



50
GLORIOUS YEARS

MUSCAT DAILY

AN APEX MEDIA PUBLICATION

MONDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2020

16 PAGE ISSUE

www.muscatdaily.com

Email: muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om



31°C/23°C

OWYA 2020 WINNERS - JAMILA AL HARTHY & DONATELLA DONATELLI
GO TO PAGES 09 & 16



Omani startup designs remotely operated ventilator

Our Correspondent
Muscat

An Omani startup called Aphcaros Engineering has designed a high-tech ventilator which it claims is the first device in the world that can be operated and controlled remotely.

Named Nafs 20, the machine is equipped with features approved internationally and helps reduce risk of infection for medical staff while enabling expert advice and consultancy remotely.

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Alwaleed Abdullah Almurshidi, an engineer at Aphcaros, said, "We are an Omani product design and development startup operating since 2016. Nafs 20 is a high-end mechanical ventilator."

The company's objective behind Nafs 20 was to design a device to reduce the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially the shortage of medical equipment including respirators. The device is suitable for use in field hospitals.



Alwaleed Abdullah Almurshidi

"The device comes with an interactive manual that helps medical staff set it up; a user-friendly interface suitable for hospital use, and a backup battery that allows continuity in case of power loss while transferring patients. It displays 50 vital parameters and is fitted with alarms in accordance with international standards," Almurshidi informed. With Nafs 20, the prescribed mix of low and high oxygen levels can be main-

tained through a software.

"The device was developed, including most of its internal components, by eight Omani engineers of the company in cooperation with specialists from the Ministry of Health. Medical staff from the ministry were very impressed by the device," Almurshidi said.

He said the team is grateful to medical staff, including doctors and technicians at The Royal Hospital and Sohar Hospital for their support with technical advice, and Omani Company for Innovation Development for financial support for the development of Nafs 20.

"We want the participation of owners of funds from the private sector to support industrial innovation as it's the basis on which modern economies are built," Almurshidi said.

Team's biggest challenge was sourcing raw material and components for the device, he said. Following the positive response to the ventilator, the team hopes to export the device.



MARITIME EXERCISE CONDUCTED

The Maritime Security Centre carried out an exercise (1/2020) with the participation of a number of military, security and civil authorities, in cooperation with Masirah Oil Limited on Sunday. The exercise aimed to raise awareness on marine pollution and test readiness for medical evacuations, search and rescue operations, fight fires and secure Omani coasts against maritime security risks (ONA)



► NEWS BRIEFS

APPLICATIONS FOR JOB SECURITY SYSTEM BENEFITS TO BE RECEIVED FROM NOV 1

Muscat - The committee overseeing the implementation of the Job Security System (JSS) has called upon private sector employees entitled to the JSS benefits, whose services were terminated, to apply for the prescribed benefits via the portal of the Ministry of Labour, the Public Authority for Social Insurance and the website of the General Federation of Oman Trade Unions.

The applications will be received from November 1 and the benefits will be disbursed to those who are entitled on monthly basis, said the Ministry of Labour, which laid emphasis on applicants' meeting the terms and conditions set in the JSS. An electronic application has been designed to help the insured to know whether they are entitled to the benefits.

Commemorative stamp issued to mark UN anniversary

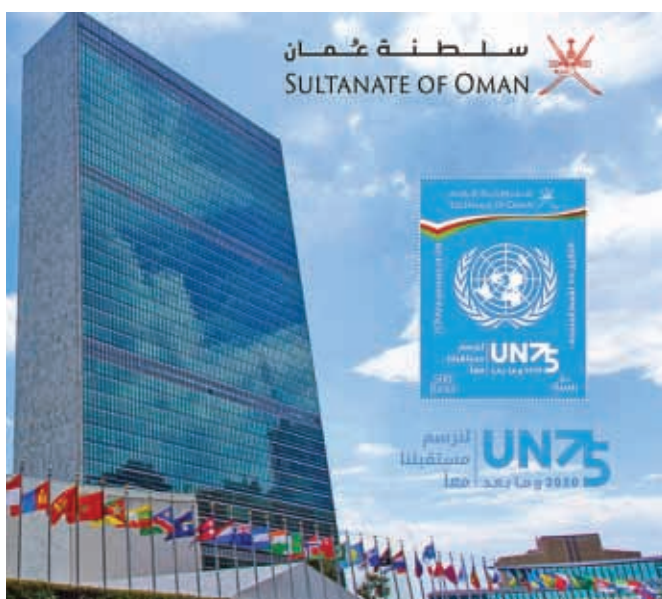
Our Correspondent
Muscat

To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the United Nations (UN), Oman Post and Central Bank of Oman issued a commemorative stamp and silver coin respectively under the patronage of H E Mohammed bin Nasser al Wahaibi, Undersecretary for Administration and Financial Affairs in the Foreign Ministry, on Sunday.

The ceremony was attended by H E Taher bin Salem bin Abdullah al Omari, executive president of the Central Bank of Oman, Abdulmalik Albalushi, CEO of Oman Post, a number of representatives of United Nations in the sultanate, and officials from the Foreign Ministry.

The stamp features Oman's flag colours, the international organisation's 75th anniversary emblem, and the slogan 'Shaping our future together'.

To mark this symbolic occasion, the UN has launched the 'UN75' initiative, which aims to promote deep reflection on international cooperation and the role the UN will play in the future. In this context, Oman is contribut-



The stamp features Oman's flag colours, the international organisation's 75th anniversary emblem, and the slogan 'Shaping our future together'

ing to a global conversation that aims to involve people from all around the world to listen to their hopes and fears, and to learn

from their experiences, in order to construct a global vision for 2045, the year that will mark the centenary of the UN.

Albalushi said, "The United Nations today remains true to its mission to bring nations and people together to preserve peace and security, and improve lives everywhere. These principles that are adopted by the UN are enshrined in Oman's coveted history when it comes to equality and dignity of people, while always advocating for peace and prosperity for the human race. This new stamp is our way of reflecting on what humanity has achieved and on what more we can do as a collective to ensure a better tomorrow."

The new stamp was prepared in cooperation with the United Nations Postal Administration, which began issuing stamps in 1951 and marked the 10th anniversary of the UN on stamps. Photographs of the renovated UN headquarters in New York City were pictured on stamps issued in 2015 for the 70th anniversary, while countries from around the world are issuing commemorative stamps to celebrate the 75th anniversary.

The new stamp can now be reserved by emailing Oman Post on philatelic@omanpost.om

27% people in Oman faced banking frauds in H1 2020

Our Correspondent
Muscat

According to a cybersecurity survey, more than a quarter (27 per cent) of people in Oman faced banking fraud at least once in the first half of 2020.

In most of the cases, the banking fraud occurred via phones with the calls received mainly during business hours.

Kaspersky, the cybersecurity firm, stated that more than half (56 per cent) of the people in Oman knew that scammers were trying to contact them and 46 per cent immediately realised that they were being scammed only when they opened a link. Scammers targeted most of these people (74 per cent) through their personal emails.

Fraudsters are seriously preparing for such calls and are actively using social engineering methods. In 61 per cent cases, they mentioned the correct name of the person whom they called and in some cases they even knew bank card details. The most common pretext for the scammers to call were the need to

SECURITY TIPS

- Be wary of any calls from people who claim to be bank employees
- Do not click on any dubious links sent via SMS or messages received in messenger
- In case of any suspicion, hang up and call the bank on the number indicated on the back of the card

confirm data, inquire about blocking bank cards and loan offers. In 39 per cent cases, the criminals attempted getting card details, and in 44 per cent cases they tried to convince the victim to transfer money to an allegedly secure account.

"Scams continue to grow. We've seen a 72 per cent increase in financial malware in the first half of 2020 in Oman. But many people still do not know how to recognise criminals and lose money as a result of simple scam schemes," said Amin Hasbini, head of Middle East Research Centre at Kaspersky.



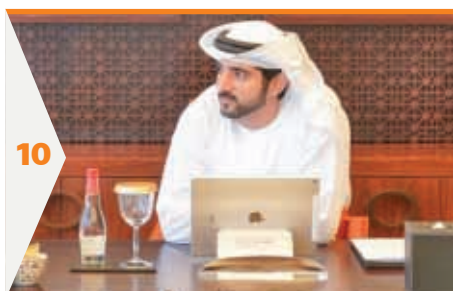
05

Hamilton makes F1 history with 92nd win in Portugal



09

Duqm to get Oman's largest integrated cement plant



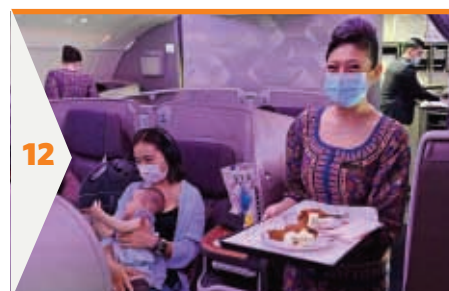
10

Dubai Crown Prince launches AED500mn stimulus package



11

Al-Qaeda leader wanted by US killed in Afghanistan



12

Travel-starved 'passengers' dine on parked planes

NOW ON WHATSAPP

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

Send us on WhatsApp 71509370



YOUR SAY

SHAME!

Do you think naming and shaming will prompt people to adhere to the precautionary measures against COVID-19?

Mbarak al Aarimy
Entrepreneur

Naming and shaming is a great move. Who would like his or her photo to be on social media for the wrong reasons? It would have serious implications on their future, including the risk of not getting hired for jobs because of their act of irresponsibility. It is worth appreciating all the health workers and the government, Ministry of Health in particular, for their immense efforts.



A R Srinivasan
Private sector employee

I am of the strong opinion that it would definitely make people think twice and adhere to the precautionary measures. However, if this does not succeed, then my recommendation would be to take still more stringent actions like imprisonment. It is imperative that we need to change our lifestyle and leave a better tomorrow for the future generations.



Reema Bhatia
Teacher

Oman's authorities have said that the recent rise in infections was a result of people failing to take health precautions seriously. The purpose of naming and shaming is to maintain safety and security and prohibit social gatherings of all sorts. I hope and expect that people take it seriously or else bear a hole in their pockets in these difficult times of a pandemic.



Dr Trishna Chhabria
Dentist

It's really sad to see that such a big global crisis has still not awakened the public to maintain social distancing protocols especially during the evening. The night curfew was the best decision to contain the spread and limit transmission. By limiting transmission, we are likely to reduce the burden on healthcare facilities and have sufficient capacity to care for those affected.



Saif Said al Saadi
Logistics officer

Yes, this kind of action will be effective. People would be ashamed to have their names and photos posted for such a reason. It'll make them more cautious and think twice before breaking the law.



Mohan Anandan
Banker

The fact that authorities have gone to this extent clearly shows the seriousness of the situation and the laxity in adhering to the prescribed safety norms by the public against the COVID-19 virus. No doubt, naming and shaming would act as a deterrent. In addition, stringent fines should also be imposed.



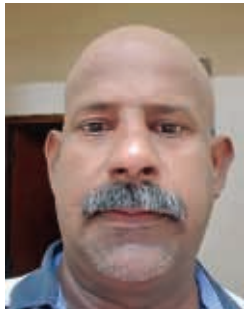
Saji Uthuppan
Lecturer

As the number of COVID-19 cases continues to rise, it is the responsibility of the public to abide by the recommendations of the government. We have seen all over the world that a lapse in individual care can lead to mass destruction. The public should be aware of their social commitment. If the public responds irresponsibly, indeed, the government should act.



Ruskeen S
Sales manager

I support such punitive action. It's the only way to keep those individuals who don't obey indoors and control their carelessness. When they see officials and authorities taking such action, people will be serious and not take matters for granted.



Susmita Banerjee
Homemaker

Naming and shaming will surely prompt people to follow the guidelines as it will make them more committed towards the safety measures. Even then, individuals themselves should be responsible enough to take care of their safety and also of the person on the other side.



? NEXT ON YOUR SAY

Would you prefer blended education over distance education in the new academic year starting on November 1? Why?

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

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PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr	4.53am
Sunrise	6.09am
Duhr	11.56am
Asr	3.12pm
Maghrib	5.37pm
Isha	6.48pm

1,095 new COVID-19 cases, 27 deaths in three days

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Health (MoH) on Sunday confirmed 1,095 new cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) over three days, taking the total to 112,932. The number of deaths reported during the same time was 27.

On average, 365 new cases were reported each day during the three days – a good sign as a result of the night movement ban that ended on Saturday.

The number of those who have recovered also increased by 1,329. 'The number of recoveries has increased to 99,278 while the number of deaths has reached 1,174,' an MoH statement said.

As of Sunday, a total of 471 patients were admitted in health institutions, including 193 were in ICUs.

MoH calls upon all to adhere to the isolation procedures by staying in an isolated room with an attached toilet and serving the



isolated person from outside the room as instructed. It said that social distancing also helps curb the spread of the virus.

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

CASES FROM OCT 19 TO 25

Oct 19	641
Oct 20	439
Oct 21	418
Oct 22	353
Oct 23 to 25 (Average of 365)	1,095

Omani sets up astronomical observatory in South Batinah

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To document astronomical phenomena and spread awareness among members of society, an Omani has set up an observatory in Al Hoqain in the wilayat of Rustaq in South Batinah.

Yousef Zahir al Salmi, who is a member of the Oman Astronomical Society, said his fascination for celestial objects and phenomena began in the 1990s and that prompted him to establish a personal observatory.

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Salmi said, "I started observing various astronomical phenomena such as solar eclipses, lunar eclipses and stars. Then I thought of setting up my own observatory."

