

Agenda for GCC meeting discussed

Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, received Dr Nayef Falah Mubarak al Hajraf, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). During the meeting, they reviewed the agenda of the next meeting of the Ministerial Council at its 154 session preparatory meeting for the Gulf Summit, and discussed strengthening the GCC march to achieve the set goals, and developing areas of joint cooperation in the GCC system and future projects. – ONA



P8

ELTON JOHN TO PERFORM AT GLASTONBURY FOR FIRST TIME



P12

OMAN FLOUR MILLS TO OPEN RO 26M POULTRY FARM FOR EGG PRODUCTION IN IBRI



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DUTCH MASTERS CRUISE INTO QUARTERS3



DUQM

AMAD DUQM DRAWS 23,000 VISITORS

The curtains fell on ‘Amad Duqm 22’ event on Saturday, which attracted over 23,000 visitors over the past nine days, thanks to the tremendous efforts of the organising committee. The event featured various youth activities in the fields of culture, sports, innovation, technology, entertainment and sustainability. The event was organised in cooperation between the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth.

DETAILS ON P3

GREEN HYDROGEN SUMMIT ON MONDAY

The Green Hydrogen Summit 2022 Conference and Exhibition will start on Monday at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre and will last for three days. The summit will be attended by Eng Salim bin Nasser al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, as a keynote speaker, alongside a host of government officials, experts, investors and consultants in the field of green hydrogen. The summit will open with an accompanying exhibition, in which more than 30 companies and institutions related to the field of hydrogen will participate. The conference will include 12 discussion sessions and a number of technical workshops.

DETAILS ON P12

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UN SAYS HELP LEBANON'S MOST VULNERABLE

P4



CHINESE CITIES LOOSEN MORE COVID CURBS

P5

Omani project among five winners of Earthshot Prize

MUSCAT: The Omani project 44.01, named after the molecular mass of carbon dioxide, is among five winners chosen for the Prince of Wales’s prestigious Earthshot Prize.

Prince William announced the winners on Friday at an awards ceremony in Boston. 44.01 won the award after being shortlisted for the Fix Our Climate category last month.

The annual Earthshot awards were founded by Prince William

to fund projects that aim to save the planet. The other winning projects are based in Kenya, India, Australia and the UK. Each winner will receive £1 million to develop their innovation.

The Omani start-up, founded by Talal Hassan, 44.01’s project in Oman will mineralise 1,000 metric tonnes of CO2 each year until 2024, with emissions equal to driving 215 gas-powered cars for a year. It also hopes to expand internationally, and store



1 billion metric tonnes of carbon dioxide by 2040.

In the process of reducing the amount of planet-warming carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere, 44.01 sucks

CO2 from the atmosphere using direct-air-capture technology, dissolves it into the water, and then pumps the resulting carbonated water into underground seams of peridotite where it’s stored in a process known as mineralisation. Their system is powered by energy derived from heat, solar and biofuels. The annual Earthshot Prize, an independent charity founded by Prince William and the Royal Foundation in 2020,

awards \$1.2 million each to winners in the five categories. Nominations for the 2023 prize open up on December 5.

Inspired by president John F Kennedy’s “Moonshot” challenge that pioneered space travel in the 1960s, the Earthshot Prize is an ambitious global environmental prize that aims to discover and scale the best solutions to help repair our planet within the remainder of this decade.

SEE ALSO P9

HIV testing confidential, assures MoH

VINOD NAIR
[@vinot_nair](#)

The Ministry of Health (MoH) has said that people can approach voluntary counselling and testing centres to conduct blood tests for HIV/Aids.

It said that these centres will not reveal the identity of the person who was examined or registered the details in the health records. These centres will provide necessary education for people who are most vulnerable to infections and methods of transmission of the virus and how to treat it.

The ministry said that the examination will be free, and details can be obtained by calling 24441999.

FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS, OMAN HAS NOT RECORDED TRANSMISSION OF AIDS TO CHILDREN THROUGH THEIR MOTHERS

Meanwhile, for more than three years, Oman has not recorded transmission of Aids to children through their mothers, this was revealed at a special event at Al Bustan Palace Hotel.



INTEGRATED WORK
Dr Badr bin Saif al Rawahi, Director-General of Disease Control at the Ministry of Health, said, “This achievement was a result of an integrated and

continuous work for years and is considered the first at the level of the Eastern Mediterranean Region.”

Dr Ahmed bin Salim al Mandhari, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, said, “Most importantly we now have new generations that are born without the stigma of having been infected with HIV. With this, elimination of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) including HIV by 2030 is possible. The Sultanate has to be praised for its commitment to WHO suggestions.”

Health expert, Dr Shereen al Feki, UNAIDS regional director, said that Oman achieved this cooperation with the private sector.

RO 10.91m for Shaheen-affected farm projects

MUSCAT: The Oman Development Bank, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, has approved development loans amounting to RO 10.91 million for agricultural projects affected by the effects of the climatic conditions ‘Cyclone Shaheen’, within the framework to manage the loans and grants.

The number of approved loans stood at 249 out of 415 applications that were received, studied and analysed in terms of damages, the existence of economic feasibility of the project and other evaluation criteria that were taken into account to ensure the revival of damaged projects in the wilayats of Barka, Al Musannah, Al Suwaiq, Al Khabourah, Saham and Ibri and their sustainability in the medium and long term. — ONA



BIG BUS IS BACK ON THE ROADS

With the onset of the winter season, the Big Bus is back in Muscat after a gap of more than two years. It is catering to the transport needs of tourists, who love to travel in groups and look for economical yet decent transport options. The Big Bus Tours offers sightseeing tours of Muscat on open-top double-decker buses. Tourists from European countries are seen enjoying the warmth of winter in Muscat, which is known for its beautiful season amid greenery, flowers and sightseeing opportunities.

DETAILS ON P3

EU completes approval of Russian oil price cap

BRUSSELS: All European Union governments on Saturday completed the written approval of a \$60 per barrel price cap on Russian seaborne oil, the European Commission said, paving the way for its publication in the EU’s Official Journal and entry into force on December 5.

The measure, an idea of the Group of Seven nations, comes on top of the EU’s embargo on imports of Russian seaborne crude that also kicks in on

December 5, and is meant to allow oil-related services to third countries only for those cargoes below the cap.

“The G7 and all EU Member States have taken a decision that will hit Russia’s revenues even harder and reduce its ability to wage war in Ukraine,” EU Commission



URSULA VON DER LEYEN

said. The price cap will prohibit G7 companies dealing with the insurance, re-insurance

or financing of oil trade or to handle Russian crude oil cargoes to third countries unless the oil was sold at or below the \$60 per barrel price cap. Urals crude closed trade on Friday at \$67.44.

From Monday, the EU itself will not be buying any Russian seaborne crude. The bloc will also stop any imports of Russian petroleum products from February 5. A G7 price cap on the petroleum products will also be set later. — AFP

President Ursula von der Leyen said in a statement.

“It will also help us to stabilise global energy prices, benefiting countries across the world who are currently confronted with high oil prices,” she said.

The price cap will prohibit G7 companies dealing with the insurance, re-insurance



Ibra hosts traditional equestrian festival



MUSCAT: The Wilayat of Ibra hosted a traditional equestrian festival with over 100 horses on Friday. Sayyid Munther al Busaidy, Head of the Oman Equestrian Federation, said, “The traditional equestrian festival in Ibra is part of a series of such events in 4 to 6 wilayats every two years.”

The event was organised by the Zad Al Rakib Equestrian Committee in the Wilayat

of Ibra in the North AlSharqiyah Governorate for the 2022-2023 season. The President of the Oman Equestrian Federation said traditional equestrian festivals aim to introduce tourists to the authentic Omani heritage, where competition and participation take place according to the standards set by the Federation. It is also an incentive to local clubs and jockeys to maintain

the tradition of riding and other skills. Over 100 horses took part in the Ardha run. Other events included tent pegging with sword and spear, in addition to showcasing the skills of the riders on their horses. The riders carried the flags of the Sultanate Oman and pictures of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik amid the chanting of folk songs and recitation of poems.

Endangered species focus of Conservation Day

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
@lakshmioman

December 4 is observed internationally as World Wildlife Conservation Day. There are 41,415 species on the International Union for Conservation of Nature red list, and 16,306 of them are extremely endangered species. There are success stories too - an example is the Iberian lynx, which was a critical predator in Mediterranean ecosystems. Twenty years ago, there were only 94 Iberian lynx left, and a recovery programme allowed the number of Iberian lynx to climb to over 1,100, showing the power of conservation. The Sultanate of Oman is alert over the issue of wildlife and trying to come out with specific codes to deal with the violators of wildlife protection norms. According to the United Nations, “Over 8,400 species of wild fauna flora are critically endangered, while close to 30,000 more are understood to be endangered or vulnerable.” UN’s Sustainable Development

Goal 15 focuses on halting biodiversity loss, and this indicates the importance of conservation. One of the biggest challenges in conservation is wildlife trafficking in addition to poaching. Even though the Day has been spreading awareness on the protection of wildlife species and their habitats since 2012, the challenges continue with wildlife trafficking, demand for animal parts and invasion of their habitats. Loss of wildlife has a direct impact on the balance of biodiversity. Hunting and smuggling of gazelles and oryx can fetch a fine of RO 5,000 and imprisonment of five years. In the Sultanate of Oman, the Environment Authority is concerned with preparing and implementing laws, regulations and decisions related to nature conservation and wildlife preservation. The authority also contributes to assessing developmental projects. Oman has also been working on rehabilitating degraded ecosystems as well as creating wildlife protection units, special measures have been taken to protect wildlife from being poached.



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Over 23,000 visitors turn up for Amad Duqm

STAFF REPORTER
DUQM, DEC 3

Amad Duqm 22's curtains came down on Saturday. The event attracted over 23,000 visitors over the past 9 days, thanks to the tremendous efforts of the organising committee. The event brought to public various youth activities in culture, sports, innovation, technology, entertainment and sustainability. The event was organised in cooperation between the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth.

The event was held over an area of 500,000 sqm, as it was designed in a way that simulates a residential village with integrated facilities. The event attracted thousands of visitors, the majority of whom were youth. For Duqm is a city of the future, it attracted many experimental opportunities and introduces different business opportunities while seeking to be an ideal place for work, residence and lifestyle.

Amad Duqm 22 event combined youth's future vision and brainstorming, as the activities varied between a meditation session, an electric bike circuit (scooter), a paddle show, a game of challenging obstacles, drone races,



a show of remote-control car races, art laboratories, video games, comedy plays, concerts, as well as the astronomy camp. Many other events also enticed visitors to enjoy the picturesque nature of Duqm and its wonderful environment.

The event marked a mini-experimental laboratory for the aspirations of Omani youth for the future of Oman and the world.



The design and implementation operations were assigned to a selected group of creative Omani youth to initiate a vision that combines science, technology, art and entertainment in a modern form that highlights challenges and opportunities alike to create a better world.

The Sculptors Forum in Nufoon was one of the largest events

The event was held over an area of 500,000 sqm, as it was designed in a way that simulates a residential village with integrated facilities

accompanying Amad Duqm 22, in which a group of international sculptors from Spain, Germany, Bulgaria, Romania and Tunisia took part. In addition, three Omani sculptors participated who all could produce the most beautiful artistic masterpieces to simulate the geological nature of Duqm, which was reflected in their beautiful marble statues.

