bolsonaro and Trump both sidelined.

Biden said their "shared values... put us on the same page, particularly, especially, when it

comes to the climate crisis."

Brazil is seeking US participation in the Amazon Fund, an international scheme to finance anti-deforestation efforts in Brazil, and Lula walked away from the Oval Office voicing

moderate confidence that would happen.

"I think they will," Lula told reporters. "I not only think they will, but I think that it's necessary they participate."

He added that while the meeting had not specifically addressed the Amazon Fund, he had brought up "the responsibility of rich countries to assume responsibility to fund countries with rainforests and not only in Brazil."

In a joint US-Brazil statement that followed the meeting, the

White House said it hoped to "work with Congress to provide funds for programs to protect and conserve the Brazilian Amazon, including initial support for the Amazon Fund."

Lula told Biden in the Oval Office that during his 2003-2010 term as president, he had committed Brazil to drastic reductions in the deforestation of the world's largest rainforest, which is often described as the "lungs of the world" for its massive greenhouse gas absorption.

AFP

US blacklists 6 China entities tied to balloon programme

Washington, US - The US Commerce Department said Friday it has blacklisted six Chinese entities for supporting Beijing's military modernization efforts, particularly relating to aerospace programmes including airships and balloons.

The move came a day after US lawmakers unanimously denounced China's use of a suspected spy balloon that flew over North America last week. The balloon's days-long flyover from Alaska to South Carolina captured the attention of regular Americans and officials, before the US military shot it down off the country's

sovereignty will be cut off from accessing US technologies," he added.

The six companies include Beijing Nanjiang Aerospace Technology Co; China Electronics Technology Group Corporation 48th Research Institute; and Dongguan Lingkong Remote Sensing Technology Co.

The other three are Eagles Men Aviation Science and Technology Group Co.; Guangzhou Tian-Hai-Xiang Aviation Technology Co.; along with Shanxi Eagles Men Aviation Science and Technology Group Co.

In a document, the Commerce Department said China's military is utilizing high-altitude balloons "for intelligence and reconnaissance activities," adding that this was contrary to US national security and foreign policy.

China insists the balloon was a "civilian airship used for research, mainly meteorological purposes."

But a State Department official has indicated the US believes the balloon to be under the control of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, and is part of a fleet that China has sent over more than 40 countries on five continents to collect intelligence information.

Friday's action indicates efforts to disrupt China's use of surveillance balloons, "which have violated the airspace of the US and more than 40 countries," said Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Enforcement Matthew Axelrod.

AFP

Companies added to the list are restricted from obtaining US items without government authorisation

east coast Saturday.

Companies added to the so-called Entity List are restricted from obtaining US items and technologies without government authorisation.

"The (People's Republic of China's) use of high-altitude balloons violates our sovereignty and threatens US national security," said Under Secretary of Commerce for Industry and Security Alan Estevez in a statement on Friday.

"Today's action makes clear that entities that seek to harm US national security and

Peru's president calls for multiparty dialogue to end political crisis

Lima, Peru - Peruvian President Dina Boluarte on Friday called for a multiparty dialogue to help resolve her country's political crisis, saying two months of sometimes deadly anti-government protests had left the nation a "fragile democracy."

Boluarte became president on December 7, after her predecessor Pedro Castillo was impeached and arrested after attempting to dissolve Congress and rule by decree.

But since that day she has faced calls to resign by protesters also demanding fresh elections. Demonstrations have at times turned violent and officials on Friday announced a new death, bringing the total number of people killed in clashes between security forces and protesters to 49.

"We are living in a fragile democracy," said Boluarte, who



Peruvian President Dina Boluarte (AFP)

has refused to resign and failed in a bid to convince Congress to bring forward elections slated for 2026.

"I think it is the most fragile in Latin America, but it is within Peruvians, within us, to strengthen democracy," Boluarte told reporters at a press conference alongside her cabinet ministers. Boluarte is Peru's sixth presi-

dent since March 2018 and the first woman to hold the role.

She was Castillo's vice president before he was ousted and charged with rebellion.

Demonstrations against her rule have been fiercest in poor southern regions with large Indigenous populations who view Castillo as one of their own.

Among their other demands

are the dissolution of Congress and the formation of a constituent assembly to rewrite the constitution, something roundly rejected by the right-wing opposition.

"In search of peace, I openly call all political leaders of every single party, but also the leaders of social and labor organizations, everyone in general so that we can meet and put the country's agenda on the table," said Boluarte. In December, Boluarte called on Congress to bring forward elections but parliament rejected the idea in five separate votes - despite an initial vote in favor, which was subsequently never ratified.

During the presser Boluarte noted the latest protester death, a 22-year-old who was shot Thursday in Apurimac, the region where she herself was born.

AFP

Acclaimed Spanish director Carlos Saura dead at 91

Madrid, Spain - Acclaimed Spanish director Carlos Saura, who hit the global spotlight in the 1960s with his critiques of Franco's dictatorship, died Friday at the age of 91, the Spanish film academy said.

"He died today at his home at the age of 91, surrounded by his loved ones," the academy wrote on Twitter, describing him as "one of the most important filmmakers in the history of Spanish cinema".

"Carlos Saura has left us, a fundamental figure in Spanish culture," Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said.

"His talent is and will always be part of the cultural heritage of our history... We say goodbye to the director of imagination but his cinema remains," added the socialist leader.

The Spanish royal family also paid their respects. "His cinema will never die. Goodbye Carlos



File photo of Spanish director Carlos Saura (AFP)

Saura," the Royal Household tweeted, along with a photo showing the filmmaker chatting with the king and queen.

Born on January 4, 1932 in the northeastern town of Huesca, Saura was known for his "never-ending activity" and "love for his craft, which continued until the end," with his latest film hitting

Spanish cinemas just a week ago, it said.

He died just a day before he was to have been awarded an honorary Goya, Spain's equivalent of the Oscars, for his decades-long career which was to have been presented at the 37th Goya Awards ceremony in the southern city of Seville.



Coordinator for Strategic Communications at the National Security Council John Kirby speaks during a daily news briefing on Feb 10 (AFP)

US shoots down 'high-altitude object' over Alaska

Washington, US - A US fighter jet shot down an unidentified object drifting high over Alaska on Friday, the White House said, just six days after the downing of an alleged Chinese spy balloon sparked a fresh diplomatic rift with Beijing.