The observatory was used to conduct astronomical work-



The observatory aims to instil a culture of astronomy in children and revive the heritage of ancient Arab astronomers

YOUSEF ZAHIR AL SALMI

shops for school students, he said. "Unfortunately, it was exposed to a fire and it stopped



(Supplied photos)

functioning. I recently rebuilt it and it will be ready next month." Salmi said he is once again

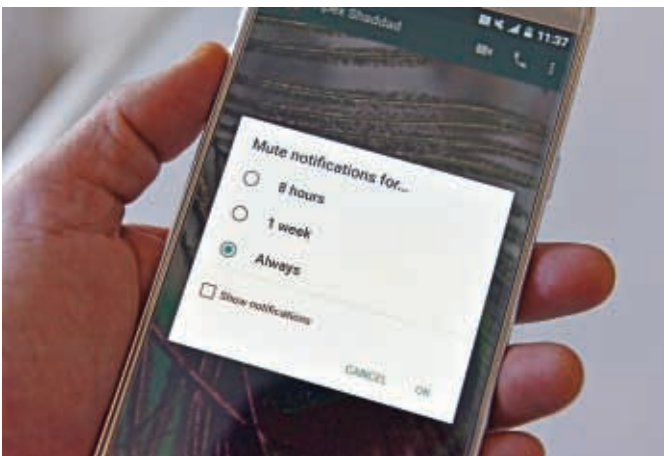
ready to spread astronomical awareness among members of society through his observatory,

and hold astronomical events and workshops for school students and astronomy enthusiasts.

"The observatory also aims to instil a culture of astronomy among children and revive the heritage of ancient Arab astronomers. There is a large space surrounding the observatory, which we will prepare for holding various astronomical events."

The coronavirus pandemic has forced him to suspend the activities he used to hold every month, he said.

Talking about the future, he said, "Now we are cooperating with the Oman Astronomical Society to monitor astronomical phenomena such as solar eclipse. We want to establish another bigger observatory and purchase modern astronomical instruments to serve more people."



WhatsApp has new mute option

Our Correspondent
Muscat

One of the best means of communication, WhatsApp is a boon in the present times. However, unwanted messages, pings and shared content from individuals or groups often annoy users.

WhatsApp has now introduced an 'Always' mute option that allows one to mute the notifications of a chat or a group indefinitely.

Earlier, the Facebook-owned messaging app provided three mute options - eight hours, one week and one year. But now instead of a year, one can mute a chat permanently. This feature is available on both Android and iOS versions of the app as well as on the web version.

Sajid Hooti, a jewellery businessman at Muttrah Souq, welcomed the new option.

He said, "We sell old and modern jewellery designs. For that we do have a couple of WhatsApp groups connecting salesmen and customers. We created the groups for better and smooth flow of our business."

But he said the problem is instead of work-related matters, group members keep sending

news items that are often old, wrong or irrelevant.

"There are offensive jokes and annoying messages as well. This 'mute' option is good. Now we can just mute some chats and don't have to check the mobile whenever a message arrives."

In Oman too, messages related to festivals, shop promotions, morning wishes and old jokes are circulated frequently and are a cause of disturbance to many.

Ahmed Haider, a sales executive, said his college friends have two WhatsApp groups and they started these on the condition that messages are only related to their college, old friends or something important.

"But everyday there are about 100 unnecessary messages. The 'mute' option helps me not to get distracted while I'm working or driving," he said.

IT expert Tariq al Barwani, while welcoming the new option, said, "Often out of courtesy, we cannot say 'no' to people who send unnecessary messages. It is best to 'mute' such people. Security wise, this is also a good idea as often in groups people send spams which can collect personal information and might cause issues."

Experimental stage of E-census reviewed

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Supreme National Committee of Electronic Census 2020 held a meeting on Sunday under the chairmanship of H E Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal al Busaidi, Minister of Interior, and discussed tasks undertaken during the experimental stage of the census.

"The committee also viewed the electronic portal which hosts the E-census and allows quick access to information and statistical indicators of popula-



(ONA)

tion, residence and establishments by building a database of all related information in electronic and updatable for-

mat where data can be merged in a collated statistical format,' the committee said in a statement.

The committee commended the efforts exerted in executing the programme within scheduled timeframe and to activate

linkage between the E-census system and the departments dealing with the project.

"So far, connectivity has been established between the portal and databases of a number of government departments, including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion and the Civil Status Directorate General," added the statement by the committee.



KNOW
THE LAW

Failure to pay alimony is a jailable offence

A husband may face jail if he fails to pay alimony to his wife, the Public Prosecution said, emphasising that alimony is a legitimate right of the wife.

In a statement, Public Prosecution said, 'Alimony is a legitimate right of the wife and a husband refusing to pay it is a crime that can land him in jail.'

'Refusing to pay alimony, specified by a final court decision, on time is a crime punishable by imprisonment for one year,' it added.

'Thyroid cancer second most common female cancer in the sultanate'

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Thyroid cancer is the most common endocrine malignancy globally, with over half a million new cases diagnosed in 2018.

According to Dr Khalsa Zahran al Nabhani, consultant for nuclear medicine and head of Nuclear Medicine Department and Molecular Imaging Centre at The Royal Hospital, the annual report on national cancer registry of 2017 revealed that nearly 200 new cases of thyroid cancer are diagnosed every year in Oman.

"It appears to be the second most common female cancer in Oman at present. Globally, thyroid cancer is more common in females, and correspondingly it was found to be more common among Omani women. Though thyroid cancer is mostly an adult malignancy, unfortunately a few children are also diagnosed with it in Oman," Dr Khalsa said.

International data has revealed an increasing trend in thyroid cancer incidence in

American, Asian, European, Oceanic and Nordic countries.

"In addition, a recently published national data from 1996 to 2017 has reported an increasing trend of thyroid cancer among Omanis. This incremental trend seemed similar to the worldwide reported data. It is uncertain why there is a significantly increasing tendency in the incidence of thy-



roid cancer worldwide. It is possible that the increasing usage of neck ultrasonography, guided FNA and other radio-imaging techniques lead to an early and accurate diagnosis," said Dr Khalsa.

Thyroid cancer types include differentiated thyroid cancer (DTC), medullary cancer and anaplastic thyroid cancer. The

vast majority (90 per cent) of thyroid cancer is differentiated thyroid cancer. DTC usually responds very well to treatment and has excellent outcome and prognosis, with high prospect for cure.

Over the last decade, there have been many improvements in the diagnosis and treatment of thyroid cancer. In Oman, pa-

In Oman, radioiodine therapy is provided by The Royal Hospital and Sultan Qaboos University Hospital. Around 1,000 patients with thyroid cancer have been treated till now

DR KHALSA ZAHIRAN AL NABHANI

tients are treated as per the latest international guidelines.

"The most common presentation of thyroid cancer is asymptomatic thyroid nodules in the neck. These are often discovered on routine clinical examination or incidentally found on ultrasound or other radiological scans of the neck done for some other unrelated reasons. In a few cases,

people themselves or relatives may notice a neck swelling. The initial step of thyroid cancer diagnosis is to take a small biopsy from the concerned thyroid nodule using a small needle. This is an outpatient procedure, called fine needle aspiration (FNA). Once thyroid cancer is diagnosed by FNA, thyroid surgery and radioiodine therapy are the

main treatment approaches.

"In Oman, radioiodine therapy is provided by The Royal Hospital and Sultan Qaboos University Hospital. Around 1,000 patients with thyroid cancer have been treated till now," said Dr Khalsa.

"The emphasis on public awareness about thyroid cancer is important to ensure early diagnosis of the disease."



OTC holds 'Women in Tourism' annual forum



As part of its celebration of Omani Women's Day, Oman Tourism College (OTC) organised its annual forum 'Women in Tourism' on October 19. The sixth edition of the forum brought to light the success stories of inspiring women in the tourism and hospitality sectors, and discussed the indirect impact of COVID-19 on the sector and its employees.

The aim of conducting this annual forum was to celebrate the growing participation of women in the tourism and hospitality sectors in the sultanate.

Commenting on the importance of holding the forum, Dr Abdulkarim Sultan al Mughairi, dean of OTC said, "By organising this annual forum, we seek to recognise the efforts of women, highlight their pivotal role in the growth of the tourism sector and

their valuable contribution towards enriching the experiences of visitors within this beautiful country.

"The challenges that we are currently experiencing from the coronavirus pandemic has greatly impacted the tourism sector. With several safety measures in place to prevent the spread of the virus, it has become more important than ever to create a platform for communication, discussion, sharing experiences, and reviewing challenges and solutions to overcome this critical period. I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to all of the speakers and participants of the forum and wish them further progress and success in their future."

OTC invited several inspirational speakers from the industry

to share their experiences with the audience and highlight the lessons learned from the pandemic.

Manal al Kiyumi, OCEC marketing manager, emphasised the need to adapt to the current situation and accept change while continuing to work via virtual communication platforms. She underlined the need to unite efforts in enhancing the cooperation of all sector representatives, to overcome the current challenges and benefit from the collective experience to make the change.

Visal al Rashdi, a licensed Omani tour guide, pointed out the importance of utilising digital platforms to achieve personal and professional goals since it allows users to hold discussions, exchange views and share experiences, virtually. In this way,

they can benefit and learn from each other. In addition, posting success stories can be a source of inspiration and support for other women working in the sector.

Anna-Marie Dowling, IHG Oman area general manager, spoke about the need to embrace change and adapting accordingly.

She highlighted the need to view the current crisis as an opportunity to think outside the box and come up with innovative solutions to ensure the continuity of business.

Ghaniya al Mawaali, Oman Sail client services account manager, addressed the need to view this crisis as an opportunity for individuals to analyse and assess the goals they want to achieve and methods to see them to fulfilment.

DIWAN OF ROYAL COURT CELEBRATES WOMEN'S DAY



In recognition of the efforts of Omani women and their leadership role, on the occasion of Omani Women's Day the Diwan of Royal Court honoured a number of its employees in the Diwan in Muscat and Salalah

Al Jenaibi Automobiles reveals limited-time offer on MINI

Al Jenaibi International Automobiles LLC (AJIA), the official importer of BMW Group vehicles in Oman, has launched a limited-time offer across its extensive collection of MINI models, valid until October 31.

Customers can take home the model of their dreams and avail a range of benefits including, MINI Service Inclusive Plus up to 5 years or 100,000km (whichever comes first), MINI Repair Inclusive (BMW Warranty) up to 5 years or 200,000km (whichever comes first), and complimentary window tinting.

Additionally, customers are sure to have a convenient and stress-free buying experience, as AJIA will provide complimentary



insurance and registration for the first year on all models purchased during this time.

Salim Sabbagh, acting chief executive officer of Al Jenaibi International Automobiles, said, "The demand of the MINI continues to grow in the region.

With its iconic style and noteworthy performance, the models provide a sense of individuality that our customers crave."

For more information, please visit www.mini-oman.com or call 96178383, 96179393, or toll-free on 800 500008.

H E Mahawar felicitated by Dr Sheikh Ghafri

H E Munu Mahawar, Ambassador of India, was felicitated by Dr Sheikh Hammad Hamed al Ghafri, Member of the State Council, on the second anniversary of the Sports Museum.

Dr Sheikh Ghafri, who was mainly responsible for the establishment of the museum, Ahmed Hammad Hamed al Ghafri, CEO of Future Group, and Osama Rawat, general manager of Oriental Pharmacy joined the celebration at Al Noor Building in Ruwi. The celebrations were limited due to restrictions imposed by the government.

After a brief reception, the felicitation ceremony began. The bouquets were presented by S A S Naqvi, former technical advisor, Oman Olympic Committee and national hockey coach of India and Oman. Dr Sheikh Ghafri presented to H E Mahawar a khanjar.

A special memento of a hockey stick and a ball was presented by Naqvi to the ambassador.



After the felicitation ceremony H E Mahawar was taken around the different sections of the museum.

The conference aims to share the best practices in TESOL, enhance the methods followed in English language teaching and learning, and provide a platform for academics and researchers to showcase their innovative ideas.

MEC to discuss trends and issues in English language learning

Middle East College (MEC) is organising its second Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) conference focusing on 'Emerging Trends and Contemporary Issues in Language Learning: the EFL Context'.

The conference, scheduled on Wednesday, will be conducted online via Microsoft Teams.

Two keynote speakers will deliver their speeches: Prof Thomas Robb, professor emeritus, Kyoto Sangyo University; and Dr Ali al Issa, associate professor of English Language Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University.

The conference aims to share the best practices in TESOL, enhance the methods followed in English language teaching and learning, and provide a platform for academics and researchers to showcase their innovative ideas.

English language teaching-related themes like Blended learning during COVID-19, English for Academic Purposes, Writing across the Curriculum, Writing in the Disciplines, the 21st Century Language Classroom, Flipped Learning in ELT, and Innovative Pedagogies for Arab Learners, to name a few, will be discussed.

TESOL Experts English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors, General Foundation Programme students, and Second English language learners will be attending the conference.

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I didn't have a magic ball when I chose to come here (Mercedes) - and all we have ever tried to do is make the most of it every single day. We are all rowing in the same direction

LEWIS HAMILTON



FACTFILE

Name: Lewis Hamilton
Date of birth: January 7, 1985
Place of birth: Stevenage, England
Nationality: British
Height: 1.74m
Weight: 66kg
Team: Mercedes-AMG
Car number: 44

FORMULA ONE CAREER

World championships: 6 - 2008, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019
Races: 262
Teams: McLaren (2007-2012), Mercedes (since 2013)
Debut: Australia 2007 (3rd)
First win: Canada 2007
Last win: Portugal 2020
Victories: 92
Podiums: 161
Pole positions: 97
Fastest laps: 52
Points scored: 3,687
Championship history:
1st (2008, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019), 2nd (2007, 2016), 4th (2010, 2012, 2013), 5th (2009, 2011)

QUICK RUN

Morbidelli wins Teruel MotoGP to climb to fourth

Franco Morbidelli claimed the Teruel MotoGP for his second win of the season after pole-sitter Takaaki Nakagami crashed on the first lap in Alcaniz in Spain on Sunday. Morbidelli crossed the finish line more than two seconds ahead of Alex Rins, with Joan Mir coming in third place after starting 12th. Mir extended his championship lead to 14 points over Fabio Quartararo, who finished eighth. Maverick Viñales was five points further back after finishing seventh. Morbidelli moved to fourth in the standings with the victory, staying 25 points off the lead. He had won his maiden career MotoGP race at the San Marino GP in September. Rins was the winner last weekend at the same MotorLand track. Mir was coming off a third-place finish last weekend.