Moreover, Amad Duqm 22 attracted visitors to sporting events such as sailing and windsurfing, which gave them a new experience in such sports, which combined the spirit of adventure and fun of challenge. The event also provided diving enthusiasts with an opportunity to experience this sport and explore marine life and sea secrets with professional trainers. Further, another sport activity involved in Amad Duqm 22 event was paragliding, which included training sessions and aerial tours for visitors.

Big Bus is back in Muscat

KAUSHALENDRA SINGH
@patkaushal

With the onset of the winter season, Big Bus is back in Muscat after a gap of more than two years. It is catering to the transport needs of tourists, who love to travel in groups and look for economical yet decent transport options.

The Big Bus Tours offers sightseeing tours of Muscat on open top double-decker buses. Tourists from Europe are seen enjoying the warmth of winter in Muscat.

Most tourists prefer boarding the Big Bus at Muttrah Souq and taking rounds of the city depending on their choice of places and time in hand.

Amalia, a tourist from Germany, admitted to stepping out of Germany after two-and-a-half years due to the Covid-19 pandemic. She came to Muscat along with her parents. All three are first-timers and are enjoying winter in Muscat.

"Because the temperature in our country is as low as zero



degree Celsius and even in minus. Here in Muscat, it is decent 28 degrees, sunny and full of natural and modern attractions," she said.

Amalia and her parents enjoyed the services of the Big Bus Tours. She liked the transport provider's planning and choice of stops.

"It is lovely to move in Big Bus and see 'majestic Muscat'. The sightseeing was interesting from Muttrah Souq, Fort, Royal Opera House and Council of Oman, which are modern masterpieces of the country," she said.

The first Big Bus Tour service was launched in Oman in 2012 when Muscat was declared the Arab world's Cultural Capital.

The Muscat Big Bus Tour operators have carefully designed route that showcases key Muscat landmarks.

"The sites include Muttrah Souq, the Historic Old Quarter, 16th century Al Mirani Fort and the modern Council of Oman building. You'll also get to enjoy panoramic views of Muscat's stunning craggy mountain range and winding coastline. Discover your own favourites amidst Muscat's must-sees as well, with 24 and 48-hour tickets giving you the opportunity to delve into the city's unique culture and heritage," said Big Bus digital brochure meant for the bus visitors.

First cochlear implant surgery in private hospital performed

KABEER YOUSUF
@kabeeryousef

A cochlear implant surgery performed on a four-year-old in the Sultanate of Oman is the first such surgery ever performed in the country's private sector healthcare, according to the hospital authorities. The achievement was announced in a ceremony attended by Her Highness Sayyida Meyyan bint Shihab al Said, Dr Hilal al Sabti, Minister of Health, and officials last week.

Besides the announcement, a hearing awareness initiative has been launched in the presence of HH Sayyida Dr Mona bint Fahd al Said and HH Sayyida Hujajja bint Jaffer al Said.

The WHO reports suggest

that by 2050 about 2.5 billion people are expected to suffer from hearing loss, and early detection of hearing impediments and intervention can create a better life for these individuals. Timely access and improvement in quality of life lead to a productive life contributing to society. An effective intervention for hearing loss is systematic screening.

By and large, hearing disabilities can be caused by genetic factors, malnutrition during motherhood, recurrent ear infections, lack of immunisation, and continuous exposure to high noise.

"We are the pioneers in patient education initiatives, and hearing awareness is one such initiative which is very important for the community

and it is our prime duty as a healthcare provider to spread awareness on the causes and prevention of diseases," said Dr Deep Makkar, General Manager and Country head of NMC Healthcare in Oman, adding, prevention of hearing loss can be done through strategies to avoid causative factors; however, rehabilitation is equally important for who are already suffering from hearing loss.

Assistive technologies like hearing aids can help people with mild to moderate hearing loss, whereas Cochlear Implants are the best options for profound hearing loss in children as well as adults. Unaddressed hearing loss is expensive to communities and governments and can cost up to \$980 bn annually worldwide.

BSM students win 'Young Geographers of the Year' awards

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, DEC 3

Alisha Goel (Year 4) and Umar Maniar (Year 5), both students of the British School Muscat (BSM), have been recognised for their entries in this year's 'Young Geographers of the Year' competition organised by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), UK.

The competition aims to encourage pupils to engage in geographical issues. Each year the competition receives entries from hundreds of pupils from schools in the UK and internationally.

This year's competition was an opportunity for students to explore the question 'Where, how and why?' by asking students where they want to travel to, how they would get there and why they wanted to travel there.

Alisha and Umar flew to London to receive their 'Highly Commended' awards. Alisha, the youngest winner of this competition wrote about Iceland, the Land of Fire and Ice and about the diverse and stunning physical and geological features of Iceland including some of the largest glaciers, active volcanoes and the spectacular Northern lights.



She had everyone spellbound by rattling off the names of the very difficult and hard to pronounce places of Iceland she had written about — Reykjavik, Vatnajökull Glacier, Fagradalsfjall Volcano! Umar had written about the amazing Amazon rainforest.

Professor Joe Smith, Director of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), said: "We were extremely impressed by the overwhelming quality of entries to this year's competition, with hundreds of pupils taking part from across the UK and beyond. We were looking for – and found – original entries showing how

sustainability was at the forefront of our entrants' minds when thinking about travel today.

Geography plays a crucial role in our understanding of place and space, and we're delighted to see so many submissions cleverly reflect how travelling with purpose can enrich our lives and help us to better understand the world by widening our geographical horizons. The standard was exceptionally high, and the work was produced in a thoughtful and knowledgeable way. Congratulations to the winners and all who took part. We know that they all have bright geographical futures ahead.



Help Lebanon’s most vulnerable: UN refugee agency



Authorities say Lebanon hosts around two million Syrian refugees, while nearly 830,000 are registered with the UN.

BEIRUT: The United Nations’ refugee agency chief called on Saturday for sustained support for Syrian refugees in Lebanon and vulnerable Lebanese citizens, three years after the country’s economy began collapsing.

“We must stand with Lebanon,” UNHCR chief Filippo Grandi said at the end of a three-day visit to Beirut.

He urged the international community to help the country as it faces “one of its hardest moments” and hosts “one of the largest refugee populations per capita in the world”.

Since late 2019, Lebanon has been in the throes of an economic crisis dubbed by the World Bank as one of the worst in modern history, dealing an especially heavy blow to vulnerable communities, including refugees.

Hundreds of thousands of Syrians fled to Lebanon after the country’s civil war began in 2011 with the brutal suppression of anti-regime protests.

Authorities say Lebanon hosts around two million Syrian

refugees, while nearly 830,000 are registered with the UN.

In a statement, Grandi said sustained support for Lebanon was needed “now more than ever... both to support Lebanese in need and the hundreds of thousands of refugees that they have generously hosted for so many years”.

During his visit, Grandi met with officials including caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati “to discuss how to better support vulnerable Lebanese and refugees”, the statement added.

Lebanese authorities have long pushed for Syrian refugees to return to their home country, and have made several repatriation efforts they describe as voluntary, but human rights groups have branded the returns as forced.

“The government reiterated its urgent appeal for an end to the refugee crisis,” Grandi said, adding that UNHCR was working towards this goal “despite the complex and challenging situation”.

— AFP

Russia rejects oil price cap agreed by EU, G7; Ukraine cheers move

KYIV: Russia on Saturday rejected a \$60-price cap on its oil agreed by the EU, G7 and Australia, which Ukraine said would contribute to destruction of Russia’s economy.

“We will not accept this price cap,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told domestic news agencies, adding that Russia, the world’s second largest crude exporter, was “analysing” the move.

The \$60-oil price cap will come into effect on Monday or soon after, alongside an EU embargo on maritime deliveries of Russian crude oil. The embargo will prevent seaborne shipments of Russian crude to the European Union, which account for two thirds of the bloc’s oil imports, potentially depriving Russia’s war chest of billions of euros.

Kyiv welcomes the price cap, which stops countries paying more than \$60 a barrel for Russian oil deliveries by tanker vessel and is designed to make it harder for Russia to bypass EU sanctions by selling beyond the European Union at market prices.

“We always achieve our goal and the economy of Russia will be destroyed, and Russia itself will pay and be responsible for all crimes,” Ukraine’s presidential chief of staff Andriy Yermak said on Saturday.

The Kremlin also said Russian President Vladimir Putin would “in due time” visit the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine, which he claims to have annexed. But Peskov gave no indication of when this could happen.

Poland had earlier refused to back the price cap over concerns



A woman walks next to a wall of a residential building, heavily damaged during Russian war, from which a group of people tried to steal the work of street artist Banksy, in the town of Hostomel, Kyiv region, Ukraine, on Saturday. — Reuters

the \$60 ceiling was too high but confirmed its agreement on Friday evening.

Yermak noted a cap of “\$30 would have destroyed it (the Russian economy) more quickly”.

The market price of a barrel of Russian Urals crude is currently around \$65, just slightly higher than the \$60 cap, indicating the measure may have only a limited impact in the short term.

The G7 said it was delivering on its vow “to prevent Russia from profiting from its war of aggression against Ukraine, to support stability in global energy markets and to minimise negative economic spillovers of Russia’s war of aggression”.

The White House described the

The \$60 oil price cap will come into effect on Monday or soon after, alongside an EU embargo on maritime deliveries of Russian crude oil

cap as “welcome news” that would help limit Putin’s ability to fund the Kremlin’s “war machine”.

Russia has threatened not to deliver to countries that adopted the measure.

The G7 and Australia said they were prepared to adjust the price ceiling if necessary. Russia has earned 67 billion euros (\$71 billion) from the sale of oil to the

European Union since the start of the war in February.

Its annual military budget amounts to around 60 billion, noted Phuc-Vinh Nguyen, an energy expert at the Institut Jacques-Delors in Paris. The EU embargo on seaborne deliveries follows a decision by Germany and Poland to stop taking Russian oil via pipeline by the end of 2022.

In all, more than 90 per cent of Russian deliveries to the European Union will be affected, according to the bloc.

After suffering humiliating defeats during what has become the largest armed conflict in Europe since World War II, Russia began targeting Ukrainian energy infrastructure in October. — AFP

Uganda says its debut satellite launched into orbit

KAMPALA: Uganda’s first satellite has been successfully launched into orbit from the International Space Station (ISS) and the East African nation’s ground controllers were in contact with the device, the government said on Friday.

The PearlAfricaSat-1 spacecraft was rocketed to the ISS by Nasa on November 7, alongside Zimbabwe’s ZimSat-1, with officials saying it will help Uganda monitor weather and disasters, map its mineral wealth and generate other crucial data.



The PearlAfricaSat-1 spacecraft was rocketed to the ISS by NASA on Nov. 7, alongside Zimbabwe’s ZimSat-1.

“Today, Friday, December 2, 2022 at 1045 EAT Uganda’s first satellite PearlAfricaSat-1 was deployed into orbit from

the International Space Station,” Monica Musenero Musanza, Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation, said in a statement.

She said Uganda’s ground station, located in Mukono district, about 25 kilometres (15 miles) east of the capital Kampala, was now “in communication with our satellite”.