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said it was unclear what the purpose or origin of the new object was, but said that it was taken down because, floating at 40,000 feet, it was a threat to civil aviation.

"The president ordered the

military to down the object," Kirby said.

Questioned about the incident by reporters at the White House, Biden said the shoot-down "was a success."

Kirby said the object was much smaller than a huge Chinese balloon that crossed the United States last week and was shot down by a US fighter jet off the Atlantic coast on Saturday.

It was "roughly the size of a small car," he said.

"We do not know who owns it, whether state owned or cor-

porate owned," he said. "We don't understand the full purpose."

Pentagon spokesman Brigadier General Pat Ryder said an F-22 Raptor used an AIM-9X missile to bring down the object - the same aircraft and munition used to target the alleged Chinese spy balloon.

The incident took place amid a new alarm over what US officials say is an ongoing program by China to fly surveillance balloons to collect intelligence around the world.

US officials said such bal-

loons have flown over 40 countries, including at least four times previously over United States territory.

The Chinese balloon last week sparked particular concern as it overflew areas where the United States keeps nuclear missiles in underground silos and bases strategic bombers.

The incident led US Secretary of State Antony Blinken to cancel an imminent trip to Beijing that had been long in planning and aimed at improving communications between the two rival superpowers.

Kirby said the new object was detected late Thursday, and shot down Friday afternoon Washington time.

It went down in northern Alaska near the Canadian border and fell over a frozen body of water, making recovery feasible, Kirby said.

"We do expect to be able to recover the debris," he said.

Biden ordered the shoot-down because at the altitude it was flying, Kirby said, the object posed "a reasonable threat" to civil aviation.

AFP

Miraculous rescues continue as Turkey-Syria toll tops 25,000

Kahramanmaras, Turkey - Rescuers pulled children and the elderly from the rubble Saturday as miraculous survival stories coincided with hasty mass burials five days after an earthquake devastated parts of Turkey and Syria, leaving over 25,000 dead.

Tens of thousands of local and international rescue workers are still scouring through flattened neighbourhoods despite freezing weather that has compounded the misery of millions now in desperate need of aid.

However, amid the destruction and death, survivors continue to emerge.

"Is the world there?" asked 70-year-old Menekse Tabak as she was pulled out from the rubble in the southern city of Kahramanmaras - the epicentre of Monday's 7.8-magnitude tremor - to applause and cries praising God, according to a video shared on state broadcaster TRT Haber.

In southern Hatay, a two-year-old girl was found alive 123 hours after the quake, reported the Hurriyet daily online, adding to numerous children saved long after the disaster, and a pregnant woman who was found on Friday. Meanwhile, in southern Turkey, families clutched each other in grief at a cotton field that has been transformed into a cemetery, with an endless stream of bodies arriving for swift burial.

Compounding the anguish, the United Nations has warned



Residents walk along destroyed buildings, as search and rescue operations continue days after a deadly earthquake hit Turkey and Syria, in the town of Jindayris, in the rebel-held part of Syria's Aleppo province, on February 10 (AFP)

that at least 870,000 people urgently need of hot meals across Turkey and Syria. In Syria alone, up to 5.3 million people may have been made homeless.

Turkey's disaster agency on Saturday said nearly 32,000 people from Turkish bodies are working on search and rescue efforts. In addition, there are 8,294 international rescuers.

Clashes within groups

However, 82 Austrian soldiers on Saturday suspended rescue operations in Hatay over a "worsening security situation", an army spokesman told AFP.

"There have been clashes between groups," he said, without giving details.

The UN rights office had on Friday urged all actors in the affected area - where Kurdish militants and Syrian rebels operate - to allow humanitarian access.

The outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, which is considered a terrorist group by Ankara and its Western allies, announced a temporary halt in fighting to ease recovery work.

In rebel-held northwestern Syria, about four million people rely on humanitarian relief, but there have been no aid deliveries from government-controlled areas in three weeks.

The Syrian government said it

had approved the delivery of humanitarian assistance to quake-hit areas outside its control.

Only two aid convoys have crossed the border this week from Turkey, where authorities are engaged in an even bigger quake relief operation of their own.

A decade of civil war and Syrian-Russian aerial bombardment had already destroyed hospitals and created electricity and water

shortages.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged the Security Council to authorise the opening of new cross-border humanitarian aid points between Turkey and Syria. The council will meet to discuss Syria, possibly early next week.

Turkey said it was working on opening two new routes into rebel-held parts of Syria.

The winter freeze has left thousands of people either spending nights in their cars or huddling around makeshift fires that have become ubiquitous across the quake-hit region.

Anger builds

Five days of grief and anguish have been slowly building into rage at the poor quality of buildings as well as the Turkish government's response to the country's worst disaster in nearly a century.

Officials in the country say 12,141 buildings were either destroyed or seriously damaged in the earthquake.

"Damage was to be expected, but not the type of damage that you are seeing now", said Mustafa Erdik, a professor at Istanbul-based Bogazici University.

Police on Friday detained a contractor trying to flee the country after his building collapsed in the catastrophic quake.

AFP



File photo of South African rap sensation Kiernan Forbes

Popular South African rapper AKA shot dead outside restaurant

Johannesburg, South Africa - One of South Africa's hottest rap artists, Kiernan Forbes, known as AKA, has been shot dead outside a restaurant in the southeastern city of Durban, his family said Saturday.

The 35-year-old won multiple South African awards, was nominated several times for a Black Entertainment Television (BET) Award in the United States, and was once nominated for an MTV Europe Music Award.

"It is with extreme sadness that we acknowledge the passing of our beloved son," his parents Tony and Lynn Forbes said in a statement posted on AKA's Twitter account. "Our son was loved, and he gave love in return." He was gunned down on Friday night alongside another man while they were walking towards their car from a restaurant.

AFP

INDIA

Previous governments looted Tripura: PM Modi

Gomati, India - Coming down heavily on the left parties governing Tripura before the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said that previous governments 'looted' the state.