Aguero faces fresh lay-off after injuring hamstring

Sergio Aguero faces another spell on the sidelines after suffering a hamstring injury in Manchester City's 1-1 draw with West Ham on Saturday. The Argentine striker only returned to action last week after four months out following knee surgery. City boss Pep Guardiola revealed he was waiting to discover the full extent of the injury to the club's all-time record scorer. "It's a muscular (injury), hamstring, I think," he said. Aguero's setback is the latest in a series of injury and illness issues that have hit City, who were without Fernandinho, Aymeric Laporte, Nathan Ake and Gabriel Jesus at the London Stadium.

Bayern teen star Davies out for up to two months

Bayern Munich expect to be without rising star Alphonso Davies for up to eight weeks after he tore ankle ligaments early in Saturday's 5-0 rout of Eintracht Frankfurt in the Bundesliga. The Canadian teenager twisted his right ankle with barely a minute gone at the Allianz Arena. "Thank you everyone for the kind messages. I will be back stronger, just a bump in the road," Davies later posted on Twitter. "He (Davies) has injured ligaments - one is torn, one is partially torn. We expect him to be out for six to eight weeks," confirmed Bayern head coach Hansi Flick. "If a player of this quality drops out, it hurts."

Barcelona hit by Coutinho injury blow

Barcelona midfielder Philippe Coutinho injured his left hamstring in his side's 1-3 home defeat to Real Madrid on Saturday, effectively ruling him out of his side's Champions League showdown away to Juventus on Wednesday. A statement from Barcelona on Sunday said the Brazilian was unavailable due to the injury, without saying when he would return to action. Barca's most expensive ever signing, Coutinho, who played the full 90 minutes, passed up a clear chance to put his side ahead in the 'Clasico' when the game was poised at 1-1, missing the target with a header from close range. AFP

92 WINS

History-maker Hamilton usurps Schumacher with record victory in Portugal

Portimao, Portugal - Lewis Hamilton became Formula One's record all-time race-winner on Sunday when he claimed his 92nd victory at the Portuguese Grand Prix to pass Michael Schumacher at the top of the list.

His win lifted him one clear of Schumacher's 14 year old record of 91 triumphs after a thrilling inaugural F1 race at the Algarve International Circuit.

After a long hug with his father Anthony who, together with step-mother Linda, had witnessed his historic achievement, Hamilton heaped praise on his Mercedes before joining his race engineer Peter 'Bono' Bonnington and Bottas on the podium.

"I owe this and so much to all these guys here and the team at the factory," said Hamilton.

"For their tremendous work, they are always pushing the

barrier higher and higher. It is a privilege working with them... Working with them is inspiring."

Hamilton fought back after an early scare, when he led but dropped to third after a rain shower, to demonstrate impeccable tyre management and flawless judgement as he claimed an eighth win in 12 races this year. The six-time world champion finished 25.5 seconds clear of his Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas with Red Bull's Max Verstappen a familiar third.

Hamilton's triumph added another unprecedented feat to his roster of records. He now has the most wins, a record 97 pole positions, a record 161 podium finishes and a record 45 consecutive points finishes.

The 35 year old Briton extended his championship lead over Bottas to 77 points. A

HAMILTON IN DREAMLAND

Portimao, Portugal - Lewis Hamilton said he was in dreamland on Sunday after becoming Formula One's record all-time race winner.

"I only ever dreamed of being where I am today," he said after the race and a long hug with his father Anthony, who managed his early career. "I didn't have a magic ball when I chose to come here (Mercedes) - and all we have ever tried to do is make the most of it every single day. We are all rowing in the same direction.

"I have got my dad here which is amazing and my step-mum Linda - and Roscoe (his dog) - so it's a very special day. It's going to take time to sink

in, but I was still pushing coming across the line. Even now, I am still in race mode mentally so I can't find the words right now to describe my emotions at the moment... Maybe I will be able to later on."

His Mercedes team chief Toto Wolff, who has helped guide Hamilton to five of his world titles and the team to an unprecedented six in a row, said: "Who would've thought when we started this project in 2013? It's almost a surreal number of wins. "From Lewis, it's his absolute passion and energy and its everything he puts into the sport - and the talent and the ability. He's just standing out."

seventh world title, which would equal another Schumacher record, now looks all but inevitable with only five races remaining this year.

Hamilton said the race had

been 'tough' and he had suffered cramp.

"Yes, it's a very physical sport and I had it in my right calf. I was lifting down the straights and it was painful."

Sainz takes early lead

Charles Leclerc was fourth for Ferrari ahead of a surging Pierre Gasly after an excellent drive in his Alpha Tauri.

Carlos Sainz came home sixth

FOOTBALL ROUND-UP

Saints end Everton's unbeaten start

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

London, UK- Southampton ended Everton's unbeaten start to the season as goals from James Ward-Prowse and Che Adams sealed a 2-0 win against the English Premier League (EPL) leaders on Sunday.

Everton had gone eight games without defeat in all competitions this term, but they paid the price for a lethargic display at St Mary's. Carlo Ancelotti's side fell behind to Ward-Prowse's first-half goal and Adams doubled their lead before the interval.

Everton left-back Lucas Digne was sent off for a dangerous challenge on Kyle Walker-Peters in the second half despite his claims he tripped when he stood on the Southampton defender's heel.

Everton remain above champions Liverpool on goal difference after a result that should serve as a reality check.

Southampton have now only

lost twice in 13 league matches and climbed within three points of first place. Jordan Pickford was in action for the first time since his ugly tackle on Virgil van Dijk left the Liverpool defender with a serious knee injury.

Pickford had been subjected to vicious abuse on social media, but Ancelotti refused to take the error-prone keeper out of the spotlight.

Jota caps Liverpool fightback

Earlier on Saturday night, Jurgen Klopp praised Liverpool's ability to cope with 'injustice' as the EPL champions survived a scare to beat Sheffield United 2-1.

Klopp's side trailed to Sander Berge's controversial first half penalty at Anfield, with the Reds frustrated that VAR gave the spot-kick despite Fabinho's foul appearing to take place outside the area.

But Roberto Firmino equalised before the break and



Southampton's James Ward-Prowse celebrates after scoring against Everton during their English Premier League on Sunday (AFP)

Portugal forward Diogo Jota completed the escape act with his second goal since signing from Wolves in September.

"The penalty was not even a foul. During a season there are so many different periods, we have had an injustice and we have

had to go again," Klopp said.

"I love these games. You have to work hard. You earn the easier games when it all goes your way on nights like this."

A gritty 1-0 Champions League win against Ajax in midweek set the tone and Liverpool again dug deep to earn their first win in three EPL games.

FRENCH LEAGUE PSG go on top

Paris, France - Moise Kean and Kylian Mbappe both scored twice as Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) beat Dijon 4-0 on Saturday to go top of Ligue 1, while the match between Lens and Nantes was postponed after 11 members of the home squad tested positive for coronavirus.

Kean started at the Parc des Princes and scored a first-half brace, his first goals since moving to PSG on loan from Everton.

Mbappe then replaced the Italy international in the latter

stages and added a late double of his own as Thomas Tuchel's team - for whom Neymar was outstanding - bounced back from their midweek Champions League loss to Manchester United and made it six consecutive Ligue 1 victories.

OTHER RESULTS:

Sunday: Bordeaux 2 Nimes 0, Brest 0 Strasbourg 3, Metz 2 Saint-Etienne 0, Montpellier 0 Reims 4, Nice 1 Lille 1.

SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP: Aberdeen 3 Celtic 3.

SPANISH LEAGUE: Sunday: Valladolid 0 Alaves 2, Cadiz 0 Villarreal 0. Saturday: Sevilla 0 Eibar 1, Osasuna 1 Athletic Bilbao 0, Atletico Madrid 2 Real Betis 0. ITALIAN LEAGUE: Sunday: Cagliari 4 Crotone 2, Benevento 1 Napoli 2, Parma 2 Spezia 2. Saturday: Lazio 2 Bologna 1.

GERMAN LEAGUE: Sunday: Wolfsburg 2 Bielefeld 1. AFP

CLASSIFIEDS

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IPL 2020

QUOTE OF THE DAY

I felt this one was one of the perfect games. Everything went to plan, and the execution was there.

MS Dhoni
Chennai skipper, after his team's big win over Bangalore, on Sunday



TODAY'S MATCH

SHARJAH, 6PM



POINTS TABLE

TEAMS	P	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
MI	11	7	4	0	14	+1.252
DC	11	7	4	0	14	+0.434
RCB	11	7	4	0	14	+0.092
KKR	11	6	5	0	12	-0.476
KXIP	11	5	6	0	10	-0.103
RR	12	5	7	0	10	-0.505
SRH	11	4	7	0	8	+0.029
CSK	12	4	8	0	8	-0.602

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

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

IPL 2020 final in Dubai

Dubai, UAE - The first qualifier and the final of IPL 2020 will be played in Dubai on November 5 and 10, respectively, while the eliminator - between the teams placed third and fourth - and the second qualifier will be played in Abu Dhabi on November 6 and 8. All the playoff matches will start at 6pm Oman time.

STOKES & SAMSON SHOW

Rajasthan Royals' win over Mumbai Indians knock Chennai out of playoff contention

Abu Dhabi, UAE - Ben Stokes finally came to the party with an unbeaten 107 off 60 balls as the Rajasthan Royals chased down Mumbai Indians' 195 for five with ease in the end on Sunday.

The win not only kept the Royals in the race for the playoffs - they are now sixth on the points table with ten points from 12 games - but also brought the curtain down on the Chennai Super Kings' campaign.

Earlier, Hardik Pandya had lit up the evening with an unbeaten 60 off 21 balls, which included seven sixes and two fours, but that didn't prove enough as Stokes and Sanju Samson added 152 in 82 balls in an unbroken third-wicket partnership to take the Royals home with ten balls to spare.

Quinton de Kock had scores of 53, 78*, 53 and 46* coming into this game. He looked primed for another good knock when he pulled a 149.6kph Jofra Archer delivery for a six to get off the mark. Archer, however, pitched the next ball a little fuller and a bit wider, and de Kock chopped on with an angled bat.

From the other end, Ankit Rajpoot was a bit wayward and Ishan Kishan, opening once again in the absence of Rohit Sharma, and Suryakumar Yadav took full advantage of that. In the sixth over, both of them hit Rajpoot for a six each to take the side to 59 for one at the end of the powerplay.

Gopal double-blow

The Royals turned to their two leg-spinners - Shreyas Gopal and Rahul Tewatia - after that and



Ben Stokes
107*
60 BALLS

Sanju Samson
54*
31 BALLS

the move worked straightaway as the next two overs produced only eight runs. Yadav then tried to take Gopal on by going inside-out but ended up slicing it over point for four.

He attempted the same shot on the next ball and this time ended up hitting it in the air towards deep cover. Tewatia charged towards the ball, put in the dive, got his fingers

underneath the ball but couldn't hold on to it.

Kishan, who was struggling to score beyond a run a ball, then slashed at Kartik Tyagi. The ball flew towards third man where Archer misjudged it before plucking it one-handed over his head to leave his teammates gasping. A couple of overs later, Gopal dented Mumbai further by removing Yadav and Kieron

Pollard in the same over. While Yadav holed out to long-off, Pollard failed to read a googly and was bowled through the gate.

Hardik blitz

Mumbai were 120 for four when Tewatia dropped Hardik on the last ball of the 16th over. Hardik made full use of the opportunity and smashed Rajpoot for four sixes in the 18th over, three of

SCOREBOARD

MUMBAI INDIANS		
I Kishan	c Archer b Tyagi	37 (36)
Q de Kock	b Archer	6 (4)
S Yadav	c Stokes b Gopal	40 (26)
S Tiwary	c Stokes b Archer	34 (25)
K Pollard	b Gopal	6 (4)
H Pandya	not out	60 (21)
K Pandya	not out	3 (4)
Extras	(lb 4, w 5)	9

TOTAL: 195 for five

Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-90, 3-95, 4-101, 5-165

Bowling: J Archer 4-0-31-2, A Rajpoot 4-0-60-0, K Tyagi 4-0-45-1, S Gopal 4-0-30-2, R Tewatia 4-0-25-0

RAJASTHAN ROYALS

R Uthappa	c Pollard b Pattinson	13 (11)
B Stokes	not out	107 (60)
S Smith	b Pattinson	11 (8)
S Samson	not out	54 (31)
Extras	(b 1, lb 3, w 7)	11

TOTAL: 196 for two in 18.2 overs

Fall of wickets: 1-13, 2-44

Bowling: J Boult 4-0-40-0, J Pattinson 3.2-0-40-2, J Bumrah 4-0-38-0, K Pandya 2-0-20-0, K Pollard 2-0-18-0, R Chahar 3-0-36-0

them off full tosses. Archer conceded only three in the 19th over but Hardik wasn't done yet. After Krunal Pandya took a single off the first ball of the final over, Hardik unleashed himself on Tyagi. Standing deep inside his crease, he hit the next five balls for 6, 4, 4, 6 and 6 to take Mumbai to a daunting total, with 74 runs coming off the last four overs.

Pattinson strikes

Before this game, Stokes had scored only 110 runs off 103 balls in IPL 2020. The Royals needed a quick start to chase down 196 and losing Robin Uthappa in the second over, who mistimed James Pattinson to mid-on, didn't help.

With the Royals 13 for one at the end of two overs, Stokes was yet to face a ball. But he soon hit his stride with four fours off

Trent Boult in the third over. Steven Smith, who promoted himself to No. 3, then struck a four and six off Jasprit Bumrah in the next over before Pattinson bowled him with an inducker. But Stokes hit the last two balls of the sixth over for fours, bowled by Krunal, to ensure the Royals didn't bog down.