The satellite was developed by three Uganda engineers in Japan, with technical assistance from Japan’s Kyushu Institute of Technology. — Reuters

UNITED IN PROTEST



Sudanese protesters with a giant national flag, as they march outside the UN mission in the capital Khartoum, on Saturday, against efforts by the UN to solve the political crisis sparked by last year’s coup. — AFP

SHORT TAKES

PARIS

No reason to panic about possible power cuts

French President Emmanuel Macron said there was no reason to panic about possible power cuts this winter, but he called on citizens to use less energy and on state utility EDF to restart nuclear reactors to prevent outages in case of cold weather.

In an interview, Macron denied that the risk of rolling black-outs was due to inadequate management of EDF’s nuclear reactor restart programme.

“First of all, let us be clear: no panic! It is legitimate for the gov-



ernment to prepare for the extreme cases which would mean cutting off electricity for a few hours per day if we did not have enough power,” Macron said.

BRASÍLIA

Biden-Lula meet likely in Washington

Brazilian president-elect Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and US officials said on Friday he is planning a trip to meet with President Joe Biden at the White House before taking office on January 1.

“I can confirm that we are planning for a visit,” White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told reporters. “We look forward to welcoming President Lula here at the appropriate time.”

Kirby said Biden’s national security adviser, Jake Sullivan,



would travel to Brazil on Monday to meet with the incoming Lula team, as well as with outgoing President Jair Bolsonaro’s administration.

TUNIS

Tunisian TU leader slams elections as pointless

Tunisia’s powerful UGTT trade union chief took aim on Saturday at legislative elections due later this month, claiming they serve no purpose in light of constitutional reforms that neutered political parties.

President Kais Saied last year sacked the government and suspended parliament, then this year extended his power grab with a constitutional referendum marred by an official turnout of barely 30 per cent.

“We head into these elections



which have neither taste nor colour, stemming from a constitution that was not participatory and was not approved by a majority,” Nouredine Taboubi said.



In brief

■ JOHANNESBURG



RULING PARTY TO DISCUSS RAMAPHOSA'S FUTURE

South Africa's ruling party is set to resume talks on Sunday on the future of President Cyril Ramaphosa, who is embroiled in a scandal that has put his presidency at risk.

Pressure is mounting for Ramaphosa to quit or be forced from office over a cash burglary at his farm which he allegedly covered up. The African National Congress (ANC) will hold a "special session of its National Executive Committee" at 12:00 GMT on Sunday, the party said on Saturday.

The committee met briefly in Johannesburg on Friday before telling journalists it would look more closely at the facts of the case against the president.

■ KOZHIKODE



INDIAN STATE TO PROCEED WITH PORT

India's Kerala state will proceed "no matter what" with a \$900 million port project and is open to deploying federal police if needed to protect it from protesters blocking construction, a government minister said on Saturday.

The local fishing community, led by Catholic priests, has blocked construction of Vizhinjam port by Adani Group for almost four months, erecting a makeshift shelter at the port's entrance. The protesters say the huge project causes coastal erosion that has undermined their livelihoods, calling for a complete halt on the construction.

■ SEOUL



SOUTH KOREA'S EX-NATIONAL SECURITY CHIEF HELD

South Korea on Saturday arrested a former national security chief on suspicion of covering up events surrounding the 2020 murder of a fisheries official by Pyongyang.

President Yoon Suk-yeol is expanding an inquiry into the highly politicised case following accusations that his predecessor mishandled the probe to curry favour with North Korea.

Suh Hoon is the first top official from the presidential office of former leader Moon Jae-in to be arrested over the case. He is accused of ordering that intelligence reports be destroyed to conceal the killing of fisheries official Lee Dae-jun, who died near the sea border separating North and South Korea.

Beijing, Shenzhen loosen more Covid curbs

SHANGHAI: Beijing residents on Saturday cheered the removal of Covid-19 testing booths while Shenzhen said it would no longer require commuters to present test results to travel, as an easing of China's virus curbs gathered pace.

Although daily cases are near all-time highs, some cities are taking steps to loosen Covid testing requirements and quarantine rules as China looks to make its zero-Covid policy more targeted amid a sharp economic slowdown and public frustration that has boiled over into unrest.

The southern city of Shenzhen announced it would no longer require people to show a negative Covid test result to use public transport or enter parks, following similar moves by Chengdu and Tianjin.

Many testing booths in Beijing have been shut, as the capital stops demanding negative test results as a condition to enter places such as supermarkets and prepares to do so for subways from Monday. Many other venues, including offices, still require testing. A video showing workers in Beijing removing a testing booth by crane onto a truck went viral on Chinese social media on Friday.

"This should have been taken away earlier!", said one commentator. "Banished to history," said another.

Reuters could not immediately verify the authenticity of the footage. At some of the remaining booths, however, residents grumbled about hour-long queues for the tests due to the closures.

Three years after Covid



People wait in a long queue to be tested for Covid-19 coronavirus at an open nucleic acid testing site as many testing stations are shut down in Beijing on Saturday. — AFP

emerged in central China, the nation has been a global outlier with a zero-tolerance approach of lockdowns and frequent testing. The authorities say the measures are needed to save lives and avoid overwhelming China's healthcare system.

China began tweaking its approach last month, urging localities to become more targeted. Initial reactions, however, were marked with confusion and even tighter lockdowns as cities scrambled to keep a lid on rising cases.

Then a deadly apartment fire

last month in the far western city of Urumqi sparked dozens of protests against Covid curbs in over 20 cities.

Authorities detained several people who participated in the protests and police in cities such as Shanghai have been checking commuters' phones for apps or virtual private network software that protesters used to communicate, according to protesters and social media posts.

On Saturday, police kept a heavy presence around Liangmaqiao junction in east Beijing, as authorities sought to

put off any potential follow-up to last weekend's unrest.

A similarly large police presence could be seen on streets close to Shanghai's Wulumuqi Road, which is named after Urumqi and was the site of a vigil for the victims of the fire that turned into protests last weekend.

China is set to further announce a nationwide easing of testing requirements as well as allowing positive cases and close contacts to isolate at home under certain conditions, people familiar with the matter said last week.

Xi, during a meeting with

European Union officials in Beijing on Thursday, blamed the mass protests on youth frustrated by years of the pandemic, but said the now-dominant Omicron variant of the virus paved the way for fewer restrictions, EU officials said.

Officials have only recently begun to downplay the dangers of Omicron, a significant change in messaging in a country where fear of Covid has run deep.

On Friday, some Beijing neighbourhoods posted guidelines on social media on how positive cases can quarantine at home, a landmark move that marks a break from official guidance to send such people to central quarantine.

Still, the relief has also been accompanied by concerns, especially from people who feel more exposed to the disease. Many analysts say they still do not anticipate a significant reopening until at least after March, as China must first achieve results in a just-launched vaccination drive targeting the elderly.

Estimates for how many deaths China could see if it pivots to a full reopening have ranged from 1.3 million to over 2 million, though some researchers said the death toll could be reduced sharply if there was a focus on vaccination.

"None of this should be interpreted as a fundamental shift away from the zero-Covid policy but rather an effort to make it more streamlined and less costly. The goal is still to get cases back close to zero," Capital Economics said in a note, referring to the recent fine-tuning of policy. — Reuters

■ TOUCHING TO FEEL



A visually impaired kid touches a human body model displayed at an exhibition on the occasion of the International Day for Persons with Disabilities in Chennai on Saturday. — AFP

Deadly incident in West Bank sparks online controversy

RAMALLAH: A deadly incident in the West Bank in which a Palestinian was shot at close range by an Israeli policeman has led to fierce debates on social media.

There were accusations from the Palestinian side of a "cold-blooded execution" of the 22-year-old near Nablus on Friday. Israeli police, on the other hand, said the Palestinian was armed with a knife. He had first tried to enter the vehicle of an Israeli couple. He was then shot by the driver, an army officer on leave. He then inflicted a deep cut on the temple of a nearby policeman.

Another policeman tried to arrest the attacker. The



Israeli security forces are pictured during a military operation in the occupied West Bank city of Hawara, on Friday. — AFP

video shows a fight between the two, with two other men involved as well.

According to Israeli police, the Palestinian tried to snatch the rifle from the policeman. The gun can be seen falling

to the ground. The policeman then pulls out a handgun and shoots the Palestinian. He feared for his life and the lives of others in the vicinity, the policeman said.

The Palestinian news agency Wafa wrote that the Palestinian was hit by four bullets. Israeli soldiers had prevented Palestinian ambulances from reaching the scene, it wrote.

UN special envoy Tor Wennesland wrote in a tweet that he was "horrified" by the killing of the Palestinian. "Such incidents must be fully and promptly investigated, and those responsible held accountable."

— dpa

SALE OF ASSETS

Hamad Al Sharji, Peter Mansour & Co., Advocates, Legal Consultants and Arbitrators (Law Firm Partnership), in their capacity as Liquidator of Hasan Juma Backer Trad. & Cont. Co. LLC is offering for sale the following:

- **Office Furniture** - 200 Staff Work Stations, Filing Cabinets, Office Tables, Chairs, Meeting Tables, CEO Office Furniture etc...
- **Gymnasium Equipment** - Treadmill, Multi Gym, Stepper, Cross Trainer, Exercise Bicycle, Dumbbells, Bench Press etc...
- **27 nos. Sewage Pumps** - Submersible & Horizontal Centrifugal Pumps of different capacities in packed unused condition.

For a list of the above materials and its inspection, please contact **Mr. U.S. Tipnis** (Mobile # 99327259) or by email unmesh.tipnis@gmail.com. Offers to be submitted to the Liquidator's office located in Bait Hoor Bldg, Next to First Abu Dhabi Bank, 3rd floor, CBD or by email to lawyer@sharjimansour.com no later than 28th December 2022.

Sale will be on "where is as is basis". The Liquidator is not obliged to sell to the highest bidder.

Hamad Al Sharji, Peter Mansour & Co.
Advocates, Legal Consultants and Arbitrators (Law Firm Partnership)
Tel. No. 24780333 / 24780335



AL SAHWA SCHOOLS

Al Sahwa Schools wishes to invite experienced teachers to apply for the following positions:

- **Secondary School Drama Teacher**
(January 2023 - March 2023)
- **Secondary Chemistry Teacher**
(January 2023 till June 2023 - with the possibility of contract extension)

Candidates should meet the following requirements:

- Relevant Teaching Qualifications.
- At least 3 years of experience teaching, preferably in International Schools Setting.
- Previous experience in IB Schools is an advantage.
- Ability to be creative and innovative.
- Fluency in English.
- Passionate about students learning with excellent curriculum knowledge.
- Able to motivate and inspire learners.
- Have the ability to plan, prepare and deliver engaging lessons.
- Proficiency and competency in using technology to support learning.

Interested candidates should submit their application through the school's website www.alsahwa.edu.om under the careers section with the exact title of the job. The deadline for applications is **Monday 12 December 2022**.

Glorious food with a cultural twist

I enjoy food, and always have. After all, what's not to like about it? And... as John Safran Soer put it so immaculately, "Food is not rational. Food is culture, habit, craving, and identity."

Certainly, as far as identity goes, 'shuwa' is synonymous with Oman, 'pizza' with Italy, 'cheese' with Switzerland, 'tortillas' with Mexico, to name just a few. What? America has its 'hamburgers'? Oh well... most cuisine reflects culture. Even how we cook reflects its culture, with South Africans enjoying their 'brai', Australians a 'barbie, the English their 'Sunday roasts', New Zealand their 'hangi', and many other exotic preparations.