PM Modi was addressing a public rally in Radhakishorepur where he said that the governments, which ruled Tripura for years, made the life of people, including the poor, Scheduled Tribes (STs), women and youth, miserable. "Their dreams were shattered, and youths were bound to leave the state and go outside," he added.

PM Modi who was on a day-long visit to poll-bound Tripura attacked on the alliance of Congress and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) after their announcement to fight elections together.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha and others during Vijay Sankalp Rally ahead of the Tripura Legislative Assembly election, at Kulai, Ambassa, in Dhalai on Saturday (ANI)

"Congress and Left make the poor poorer. They only shout slogans in the name of the poor, but never seen their pain," PM Modi said.

"They (CPIM and Congress) are friends in Tripura but foes in

Congress and Left make the poor poorer. They only shout slogans in the name of the poor, but never seen their pain

PM NARENDRA MODI

another state, Kerala," he added.

Referring to thousands of people who came to attend the public rally, PM said, "Your arrival here in such large numbers to bless us is an announcement of the return of the BJP government. Your presence here in record

strength will give sleepless nights to our rivals."

Sharpening his attack further on the Left parties, PM Modi said, "During their regime, it was difficult for people to get even water and electricity. Those who governed Delhi and Tripura earlier never cared about these facilities. Those who looted Tripura for years and compelled people to live in paucity have now come together."

"Five years ago, when there was CPI(M) government here, 'CPM ki Chanda Waali Company' used to loot your ration. The poor wanted ration but Leftists used to loot the ration. You ousted them from Tripura and formed a double-engine government here. People of Tripura can see its results,"

Modi added.

Earlier in the day, PM Modi addressed an election rally in Ambassa, and said that the BJP government strives to bring forth the contributions of the tribal people in nation-building through its consistent steps of recognizing their efforts.

"I had promised 'HIRA' (Highways, Internet ways, Railways and Airways) in Tripura and people could see the delivery of projects. The work of doubling the length of National Highways in Tripura is at a high pace," he said.

The Left Front ruled Tripura for 25 consecutive years from 1993 to 2018. Elections are to be held on 60 seats in Tripura on February 16. The counting of votes will be held on March 2.

ANI

ED arrests YSRCP MP's son in Delhi excise policy scam

New Delhi, India - The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday arrested the son of Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party's (YSRCP) MP, Magunta Raghava Reddy, in connection with the Delhi excise policy scam case.

The ED officials confirmed the arrest of Magunta Raghava Reddy who is the son of Andhra Pradesh MP Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy for his alleged role in the formulation of the excise policy and in kickbacks. Earlier Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) also questioned Raghava Reddy and asked whether the liquor cartel paid bribes to the Aam Aadmi

Party (AAP) government functionaries in Delhi through a middleman.

It was alleged that the Magunta family was running one of the liquor cartels in Delhi and has been in the liquor business for the last several years.

According to the ED sources, Raghava Reddy will be produced in Delhi's Rouse Avenue Court by noon.

The Rouse Avenue Court on Wednesday sent Businessman Gautam Malhotra, son of former Shiromani Akali Dal MLA Deep Malhotra, and Telangana CM's daughter K Kavitha's auditor to ED, CBI remand respectively in the case.

LG removes AAP nominees from private DISCOMS

New Delhi, India - Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena has removed Aam Aadmi Party spokesperson Jasmine Shah and AAP MP ND Gupta's son, Naveen ND Gupta from the position of 'Government Nominees' on the board of private DISCOMS.

The LG Office informed in a statement that they have been removed for "illegally" occupying the positions, and they have been replaced by senior government officers. "Delhi LG, VK Saxena had ordered for the immediate removal of AAP spokesperson, Jasmine Shah, Son of AAP MP, ND Gupta-Navin Gupta and other private individuals, who had been illegally appointed as government nominees on the boards of privately owned DISCOMS- BYPL,

BRPL (Anil Ambani) and ND-PDCL (Tata)," the statement from the LG office read.

As per the LG office statement, the two had "collaborated" with private representatives on boards of Anil Ambani-owned DISCOMS and "benefitted" them to the tune of Rs8000 crore at the cost of the public exchequer.

The finance secretary, the power secretary and the MD of Delhi Transco will now represent the government on these Ambani and Tata-owned DISCOMS, as per regular practice, followed since Sheila Dikshit's time as the CM, when these DISCOMS came into existence, the statement read.

"Invoking 'difference of opinion' under Article 239AA of the Constitution of India, after the



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena exchange greetings during the Republic Day (ANI)

Arvind Kejriwal government persisted upon their continuance on these boards, despite proven misconduct and maleficence on their part, by way of benefiting the Ambani-owned DISCOMS to the tune of more than Rs 8000 crores, at the cost

of government exchequer, Saxena had referred the matter to the President of India for a decision. He had asked for the removal of the above-mentioned political appointees on the DISCOM boards with immediate effect, pending the President's

decision, and asked for senior government officials to replace them on the boards of the DISCOMS," the LG Office stated.

Senior government officials like the finance secretary, the power secretary and representatives of government-owned GENCOS and TRANSCO, had been the norm till Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP Government nominated party functionaries as 'government nominees' on the DISCOM boards.

The statement informed that the Delhi government which owns 49 per cent of the stake in the private DISCOMS used to nominate senior government officials so that the interests of the people of Delhi could be taken care of, in decisions taken by the DISCOM boards.

ANI

SPINNED DOWN!

Ashwin, Jadeja shine as India crush Australia by an innings and 132 runs

Nagpur, India - Spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja eviscerated Australia in just over two hours to hand India a crushing innings-and-132-run victory Saturday inside three days of the opening Test.

The hosts took a commanding first-innings lead of 223 in Nagpur, then skittled out Australia for 91 in an extended second session to take a 1-0 lead in the four-match series.

Steve Smith was left to survey the ruins on 25 after Ashwin, who took five wickets in the innings and eight in the match, triggered a complete batting collapse inside a single session.

"We know playing a series like this it's important to start well," captain Rohit Sharma told reporters.

"Glad all our batters could put up a show, get 400 and enough lead then the spinners came into the picture."

Ashwin rattled the opposition batting with his off-spin as he sent back Usman Khawaja (five), David Warner (10) and Matt Renshaw (two).

Jadeja, who grabbed five in the first innings, took two wickets including Marnus Labuschagne - Australia's first-innings top-scorer with 49 - trapped lbw for 17.