Stokes-Samson sizzle

Stokes was now growing in confidence. In the eighth over, he slog-swept Rahul Chahar over deep midwicket for his first six of the season. The next ball was sent past backward point, courtesy a reverse sweep. While the Royals reached 99 for two at the end of ten overs, they still needed another 97.

A couple of quiet overs made it 89 required from 48 balls. It was then Samson who took the pressure off Stokes with some timely blows.

On 19 off 18 at the end of the 12th over, Samson hit two sixes and two fours in the next two overs to bring it down to 52 needed from the last six overs. With both batsmen in top gear by now, that wasn't a big ask. With Bumrah straying down the leg side, Samson took him for two successive fours and then brought up his half-century, off 27 balls, with a brace.

A couple of streaky fours further ate away from the target. With ten required, Stokes was three short of his hundred. He reached the landmark in style by hitting Pattinson for a six over midwicket and then sealed the game with a four on the next ball.

Cricinfo

Gaekwad powers Chennai to easy victory

Dubai, UAE - The Chennai Super Kings built a squad for the slow, turning pitches at the MA Chidambaram Stadium.

On Sunday, when they were all but out of IPL 2020, they got to play in conditions not dissimilar to those back in Chennai, and pulled off a performance that made you wonder how their season might have gone had COVID-19 not transplanted the tournament to the UAE.

They were abetted by a Royal Challengers Bangalore batting display that seldom got out of second gear, which set them a target of just 146, but some of the hallmarks of the classic Super Kings performance were also on show.

Accurate medium-fast bowling with frequent changes of pace, an expert middle-overs strangulation by spin featuring typically clever MS Dhoni fields, and a controlled chase featuring timely six-hitting to keep the required rate in check.

There was also, as has often been the case, an opposition attack that wasn't entirely suited to the conditions.

Along the way, there was even one unusual detail, a young player who batted with - let's use the word - spark, Ruturaj Gaikwad, who anchored the chase with an unbeaten 51-ball 65 while Faf du Plessis and Ambati Rayudu brought urgency at the other end. The eight-wicket win for Super Kings came too late in their campaign as they bowed out of contention

following Rajasthan Royals' win over Mumbai later on Sunday.

Bangalore began the game with a chance of rising to the top of the table and ended it with their chances of a top-two finish significantly diminished.

A brisk beginning

Choosing to bat, the Royal Challengers made just the kind of start they would have wanted on a slow pitch, with Aaron Finch and Devdutt Padikkal. They hit three fours and a six in the first three overs before Sam Curran came on and made a vital intervention, both in terms of immediate and longer-term impact, getting Finch out with a slower delivery.

Padikkal hit two more opportunistic leg-side fours in the next two overs, helping the Royal Challengers end the powerplay at 46 for one, before falling to the first ball of the seventh over, going after the left-arm spin of Mitchell Santner.

Kohli and de Villiers

Those two names can give anyone the shivers if they're together for 68 balls, but on this day, Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers only put on 82 off those 68 balls. This was partly down to intent - partly down to the slowness of the pitch, and partly down to some smart spin bowling from Santner, Imran Tahir and Ravindra Jadeja.

Against Kohli, Dhoni exaggerated the effectiveness of this mode of attack by placing a



Ruturaj Gaikwad
65*
51 BALLS

straight midwicket and a straight extra-cover to prevent easy singles down to long-on and long-

off. Kohli kept backing his ability to hit down the ground. It brought him a six and a four, but

they were the only boundaries in his innings, and it also brought Tahir and Jadeja difficult caught-

SCOREBOARD

ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE		
D Padikkal	c Gaikwad b Santner	22 (21)
A Finch	c Gaikwad b Curran	15 (11)
V Kohli	c du Plessis b Curran	50 (43)
AB de Villiers	c du Plessis b Chahar	39 (36)
Moeen Ali	c Santner b Curran	1 (2)
C Morris	b Chahar	2 (3)
G Singh	not out	2 (2)
W Sundar	not out	5 (2)
Extras	(lb 2, nb 2, w 5)	9

TOTAL: 145 for six

Fall of wickets: 1-31, 2-46, 3-128, 4-132, 5-138, 6-139

Bowling: D Chahar 4-0-31-2, M Kumar 2-0-20-0, S Curran 3-0-19-3, M Santner 4-0-23-1, I Tahir 4-0-30-0, R Jadeja 3-0-20-0

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS

R Gaikwad	not out	65 (51)
F du Plessis	c Siraj b Morris	25 (33)
A Rayudu	b Chahal	39 (27)
MS Dhoni	not out	19 (21)
Extras	(lb 1, w 1)	2

TOTAL: 150 for two in 18.4 overs

Fall of wickets: 1-46, 2-113

Bowling: W Sundar 4-0-27-0, C Morris 3.4-0-36-1, M Siraj 2-0-29-0, Y Chahal 4-0-21-1, Moeen Ali 2-0-17-0, N Saini 3-0-19-0

and-bowled chances that they put down. When de Villiers holed out for a 39 off 36, Bangalore were 128 for three in 17.3 overs, and the death-overs flourish they'd been building towards didn't happen. Deepak Chahar and Curran conceding just 20 off the last three overs while dismissing de Villiers, Moeen, Kohli and Chris Morris.

Pace onto the bat

Chahar, Curran and Monu Singh - who made his debut for the Super Kings in his third season with the franchise - are all medium-fast at best, and on this pitch bowled plenty of slower balls as well. Morris, Mohammed Siraj and Navdeep

Saini are all genuine quicks, and they didn't vary their pace as much as their Super Kings counterparts did today.

Kohli picked this out as a key differentiator between the two sides at the post-match presentation. The three Super Kings seamers between them conceded 70 in nine overs. The three Royal Challengers quicks conceded 84 in 8.4 overs, despite Saini bowling two quiet overs to Dhoni towards the end of the game.

Du Plessis used the pace brilliantly early on, picking up two fours and a six in the fine-leg region, off Morris and Siraj. Gaikwad, meanwhile, used his feet well against both spin and seam to get to the pitch and hit over the infield. By the end of the powerplay, Chennai were 48 for one with du Plessis out.

The momentum didn't go away with the wicket, as Gaikwad continued to use his feet to launch Moeen for a big six over long-off, and Rayudu clattered a six and a four in an erratic tenth over of Saini.

A typical Rayudu charge down the wicket at the end of the 12th over, to smack Siraj over long-on, brought the equation down to 41 off 48. The Super Kings were never going to lose from there. At the fall of Rayudu's wicket - when they needed 33 off 39 - Dhoni came in and finished with an unbeaten 19 off 21 as Chennai wrapped it up with eight balls to spare.

Cricinfo

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SAMSUNG CHAIRMAN DIES AT 78
Samsung Electronics chairman Lee Kun-hee, who transformed the South Korean firm into a global tech titan, died at the age of 78 on Sunday, the company said

BUSINESS

Duqm to get Oman's largest integrated cement plant

The \$435mn project is expected to be operational in early 2023

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman's largest integrated cement plant with a capacity of 3.5mn tonnes per annum will be established in Duqm.

With an estimated investment of US\$435mn, Duqm Cement Projects International LLC (DCPI) is all set to construct this major integrated cement manufacturing facility in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, according to a press statement issued on Sunday.

The new competitive plant, with a capacity of 3.5mn tonnes per annum or 10,000 tonnes per day, is likely to give impetus to the development of downstream industries in Duqm area.

"The economies of scales resulting from the envisaged capacity of 10,000 tonnes per day coupled with the latest technology would help us in achieving our aim of becoming one of the most efficient cement producers in the region," a spokesperson of DCPI said in the statement.

This major project aims to contribute to the national objective of making Oman a hub for industrial excellence in the region



An artistic impression of the proposed cement plant

by virtue of its abundant mineral resources, additives, world-class ports, efficient economic zones and strategic location.

Seven Seas Company LLC, the lead promoters of the project, have announced the release of the EPC tender to the world's leading equipment suppliers. The usufruct agreement has been signed with the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. "The re-

sults of prospecting for the quarry with limestone reserves that have been allotted adjacent to the cement plant have been very encouraging. All the utility requirements for the project like power, water have been allotted and the environmental clearance for the plant and the quarry obtained," the statement said.

The project will conform to the latest and advanced speci-

fications of the environmental standards and is expected to be operational by the first quarter of 2023. The new cement plant will help to meet the local demand and the demand in the overseas markets of India, Sri Lanka and East Africa with the support of well-equipped and dedicated port facility at the Port of Duqm.

To cater to the export de-

mand, the promoters are planning to put up an additional clinkerisation unit once the operations are stabilised. Currently, raw limestone is imported by India due to shortage of limestone in the subcontinent. The project expects to bridge this gap by providing value-added clinker.

The integrated cement plant will substantially contribute to the twin national objectives of 'diversifying the economy' and 'productively employing national workforce'. It is also expected to stimulate a series of downstream opportunities in the building materials sector.

This major project will substantially add value to local resources which are otherwise exported in raw form. The project is also expected to generate 340 direct and 1,000 indirect employment opportunities.

The project is also expected to contribute to the development of Mineral Rail Project by boosting its economic viability. The promoters are in the advanced stages of tying-up with strategic investors and in achieving financial closure by the last quarter of 2020.

GCC agri-nutrients feed 5% of world's population: GPCA

Our Correspondent
Muscat



Dr Abdulwahab al Sadoun

The GCC agri-nutrients industry supports the food supply of 5 per cent of the world's population, or 350mn people across the globe, according to a new report published by the Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association (GPCA).

This figure marks the rising importance of agri-nutrients in enhancing global food security in a rapidly changing world, where there will be a need to produce 70 per cent to 100 per cent more food by 2050 to feed the growing population, GPCA said in a statement.

The report further revealed that over the last five decades, a portion of the global population supported by agri-nutrients manufactured by GCC producers has increased 33 times, from about 9mn in 1970 to 350mn currently.

The GCC agri-nutrient industry supports about 12,100 direct jobs in the region, and almost three times as many indirect and induced jobs, which means that every person working in the sector supports enough food production to feed about 30,000 people worldwide, including people in the GCC. Additionally,

every person employed by the regional industry supports 17.7 tonnes of three main crops production per year (rice, wheat and maize), underlying the significance of the Arabian Gulf region in supporting global food security.

GPCA said despite the coronavirus crisis, the GCC fertiliser producers continued to produce essential fertilisers and supply their global customers without significant production and supply chain disruptions.

Dr Abdulwahab al Sadoun, secretary general of GPCA, said, "The GCC region is an important, global centre for the production and export of agri-nutrients, which have proven to be essential for enhancing global food security, particularly during the current crisis. The global community must work together to ensure open and free international trade and protect food supply chains by providing essential agri-nutrient inputs."



Category: Oil & Gas



And the winner is...

Jamila al Harthy

Jamila al Harthy, a woman with nerves of steel who faced many personal and professional challenges in life in a male-dominated society, takes pride in disclosing that she shaped her own destiny by sheer hard work and dedication.

Determined to succeed against all odds, she had built her own house and started a real estate business all on her own to become a symbol of financial independence and personal success for all the female members of her family.

Socially active, Jamila has been an advocate for Alzheimer's Disease Awareness and Women's Rights in Oman alongside her fulfilling career in the Oil and Gas sector in Oman. She had worked for over 20 years in Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) and is known for being totally engaged in her job.

Jamila, who graduated with honours as a petroleum engineer from United States, is the first Omani lady to work on offshore operations in the Southern North Sea in UK. She has also travelled several times between Oman and Holland, UK, Brunei, and China for sharing her knowledge and best practices on successfully employing new technology that led to an increase in oil reserves.

She had also been posted in the Ministry of Oil and Gas for five years as a technical advisor, regulating major operating oil companies in Oman, such as Oxy, BP, Daleel, CEED, and others.

With a long and fulfilling career behind her, Jamila (who retired in March) has been not just a formidable coach to young Omani engineers, but also an inspiration to many more who are contemplating a career in the oil sector.

HEADLINE PARTNER



ASSOCIATE PARTNER



MSM rises 0.2%, volumes down

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The benchmark index of the Muscat Securities Market (MSM) rose by 0.19 per cent to close at 3,564.11 points on Sunday.

Trading activity deteriorated from the previous session as turnover declined 51.01 per cent to RO404,958 and volumes fell 60.53 per cent to 3.11mn shares.

While Financial index fell 0.05 per cent, Industrial and Services indices rose 0.79 per cent and 0.24 per cent, respectively. The MSM Shariah Index closed down by 0.07 per cent to close at 518.1 points.

Market breadth remained positive as seven companies closed up, while five companies closed down. The rest 20 traded stocks closed flat for the day.

Top gainers were Raysut Cement (8.51

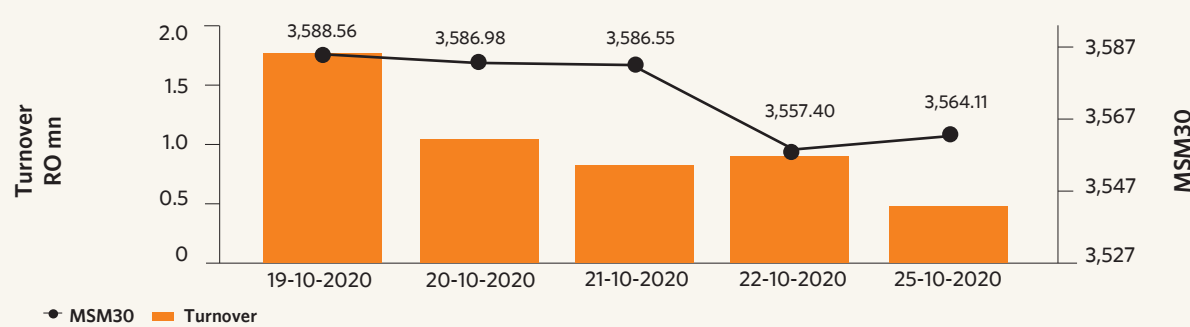


per cent), Sembcorp Salalah (3.64 per cent), Dhofar Generating Company (2.75 per cent) and Galfar Engineering & Contracting (2.63 per cent).