In culture, food, and certainly tradition, young New Zealand chef Hayley-Chanel Simeon brings something new to the table, with food that passionately reflects her indigenous Maori heritage, and identity. I'm personally proud of the way Simeon has shaken up the culinary landscape, as she has, from the unsung environment of my hometown. Who knew a town of only 1830 residents, mostly fishermen, would become a magnet for gastronomes, and aficionados of fine food, drawn by this culinary star.

Bluff has always been something of an 'afterthought' for New Zealanders, and tourists, but that's changing. Not because of Bluff oysters, blue cod, or crayfish, but how Simeon creates magical dishes from them, earning herself burgeoning celebrity status... doing what mum taught her, what her family, her whanau catch, taking nature's bounty, giving it 'the treatment', to create some Maori magic... some kai (food)... worth living for.

Simeon studied food technology before opening her own eatery on Bluff's main street, her 'Hayz at The Anchorage' soon becoming a haven for those who appreciate locally sourced foods like Southland lamb, venison, and sweetbreads, muttonbirds (titi), and stunning seafood, or kaimoana, such as the established favourites like



Ray Petersen
r.j.petersen52@gmail.com

The writer is a media consultant

AS FAR AS IDENTITY GOES, 'SHUWA' IS SYNONYMOUS WITH OMAN, 'PIZZA' WITH ITALY, 'CHEESE' WITH SWITZERLAND, 'TORTILLAS' WITH MEXICO, TO NAME JUST A FEW

cod, grouper, oysters, and crayfish, but doing much more with the lesser known mussels, paua (abalone), kina (sea urchins), and local herbage, like the peppery horopito, edible thistles, and seaweed (karengo).

Her current menu features mouth-watering 'Open Crayfish (koura) Won Tons' with a Pepper drizzle and micro herbs; 'Fresh Mutton Bird' stuffed and roasted, on Potato Mash with Puha; 'Creamy Paua (abalone) Won Tons,' the 'Paua burger,' or 'Paua and Horopito sausages,' 'Blue Cod Bao Buns,' or the au naturel 'Sea Urchin (kina),' 'Mussels,' or 'Oysters,' all of them spiritual and culinary characters in a visual, palate-busting extravaganza. Think of what you know of Heston Blumenthal, Curtis Stone, Shannon Bennet, and Rick Stein to get an idea of the wizardry that would make Harry Potter blush, all leading to new, vibrant creations, taste sensations, that are today making Bluff a 'bucket list' destination, making Simeon a new age celebrity, and her kai... well, let's just say you would need to book ahead!

Simeon places significant emphasis on developing youth culinary initiatives and opportunities with her now familiar enthusiasm. Most of the time, your food will most likely be prepared, cooked, and served by Simeon herself, a real Kiwi proud to be offering a menu "featuring the freshest ingredients, bring bold, inspirational flavours to your plate, to your life, through our food." A chef truly believing our natural food resources are, if we manage them with respect, renewable, and when dishes are prepared with compassion and deference to the land and sea they come from, and complete respect, the hallmark of her culinary and cultural adventures.

It is certainly a long way from the sun-drenched Sultanate of Oman, the Jewel of the Gulf, to the much more temperate Southern Pacific jewel of New Zealand, yet sense a common respect for their cultures, traditions, and love and appreciation of good fare.

THE LEAP OF FAITH



An Iraqi army cadet performs 'the leap of faith' from a bridge in Baghdad, Iraq, on Saturday. – Reuters

Are you a workaholic?

Some people get so involved in their job that it becomes the centre of their entire existence. Not realising that they are burning away their youth in a job that will not stay with them forever.

The woman who came to my clinic last week was in her early forties. She is very smart and ambitious. When her boss retired, she was the first to be nominated as the acting manager, but this promotion came with a price as she found herself working long hours to supervise her team members and do her own work.

The term "acting" before her new title meant this position was temporary and without extra pay so she had to attend an interview and compete with other applicants who can be from outside the organisation where she worked or more experienced.

Understandably she became more anxious and stressed, working late almost every day and managing to squeeze one hour at the gym which was according to her "more of stress therapy than fun".

She was sleeping less as she used the time catching up at work and lost the desire to socialise with others as weekends became a time to catch up



Dr Hamed al Sinawi
@alsinawi

The writer is a senior consultant psychiatrist at Sultan Qaboos University Hospital

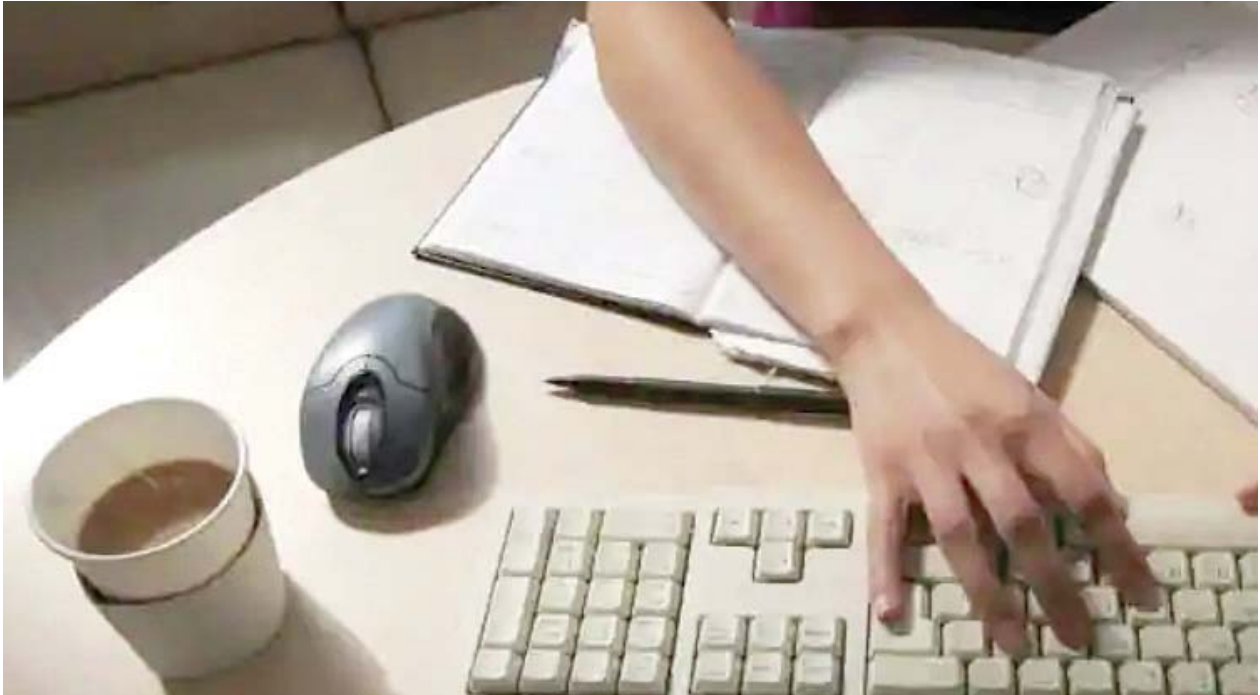
ACCORDING TO PSYCHOLOGISTS, PEOPLE BECOME WORKAHOLICS WHEN THEY ARE WORKING WITH OTHER WORKAHOLICS WHO SET UP STANDARDS FOR THOSE AROUND THEM

with sleep and spend time with the family. Her anxiety levels were so high that she started questioning her abilities to lead her team.

She would experience panic attacks as the interview date approached and became extremely worried that this anxiety will affect her performance during the job interview.

Some people get so much involved in their job that they

sacrifice their physical and mental health, others spend less quality time with their family and loved ones to the point of needing reminding to keep some time for others. The situation becomes similar to an alcoholic who gets so dependent on alcohol that it becomes the centre of his world. He would neglect other aspects of his life including work and family. The term workaholic was derived to describe a similar situation.



Someone would ask. Is being a workaholic bad for you?

We all agree that working hard in itself is not a bad thing, but there's a thin line between "hard worker" and "workaholic." And when you cross that line you end up putting yourself at risk of developing mental and physical illnesses such as depression, heart disease, and high blood pressure. The impact of being a workaholic is not limited to the person alone

but affects their partners who experience feelings of neglect and abandonment, while the children of workaholics show increased rates of anxiety and depression.

According to psychologists, people become workaholics when they are working with other workaholics who set up standards for those around them, this can be seen in competitive jobs like medicine where spending long hours at work beyond the expected time is praised and seen as a sign of dedication, other factors include having a personality type that's always on the move doing things makes the person more likely to become workaholic.

So what can you do to avoid being a workaholic? One tip is to learn time management and leadership skills so you don't have to stay longer at work or take work home with you, schedule social time in your calendar and make sure there is enough "me time" in your week.

Whatever you do, make sure you are working towards a better work-life balance.



Let them eat bread: The origins of the baguette

IT IS AS MUCH a part of French culture as the Eiffel Tower or Edith Piaf but the origins of the humble baguette, which UNESCO on Wednesday added to its List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, remain a mystery.

Here are some of the more popular theories:

NAPOLEON'S BREAD OF WAR

The oldest tale has the baguette being kneaded by bakers in Napoleon's army. Less bulky than a traditional loaf, the long slim shape of the baguette made it faster to bake in brick ovens hastily erected on the battlefield.

France's most famous man of war was preoccupied with getting his men their daily bread.

During his Russian campaign in 1812, he toured the ovens daily to sample the day's offering and ensure the crusty batons were being distributed regularly, according to historian Philippe de Segur.



He also had portable bread mills sent to occupied Moscow, but the setbacks suffered by the Grande

Armée in one of the deadliest military campaigns in history ended his bid to export the doughy staple.

THE VIENNESE CONNECTION

Another theory has the baguette starting out in a Viennese bakery in central Paris in the late 1830s.

Artillery officer and entrepreneur August Zang brought Austria's culinary savoir-faire to Paris in the form of the oval-shaped bread that were standard in his country at the time.

According to the Compagnonnage des boulangers et des pâtisseries, the French bakers' network, Zang decided to make the loaves longer to make them easier for the city's breadwomen to pluck from the big carts they pushed through the city's streets.

BREAKING BREAD

Another theory has the baguette being born at the same time as the metro for the 1900 Paris Exposition.

People from across France came to work on the underground and fights would often break out on site between labourers armed with

knives, which they used to slice big round loaves of bread for lunch.

According to the herodote.net history site, to avoid bloodshed, one engineer had the idea of ordering longer loaves that could be broken by hand.

EARLY RISING

In 1919, a new law aimed to improve the lives of bakers by banning them from working from 10 pm to 4 am.

The reform gave them less time to prepare the traditional sourdough loaf for the morning, marked the widespread transition to what was called at the time the yeast-based "flute", which rose faster and was out of the oven in under half an hour.

Standardised at 80 centimetres (30 inches) and 250 grammes (eight ounces) with a fixed price until 1986, the baguette was initially the mainstay of wealthy metropolitans, but after World War II became the emblem of all French people. — AFP

Science Café hosts a session on invasive birds in the Sultanate of Oman

MAWARID (Oman Animal and Plant Genetic Resources Centre) of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation hosted another Science Café session on

"Invasive Birds and their Impact on the Environment in the Sultanate of Oman" at Al Arai Boulevard recently.

Invasive birds are defined as

species of birds that live outside their natural range in habitats, which are usually very harmful, as they cause important changes in natural ecosystems or indigenous biodiversity, and colonise an area in a large way, causing damage to the environment or the local agricultural economy, and they are usually non-native species.