But Ashwin ruled the afternoon to run through the Australian batting, which fell flat on a pitch where India's tail - including Axar Patel (84) and Mohammed Shami (37) - scored handsomely in the first session.

"Their spinners are always going to be hard work when the wicket is spinning," said Aussie skipper Pat Cummins.

"That first innings, the wicket



India's Ravichandran Ashwin celebrates after the dismissal of Australia's Matt Renshaw during the third day of the first Test at the Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium in Nagpur on Saturday (AFP)

spun but wasn't unplayable. Would have loved another 100 or so runs and put a bit more pressure on their first innings. Obviously starting here is tough."

Shami bowled Nathan Lyon for the ninth wicket to extend the session and finished the job when he trapped Scott Boland lbw.

Saving grace

Debutant spinner Todd Murphy was the tourists' sole saving grace, adding two more wickets on Saturday morning to return figures of 7-124.

Murphy, who on Friday became the youngest Australian spinner to bag five in his first Test, bowled Jadeja for 70 early

in the morning session to end an 88-run eighth-wicket partnership with Axar.

Jadeja, a left-hander making his international return from a knee injury, added just four to his overnight 66.

But Axar stood firm in his effort to bat Australia out of the game and found an able ally in

number 10 Shami, who made the most of a dropped catch on six.

Shami smashed two fours and three sixes to boost the total before becoming Murphy's seventh wicket. Cummins took two wickets and bowled Axar at the stroke of lunch to wrap up the Indian innings.

AFF

Captain Rohit says spinners a 'blessing' after crushing win

Nagpur, India - India's Rohit Sharma said Saturday it was a "blessing" to lead his champion spinners after they spearheaded a crushing innings victory against Australia inside three days.

Spin twins Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja combined to dismiss Australia for 91 inside one session of the third day's play in Nagpur as the hosts took a 1-0 lead in the four-match series.

these, its always a blessing," he added.

"The conditions are there, yes, but you need to exploit them as well and conditions are for both teams. They know which areas to hit, how to keep applying pressure."

Off-spinner Ashwin surpassed 450 Test wickets in the first innings and now has 457 in the bag.

Rohit said Jadeja kept pressing him for a bowl in the

When you have quality of Axar, Jadeja, and Ash, having played in India for so many years, playing on pitches like these, its always a blessing

ROHIT SHARMA

Ashwin took five in the second innings and a match haul of eight wickets while the left-handed Jadeja grabbed five on his international return from a knee injury to bowl out Australia for 177 in the first innings.

Jadeja also scored 70 with the bat to be named man of the match.

Axar Patel took just one wicket but hit a match-winning 84 in India's 400 all out.

"It's like captaining Cummins, Hazlewood and Starc in Australia," Rohit said.

"When you have quality of Axar, Jadeja, and Ash, having played in India for so many years, playing on pitches like

second session to complete his own landmark of 250 Test wickets.

"They are all reaching their milestones. Jadeja was on 249 wickets and he was telling me, 'Give me the ball'," Rohit said with a smile.

"Ashwin was on four wickets and he wanted five and that was the challenge I was facing. I really don't know too much about milestones but these guys know about it," he added.

Australia skipper Pat Cummins called Ashwin a "world class bowler", especially at home, and "one of the all-time great Indian bowlers".

AFF

India's Jadeja fined for finger ointment after Australia Test

Nagpur, India - Indian man-of-the-match Ravindra Jadeja will be fined a quarter of his first Test match fee for breaking protocol to self-treat a finger injury while bowling against Australia, administrators said Saturday.

The all-rounder led India's crushing innings victory with figures of 5-47 on Thursday and 70 runs including a crucial partnership with skipper Rohit Sharma to help dispatch the tourists inside three days.

But images from Nagpur stadium had shown Jadeja rubbing a mystery substance on the index finger of his bowling hand during the first day, raising the spectre of possible ball-tampering.

The International Cricket Council said the match referee was satisfied the cream was "applied to the finger purely for medical purposes" to reduce



India's Ravindra Jadeja celebrates with Rohit Sharma after the dismissal of Australia's Marnus Labuschagne (AFP)

swelling.

It nonetheless said Jadeja had breached its code of conduct by not "asking for permission to do so from the on-field umpires".

Jadeja "admitted the offence and accepted the sanction", the ICC said in a statement.

"The cream was not applied

as an artificial substance to the ball and consequently it did not change the condition of the ball," it added.

The Nagpur Test was the first for the world's top-rated all-rounder after returning from a career-threatening knee injury.

AFF

Aussies look for better show against India spin masters, says Cummins

Nagpur, India - Australia's batsmen need to find their footing against the Indian spinners who menaced them into a crushing first Test innings loss, skipper Pat Cummins said Saturday.

The tourists were skittled out for 91 in just over two hours on day three to go down by an innings and 132 runs in Nagpur and trail the four-match series 1-0.

Spin twins Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja shared 15 of the 20 Australian wickets to fall on a pitch where the hosts posted 400 all out.

"A lot of it was good bowling," Cummins said on his team's batting collapse.

"Two masters of their craft, fresh legs, they bowled really well," he added.

"I don't think much is going to change the next couple of games. That's what we're going to come against so we have to find better



Pat Cummins

methods."

Steve Smith stood unbeaten on 25 while the Australian batting fell flat in just 32.3 overs.

Marnus Labuschagne (49), Smith (37), Peter Handscomb (31) and wicketkeeper Alex Carey (36) showed some spark in the first innings before Australia were bowled out for 177

after tea on day one.

"You saw Smithy and Alex Carey at times put the pressure back on the bowlers," said Cummins.

"I think it takes a bit of bravery, it's easier said than done. Again, that will be the conversation this week. If we get the same conditions, same bowlers, what

are we going to do differently?"

Debutant spinner Todd Murphy was the lone bright spot with figures of 7-124 in an otherwise lacklustre show and Cummins was all praise for the 22-year-old.

"Todd was fantastic," said Cummins. "He walked straight in and looked like he belonged at this level. With only four frontline bowlers we knew that second spinner was key and he was fantastic."

World number one Australia came in to the Test with much talk on the bone-dry Nagpur pitch, which some Aussie pundits claimed had been "doctored" by selective watering of the deck.