Top losers were Gulf Investment Serv-

ices (-9.38 per cent), Oman Investment and Finance (-3.41 per cent), Al Sharqia Investment Holding (-2.94 per cent), Oman National Engineering & Investment (-1.8 per cent).

MSM INDEX AND TURNOVER OF FIVE TRADING DAYS



Dubai Crown Prince launches AED500mn stimulus package

Dubai, UAE - Under the directives of Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and chairman of the Executive Council of Dubai Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum launched an AED500mn economic stimulus package to support various business sectors across the economy.

The new package brings the total value of stimulus packages introduced by the emirates' government in 2020 to AED6.8bn. The stimulus package is aimed at mitigating the impact of the current global economic situation on businesses and support them to overcome the current exceptional circumstances.

"We strive to support the business sector while working together to counter the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The business sector is at the heart of our economy. We are keen to revive the business



Dubai Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan al Maktoum

environment and open new horizons for entrepreneurs and investors in line with Dubai's future aspirations," Sheikh Hamdan said.

Highlighting the importance of the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), he said, "We are working as one integrated system, and our main goal is to accelerate the pace of recovery and ensure that the economy can tide over this phase. The current circumstances require consistency in the business approaches to ensure continuity and a flexible economic environment that can adapt to global

changes."

He launched several economic initiatives that seek to support various business sectors in Dubai. Advertising companies affected by the pandemic will be exempted from Dubai Municipality's advertising permit fees for three months, retroactive from March 15 to June 16, 2020.

Sheikh Hamdan also launched a series of initiatives to support private nurseries in Dubai, which include exempting them from the renewal fees of the commercial licence.

WAM

US claims China meeting trade targets

Washington, US - The US Trade Representative and Department of Agriculture said China had made progress towards meeting key parts of the 'phase one' deal signed earlier this year to calm their trade war.

Washington and Beijing engaged in a trade war starting in 2018 until the deal reached in January marking a partial truce, which obligated Beijing to import

an additional US\$200bn in American products over two years, ranging from cars and machinery to oil and farm products.

In its statement, the government said China had already bought 71 per cent of its target for agricultural purchases under the deal, amounting to US\$23bn.

"Since the agreement entered into force eight months ago, we have seen remarkable improve-

ments in our agricultural trade relationship with China, which will benefit our farmers and ranchers for years to come," US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said.

The statement said corn sales had hit a record high of 8.7mn tonnes and soybean sales for the 2021 market year were double the levels of 2017.

AFP

As oil prices dive, Iraqi Kurds seek to diversify economy

Meer Rostam, Iraq - Iraq's Kurdish region has for decades lived off its oil wealth, but plummeting energy prices amid the pandemic and financial mismanagement are forcing locals to return to long abandoned farms.

Civil servants from the northern region's bloated public sector have gone without pay and many are now turning back to agriculture and other businesses to make ends meet.

On a rugged hillside some 50km east of Arbil, the booming regional capital, vineyards are ripe for harvesting as a new source of income.

Abdallah Hassan (51), a civil servant from the nearby village of Meer Rostam, has returned to harvest the grapes, used to produce raisins and vine leaves, for the first time in almost 20 years.

"There is hardly any work left for us and there are no salaries," he said, complaining that the regional government now 'only pays wages every couple of months'.

"It's better for farmers to tend to their fields than wait for the payday or for charity."

Hassan recounted how before the 2003 US invasion that toppled ex-dictator Saddam Hussein's regime, the Kurdish region had survived on farming during years of painful sanctions.

Since then, in its drive to secure lucrative oil revenues, the autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) had mostly abandoned agriculture.

Big investments from multinational energy companies have transformed the region, and Arbil has become an urban hub with skyscrapers and luxury hotels.

This year, however, the



A worker moves grain at a silo in Arbil, the capital of the northern Iraqi Kurdish autonomous region on July 05 (AFP)

COVID-19 pandemic and tumbling oil prices have taken a heavy toll, worsened by budget disputes with the central government in Baghdad.

The Iraqi economy, one of the world's most oil-dependent according to the World Bank, saw its gross domestic product contract by about 10 per cent this year.

Mohammed Shukri, chairman of the Kurdistan Board of Investment, said putting all of the regional economy's eggs into the energy basket had proven costly.

"We're rich when the oil price is high, and we're poor when the oil price is low," he told AFP. "I wouldn't call this a healthy economy."

Kurdish economist Bilal Saeed also argued the region's leaders had made a strategic blunder by letting other sectors fall by the wayside.

"Instead of using that revenue to develop the agriculture, health and tourism sectors, the govern-

ment of Kurdistan has focused mostly on developing its oil sector and ignored the rest," he said.

Over-reliance on energy has also had a corrosive effect on Iraq's state apparatus and fuelled corruption.

A World Bank report this year pointed to Iraq's 'failure to equitably share the benefits of oil wealth' and described a murky patronage system.

'First, the dominant parties use government payrolls to reward political loyalty,' it said. 'Second, they use government contracts to enrich business people close to their leaderships. Third, money is simply stolen from the ministerial budgets for both personal gain and party use.'

It is a similar story in the Kurdish region, where lucrative state posts have long been handed out by the two main ruling parties, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the Kurdistan Democratic

Party.

This has created a bloated public sector with over 1.2mn staff, around 40 per cent of them in the military and security sectors, out of a regional population of 5mn.

With its budget now bled dry and the KRG facing some US\$28bn in debt, it decided in June to slash civil servants' salaries by 21 per cent.

But despite this, it has been unable to pay all of their wages on time, with the outstanding pay, accumulated over years, estimated at US\$9bn.

'Hit by cheap imports'

Shukri said that despite current woes, his investment board had granted 60 investment licences worth US\$1.5bn, mostly in agriculture and manufacturing.

But how many projects will go ahead is uncertain at a time of growing impatience among local entrepreneurs.

Iraqi businesses face tough competition from imports from Iran and Turkey, whose currencies have been devalued while the Iraqi dinar remains indexed to the dollar.

Baarz Rassul, whose company Hend Steel produces 50,000 tonnes of cast steel per month, pleaded for 'higher customs duties and better border controls'.

He said when he tried to diversify into agriculture, he found it difficult to compete with cheap imports and has since dismantled his greenhouses.

Saeed, the economist, said Arbil and Baghdad must work out a sustainable economic plan that serves both sides.

AFP

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Al-Qaeda leader wanted by US killed in Afghanistan

Kabul, Afghanistan - Afghan forces have killed a top Al Qaeda militant wanted by the United States, as the government on Sunday accused the Taliban of still keeping close ties with the Islamist militant group.

Abu Muhsin al Masri, an Egyptian national believed to be the group's number two in the Indian sub-continent, was targeted in eastern Ghazni province, Afghanistan's intelligence agency said in a statement.

The National Directorate of Security did not provide further details about the operation or when it was carried out.

Masri's killing was an indication of the relationship between the Taliban and Al Qaeda, Afghanistan's Interior Minister Masoud Andarabi claimed on Sunday without providing details.

'The killing of one of the key Al-Qaeda member, al-Masri by the National Directorate of Security demonstrates close ties of the Taliban with the terrorist groups that are operating against the Afghan government and its people,' he tweeted.

"They still keep close relations with the terrorist groups and they are lying to different sides."

The Taliban's sheltering of Al Qaeda was the original reason for the US invasion of Afghanistan after the September 11, 2001 attacks.

In a landmark deal with the United States in February, the Taliban agreed to not allow Afghan soil to be used by foreign extremists including Al Qaeda, in return for Washington withdrawing its troops from the



Broken windows of a room near the site where a suicide bomber blew himself up in Kawsar-e Danis education centre, in Kabul on Sunday (AFP)

Abu Muhsin al Masri, who also went by the name Husam Abd al Ra'uf, was an Egyptian national believed to be the group's number two in the Indian sub-continent and was on the FBI's Most Wanted Terrorists list

country.

Masri, who also goes by the name Husam Abd al Ra'uf, is on the FBI's Most Wanted Terrorists list.

A US warrant for his arrest was issued in December 2018 after he was charged with providing support and resources to a foreign terrorist organisation and plotting to kill US nationals, according to the FBI.

A source at the Afghan intelligence agency, who did not want to be named, told AFP that

an aide to Masri who was 'in contact with the Taliban' was also detained during the operation in Ghazni province, a volatile region where Taliban fighters are very active.

Pakistan-based analyst Rahimullah Yousufzai, who previously interviewed Al Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden, said Masri was largely unknown but his killing showed that these militants still existed.

"This incident shows that Al Qaeda's men are few and far be-

tween, but they are still there," he told AFP.

Masri was from the second tier of Al Qaeda which kept him largely unknown, according to a source with an extremist group based at an unknown location in Pakistan.

Meanwhile, the death toll from a bomb blast claimed by the Islamic State group at a higher education centre in Kabul rose to 24 on Sunday - most of them students.

Interior Ministry spokesman

Tariq Arian said another 57 people had been wounded in Saturday's attack in a western district of the capital.

Students were seen on Sunday morning salvaging books from nearby accommodation that was damaged by the blast.

The explosion happened when about 800 students were studying at the centre, Baqir Rahimi, who survived the incident, told AFP.

"I had just entered the classroom when the blast occurred and it was loud and deafening," the teenager said.

"There were screams and cries for help. I rushed to the entrance gate of the centre and saw bodies lying on the ground."

AFP

Iraqis rally to relaunch year-old anti-govt revolt



Iraqi demonstrators gather on Al-Sinak Bridge in Baghdad on Sunday (AFP)

Baghdad, Iraq - Thousands of Iraqis headed on Sunday to Baghdad's iconic Tahrir Square and its high-security Green Zone to mark the first anniversary of a protest movement against the country's stagnant political class.

"This is an important day, we are here to keep the movement going," student Mohamed Ali said in the square, epicentre of the revolt.

The renewed mobilisation has retained protesters' key demand of the ouster of the entire ruling class accused of corruption and being beholden to neighbouring Iran. Iraq is the second largest oil exporter in the world but has struggled to pay salaries for its bloated public sector.

"We have the same demands as last year," Ali told AFP.

In a months-long revolt launched in October 2019, hundreds of thousands of demonstrators camped out in Baghdad and southern cities to demand a total overhaul of a political system failing to deliver basic services and salaries.

About 600 protesters were killed and 30,000 wounded in clashes with security forces before the movement lost momentum then ground to a halt in the spring due to the coronavirus cri-

Army checkpoints and roadblocks have been erected around the square and the Green Zone, which is off-limits to Iraqi citizens in Baghdad

sis and rising US-Iran tensions.

Since Saturday, military checkpoints and roadblocks have been erected around the square and the Green Zone, which is off-limits to Iraqi citizens. The fortified Green Zone - site of parliament, government offices and the US embassy - is separated by a bridge from the square.

Riot police stationed around major thoroughfares have barred demonstrators waving Iraqi flags from trying to cross.

Other parallel bridges have also been sealed off.

With no central leadership behind the protests, activists are divided over whether to stay put in Tahrir or head to the Green Zone at the risk of violence breaking out.

AFP

Palestinian from West bank dies after Israeli troops 'thrash' him

Ramallah, Palestinian Territories - An 18 year Palestinian died Sunday after a confrontation with Israeli troops, with the army saying it happened while trying to flee and Palestinian officials saying he had been beaten.

The Palestinian health ministry said that Amer Abdel-Rahim Sanouber from the village of Yatma in the occupied West Bank arrived at hospital after being 'severely beaten on the neck'.

The head of the Palestine Medical Complex, Ahmed al Betawi, was quoted in the ministry statement as a 'martyr' who was brought to the hospital at 3.00am with 'signs of violence

and beatings on his neck from the back'.

Asked about the incident, Israel's army said troops responded to an incident north of Ramallah after rocks were hurled at an army vehicle.

Troops 'in the area were dispatched to the scene and searched the area for assailants' the army statement said.

'Initial details suggest that upon the arrival of the troops... the two suspects tried to escape by foot,' it said.

'While fleeing, one of the suspects apparently lost consciousness, collapsed and hit his head. The suspect was not beaten by IDF troops,' the army added.

It said troops at the scene and

army medical teams provided medical attention to the suspect, who was 'declared dead' following several 'resuscitation attempts'.

Details of altercations involving Palestinians and Israel's army in the West Bank have been harder to access since the Ramallah-based Palestinian Authority ended security coordination with Israel in May.

Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas said the decision was made in response to Israeli plans to annex parts of the West Bank. Israel put its annexation plans on hold in return for the establishment of full diplomatic ties with the United Arab Emirates.

AFP

Israel's Netanyahu says peace deals 'changing the map' of Middle East

Jerusalem - Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Saturday that a trio of normalisation accords with Arab states offered an end to the Jewish state's former geographic isolation, with shorter and cheaper flights.

"We are changing the map of the Middle East," he told a televised press conference in Hebrew, pointing to a whiteboard with diagrams of flight corridors.

Air travel over Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates would save passengers heading for India and other Asian destinations 'hours and a lot of money of course', he said.

Israel struck landmark agreements last month with the



A file photo of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (AFP)

United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, and on Friday, agreed with Sudan to normalise rela-

tions in a US-brokered deal.

"There will be more countries," Netanyahu said.

Saudi Arabia still has no formal ties with the Jewish state, but now allows flights in its air space.

The Sudan rapprochement, Netanyahu said, would open up benefits for Israelis crossing the Atlantic.

"We now fly westward, over Sudan, according to agreements we made even before we announced normalisation, (and) over Chad, with which we also established relations, to Brazil and South America," the Israeli Prime Minister said.