On the other hand, not all non-native birds are naturally invasive birds, many of them can adapt to different ecosystems without causing harmful effects, and the same species that are considered invasive in one area may not be harmful in another, and therefore can be considered non-native.

Among the most important types of invasive birds in the Sultanate of Oman are the myna bird, the house crow, and the rose-ringed parakeet, which cause harmful effects on the ecosystem in the Sultanate of Oman in general and Dhofar Governorate in particular.



The Science Café is a dialogue session that discusses a number of important scientific topics in an informal meeting held once a month outside the work offices. It contributes to raising awareness

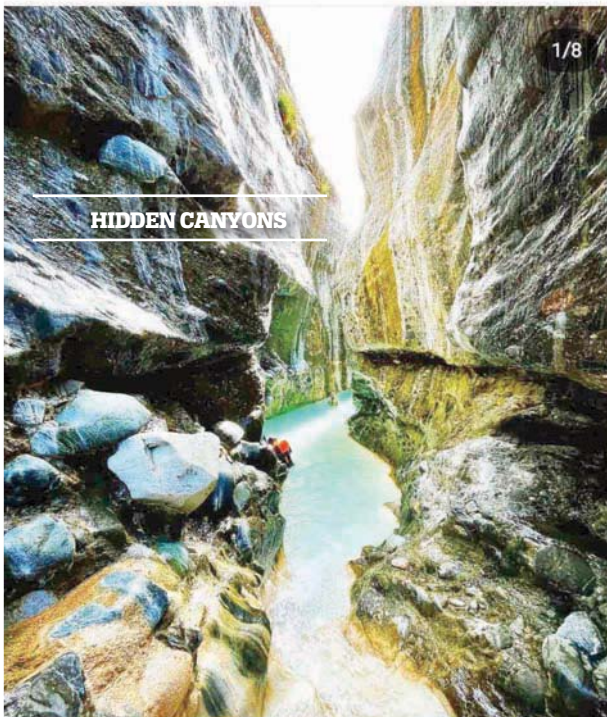
among the general public about scientific issues related to genetic resources and how to deal with them on a daily basis by organising monthly dialogue sessions that will continue until the end of May.



INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS

khalidalmawali_
ولاية منح

A GATHERING

jaimy.george
Wadi Al Hoqain

HIDDEN CANYONS

thamooooor84
Salalah, Oman

STALKING

SHARE A SLICE OF YOUR LIFE

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



AROUND THE WORLD

MUSIC

Elton John to perform at Glastonbury for first time



ELTON JOHN WILL HEADLINE Glastonbury next summer in the last British show on his lengthy global farewell tour at the renowned music festival on Worthy Farm.

One of the biggest selling artists of all time, John has never played Britain's leading music festival and said an appearance on the Pyramid Stage on the last night of the 2023 event would be the perfect way to bow out in Britain.

The 75-year-old activist and singer of hits such as "Tiny Dancer" and "Rocket Man" is coming towards the end of a "Farewell Yellow Brick Road" tour after more than 50 years on the road.

John had his first big hit in 1970 with "Your Song", the same year that the first Glastonbury festival took place in south-west England, when tickets cost one pound and revellers drank free milk from the farm.

"Every week I speak to new artists on my radio show and Glastonbury is often cited as a pivotal moment in launching their careers - the festival's genuine, enthusiastic support for the best emerging talent is something I've long admired," he said in a statement.

Glastonbury is unique in selling out before any headliners have been announced, given the strength of previous line-ups with stars ranging from Beyonce to David Bowie, Dolly Parton to Bruce Springsteen and the Rolling Stones.

Paul McCartney, 80, played at last year's

Glastonbury, becoming one of its oldest headliners as the festival returned after a three-year absence due to the Covid pandemic.

Tickets for the 2023 event sold out in just over an hour.

"This will be the final UK show of Elton's last ever tour, so we will be closing the Festival and marking this huge moment in both of our histories with the mother of all send-offs," Glastonbury co-organiser Emily Eavis said.

John, who has reigned over pop music with piano-led rock songs and ballads such as "Candle in the Wind", announced a farewell tour in 2018, saying he wanted to focus on his family.

The tour had been due to run from September 2018 to 2021, encompassing five continents and over 350 dates but it was disrupted by the pandemic and John's hip problems. It brings down the curtain on one of the most glittering careers in show business. John has sold more than 300 million records worldwide, won every industry award going and raised millions of pounds in the global fight against HIV/Aids.

John performed for US President Joe Biden at the White House in September, before he ended the US leg with a star-studded show at the Los Angeles Dodger Stadium in November. He performs in Australia and New Zealand in January before kicking off the British tour in Liverpool in March.

— Reuters

TRAVEL TALES

Handmade in Hong Kong



IN A BRIGHTLY LIT cubicle tucked under the staircase of a tenement building in Hong Kong's Jordan district, Cheung Shun-king guided a chisel over a pearly white mahjong tile to form a groove of concentric circles.

"I have been doing this my whole life," he said, standing to brush off the shavings with a voluminous feather duster. "That's why I have to continue."

Against a backdrop of break-neck transformation, handmade items in Hong Kong have taken on a special meaning among a younger generation, and those enamoured of the grit and glamour of the city's late 20th century.

Over the past two decades, other family businesses and decades-old diners have been toppled by inhospitable rents and redevelopment projects. Political upheaval since 2019, coupled by restrictive pandemic rules, have triggered a wave of migration away from the city and kept tourists at bay. As one cultural icon after another has faded, residents have sought to hold onto what remains.

Cheung, 70, came from a family of mahjong carvers and inherited Biu Kee Mahjong from his father in the 1960s. The future of his shop at 233 Temple St., which he has run for nearly three decades, is in limbo and he may soon be forced to move because of government building regulations. But he continues to open the shop every day of the week. "I will keep working as long as I have the strength to do so," he said.

While the game of strategy has remained popular in the city, mahjong parlours have faded out of fashion and cheaper mass-produced sets dominate the consumer market. Handmade mahjong sets like those made by Cheung and his father and grandfather have become increasingly uncommon. For a full set of 144 tiles, which takes him weeks to complete, Cheung charges upward of 5,500 Hong Kong dollars (about \$700).

Cheung has in recent years

begun selling tiles with personalised messages or etchings. Prices start from HK\$100 per word and HK\$300 per drawing, and orders have to be placed by phone or on his Facebook page, with weeks of lead time.

A three-minute walk away from Biu Kee, up a flight of steps at the austere Bowring Commercial Center, Miru Wong sells embroidered footwear at Sindart, a matchbox-size shop lined with jewel-toned slippers.

The business was first established in 1958 by her grandparents. Back then, her grandfather made shoes that her grandmother would embellish with embroidered fish, dragons and peonies. Wong, 32, was the only member of her family to learn both skills.

She took over Sindart about a decade ago after studying design and making the task of modernising embroidered shoes the subject of her final thesis project. Since then, she has introduced new designs, such as peacock feathers and bamboo-munching pandas. Working with her father, Billy Wong, a graphic designer, she replaced the soles of the slippers with an anti-slip material.

Miru Wong continues to sell crimson bridal slippers with elaborately embroidered insoles and baby booties shaped as tigers and elephants with embroidered eyes, ears and teeth. After the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, Wong noticed that the wholesalers from which she sourced textiles and sequins were closing one after another.

"You use many different materials when you make shoes," she said. "So when those materials disappear, you have to find new ways."

She crafted slippers from the remaining stock of patterned fabrics that were being phased out — silvery brocade and violet-hued paisleys — and marketed them on her Instagram account as a discontinued series.

"There are actually many people who really like embroidered shoes," she said, adding that she had apprentices rang-

ing in age from retirees to high school students. "And younger people have a lot of drive to think of new ways to make traditional crafts."

To Elton Chow, the 32-year-old director of Full House Denim & Workshop, contemporary cutting and trendy touches were essential in making otherwise retro garments appealing in everyday settings. His airy shop is on the 11th floor of the Multifield Center on Shanghai Street in the Mongkok district, along a stretch of wholesale kitchenware shops.

A former denim merchandiser, Chow's decade-old business is known for selling custom jeans for all shapes and sizes, with prices starting from HK\$2,100. Chow also designs ready-to-wear denim apparel with everything from suit trousers and newsboy caps to chambray kimonos and wide-legged hakama pants.

"I have quite a lot of admiration for Japanese artisans and their devotion to traditional methods. What they make is very refined," he said. "Japanese denim is also renowned in the world, so that's where we source a lot of our fabric."

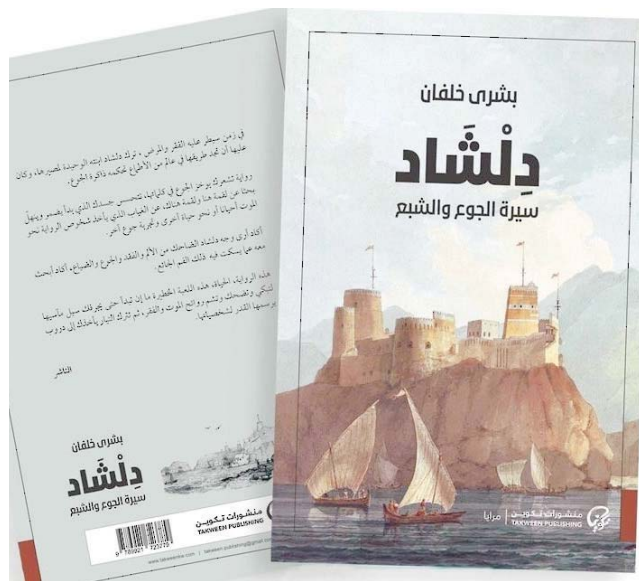
Retailing for HK\$1,400, a cropped washed jacket in his latest collection featured textured sleeves made from the material of kendo uniforms and traditional Chinese pankou knot buttons. The inner lining was made of slub yarn, with a digitally printed blue and white pattern.

The Japanese patchwork tradition of boro and sashiko — patchwork and stitching that was simultaneously decorative and functional — was the ethos behind denim teddy bears, tote bags, purses, socks and the inner layers of several jackets. Most recently, Chow also made a stitched boho sweatshirt from several vintage paisley bandannas. "If you wear a traditional garment, it might not look very good," Chow said. "We use special fabric to create traditional styles, while incorporating cutting and features that adhere to contemporary aesthetics."

— NYT

BOOK REVIEW

A vivid journey back to Old Oman



By Arwa al Hashimi

FOR HER NOVEL "Dilshad: A Biography of Hunger and Satiation", Omani writer and novelist Bushra Khalfan was shortlisted for the 15th edition of International Prize for Arabic Fiction (Booker 2022) and she won the 8th Katara Prize for Arabic Fiction in Qatar.

The centre of the book is Dilshad, the poor orphan boy who got his share of starvation and poverty just like other people who lived in Muscat and the nearby areas in its warring past. Bushra reflects on a bygone era in Muscat tracing back the hard times the old Omanis faced.

Hunger and Satiation is a look into the economic conditions and an exploration of the fears of the people including those who have enough food but were afraid of the hunger demon that follows the War.

The novel presents a community being deprived not only of food but many other things including family care, happiness, knowledge, travel and many other forms of hunger.

Dilshad fought hunger with loud laughs using it to mask the noise his stomach made. He transmitted his habit to his daughter Maryam. Maryam, inheriting the poverty also fought her own demons using laughter to silence the pain that lived long in her heart. Yet, that pain wasn't only of hunger. Maryam had a hard time

understanding the big gap between starving in Muscat, specifically Al loghan village, and being full living with one of Muscat's wealthiest families in "Lomah house".