But Cummins said the pitch offered "no surprises".

On the injury front, Cummins all but ruled out pace bowler Josh Hazlewood for the second Test in New Delhi starting Friday.

AFF

Pakistan look to break India's grip at Women's T20 World Cup

Cape Town, South Africa - Pakistan will look to break India's iron grip on their rivalry when the Asian giants meet in the Women's T20 World Cup at Newlands in Cape Town on Sunday.

India and Pakistan have met in 13 women's T20 internationals in the past 14 years, with India holding a 10-3 winning advantage.

Because of political tensions, all the contests have been in multi-team tournaments.

The only match not on neu-

tral territory was in the Asia Cup in Delhi, India, in 2016 when Pakistan won a rain-affected contest.

Pakistan won the most recent match between the two sides, also in the Asia Cup, in Sylhet, Bangladesh, in October 2022. But India went on to win the cup.

However, India's vice-captain Smriti Mandhana will "likely" miss the team's Women's T20 World Cup opener against rivals Pakistan, her coach said on Saturday.

"Smriti has got a finger injury,



Harmanpreet Kaur

she is still recovering. Most likely, she won't play tomorrow," coach Hrishikesh Kanitkar told a press conference on the eve of Sunday's game in Cape Town.

India have a superior overall record in women's cricket and reached the final of the 2020 World T20, losing to hosts Australia.

There is also a gulf in earning potential, with most if not all of the Indian players likely to land lucrative deals in the Indian Women's Premier League auction which takes place in Mum-

bai on Monday.

That will only add to the riches of skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and Mandhana who currently earn around \$60,000 each. India's women are also on an equal footing with their vaunted men's team when it comes to match fees - they all receive 1.5 million rupees (\$18,000) for each Test, 600,000 rupees for one-day internationals and 300,000 rupees for T20 internationals.

Kaur said she expected the World Cup to be competitive.

"Though Australia go into the tournament as favourites, there is very little separating other teams, promising close matches and high-class performances," she said.

Pakistan captain Bismah Maroof, one of her country's centrally contracted players, said a series in Australia last month had been ideal preparation for the World Cup, although Pakistan lost both completed matches against the world's top women's team.

AFF



West Ham United's Italian defender Emerson Palmieri (L) scores the equalising goal during the English Premier League football match between West Ham United and Chelsea at the London Stadium, in London on February 11, 2023. (AFP)

NO RESPITE

Chelsea's troubles continue as Emerson's goal win a point for West Ham

London, United Kingdom - Chelsea's winless run in the Premier League extended to three games as Joao Felix's first goal for the Blues was cancelled out by West Ham's Emerson in Saturday's 1-1 draw.

Graham Potter's expensively assembled side once again failed to live up to their price tags as the pressure mounted on the Blues boss. Portugal forward Felix put Chelsea ahead in his second appearance for the club, only for Italy defender Emerson to haunt his former team with an equaliser before half-time.

Ninth-placed Chelsea have won just one of their past eight games in all competitions and are nine points adrift of the Premier League's top four. Chelsea, without a win in their last seven away league games, splashed out more

than £300 million (\$362 million) on new signings during the January transfer window.

Although Potter insists he is well aware of the pressure to get

quarter-finals to earn some breathing space.

Failing to beat lowly West Ham was another black mark against Potter, with the east Londoners sitting just two points above the relegation zone.

Felix returned for Chelsea following a three-game suspension and the on-loan Atletico Madrid forward posed an immediate threat when his goal was ruled out for a tight offside decision.

West Ham failed to heed that warning and Felix made them pay

as he opened the scoring in the 16th minute.

Chelsea stumble

It was a goal entirely constructed by Chelsea's new recruits, with Mykhailo Mudryk snapping into a tackle on Jarrod Bowen before Enzo Fernandez curled his cross towards Felix, whose well-timed run beat West Ham's offside trap as he volleyed home from six yards.

Chelsea bossed the first half with the kind of composed display they have struggled to muster this term.

West Ham finally threatened when Kepa Arrizabalaga blocked Michail Antonio's back-heeled effort from Bowen's cross.

But Chelsea had lost their focus and the lead slipped from their grasp as well after 28 minutes.

It was a sloppy goal for Chelsea to concede as Vladimir Coufal was given too much time for a cross that was nodded on by Bowen to Emerson, who was left unmarked to scuff home at the far post.

Chelsea winger Noni Madueke, making his first start since signing from PSV Eindhoven in January, almost restored their advantage, cutting inside for a fierce strike that was well saved by Lukasz Fabianski.

Fabianski made another good save to keep out Felix's free-kick, while Antonio nearly headed Reece James' free-kick into his own net.

Chelsea struggled to find any rhythm in the second half and Potter sent on Mason Mount, Ben Chilwell and Hakim Ziyech but it made no difference.



Robert Lewandowski

Brazilian FA denies agreement with Madrid coach Ancelotti

Sao Paulo, Brazil - The Brazilian football federation on Friday denied it had reached an agreement with Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti to take charge of the five-time World Cup winners.

"This information is false," the federation said in a brief statement. "The question (of a new coach) is being dealt with in a transparent manner and the chosen coach will be announced when the time is right."

Ancelotti is currently with Real in Morocco at the Club World Cup, where his team will play Saudi Arabia's Al Hilal in Saturday's final.

The 63-year-old Italian told a press conference on Friday his intention was to see out his contract with Real.

"My situation is pretty clear. I have a contract until 2024," said Ancelotti, who returned for a second spell with Real at the

start of last season.

Brazil are looking for a new coach after Tite stepped down following the country's quarter-final loss to Croatia on penalties at the 2022 World Cup.

Former Spain coach Luis Enrique, Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola, Zinedine Zidane and Jose Mourinho have all been regularly cited by Brazilian media as potential successors to Tite.

AFP



Carlo Ancelotti

'Lewandowski has brought winning mentality to Barca'

Barcelona, Spain - Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez hailed striker Robert Lewandowski for helping change the mindset at the club.

The Catalans are eight points clear of rivals Real Madrid at the top of La Liga and beat Los Blancos in Saudi Arabia to win the Spanish Super Cup in January.