"Israel was completely isolated...Israel is now connecting to the whole world," Netanyahu added.

AFP

US Embassy in Azerbaijan reports threats against foreigners

Washington, US - The United States on Saturday warned that Americans and foreigners could be targeted by kidnappers or attackers in Azerbaijan, where a conflict is roiling the separatist province of Nagorno-Karabakh.

'The US Embassy in Baku has received credible reports of potential terrorist attacks and kidnappings against US citizens and foreign nationals in Baku,' the diplomatic mission said on its website in a message shared by the State Department on Twitter.

'US citizens are advised to exercise heightened caution in locations where Americans or foreigners may gather,' including

major hotels in the capital, the embassy added, without further details on the origin of the threats.

The warning comes in the wake of a similar message in Turkey, where US diplomats have reported 'credible' threats of attacks or kidnappings targeting Americans in Istanbul or other localities.

It was not clear if the warnings were linked.

Turkey's involvement in the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, recognized internationally as part of Azerbaijan but controlled by Armenian separatists, has raised the concern of several Western



Refugees of the Nagorno-Karabakh region rest in their beds in a centre for refugees, in Yerevan on Saturday (AFP)

countries since it said it wanted to help Azerbaijan.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met separately Friday with his counterparts from Armenia and Azerbaijan, urging them to 'end the violence and protect civilians'.

During that meeting, Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan pressed concerns about Azerbaijan receiving weapons from its ally Turkey, accusations already made by Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pachinian and Armenian President Armen Sarkissian.

The United States has said it is neutral but Pompeo has criti-

cized Turkey and in a recent interview described Armenia's actions as defensive.

Armenia and Azerbaijan accuse each other of having targeted the civilian population since the beginning of hostilities on September 27 in the mountainous region.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Thursday that the death toll was nearing 5,000 in the worst flare-up in Nagorno-Karabakh in more than two decades. Karabakh conflict started with brutal crimes against Armenian people, Putin told in 'Valday' Discussion Club.

AFP

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Italy tightens restrictions after surge

Italy protesters, police clash over virus curbs as countries battle rise in case

Paris, France - Italian demonstrators staged Europe's latest public rally against new anti-coronavirus restrictions early on Sunday, as more countries tightened social distancing rules over the weekend to fight surges in infections.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned of an 'exponential' rise in infections threatening health systems' ability to cope with a second wave of the pandemic, testing many nations that appeared to have the virus under control earlier this year.

Governments are now struggling to balance new restrictions against the need to revive economies already battered by earlier draconian lockdowns after the virus first emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan late last year.

But populations weary of social isolation and economic hardship have bristled at new restrictions.

Around 200 masked far-right militants clashed with Italian riot police during a demonstration against a new curfew in Rome shortly after midnight on Sunday, throwing flares and firecrackers at officers.

Seven protesters were arrested during the rally, which



Italian police officers clash with activists during a protest against restrictions, at central Piazza del Popolo in Rome on Saturday (AFP)

came the night after hundreds of people set rubbish bins on fire and threw projectiles at police further south in Naples in another anti-curfew protest.

Italy is reeling from its worst post-war recession after a two-month national lockdown

prompted by one of Europe's worst outbreaks, and authorities have so far sought to avoid reimposing more drastic quarantine restrictions.

The latest protests there cap a week of similar demonstrations against government re-

strictions in several parts of Europe, including Spain, Switzerland and the Czech Republic.

'Meet as few people as possible'

The continent has seen a spike in new infections and taken a

raft of new containment measures, mostly trying to avoid nationwide lockdowns - from night-time curfews to more restrictions on social gatherings.

After Germany recorded its 10,000th coronavirus death on Saturday, Chancellor Angela

Italy is reeling from its worst post-war recession after a two-month national lockdown prompted by one of Europe's worst outbreaks and authorities have so far sought to avoid reimposing more drastic restrictions

Merkel said: "The order of the day is to reduce contacts, (and) to meet as few people as possible."

Polish President Andrzej Duda said on Saturday he had become the latest public figure to test positive for coronavirus as the EU country faces record infection rates.

Duda, 48, said in a tweet that he had tested positive but 'felt fine' and was still on the job.

Spain became the first European country earlier this week to officially record a million coronavirus cases since the start of the pandemic.

People across the nation were bracing for a national state of emergency, overnight curfews and other new containment measures.

"They probably should have done this a long time ago or taken other steps, like restricting the number of people taking public transport or going to work," 22 year old student Patricia Vazquez told AFP in the capital Madrid.

'Close to capacity'

On Friday, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus warned that 'too many countries are seeing an exponential increase in COVID-19 cases and that is now leading to hospitals and intensive care units running close to or above capacity'.

"We urge leaders to take immediate action to prevent further unnecessary deaths."

The pandemic has now claimed the lives of 1.1mn people and infected more than 42mn globally, with the WHO warning the northern hemisphere was at an especially critical juncture.

The United States is the worst-affected country with 224,000 deaths, followed by Brazil, India, Mexico and Britain.

AFP

US sees record numbers for second day; Pence aides tested positive

Washington, US - The United States saw a record high number of new daily COVID-19 cases for the second day in a row on Saturday, figures from Johns Hopkins University showed, as warnings grew over its spread.

The country reported 88,973 new infections between 8.30pm Friday and 8.30pm Saturday, the figures showed, substantially above the previous day's 79,963.

A total of 8,568,625 cases have been reported in the United States with 224,751 deaths, the highest in the world in absolute terms.

Several aides to Vice President Mike Pence, including his chief of staff, have been tested positive for coronavirus, CNN



White House Director of Legislative Affairs Marc Short, an aide to Vice President Mike Pence has been diagnosed with COVID-19 (AFP)

has reported.

The Vice President's office announced on Saturday evening that chief of staff Marc Short was diagnosed with COVID-19.

Sources told CNN that Marty

Obst, a senior advisor to Pence who is not a government employee, and another aide in Pence's office were also tested positive for the virus.

The worst current outbreaks

in the country are in the north and midwest, and some 35 of the 50 states are seeing an increase in case numbers.

The number of deaths over 24 hours has remained broadly stable since the beginning of autumn, with between 700 and 800. On Saturday the US recorded 906 deaths, the Johns Hopkins tracker showed.

President Donald Trump has sought to beat back harsh criticism of his handling of the health crisis ahead of the November 3 election, particularly from his Democratic opponent Joe Biden.

On Saturday, former president Barack Obama tore into the Trump White House's approach to the pandemic.

AFP/Agencies

Travel-starved 'passengers' dine on parked planes



A Singapore Airlines stewardess serves food in business class during the inaugural lunch at Restaurant A380 @Changi onboard an A380 plane at Changi International Airport in Singapore on Saturday (AFP)

Singapore - Hundreds of travel-starved diners ate lunch and watched seat-back films aboard two parked Singapore Airlines jets turned into pop-up restaurants on Saturday.

With the aviation industry in deep crisis due to the coronavirus pandemic, airlines have turned to alternative ways to raise cash, from offering 'flights to nowhere' to tours of aircraft.

Singapore's flag carrier, which has cut thousands of jobs and grounded nearly all its planes this year, offered passengers the chance to dine on board two A380 superjumbos - the world's biggest passenger jet.

On Saturday more than 400 diners checked in at Changi Airport and went through the usual security checks before arriving at the aircraft for lunch.

"The food is pretty amazing, it's better than the one they serve during the flight," Zhou Tai Di, a 17 year old student in economy class, told AFP as he tucked into his soy sauce-glazed chicken with spicy fried eggplant and rice.

Of course the feeling of actually flying will be better... even though we can't do it now due to COVID, this is a good substitute for now, to recreate the feels of taking a long-haul flight

CALVIN TEO

Some settled in for a nap while waiting for their meals to be served, while others watched movies on the seat-back entertainment systems.

About half the seats were left empty, in keeping with social-distancing guidelines.

Calvin Teo, a 29 year old civil servant and aviation buff, paid S\$321 (US\$236 approx) to be served a six-course meal in business class, saying he missed flying and hoped to recreate the experience.

"Of course the feeling of actually flying will be better, because there's the excitement of going to a new destination, to explore a new destination, and even though we can't do it now due to COVID, this is a good substitute for now, to recreate

the feels of taking a long-haul flight," he told AFP.

The most expensive option is a S\$642 eight-course meal in a first-class suite, while the cheapest costs S\$53 and consists of a three-course meal in economy class.

A limited number of diners were also able to tour the double-decker aircraft and take selfies with pilots in the cockpit.

The tarmac meals proved surprisingly popular - the airline announced six additional sessions after more than 900 lunch tickets sold out within 30 minutes of bookings opening earlier this month.

The airline is also offering home deliveries of plane meals.

AFP

Colombia surpasses 1mn cases: Ministry

Bogota, Colombia - Colombia on Saturday surpassed the benchmark of one million cases of COVID-19 registered in the country since the beginning of the pandemic, the Health Ministry announced.

The last 24 hours saw 8,769 new infections, bringing the total to 1,007,711 since the first case was detected on March 6, the ministry said.

Deaths rose to 30,000 after authorities added 198 fatalities from the last ten days.

With 50mn people, Colombia is the eighth country to top a million infections, after the United States, India, Brazil, Russia, Argentina, Spain and France.

At an event in Chinchina, Caldas, President Ivan Duque stressed that Colombia has a relatively low death rate among Latin American countries on a per capita basis.



This file photo shows a woman being tested for COVID-19 during a random test at a Metro station in Medellin, Colombia, on July 6 (AFP)

"We did much better than other countries. But I do not say this so that we feel proud, I say it because we must protect ourselves better," the conservative said.

According to the National In-

stitute of Health, Colombia ranks tenth in the region with an average of 561 deaths per million inhabitants: almost half of Peru (1,016) and about a quarter less than Brazil (719).

Colombia went under a na-

tional lockdown on March 25, then relaxed restrictions to shore up its collapsing economy. Since September 1, the country has been relying on individual responsibility and widespread use of masks in public places.

Duque says he has allocated resources of 'close to 11 per cent of GDP' - some US\$31Bn - to deal with the crisis.

Unemployment in cities nonetheless climbed to an all-time high of 19.6 per cent in August.

With 308,645 infections, the Colombian capital Bogota accounts for a third of the country's cases and is the city most affected by the virus.

However, in recent weeks the number of COVID patients has soared in the department of Antioquia, with intensive care units at capacity.

AFP

As Mike Pompeo campaigns against China, a growing welcome in India

Washington, US - When the United States tried to seal a defence deal seven years ago with the Maldives, a sprawling and strategic archipelago, its plans were quietly torpedoed by a friend - India, which considers the Indian Ocean its sphere of influence.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo will visit the Maldives this week after top-level talks in India - which offered open support when the Pentagon finally went ahead with a defence pact with the island nation in September.

What brought about the change, analysts say, is a deepening concern in New Delhi about China, which engaged in a deadly border clash with India this year and has been ramping up influence around South Asia, including in the Maldives.

Pompeo will also visit Sri Lanka - where China has lent billions of dollars, leaving a mountain of debt - as well as Indonesia, as President Donald Trump's administration steps up its challenges to Beijing's maritime claims in the dispute-rife South China Sea.

Pompeo, who has championed a hard line on Beijing, said his trip will 'include discussions on how free nations can work together to thwart threats posed by the Chinese Communist Party'.

Pompeo will be the first US secretary of state since 2004 to visit the Maldives, which under the defence accord agreed to strengthen cooperation with the United States and support a 'free and open Indo-Pacific'.

"At another time, India might have complained about the US presence in the Indian Ocean. Today, it doesn't want the US to leave," said Tanvi Madan, director of The India Project at the Brookings Institution.

New Delhi has come around to seeing greater US involvement in India's backyard as offering a better alternative to China, she said.

"India recognises that it can't do it alone, either because of ca-



US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (right) with US President Donald Trump at the White House in Washington, DC, on Friday (AFP)

India recognises that it can't do it alone, either because of capacity issues or because it has baggage with the countries that affects what they would be willing to do

TANVI MADAN

capacity issues or because it has baggage with the countries that affects what they would be willing to do with India versus, say, Japan or the US."

Sri Lanka's populist president, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, has embraced support from China but

will likely want to 'play the game' of being courted by different powers, said Aparna Pande, director of the Hudson Institute's Initiative on the Future of India and South Asia.

She doubted Sri Lanka would go the route of India's historic

rival Pakistan, which has forged tight relations with China. New Delhi believes that if the United States gets more involved in Sri Lanka, 'the needle will come a little closer to the US-India side than the China side', Pande said.

Priority even during election

Pompeo will be joined by Defence Secretary Mark Esper in New Delhi on Monday and Tuesday for annual talks.

Officials said the two countries are expected to sign an agreement on sharing geospatial intelligence, paving the way

for the United States to ship increasingly sophisticated missile technology.

The United States has sold India more than US\$20bn in weapons since the world's two largest democracies began to scale up relations in the 2000s but New Delhi has also turned to historic partner Russia as well as France and Israel as it modernizes its military.

The 'two-plus-two' dialogue, delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic that has ravaged both India and the United States, comes one week before US elections in which Trump is

trailing Democrat Joe Biden in polls.

Pande said the timing showed India that the United States placed a high priority on the relationship - and she doubted there would be significant changes under Biden.

"I think Delhi is one of the few capitals which is not very worried [about swings in policy depending on the election]," Pande said.

As US relations deteriorate with China, 'which country would you want on your side - one which borders China, is antagonistic to China, has lost ter-

ritory to China and has the potential to become a rival to China. That's India'.

India has banned Chinese apps including TikTok but has voiced hope for stable relations with Beijing, even after 20 Indian troops and an unknown number of Chinese soldiers died in the June clash in the Himalayas.

When Indian officials hear the Trump administration, "I do think they would prefer it not to be so in-your-face at times, because they do take a subtler approach," Madan said.