It was known to host needy girls to be taught tenets of Islam and serve the lady of the house. As Faridah, Maryam's daughter, she did not know about hunger except in the hardship after the death of her father, who was the Son of Lomah. Therefore, she kept laughing just to keep up with her mother, who knows the meaning of hunger more than she does.

The readers of the book are taken to some of the most vivid pictures of Muscat in the past where everyday living was a struggle. It significantly highlighted and identified the relations between people, dissect their standard of living, and looks at even their language.

Bushra was able to visualise the intermixing of many races in Oman. She made all the characters talk under one single voice despite all the differences between them making them one single community that gathered people who loved and supported each other.

With a wonderful open-ending, Bushra wrote the last words of her novel: "The book of hunger has been completed, followed by the book of satiation, God willing..." Giving her readers creativity and freedom to pursue the ending they wanted.

business



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Oman’s 44.01 wins prestigious Earthshot Prize

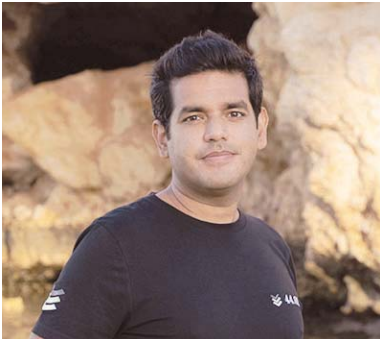
BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, DEC 3

Carbon mineralisation pioneer 44.01 was last night named the winner of the 2022 Earthshot Prize, in the ‘Fix Our Climate’ category. This is the latest vote of confidence in 44.01 and in the elimination of CO2 via peridotite mineralisation.

Unlike carbon ‘storage’, which involves burying CO2 underground in disused oil-wells or aquifers, mineralisation removes CO2 forever.

Mineralisation can therefore offer a carbon removal solution that is safe, cost-effective and permanent. 44.01 has previously received recognition and support from, among others, the Musk Foundation via XPRIZE, Shopify and Stripe.

Founded by Prince William and The Royal Foundation in 2020, The Earthshot Prize is a global environmental prize to discover, accelerate, and scale ground-breaking solutions to repair and regenerate the planet.



Mineralisation can offer a safe, cost-effective way of eliminating CO2 forever. Our challenge is to scale our solution internationally, and the Earthshot Prize will help us to do just that

TALAL HASSAN
44.01 Founder and CEO



Inspired by President John F Kennedy’s Moonshot which united millions of people around the goal of reaching the moon, The Earthshot Prize aims to catalyse an Earthshot challenge to urgently encourage and scale innovative solutions that can help put the world firmly on a trajectory towards a stable climate, where communities, oceans, and biodiversity thrive in harmony by

2030. The Earthshot Prize is judged by an international council which includes leaders from the fields of business, philanthropy, science and entertainment. The panel looks for tested, scalable solutions that can help repair the climate and prevent further harm. The prize’s other categories are protect and restore nature, clean our air, revive our oceans, and build a waste-free

world. Talal Hasan, 44.01’s Founder and CEO, said “We are delighted to have been recognised by the Earthshot Prize. Mineralisation can offer a safe, cost-effective way of eliminating CO2 forever. Our challenge is to scale our solution internationally, and the Earthshot Prize will help us to do just that.” Muscat-based 44.01 eliminates CO2 by turning it into rock, removing it from the atmosphere safely, efficiently, and permanently. 44.01 has already conducted successful pilots of its mineralisation process in the Sultanate of Oman. In 2023, 44.01 will begin mineralising CO2 commercially. The company has ambitious aims to mineralise one billion tonnes of CO2 by 2040. As the world transitions to clean forms of energy, 44.01 is also providing new employment opportunities for engineers and geologists working in the fossil fuel industry. Given Oman has one of the largest surficial deposits of

peridotite in the world, carbon mineralisation could also be a boon for workers in the region and for the energy transition. By seeking to solve global problems, 44.01 is solving local ones too. 44.01, whose name refers to the molecular mass of carbon dioxide, eliminates CO2 by mineralising it in peridotite, a rock found in abundance in Oman as well as in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Australasia. Peridotite mineralisation is a natural process, which 44.01 accelerates by injecting carbonated fluid into seams of peridotite deep underground. The Earthshot Prize aims to turn the current pessimism surrounding environmental issues into optimism, by championing inspiring leadership and helping to scale incredible cutting-edge solutions. More than a Prize, it works in partnership with a Global Alliance of Partners to support the scaling of the solutions discovered and selected each year.

Air logistics stakeholders join hands to put Oman on global trade map

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, DEC 3

Leading organisations from across the air logistics industry in the Sultanate of Oman have pledged to strengthen efforts in support of the government’s goal place the country on the global trade map in line with the broader Oman Vision 2040 strategy.

This commitment was affirmed at an air cargo workshop organised last week by Oman SATS, the air cargo operator, in coordination with Oman Customs, Royal Oman Police and Oman Airports.

The Omani government attaches great importance to this sector, as it has for years made many possibilities and facilities to make the Sultanate of Oman a regional and international centre for transit shipments and re-exports to other destinations, due to the Sultanate of Oman’s strategic location between Asia, Europe and Africa. In opening remarks, Shaikh Aiman bin Ahmed al Hosni, CEO of Oman Airports and Chairman of Oman SATS, praised the vital role of the air cargo sector, notably during the recent pandemic. The sector had made an important contribution in mitigating the effects of the pandemic and attracting international airlines to use Muscat International Airport as a destination for their operations. Brigadier Saeed bin Khamis



al Ghaithi, Director General of Customs, emphasised the commitment of Oman to create an investment climate in line with market requirements. S T Tan, CEO — Oman SATS, set up in joint venture with Singaporean SATS International Company, one of the largest handling companies in the world, gave an overview of the future of air cargo operations in Oman. Participating along with national carrier Oman Air, local budget carrier said it recently started operating the first air cargo plane. Oman Logistics Association

said it has actively enhanced coordination with the authorities to address the challenges of the private sector and develop its logistical skills. Fisheries Development Oman (FDO), said it is working on large projects in the fish sector, which requires complementing the supply chain to reach the global markets by air as an added value for the sector. A representative of Oman Vision 2040 for the National Investment and Export Development Programme — Nazdaher, presented the programme’s strategies to achieve

the investment requirements of the Sultanate of Oman with innovative solutions to support investment decision-making. The Oman Logistics Centre at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology also participated with a working paper of the ministry’s plans to prepare government laws, regulations in the logistics sector. An e-commerce official at Asyad Express gave a glimpse into the future of e-commerce, the country’s current global position, and how Oman can benefit from the great global demand.

Oman’s bourse emerges as best performing market in GCC

JOMAR MENDOZA
@JmObserver

After witnessing a decline for two consecutive months, the Muscat Stock Exchange — the only bourse of the Sultanate of Oman — has emerged as the best performing market in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for November 2022 as it jumped 5.7 per cent closing at 4,613.719 points. In terms of sectoral index performance, all three sector indices in the exchange recorded a growth during November 2022. The Financial Index recorded the largest monthly increase among the sectors to close the month at 7,490 with 7.2 per cent growth. The Industrial index followed with a monthly growth of 2.4 per cent while the Services Index recorded a 1.4 per cent rise in comparison. The reversal of the index performance during the month improved the exchange’s overall year-to date return which stood at 11.7 per cent at the end of November 2022, according to Kamco Invest. In terms of company performance, Al Hassan Engineering Company led the top gainers table recording 25 per cent share price jump during the month, followed by Ominvest which registered 18.8 per cent share price increase during the similar period.



Comparatively, Sohar Power topped the decliners table recording 20 per cent share price fall during November 2022 while Raysut Cement witnessed 18.8 per cent fall in share price during the similar period. Monthly trading activity on the exchange increased during the month recovering from a slight dip in the previous month. Total volume of shares traded during November 2022 increased by 58.6 per cent to reach 276.2 million shares as compared to 174.1 million shares during October 2022. On the other hand, the total value traded on the exchange witnessed an increase of 23.2 per cent to reach RO 53.3 million. Bank Muscat topped the monthly volume traded chart witnessing 52.3 million of its shares change hands during the month, followed by HSBC Bank of Oman and United Finance with 34.4 million and 19.9 million of shares traded during the month.

Free gold coins as part of Malabar Gold & Diamonds Festival

MUSCAT: With an extensive retail network of over 295 outlets across 10 countries, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the 6th largest jewellery retailer globally, has unveiled their offers for this year's Malabar Gold & Diamonds Festival.

Customers can get assured gold coins on purchase of diamond and precious gem jewellery purchase at any Malabar Gold & Diamonds showrooms across Oman. To mark

the holiday season, the brand has also enriched their collection of designs across gold, diamond, precious gem and platinum jewellery. The limited period offer will be valid until December 24.

On purchase of every diamond or precious gem jewellery worth RO 500, customers are eligible for a free 1 gramme gold coin and for diamond or precious gem jewellery purchase worth RO 300, customers



MALABAR
GOLD & DIAMONDS
FESTIVAL

can get a free ½ gramme gold coin. “The Malabar Gold & Diamonds Festival is one of our brand's most awaited offer seasons of the year. With the approaching holiday season, we

have made every effort to improve the shopping experience of our customers with our exquisite array of gold, diamond and precious gem jewellery with an added incentive of free gold coins on diamond and

precious gem jewellery purchase. “We are certain that our loyal customers in the Sultanate will welcome the festival with open arms and flock to our showrooms,” commented Shamlal Ahamed, Managing Director, International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

In line with Malabar Gold & Diamonds commitment towards satisfying the jewellery shopping

requirements of its immense multi-ethnic customer base in the region, the brand has enhanced its collection of gold, diamond and precious gem jewellery collection across its numerous sub-brands such as Mine, Era, Viraaz, Precia, Ethnix and Divine.

The collections are available across 22K, 21K and 18K jewellery, in traditional, contemporary, bridal and every day wear designs.

ARA Petroleum signs PSA to provide natural gas in Tanzania



MUSCAT: ARA Petroleum Tanzania Limited (APT), one of the group companies of Zubair Corporation, has signed last week an Addendum to the Ruvuma Block Production Sharing Agreement (PSA) to now provide for natural gas. APT is a subsidiary of Zubair Corporation of Oman and holds majority shares in the Ruvuma Block in Tanzania as well as being the operator for the block.

The PSA was initially signed in 2005 for oil exploration in the Mtwara Licence. A significant gas discovery made in the The Ntorya location in wells drilled earlier. APT was established in 2018 to accelerate the development of the Ntorya area. The exploration activities picked up momentum in 2021 with APT acquiring working interest from Ndovu Resources Ltd and becoming the operator of the project.