Last season, Barcelona failed to win a trophy but the mood changed in the summer when the club brought in several players, including former Bayern Munich striker Lewandowski.

"Lewandowski is accustomed to winning titles with Bayern. He had brought us that winning mentality, that of a champion," Xavi told reporters Saturday.

"In his head, defeat is not an option."

The 34-year-old Polish international has scored 23 goals in 26 games this season for Barca.

Barcelona can extend their lead on Madrid if they win at Villarreal on Sunday, before Carlo Ancelotti's side face Elche midweek, due to their participation in the Club World Cup.



Thiago Silva

Thiago Silva extends Chelsea contract

London, United Kingdom - Chelsea extended the contract of 38-year-old centre-back Thiago Silva to the end of the 2023/2024 season on Friday.

Despite spending in excess of £500 million (\$606 million) on new players this season, the Brazilian international has remained indispensable at the heart of the Blues defence.

"I am honestly so happy to continue my career with the Blues," said Silva, who joined Chelsea on a short-term deal from Paris Saint-Germain in 2020.

"When I signed my first contract here, it was to just do one year. Now it is already the fourth. I could not have imagined that, but really it is a very special moment for me to sign and stay at Chelsea."

Chelsea co-owners Todd Boehly and Behdad Eghbali have come under fire for a scattergun approach to the transfer market during their first year in charge of the club.

But in a joint statement they hailed Silva's experience and leadership skills as a vital complement to the array of young talent they have signed up on long-term deals.

"He's a world-class talent, as he's proven over many years for club and country, and his experience, quality and leadership skills are vital to our vision going forward," said Boehly and Eghbali.

"We're thrilled he has extended his contract with us and we look forward to more success with him ahead."

AFP



AC Milan's Olivier Giroud (R) celebrates with team-mates after scoring against Torino in their Italian Serie A match on Friday (AFP)

Giroud ends Milan slump with Torino winner

Milan, Italy - Olivier Giroud ended AC Milan's dramatic slump with the only goal in Friday's 1-0 win over Torino which moved the champions back into the Serie A top four.

France striker Giroud claimed the points for Milan with a trademark header from Theo Hernandez's cross midway through the second half at the San Siro, snapping a three-match losing streak in Italy's top flight.

His seventh league goal of the campaign moved Milan up to third, 15 points behind runaway league leaders Napoli who host Cremonese on Sunday night.

Milan are two points behind second-placed local rivals Inter Milan and also have Roma, Lazio and Atalanta all within three points behind them and still to play this weekend.

change to a three-man defence trialled in last weekend's derby defeat to Inter Milan and although the result was this time a positive one, the performance will not have Tottenham unduly worried.

However it was the first time Milan didn't concede a goal since the turn of the year, holding off a spirited Torino side who stay on 30 points in seventh and missed the chance to close in on the European places.

Winger Rafael Leao was back in the starting line-up after being dropped for Milan's most recent two losses and provided some of the cut and thrust which has made him such a star in Italy.

His burst down the left flank in the 77th minute should have led to Hernandez doubling the hosts' lead, only for the France full-back to slash wide a dreadful first-time finish. "It was a big win for us... when you lose a lot of matches like we did it's all mental," said Hernandez.

His goal kind of unblocked us mentally and we were much better to watch afterwards

STEFANO PIOLI





Brooks Koepka

‘Being able to join LIV an amazing opportunity for Asian Tour players’

Muscat – Recent Asian Tour Q-School Final winner Jack Thompson has continued to impress making the cut at the first International Series Oman, the first of 10 elevated tournaments on the Asian Tour in 2023.

The Australian has played in a field consisting of major champions Brooks Koepka and Charl Schwartzel, in just his second International Series event following last year’s England tournament at Slaley Hall.

Following his second round at Al Mouj Golf, Thompson said: “I got an invite last year in Newcastle and I didn’t play as well but I think it’s been great, good venues, fantastic hospitality and I really enjoyed it so hopefully looking forward to playing a few this year.”

With exemption into 2024’s LIV Golf League on the line for The International Series Order of Merit winner, the 25-year-old added: “Yeah it’s definitely in the back of my mind, I try not to look at things too far in the future but if I keep doing what I’m doing

and it’s pretty cliché, just take each round and tournament as it comes and hopefully one day I can end up there.”

Four-time major winner Brooks Koepka offered his thoughts on the opportunity provided by The International Series: “That’s the goal, hav-

It has been great, good venues, fantastic hospitality and I really enjoyed it

JACK THOMPSON

ing a pathway to go from wherever you are to the next step, and this does that.

“Giving opportunities is important to growing the game of golf and having that end goal of being able to join LIV is an amazing opportunity for Asian Tour players,” said Koepka, who, however, had a disappointing outing in Oman as he missed the cut on Friday.

KANAYA EYES GLORY

Japanese player on threshold of first overseas victory at International Series Oman

Muscat - Takumi Kanaya continued to put together one of his most impressive performances outside of Japan on Saturday when he took the third-round lead in the US\$2 million International Series Oman at Al Mouj Golf.

The Japanese star led at the start of the day by one shot from compatriot Ryo Hisatsune and that is how it finished on Saturday after they both returned five-under-par 67s. Thailand’s Sadom Kaewkanjana, an ever-present name on the leaderboard for the past year on the Asian Tour, also shot 67 to sit in third place, three back from the leader.

Spaniard Sergio Garcia and Joaquin Niemann from Chile moved ominously into fourth, four off top spot, after rounds of 68 and 69 respectively.

Kanaya showed why so much is expected of him with an exceptional round that showed he is comfortable leading from the front. Enjoying calmer conditions compared with the strong winds of Friday, the 24-year-old moved to nine under for the tournament, helped by a brilliant run of four birdies in five holes from the eighth. He made six birdies in total and just one bogey.

Surprisingly he missed a four-foot putt for birdie on 17 and another makeable birdie putt on the last. “I feel good, it is because this course really suits me,” said Kanaya. “I am able to play my shots, find the fairways, and find the greens. Will just take it shot by shot tomorrow.”