AFP

Thai movement vows fresh protests after PM snub

Bangkok, Thailand - Prominent leaders of Thailand's pro-democracy movement vowed to return to the streets Sunday to protest against Premier Prayut Chan-O-Cha, after their deadline for him to resign was ignored.

The former military chief who staged the 2014 coup is facing pressure from a student-led movement that has organised massive demonstrations for months calling for his resignation.

They regard his hold on power - renewed after last year's widely disputed elections - as illegitimate and on Wednesday gave him three days to step down.

As the deadline for Prayut to resign by 10.00pm on Saturday came and went, activist Jatupat 'Pai' Boonpattaraksa said protesters would turn out in force Sunday at a major Bangkok intersection.

"We hear the answer from the prime minister to our request," Pai told a crowd outside Bangkok's Remand Prison, where protesters had gathered to call for the release of fellow activists.

"Tomorrow as citizens, we will protest against Prayut at Ratchaprasong at 4.00pm."



Pro-democracy protesters hold up their phone flashlights as they take part in an anti-government rally in Bangkok on Sunday (AFP)

Prayut remained resolute Saturday while attending a prayer ceremony for the country at a historic Bangkok temple, saying 'all problems can be solved' through compromise.

"The government has real intentions to solve problems as long as it's under the line of laws," he told reporters, adding that he 'won't quit'.

The movement is largely leaderless though the different groups are united when it comes to their demands for an overhaul to Prayut's government.

Some are also issuing controversial calls for reform to the

kingdom's unassailable monarchy, questioning the role of King Maha Vajiralongkorn in Thailand - once a taboo act due to draconian royal defamation laws.

Another group called the People's Movement announced a march to the German Embassy on Monday afternoon - in apparent defiance of the king, who spends long periods of time in Germany.

The monarch has been back in Thailand for the past week and a half to commemorate a Buddhist holiday and the death of his late father Bhumibol Adulyadej.

AFP

From protest to ballot box, Chile votes in referendum for change

Santiago, Chile - A year to the day after more than one million people thronged downtown Santiago in the biggest march of Chile's social uprising, Chileans vote on Sunday on whether to change the country's dictatorship-era constitution.

Voters are expected to turn out in numbers, spurred on by slogans that scream from the graffiti-scrawled walls of central Santiago, harking back to the violence-scarred protests that left 30 people dead and thousands wounded.

"Chile decides," and "I want peace so I'm voting Reject!" shout inscriptions in the city center, where blue-jacketed copies of the constitution - which critics say favoured the wealthy - are selling as souvenirs.

"Learn how they privatized our water," bawled one vendor from a kiosk on the central Paseo Huerfanos street. A protest movement which had daily drawn thousands onto the streets reached critical mass on October 25, 2019, and the within weeks President Sebastian Pinera had agreed to initiate a process to draft a new constitution.



A worker of the Electoral Service of Chile sets up a polling station on the eve of a nationwide constitutional referendum voting amid the pandemic, in Santiago on Saturday (AFP)

Demand for a new constitution had been a recurring theme of the protests, set off by a hike in public transport fares. They rapidly turned into widespread demonstrations against social and economic inequalities - encompassing health, education and pensions.

Chileans will be asked two questions on the ballot papers: to approve or reject a new constitution, and if necessary, what kind

of body should draft it - a mixed assembly composed equally of lawmakers and citizens, or a 155-member convention made up entirely of citizens.

Opinion polls show more than 70 per cent support a new constitution, with just 17 per cent voting for rejection.

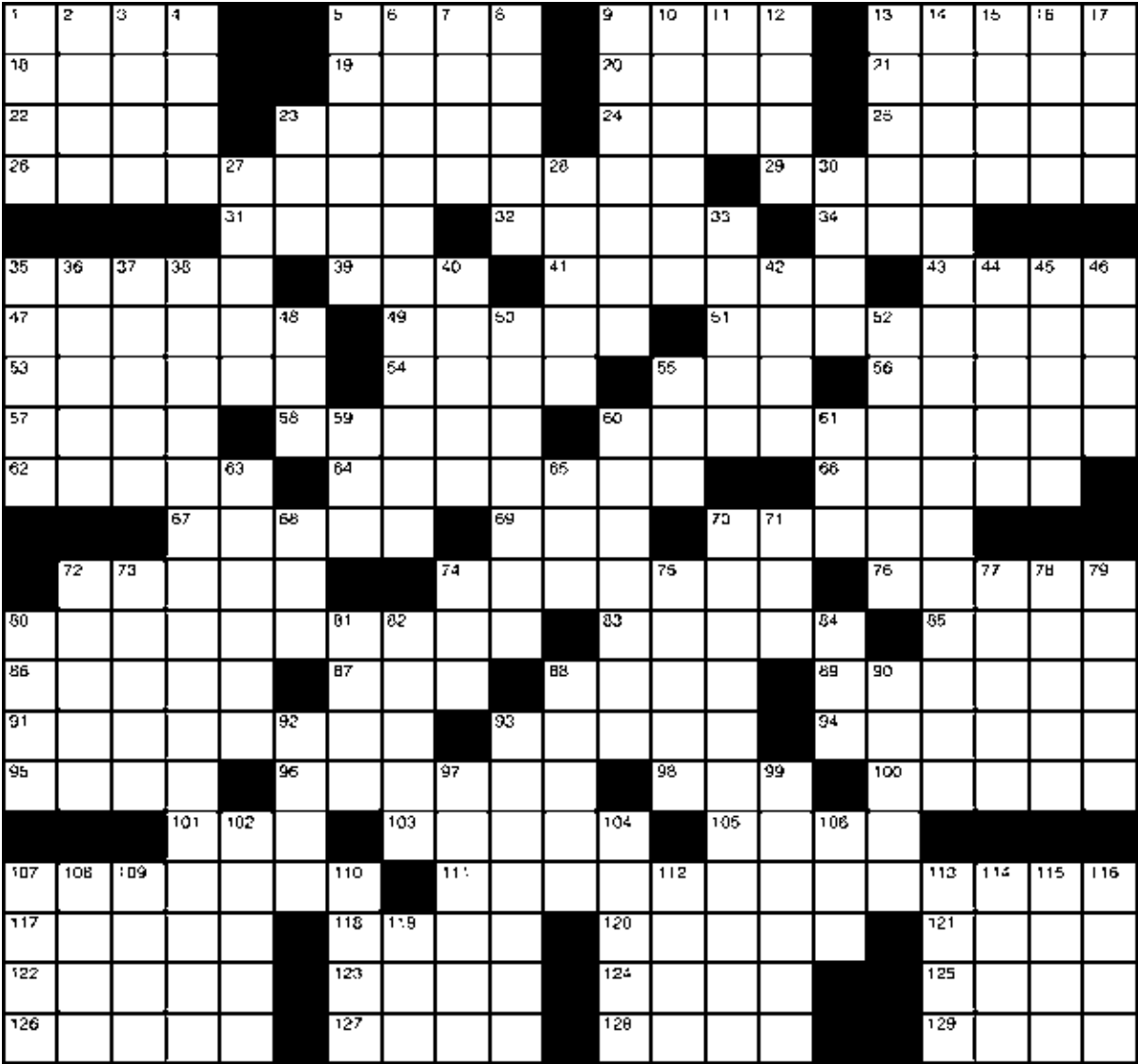
Polls also indicate similar backing for a constituent all-citizen convention, to be elected in April 2021.

Their draft would be put to another referendum in 2022.

"A first aim of this constitutional process is to leave behind the shadow of [Augusto] Pinochet's dictatorship, in order to draw up a new constitution without the original sin of having been established under the use of force," Marcelo Mella, a political scientist at the University of Santiago, told AFP.

AFP

DAILY CROSSWORD



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ACROSS

- 1 Pointers
- 5 Spectacle
- 9 Food fish
- 13 Dagger
- 18 Wife of Bragi
- 19 Hemingway, to friends
- 20 Leander's love
- 21 Obscured
- 22 Mesh weave
- 23 County in Ulster
- 24 ___ mundi
- 25 French historian Joseph Ernest
- 26 Render powerless
- 29 Farm machines
- 31 Silkworm
- 32 Reception room
- 34 Turkish general
- 35 ___ cog: err
- 39 ___ Na Na
- 41 Goat antelopes
- 43 Baby powder
- 47 Cysts
- 49 Disconnected
- 51 Ancient Israeli seaport
- 53 Slalom and downhill skiing
- 54 Brood of pheasants
- 55 AMA members
- 56 Corners
- 57 Viewed
- 58 ___ into: assailed

- 60 "Straighten up and fly right"
- 62 Arrests
- 64 Sustain successfully
- 66 Erstwhile Rumanian capital
- 67 Man ___
- 69 Appetizer
- 70 Decoration
- 72 ___ Dun: Uttar Pradesh city
- 74 Passed judgement concerning
- 76 Partitions
- 80 Help a horseman
- 83 Detached
- 85 Standard
- 86 "Look ___ horse ..."
- 87 Carry
- 88 Blockhead
- 89 Bathhouse
- 91 Miserable
- 93 Infatuate
- 94 Of superior quality
- 95 Jazz great Getz
- 96 "___ peace"
- 98 Pi follower
- 100 Chicago terminal
- 101 ___ whiz!
- 103 Locates
- 105 Israel's Abba
- 107 Feels put upon
- 111 Cozy up to

- 117 Prevent
- 118 Demure
- 120 Silky material
- 121 Celebes ox
- 122 Shankar's instrument
- 123 First-rate
- 124 Perry's creator
- 125 Gloomy
- 126 Dinner setting component
- 127 Token
- 128 Fam. members
- 129 Concerning

DOWN

- 1 Cultivate
- 2 Brain wave
- 3 Insignificant
- 4 Elitist
- 5 Algerian cavalrymen
- 6 Be a part of
- 7 Colorful fish
- 8 Declines
- 9 Soup vegetable
- 10 Faultfinder
- 11 Amphora
- 12 Meager
- 13 Wagon brake
- 14 Stay aloof from
- 15 Sea eagle
- 16 Hebrew month
- 17 Domesticated pigeons
- 23 NFL middleman
- 27 Aspire
- 28 Tidal flood

- 30 Life of Riley
- 33 Abalone shell lining
- 35 Hide away
- 36 Swedish seaport
- 37 Motivate
- 38 Accuse
- 40 On foot, in France
- 42 Ultimate
- 44 Tracts
- 45 Suspicious
- 46 Wine container
- 48 ___ up: finalize
- 50 Totaled
- 52 Appropriates
- 55 Stipple
- 59 Celestial altar
- 60 Black gum trees
- 61 Norwegian playwright's monogram
- 63 Bolivian mountain
- 65 Black gold
- 68 ___ de tete
- 70 Pick up the tab
- 71 Hosp. employees
- 72 Number
- 73 Madonna's acclaimed role
- 74 Toupee, slang
- 75 Sadness
- 77 ___ Grossa, Brazil
- 78 City on the Mosel
- 79 Love, Italian style
- 80 Intervals

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19
Monday's skies start the week off slow, Aries. The moon drifts aimlessly through dreamy Pisces, keeping to herself throughout the day. You're likely to feel withdrawn and introspective, with an awareness of any feelings you've denied as of late. Luna's lack of assistance makes it hard for productive efforts to get off the ground, so honour your need to recharge and rest up instead.

LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22
Monday's skies are decidedly aimless. Take the cue the universe is offering up and arrange your responsibilities so they can be addressed at a later date. The moon saunters through Pisces, stirring up an array of deep-seated emotions that have been bottled up around relationship matters. Luna's lack of connection to other planets suggests it's best to keep things low-key.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21
Monday's skies make it hard to get up and at 'em. The moon wades through Pisces, pointing your focus towards your home, hearth, and family relations. Luna receives no contact from other planets throughout her voyage, thus rendering the day slow and short of activity. Spend the day tidying up your environment and giving yourself the extra rest and recuperation you need.

TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20
Little cosmic action permeates the day ahead. The Pisces moon wanders solo, forming no connections to other planets, ultimately posing a much more low-key day workwise. Rather than fret over how much work you have, aim to acknowledge your underlying need for fulfilling connections to your friend groups. People will bring more joy than productivity today.

VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22
When the cosmos are quiet, life on earth tends to be quiet too. That seems to be the case today, as the moon drifts through Pisces, making no aspects to other planets. Luna's lack of vigour makes it an ideal day for maintaining any projects that are currently underway—especially those involving other people. Enjoy the day off and let yourself drift away with a lover.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19
You're likely to find yourself busy completing a variety of errands. The Pisces moon urges you to find movement and expression in your environment, but her lack of connection to other planets hinders your ability to bring big efforts to full fruition. Try to keep your focus on the little things, rather than turning your eye towards the bigger picture.

GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21
You're at your most visible career point of the month. You may feel drawn towards taking productive action with your ambitions, but try to stick to maintenance rather than launching ahead into new territory. The Pisces moon makes no connections to other planets today. This makes it unusually difficult to get ahead with any fresh endeavours. So, focus on the projects you already have underway.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22
It's easy to feel confused by the mixed signals you're wrestling with. The moon wanders through Pisces, turning your attention to your workload and any unattended errands that need accomplishing. Yet, Luna's lack of communication to other planets makes it hard for major efforts to come to fruition. Keep yourself busy with small efforts and maintenance, rather than taking large leaps.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18
How often do you get a day that goes exactly as planned? Today's cosmos present this subtle gift, as the moon slides through dreamy Pisces without outreach from other planets. Luna's lack of connection makes the day low on action and big on dreaminess. Turn your attention towards your cherished talents to cultivate joy and let the world take care of itself.

CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22
It's hard to get ahold of your head today, Cancer. You're likely to be drifting in and out of fantasies, as the otherworldly Pisces moon conjures up strange visions to contend with. Luna has an introverted day, as she makes no contact with other planets. It's hard to stay focused on hard and fast tasks in reality. Let yourself lean into the dreamworld you're hungry to inhabit.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21
Give yourself a break. You're likely to have a serious case of the Mondays this afternoon, as the cosmos present little cosmic action to work with. That being said, you can spend the day how you'd like—especially since the moon drifts through playful and richly creative Pisces. Turn your attention towards what gives you joy and save the heavy lifting for another day.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20
Monday's skies are slow. The moon treks through your sign all day, making no aspects to other planets on her path. Luna's disconnect makes it difficult to push any new ventures forward, thus it's best to turn your attention towards maintenance rather than renewal. Luna's presence highlights your need to devote energy to your health, appearance, and individuality.

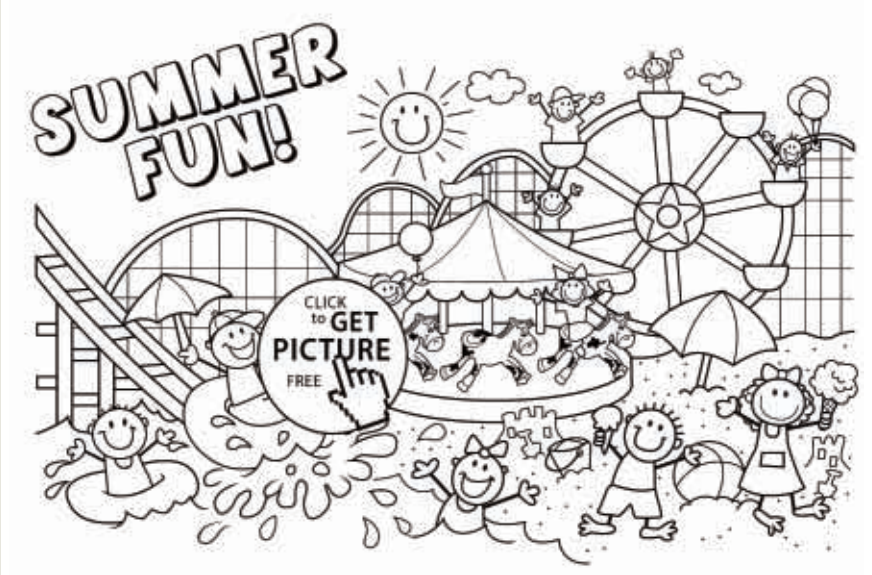
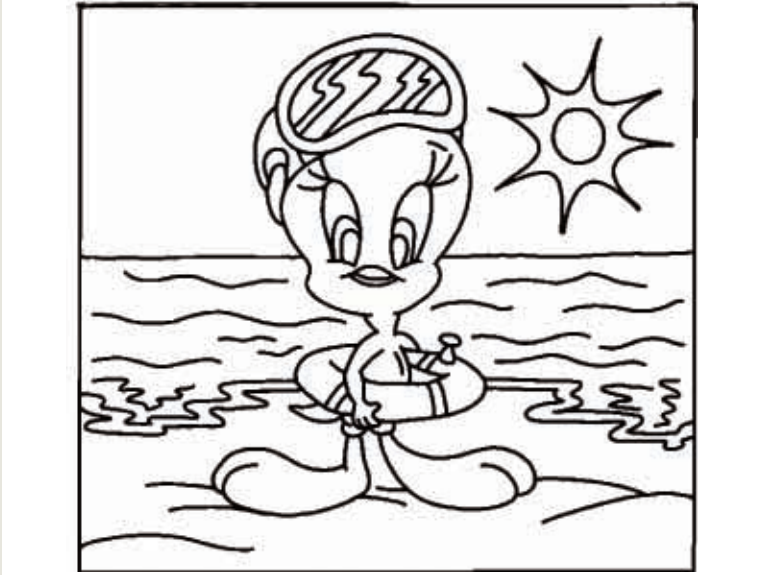


TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- 1. How many Ergs are there in 1 joule?
a. 10²
b. 10⁴
c. 10⁶
d. 10⁷
- 2. Innocent III, who became pope in 1198 led
a. the first crusade
b. the second crusade
c. the third crusade
d. the fourth crusade
- 3. In which year a resolution 'Uniting for Peace' was adopted by UN General Assembly?
a. 1950
b. 1960
c. 1965
d. 1980

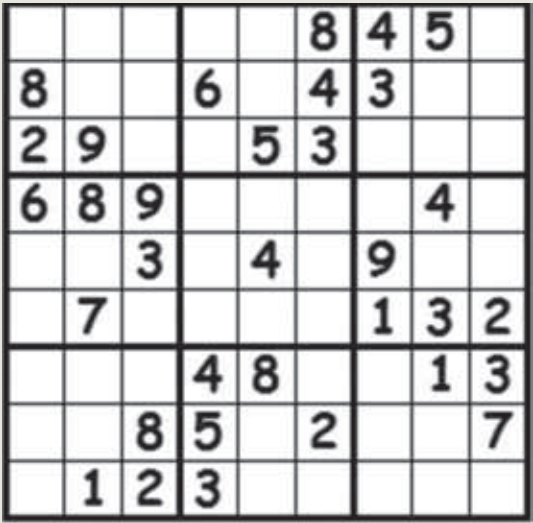
Answers: 1. d 2. c 3. a

KIDS COLOURING



DO YOU SUDOKU?

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



BOGGLER



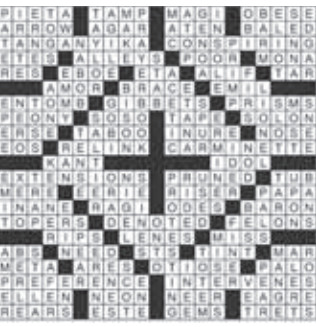
Each game will present you with a matrix filled with letters. The objective is to form words by linking adjacent letters - to the left, right, on top, bottom, or diagonal to each other. The Boggles Classic game uses a 4 x 4 matrix. Words are valued at one point for each letter in excess of two letters.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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER



DAILY CROSSWORD ANSWERS (OCTOBER 25)



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





BACKYARD BARBECUES

The weather has started to cool off and soon barbecues will be the order of the day. It is the right time of the year to start planning your next barbecue party. Barbecue evenings with the family in your backyard is a good way to enhance your bonding among all members.

Supermarkets in Oman are teeming with all you need for a perfect barbecue evening. From charcoal barbecue furnaces with built in fans to torchlights for your lawn, besides a range of accessories and fuel, everything is available under one roof. Here are some tips to successfully organise a backyard barbecue:

USE COMPOSTABLE TABLEWARE

Nothing makes clean-up easier and more convenient than using disposable tableware for your outdoor barbecue because no one wants to deal with a big mess after dessert. New disposable tableware available in supermarkets are made of compostable materials, not foam or plastic, and are ideal for barbecue parties. You get a variety of heavy duty plates, bowls, trays, hot cups, cutlery and straws made from plant-based materials, so they're 100% compostable in commercial facilities.

The plates, bowls and trays are also microwave safe - and sturdy enough to handle generous servings of barbecue, salads and sides without buckling. There are even fibre cups for serving hot beverages, including soups and curries, besides disposable cutlery and straws, too, for cold drinks.



OPT FOR WASHABLE TABLE LINENS

Using machine washable tablecloths or runners, along with reusable cloth napkins, keeps these items out of your trash and saves you money. Outdoor eating can be messy, so find bright, colourful linens with fun patterns that won't show every little spill or stain.

Get creative with your menu and presentation. Serve a colourful fruit salad in a hollowed out melon, like cantaloupe, or pineapple for effect.

DETER PESTS SAFELY

To keep mosquitoes and other pesky insects away from your family while enjoying the outdoors, look for non-toxic solu-

tions. Use products containing natural bug repellents like citronella oil, lemon eucalyptus oil, rose geranium oil, rosemary extract and peppermint oil - or make your own spray using these oils.

CREATE SIGNAGE FOR CLEANUP

Set up trash cans or boxes outside with clear labels to keep recyclable items separate from trash, so everyone in the family knows where to discard each item when the BBQ is over. Cleanup was never this simple - or good for the earth.

BE READY

Make sure all the food is ready to go on the grill when the guests arrive and that any side dishes are assembled, cooked as

needed and out on display. You don't want guests to arrive while you're still forming burger patties and chopping lettuce and tomatoes. Ask your guests to bring side dishes and desserts.

PUT DECORATIVE LIGHTS AROUND

It will get dark outside. Be ready with torches or other decorative backyard lights to guide people around as well as to provide an interesting ambience. Also, organise games for children as well as adults so that eating is not the sole activity to keep the evening going. Make sure you have enough of games to suit people of different ages and to ensure maximum participation. Surprise gifts can also add an element of thrill.



Barbecue safety tips

GRILL AWAY FROM ANY STRUCTURES

Charcoal and gas grills are designed for outdoor use only. However, most home fires start from outdoor grills in a courtyard or patio. So make sure to set up your furnace away from any structures or overhanging tree branches.

STABILISE YOUR GRILL

Only set up your grill on a flat surface and make sure the grill can't be tipped over. Consider using a grill pad or splatter mat underneath your grill to protect your deck or patio. Remove grease or fat buildup from both the grill and the tray below the grill. If you are using a charcoal grill, allow the coals to completely cool off before disposing of them in a metal container.

CHECK FOR PROPANE LEAKS

If you use a gas grill, check the gas tank hose for leaks by applying a light soap and water solution to the hose and then turning on the gas. If there is a propane leak, the solution will

bubble. Other signs of a propane leak include the smell of gas near the barbecue or a flame that won't light.

LIGHT UP RIGHT

If you are using a gas grill and the flame goes out, turn the grill and the gas off, then wait at least five minutes to re-light it. Never leave a lit grill unattended and don't allow kids or pets to play near the grill. If you use a charcoal grill, only use charcoal starter fluid. If the fire starts to go out, don't add any starter fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire.

PRECAUTIONS

- Theme party outfits should not be mandatory for those attending to the barbecue grill. One should dress appropriately as clothing can easily catch fire. Be sure your shirt tails, sleeves or apron strings don't dangle over the grill.
- Have baking soda on hand to control a grease fire and a fire extinguisher nearby for other fires. Alternately, keep a bucket of sand next to the grill for emergencies. Never use water to put out grease fire.



'STUD'Y TIME

Hubert Vaz

He wakes up every morning and whispers sweet nothings to them... He spends fond moments looking into their eyes and caressing them... He devotes long hours shaping up together, without which no day would be complete.

Thirty year old Saud Abdullah al Ansari, who has nurtured a deep passion for horses and horse riding from his childhood, at his father's stud farm in Sohar, wants to convert his obsession with horses into a fulfilling vocation. Apart from keeping his passion alive, it would also promote the age old love for horses in the Arab world and get people acquainted with what was once an essential skill in Arabian culture.

Saud's favourite stud is Tarzan, a racehorse trained for endurance competitions while the other horses in his farm include three mares - Fathima, Tuhfat Almuluk and Casa Blanca - and

I love horses and my life would be incomplete without them. I understand them and they understand me. I keep them as my family and take utmost care of them

SAUD AL ANSARI



two stallions - Mureid Alqasr and Almitr. Saud shares a very special relationship with his horses and understands their every movement while the horses, too, reciprocate by not just following his orders but also understanding his mood and mindset everyday.

A certified horse trainer who learnt riding as a lad and retained his love for it well into his youth, Saud provides training in horse riding and other competitive equestrian skills to those interested, at his stud farm at Falaj al Qabil in Sohar. A large number of youngsters visit him daily to pursue this hobby which, he believes, teaches one to be disciplined as well as have a deep respect for animals.

A winner of many prizes, including the first position twice in the Royal Cavalry racing show in 2017-18 and 2018-19, first position in a flat race in 2019-20 and the sixth position in an endurance race in 2017-18, Saud says he wants to further develop his riding and training skills and so hopes to soon take up study in this field in Germany.

"I love horses and my life would be incomplete without them. I understand them and they understand me. I keep them as my family and take utmost care of them," says Saud who allows visitors



who love horses and are interested in riding to visit his farm to further their passion. So far, he has trained over 150 people of all ages, some for riding as a hobby as well as some who were interested in becoming jockeys.

Proud to possess a Master's certificate pertaining to all fields of equestrian from the Royal Equestrian Club and a Trainer's Card from the Oman Equestrian Federation, Saud is more than content with what he is currently doing. However, his dream is to set up his own training academy where he could breed Arabian horses and promote a love for the equestrian culture in a big way. And, he hopes to gear up to make is dream a reality in coming years by getting acquainted with international breeding and training routines to be able to raise the standard in his farm.

"I want people in Oman to get acquainted with horses, understand them, learn riding and other skills. I am sure many talented riders would emerge to participate in regional and international competitions to bring greater glory to Oman in this field," says Saud, hopeful that someone would come forward from the government or from private establishments to support him to realise his dream.



Category: Marketing



And the winner is...

Donatella Donatelli

Donatella Donatelli, head of Marketing & Communication, Mercedes-Benz Oman, is a wizard in marketing strategies and communication campaigns who has taken her company from strength to strength by sheer dedication, planning and a never-say-die attitude.

Holding a Master's degree in International Affairs from the Institute of International Political Studies of Milan, a degree in Political Science, a postgraduate diploma in Public International Law from The Hague Academy of International Law and on European Union's Institutions and Politics from the Institute of European Studies Alcide De Gasperi of Rome, Donatella is equipped with what it takes to further her business pursuits with ease.

In Mercedes-Benz Oman, Donatella successfully developed above and below the line marketing strategies and consumer tactical campaigns whilst skillfully introducing very effective digital campaigns and engaging social media platforms. Her achievements have been recognised by the Mercedes-Benz regional office in Dubai, winning Best Social Media Activation, Best After-Sales Marketing, Best Mercedes-Benz Customer Experience Activation, Best Mercedes-Benz Accessories & Collection Market Awards. She has also developed campaigns that are now used as best practice across not only the Middle East, but also in global Daimler communications.

Donatella has also developed and implemented an inbound and outbound CRM department which has proved to be a huge support function to the operational departments and has streamlined the customer experience and made the customer communication process more efficient.

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