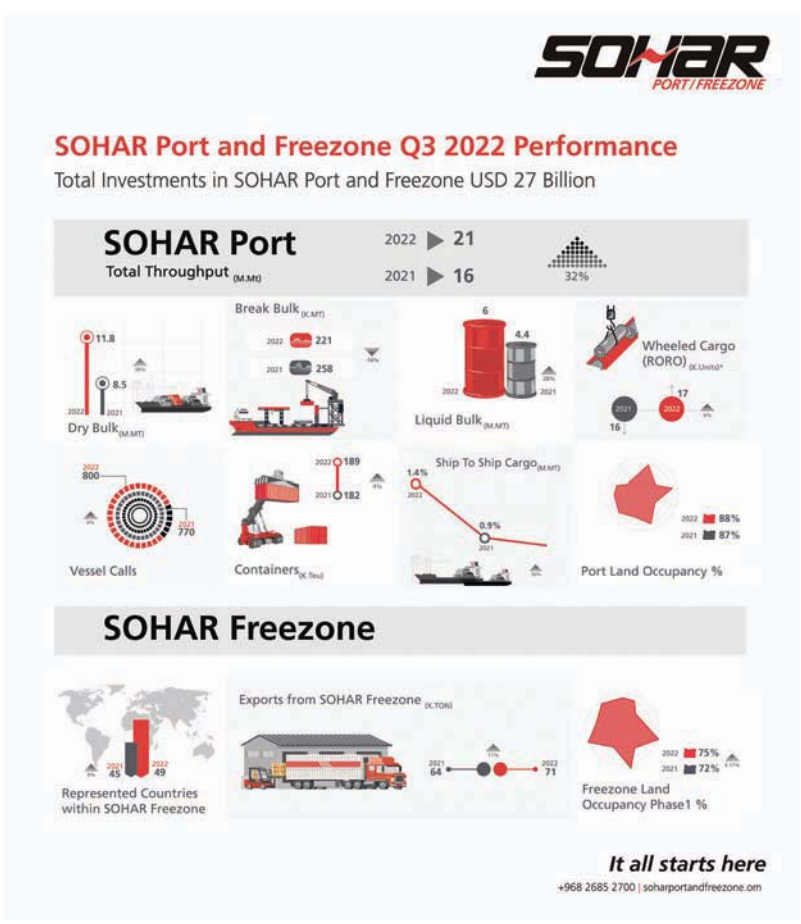
During the signing ceremony held in Dar es Salam, Energy Minister January Makamba said that the two countries, Tanzania and the Sultanate of Oman, are connected by historical ties and that the signing of these agreements further enhances these ties.

SOHAR Port and Freezone announces strong results for Q3

MUSCAT: SOHAR Port and Freezone has announced strong results for the third quarter of 2022 as the Port throughput (export & import) reported an increase by 32 per cent over the same period last year.

As the rapidly growing complex continues to transform the Sultanate's burgeoning maritime and logistics industries, dry bulk volume grew by 38 per cent to almost 11.8 million tonnes, liquid bulk increased by 28 per cent to just over 5 million tonnes.

The number of handled containers increased by 4 per cent to 188,604 TEU. In addition, the Port also recorded robust growth of 60 per cent increase in Ship-to-Ship (STS) cargo given its strategic location and its reputation for delivering unmatched quality of service with quick turnaround times with Port's ever-growing STS Customer base.



confident that SOHAR Port and Freezone will continue to grow and place Oman on the global trade and logistics map.

“We are also excited about the prospects of investments in the realm of green hydrogen, supported by the recently signed agreement between Oman and the Netherlands at COP 27, which will contribute to building the global green hydrogen value chain, as well as boost port development opportunities.”

Meanwhile, the SOHAR Freezone's performance has been unrelenting in Q3 2022 with 11.2 per cent increase in exports, and 4.2 per cent increase in land occupancy compared with the same period last year. With a bespoke regulatory and incentive scheme program to attract Foreign Direct Investment, phase one of the Freezone is now occupied at over 75 per cent capacity.

Omar al Mahrizi, Chief Executive Officer of SOHAR Freezone and Deputy Chief Executive Officer of SOHAR Port, said, “The growth we have achieved in 2022 to date provides a solid platform for even better results during 2023. Further expansion is planned as we continue to reach out to overseas investors about

the potential of SOHAR Port and Freezone to meet their logistical needs in the region.”

He added, “In line with the aims of Oman Vision 2040 and considering the financial and economic measures the government is taking, the national economy is expected to grow by 5.7 per cent next year. As a key enabler of growth, we look forward to more successes and achievements as SOHAR Freezone continues to attract Foreign Direct Investments and be the home of mega-projects in the fields of manufacturing consumer goods, food and industrial supplies, while offering competitive incentives and benefits.”

“In addition, and in line with its in-country-value strategy, SOHAR Port and Freezone local awarded outsourcing contracts increased by 114 per cent,” Omar concluded.

SOHAR Port and Freezone has attracted \$27 billion in total investment as part of a long-term commitment to developing Oman's economy in line with the objectives of Vision 2040.

Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, SOHAR is one of the world's fastest-growing complexes of its kind and significant developments within its industrial and food clusters are currently underway. The company is also exploring investment in green and renewable energy to make the Port and Freezone more efficient and environmentally conscious for the benefit of tenants, clients, community and environment.

Muzn wins most innovative Islamic window award



MUSCAT: Muzn, National Bank of Oman's (NBO) Islamic banking window, recently won the Most Innovative Islamic Window award at the Islamic Banking and Finance Summit 2022. The accolade is a tribute to Muzn's innovative and Shariah-compliant financial solutions and state-of-the-art digital platforms, including a mobile app and Corporate Internet Banking, as it aims to continuously create an exceptional customer experience.

Aimed to highlight the current growth of Islamic banking, the Islamic Banking and Finance event was held by Alam Al Iktisaad Wal Amal (AIWA) under the auspices of the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) and brought together leaders in Islamic banking. Tahir al Amri, Executive President of CBO, gave the keynote address. Discussed topics included digital transformation, sukuk and takaful, Islamic FinTech and crowdfunding, to name but a few.

Meanwhile, AIWA awards recognised top achievers in Oman's corporate world.

Omantel tops 5G utilisation in the ME region

MUSCAT: After three years of relentless efforts across the nation, Omantel's 5G now accounts for more than 60 per cent of the total wireless access traffic on its network — making it the first operator in the Sultanate of Oman to reach such figures in 5G deployment and have positioned the company as a leader among the best 5G network operators in the region.

Commenting on the achievement, Eng Aladdin Bait Fadhil, Chief Commercial Officer at Omantel, said, “Our sustained efforts are bearing fruits and I am glad that more people throughout the Sultanate of Oman are now connected through our state-of-the-art 5G network. We are keen on accelerating our progress to take 5G deployment miles ahead, and we are getting future-ready by bringing the most advanced technologies to the nation.”

Omantel was the first operator



in the Sultanate of Oman to commercialise 5G services, after leading the commercialising of the FWA and eMBB (Enhanced Mobile Broadband) services, significantly expanding all basic 5G outdoor coverage in major cities of Oman in 2022. Omantel is proud of its leadership of the 5G market in the Sultanate of Oman and for being one of the leading regional 5G operators.

Omantel is engaged with vertical industries and partners to expand the industry's digital

transformation. During last year's GITEX, Omantel along with Hutchison Ports Sohar and Huawei collaborated to successfully launch the use case of 5G smart port in the Sultanate of Oman. This was the first 5G application in the field of ports in the Middle East region.

Omantel is also using 5G to take cloud gaming to the next level. It recently joined hands with NVIDIA and Zain to launch the powerful cloud-based GeForce Now for its home broadband customers. Gamers can just use GeForce Now and play online by connecting to their favourite gaming stores/platforms like Steam, Ubisoft and Epic Games.

Omantel's focus is to take the user experience to higher levels, in terms of network performance, service provisioning channels, and after-sales care that builds market competitiveness through user experience leadership.

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HIS MAJESTY ADMINISTERS OATH TO NEW MINISTER

MUSCAT: Before His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Dr Siad bin Hamoud bin Ahmed al Habsi (pictured), Chairman of the Supreme Court Sayyid Khalifa bin Said bin Khalifa al Bussaidi, and Chairman of Administrative Judiciary Court Shaikh Al Muthair bin Abdullah bin Issa al Harthy, took the oath of office at Al Barakah Palace on Thursday. SEE A230 P2

UN HAILS OMAN'S SUPPORT FOR PEACE IN YEMEN
NEW YORK: Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, has commended the role of the Sultanate in supporting international efforts to establish security and peace in Yemen. In a virtual video call to countries backing the global ceasefire initiative, Guterres said that the international community is grateful to the Sultanate of Oman for its crucial role in enhancing efforts aimed to establish peace and security in Yemen. "The United Nations values this vital and positive role," he said. Guterres added that the "Sultanate represents a unique model, not only in the Middle East, but also in the world." He urged other countries to follow the example of the Sultanate in advocating and supporting peace and stability. — OMA

NEW RO 50 BANKNOTE FROM THIS MONTH
MUSCAT: To mark the 50th anniversary of the Omani Renaissance and in commemoration of the memory of its founder late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, the Central Bank of Oman CBO issued a sixth series of new RO 50 banknote, which will begin circulation this month. CBO will also issue new banknotes for all other denominations during the last quarter of 2020. TURN TO P4

SAMUEL SUET
MUSCAT: The frequent orders and fervent appeals by the authorities to follow social distancing guidelines are falling on deaf ears. A drive around the downtown Ruwi and its adjoining areas reveals how recklessly people crowd at different corners and walk shoulder-to-shoulder. While most people across the country are following the guidelines that health authorities say are necessary to keep the coronavirus from spreading, many are not. "In these critical moments of uncertainty with both physical and mental strain, we should discipline ourselves, while most people they pave the way for the spread of the infection. Even if we do not have the authority to lay charges on the offenders, at least we can scare them away," he told the Observer. TURN TO P4

SOME PEOPLE NOT FOLLOWING SOCIAL DISTANCING NORMS
and in some cases, it is necessary to police the behaviour of other people as well," said Harmed al Wubaidi, who stopped his car to scare away a group of people at a sidewalk in Ruwi. The Supreme Committee and the Ministry of Health have said it more than enough times that social distancing is the best way to slow the spread of COVID-19. While expressing his ire, Harmed said, "The attitude of some people is not acceptable that they have the right to ignore the guidelines and they have the right to ignore the guidelines and they have the right to ignore the guidelines."

Green Hydrogen Summit 2022 starts tomorrow

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, DEC 3

The Green Hydrogen Summit 2022 Conference and Exhibition will start tomorrow, Monday, December 5, at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre and will last for three days.

The summit will be attended by Eng Salim bin Nasser al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, as a keynote speaker, alongside a host of government officials, experts, investors and consultants in the field of green hydrogen.

The Hydrogen Summit will open with an accompanying exhibition, in which more than 30 companies and institutions related to the field of hydrogen will participate.



The Hydrogen Conference will include 12 discussion sessions and a number of technical workshops, where the themes will focus on the hydrogen economy strategy and green hydrogen infrastructure in the Sultanate of Oman, and the value added in the green hydrogen chain, partnership and investment in this field as well as green hydrogen projects in the Sultanate of Oman.

The Sultanate of Oman aims to become one of the leading countries in the production of green hydrogen in the world. Oman's Ministry of Energy and Minerals has developed an ambitious strategy to ensure the development of a green hydrogen economy.

It is also working to promote this sector because of its positive impact on diversifying energy sources, and it constitutes a strategic opportunity for Omani and international companies to cooperate and participate in supporting energy security at the local and global levels and achieving economic diversification.

The holding of the Green Hydrogen Summit is consistent with the Sultanate of Oman's plans for energy transition towards reducing carbon emissions, to achieve a balance between sustainable developments and limiting the repercussions of climate change, benefiting from clean technology and diversifying energy sources.

How to make money as a content creator?