The Japanese star, with the distinctive golf swing and quick follow through, has won three times on the Japan Tour – the 2019 Mitsui Sumitomo Visa Taiheiyo Masters, as an amateur,



Takumi Kanaya of Japan will be aiming for victory at the US\$2 million International Series Oman at Al Mouj Golf on Sunday

I feel good, it is because this course really suits me. I am able to play my shots, find the fairways, and find the greens. Will just take it shot by shot tomorrow

TAKUMI KANAYA

the 2020 Dunlop Phoenix and the Token Homemate Cup in 2020 – but is looking for his maiden professional title overseas.

He was one of his country’s

most successful amateurs having claimed the 2015 Japan Amateur, the Asia Pacific Amateur in 2018, and the team gold medal at the Asian Games that year. He was also ranked first on the World

Amateur Golf Ranking for 55 weeks.

Hisatsune, who is looking for his first big Tour win, is four years younger than Kanaya and looking forward to playing with his decorated compatriot tomorrow. He said: “Yeah, I respect my older friend, we’re both Japanese and I’m so happy to play with him. Yeah, so happy to get both of us playing together and making a lot of birdies. Today was great, I feel like I was smart in my game management.”

Sadom was fourth in last week’s season-opening PIF Saudi International powered by Soft-Bank Investment Advisers and will no doubt be a threat on Sunday. “Today was pretty good for me, I hit more fairways than the last two rounds,” he said.

Garcia bounced back well after Friday’s 76 – which considering the windy conditions was more like par for the course. “Obviously, today it was windy, but it wasn’t as windy as yesterday,” said Garcia.

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Scottie Scheffler of the US in action at Phoenix Open (AFP)

Scheffler leads Rahm as darkness halts Phoenix Open second round

Phoenix, United States - Scottie Scheffler fired seven birdies in a seven-under-par 64 on Friday to take a two-shot clubhouse lead over Jon Rahm as the two chase Rory McIlroy’s number one ranking at the Phoenix Open.

World number two Scheffler, the defending champion in Phoenix, had a 10-under-par total of 132 and Spain’s third-ranked Rahm was his nearest rival in the clubhouse after a five-under-par 66 for 134.

Overnight co-leader Adam Hadwin of Canada was eight-under through 10 holes when darkness halted play in the US

PGA Tour event at TPC Scottsdale, which has been in catch-up mode since a morning frost delay on Thursday. Both Scheffler and Rahm have a chance to overtake Northern Ireland star McIlroy atop the world rankings this week. McIlroy was three-under for the tournament through 13 holes of the second round.

Scheffler teed off on the 10th and after a birdie at the 12th he electrified the raucous crowd at the par-three 16th with a tee shot that took a bounce and rolled toward the cup - only for a gust of wind to carry it off the green.

AFP

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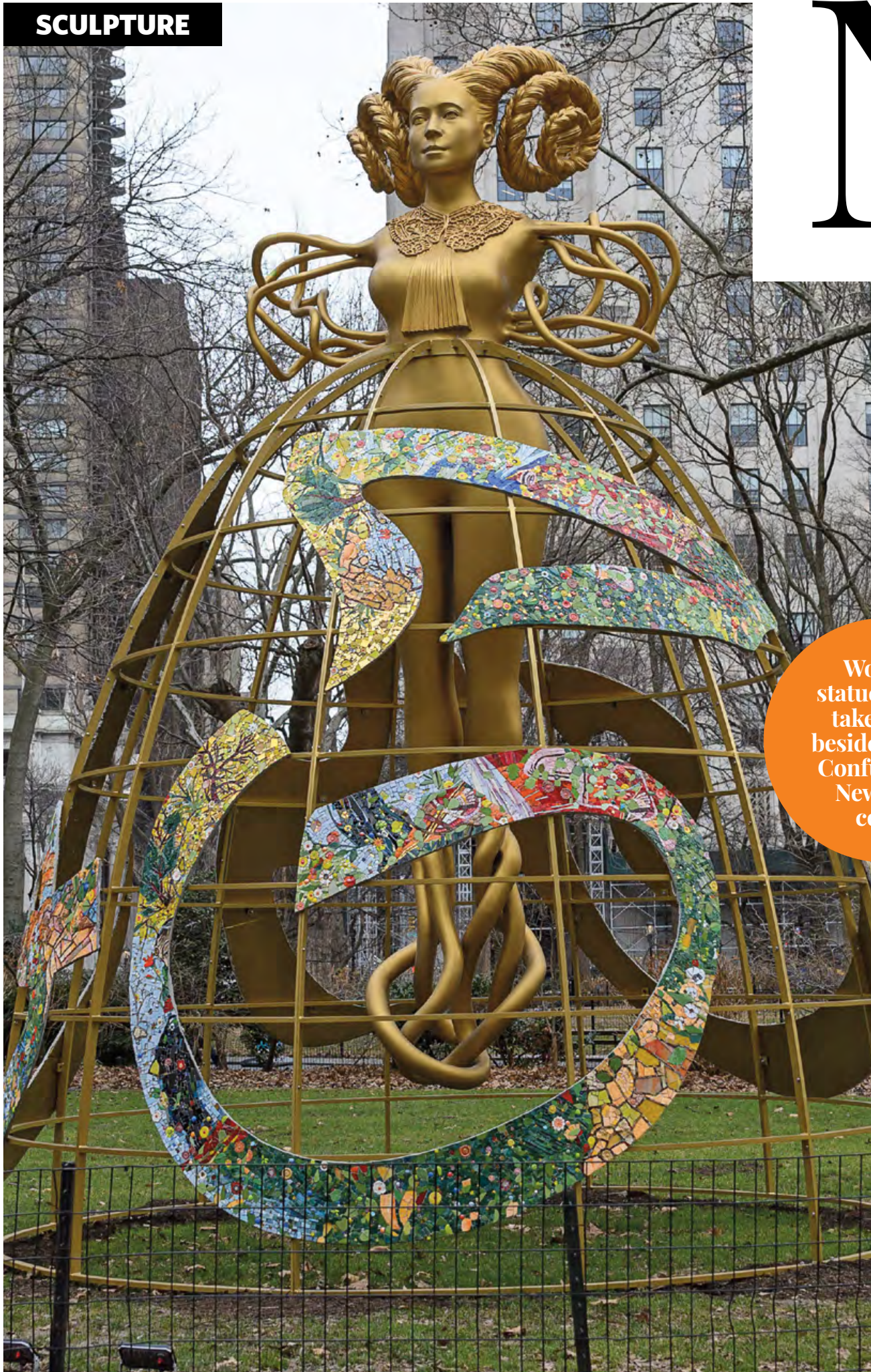
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SCULPTURE



Shahzia Sikander's sculpture "Witness" is on display in Madison Square Park as part of her multimedia exhibition "Havah...to breathe, air, life" on February 7, 2023, in New York City.

NOW

For more than a century, the plinths atop a New York courthouse held statues all depicting men. Not anymore, thanks to the work of a Pakistani-American artist. Joining Zoroaster, Confucius, Moses and six other male ancient jurists on the neoclassical building's roof in Manhattan is an eight-foot female sculpture shimmering in gold.

Shahzia Sikander, 53, created the work, called 'NOW', to raise awareness about the low representation of women in public statues in the United States, which tend to honor white men.

"Representation matters and women representation (matters) in spaces which have been fundamentally very patriarchal, like law and art," the artist told AFP.

"So of course, placing the character on the roof of the courthouse, the context of the courthouse allows a very different conversation to take shape," the 53-year-old added.

The building, in Manhattan's Flatiron District, has boasted ten plinths since it opened in the late 19th century. In 1955, a statue of the Prophet Mohammed was removed from one following complaints from Pakistan, Indonesia and Egypt.

Several statues were then shifted over one spot - but an empty plinth still remained.

Now, Sikander's sculpture occupies the spot where the Byzantine emperor Justinian used to stand. Her statue depicts a feminine figure emerging from a pink lotus flower, her hair braided into spiraling horns.

It calls to attention the discrimination women continue to face, "whether it is health and education rights, equal economic opportunities, gender-based violence and race, or class discrimination," Sikander says.

"Despite years of women's struggle for legal, socio-economic and political equality, gender bias still continues to create barriers for many women," she wrote in her artist's note about the work.

Sikander, who was born in Lahore and moved to the US 30 years ago, entitled the work 'NOW', a nod to recent events that opponents say have dismantled women's rights.

The Supreme Court, which has leaned heavily to the right since Donald Trump's presidency, scrapped the federal right to abortion when it overturned Roe v Wade in June.

The statue boasts the signature lace collar of liberal icon and progressive Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who died in September 2020 at the age of 87.

"With Ginsburg's death and the reversal of Roe, there was a setback to women's constitutional progress," said Sikander.

The temporary work is part of her exhibition "Havah... to breathe, air, life," which features an 18-foot sculpture called 'Witness' in nearby Madison Square Park.

AFP



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تعلن دائرة الملكية الفكرية عن طلب تسجيل العلامة التجارية المقبولة وفقاً لأحكام قانون (نظام) العلامات التجارية لدول مجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية الصادر بالمرسوم السلطاني رقم 33 / 2017

طلب تسجيل العلامة التجارية رقم : 152621
تاريخ تقديم الطلب: 14/02/2022
اسم طالب التسجيل : اي سي اي
تصنيف : 35 محلات بيع الملابس الرياضية
تاريخ النشر : 17/04/2022



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طلب تسجيل العلامة التجارية رقم : 157220
تاريخ تقديم الطلب: 31/08/2022
اسم طالب التسجيل : بن علي
تصنيف : 35 بيع العطور ومستحضرات التجميل
تاريخ النشر : 30/10/2022



VAN GOGH

Choosing Vincent

Van Gogh family role hailed in museum's 50th birthday show

He's one of the most famous artists in history. But Vincent van Gogh could have faded into obscurity were it not for his family - and the vision of one woman.

The Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam launched its 50th anniversary celebrations on Wednesday with a new exhibit hailing their often under-appreciated role.

'Choosing Vincent' which opened on Friday and runs until April 10, not only features several of the Dutch master's famous paintings, but also rarely-seen objects, including his birth certificate and the only-known photograph of him in existence.

It pays homage to the tireless work of Vincent's beloved brother Theo and, in particular, Theo's widow Jo Van Gogh-Bonger, who dedicated her life to making sure the world saw the genius of Vincent's works.

"Jo contributed greatly to the fame of Vincent," curator Lisa Smit said.

Van Gogh sold only a handful of paintings during his lifetime, and at the time of his death in 1890 after a self-inflicted gunshot wound, was often wracked with self-doubt about his talent.

Theo died six months after Vincent, in 1891, leaving Jo Van Gogh-Bonger with a large collection of paintings by a virtually unknown artist.

All-important life decision

"At this point in time, Jo was a young woman of 28 and she had a little boy who hadn't even turned one yet," said Smit.

"So what is she going to do with this collection? Is she going to keep it, is she going to sell it? She really has to make that all-important life decision."

The answer to that question created the Van Gogh we know now -- whose paintings including 'Sunflowers' and 'Irises' are among the most expensive ever sold.

"A few months after Theo's death, she writes in her diary that she wants to make it her mission to follow Theo's dream to find recognition for her brother in law, which she does for the rest of her life," said Smit.

She not only preserved the paintings but also looked after the correspondence between her hus-



Jo (Van Gogh-Bonger) contributed greatly to the fame of Vincent. She was a young woman of 28 and had a little boy who hadn't even turned one

LISA SMIT

band and her brother in law, which would later be published as 'Dear Theo'.

Theo and Jo's son, named Vincent after his artist uncle, continued keeping the collection intact and was instrumental in handing it over in its entirety to the Vincent van Gogh Foundation in 1962.

Part of the deal was the building of a museum to house Van Gogh's works including other famous paintings like 'Wheatfield with Crows' and self-portraits.

Tells a story

'Choosing Vincent' prominently features the iconic

work 'Almond Blossom' - which Vincent painted as a gift to his namesake nephew in 1890 a few months before his death.

The Japanese-influenced work was one of the hundreds of Van Gogh's paintings handed over to the Foundation in 1962. In 1973, the museum opened its doors to the public as the Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh.

The museum changed its name to the Van Gogh Museum in 1994 and today houses more than 200 paintings, 500 drawings and around 800 letters in the largest collection globally by the painter.

"This is an exhibition that tells a story," said Van Gogh Museum Director Emilie Gordenker. "A story about Vincent, but also his family and how close they were and what they meant to each other."

AFP





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