STEFANO VIRGILLI
stefano@virgilli.com

The author is a member of the International Press Association

One of the most popular ways of making money in today's social media is by producing exclusive content only available to followers who pay monthly subscriptions through a subscription platform.

Creating your own products can be as complex and is certainly something to think about if you are already monetising your social media following.

However, creating content on social media can be a great way to generate an income from home. Videos are probably the best way to keep your followers engaged with your content, products or services.

One of the most popular ways of making money in today's social media is by producing exclusive content only available to followers who pay monthly subscriptions through a subscription platform.

Sponsored posts are another way to monetise your influence, as long as you have a decent following already, either through social media or on your blog.

The most common way of monetising your brand as an influencer is by offering ads or sponsored posts on social media and on your blog. Another good way to monetise your social media following is by promoting brands that you like, linking to their affiliate programmes.

For image-based marketing, such as your Instagram account, influencer promotion in the form of product placement is a common way to making an income.

If you compare TikTok to YouTube, you will find that they both have funds specifically created for influencers, and, in YouTube's case, you can make

money from every replay of your videos.

The amount of money that can be made by making YouTube varies greatly. In fact, creators are paid whenever people view ads on YouTube (so, every time an ad is watched).

Creators usually earn \$3 to \$5 for every 1,000 views of ads on their first platform videos.

For creators producing longer videos, such as tutorials for applying makeup and DIY home decorating, YouTube has long been an essential platform thanks to its revenue-sharing AdSense model, which gives YouTube Partners (users with 1,000 subscribers and 4,000 hours watched) 55 per cent of revenue generated by ads before, during and after the end of their longer-form video content.

Until TikTok's explosive growth — it has surpassed 100 million downloads in the US alone this year — YouTube has been content creators most consistent source of revenue, who get their share of revenue from ads appearing alongside their videos. YouTube has been around since 2005, and youtubers such as MrBeast and PewDiePie earn about \$50m annually thanks to the video platform.

If your YouTube channel gets 10,000 views per day, this works out to between \$6,000 to \$11,000 a year. With YouTube's average payout rates hovering around \$0.01 and \$0.03 per ad view, it is possible for YouTubers to earn about \$18 for every 1,000 ad views, translating into \$3 to \$5 for every 1,000 views of videos.

Forbes has also estimated that, for the best talent, a YouTuber could earn about \$5 for each 1,000 video views. The average YouTuber with 100k subscribers could earn \$12,000 or more for each sponsored video.

Using the same rates above, a YouTuber with 100k subscribers and 2 new videos per week could earn between \$600-\$1,000. The average YouTuber makes \$0.18 per watch, equating to about \$18 per 1,000 views of the video.

The average YouTubers' earnings for a million views typically range from \$2,000-\$4,000. The exact amount YouTubers may earn per 1,000 views will vary depending on factors such as engagement and content type.

Oman Flour Mills to open RO 26 million poultry farm for egg production in Ibri

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, DEC 3

Oman Flour Mills Company announced it will open on Thursday the Gulf International Poultry Farm in Al Subaikhi area in the Wilayat of Ibri in Al Dhahirah Governorate.

With an area of 18 million square metres, the farm is one of the largest poultry farms for egg production in the Gulf Cooperation Council. The farm was established in partnership between the investment arm of Oman Mills,



the Gulf-Japan Food Fund, Japan's Weiss Foods and IFFCO. Haitham bin Mohammed al

Fannah, Chief Executive Officer of Oman Flour Mills, said, "The project, whose investment cost

exceeds RO 26 million, will serve the needs of the local market of table eggs with a production capacity of 360 million eggs annually and supports the export sector of the Sultanate of Oman through the export of surplus to the markets of the region."

In a statement to Oman News Agency, Al Fannah added that the project's feasibility would increase with the increasing demand for protein-rich eggs. It is worth-noting that the farm was established using Japan's advanced techniques and expertise.

US keeps anti-dumping duty on steel pipe imports from Oman

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, DEC 3

Dealing a blow to Oman's thriving pipe manufacturing industry, US authorities have decided to keep in place existing anti-dumping duties on imports of circular-welded carbon quality steel pipes from the Sultanate of Oman, among other countries.

The decision came in a ruling issued by the US International Trade Commission (USITC) — part of the US Department of Commerce — during a review of anti-dumping measures adopted by the US government against imports of circular-welded steel pipes from Oman, as well as Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates.

Announcing its latest determination on the issue, the USITC said, "The US International Trade Commission (USITC) today determined that revoking the existing antidumping duty orders on imports of circular welded carbon-quality steel pipe from Oman, Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates would be likely to lead to continuation or recurrence of material injury within a reasonably foreseeable time.

"As a result of the Commission's affirmative determinations, the existing orders on imports of this product from Oman, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates will



remain in place."

Exports of circular welded pipes into the United States represent a lucrative market for Omani pipe manufacturers. They are typically used in plumbing and heating, air conditioning, automatic sprinkler and fencing systems.

However, over the last several years, American manufacturers of these products have petitioned the USITC claiming that such pipes from Oman, and the two other countries, are imported and distributed at less than fair market value, thereby causing material injury to their business.

A representative grouping of these manufacturers have also argued that the pipes actually originate in India in the form of hot-rolled steel. The latter product is exported into Oman, among other Gulf states, where it is processed into circular welded pipes and shipped out into the US.

This rerouting enables Indian companies to circumvent existing antidumping duties on circular welded pipes manufactured in India, they claim. Under the Uruguay Round of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), countries imposing an

antidumping or countervailing duty order must revoke or terminate the decision after five years unless they conclude that the revocation would likely lead to the continuation or recurrence of dumping or subsidies and of material injury within a reasonably foreseeable time.

Earlier this year, the USITC voted for a full review (also known as sunset review) to take place in November 2022. The review took place last week with the Commission voting to keep the existing anti-dumping duty order in place.



SUNDAY | DECEMBER 4 | 2022 | JUMADA AL ULA 10 | 1444 AH

DUTCH MASTERS MARCH INTO QUARTERS



Netherlands' defender #22 Denzel Dumfries celebrates with Netherlands' midfielder Teun Koopmeiners after scoring his team's third goal during the Qatar 2022 World Cup round of 16 match between the Netherlands and US at Khalifa International Stadium in Doha. — AFP

DOHA: A clinical Netherlands ended the United States' World Cup dream on Saturday, sweeping into the quarterfinals with a ruthless 3-1 victory.

First-half goals from Memphis Depay and Daley Blind and a late strike from Denzel Dumfries sealed a deserved victory as the Dutch handed out a painful lesson in finishing to their American opponents.

The Netherlands, bidding to win their first World Cup after losing in three previous finals, will face Argentina or Australia in the last eight.

Veteran coach Louis van Gaal's men were worthy victors in Saturday's last-16 clash at the Khalifa International Stadium.

Although the USA enjoyed long periods of possession in a bright first-half display, all too often a lack of composure in the final third let them down. Instead it was the Dutch who calmly bided their time before carving open the Americans with forensic precision.

USA forward Christian Pulisic squandered a golden chance to put his team 1-0 up after only three minutes, when he found himself in space only to see a scuffed shot saved by Andries Noppert.

Buoyed by that early chance, the US remained on the front foot, attacking high up the field.

But on 10 minutes the Netherlands took the lead. Superb interplay in midfield saw the ball worked to Inter Milan's Dumfries down the right. Dumfries picked out Depay, who swept home the finish to cap a majestic 20-pass move that was in the best traditions of the Netherlands' total footballing heritage.

Tim Weah had the best American chance of the remainder of the half on 43 minutes, letting fly with a rasping shot that Noppert parried away. But in first half stoppage time, the Netherlands delivered the hammer blow.

Dumfries again found space down the right and drilled a cross to Blind, who had ghosted clear of Sergino Dest, for an emphatic low finish.

Berhalter brought on Haji Wright for McKennie midway through the second half and the move sparked a fleeting revival.

After seeing a goal-bound chance cleared at the near post on 75 minutes, Wright scored a minute later when his flick from Pulisic's cross looped over Noppert into the Dutch net for 2-1.

Yet the American fightback was shortlived. In the 81st minute, Blind calmly crossed to an unmarked Dumfries at the far post, who made it 3-1. — AFP



Switzerland players celebrate qualifying for the knockout stages. — Reuters

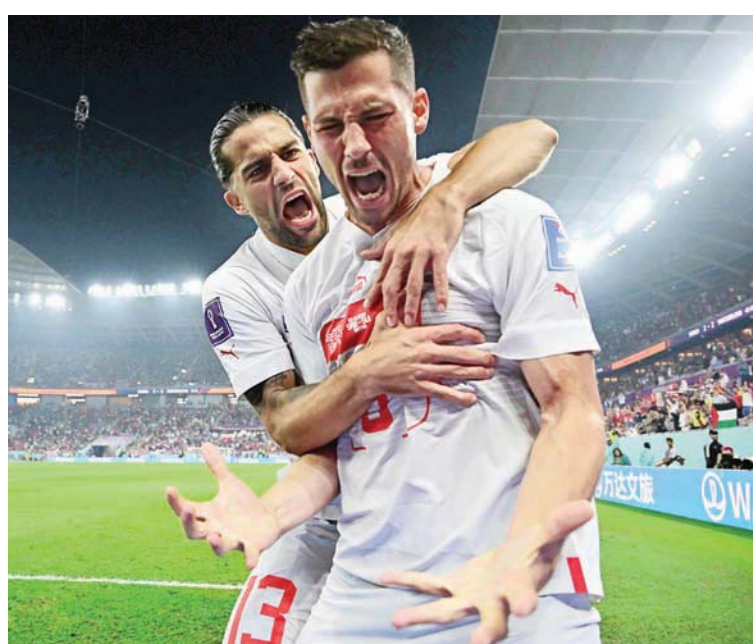
SWITZERLAND EDGE SERBIA IN FEISTY CLASH TO ADVANCE



Switzerland's Remo Freuler celebrates scoring their third goal. — Reuters



Switzerland's midfielder Remo Freuler (top) fights for the ball with Serbia's forward Dusan Tadic during the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group G match at Stadium 974 in Doha on Friday. — AFP



Switzerland's midfielder Remo Freuler (R) celebrates with Switzerland's defender Ricardo Rodriguez after scoring his team's third goal. — AFP

DOHA: Switzerland booked a last-16 showdown with Portugal at the World Cup on Friday after a 3-2 win over Serbia in a bad-tempered match secured them second place in Group G.

Xherdan Shaqiri gave the Swiss an early lead but goals from Aleksandar Mitrovic and Dusan Vlahovic in a frantic first half turned the match on its head before Brel Embolo levelled just before half-time.

Remo Freuler's brilliant goal shortly after the restart proved to be the winner, sending the Swiss through to the knockout rounds for the fourth time in five World Cups.

"It was a game where a lot of emotions were involved but in general the game was fair," said

Switzerland captain Granit Khaka.

"We wanted to focus on football and win the game and we did this. Now we're in the round of 16 and we're proud."

Bad blood marred the meeting between the teams at the 2018 tournament, when Khaka and Shaqiri celebrated goals by making pro-Kosovo gestures that enraged the Serbs.

Tempers flared in the second half in Qatar on Friday after Serbia appealed for a penalty, with the stadium announcer calling for an end to "all discriminatory chants and gestures" around 15 minutes later.

"I can't tell you the reason why and what happened exactly," said Serbia coach Dragan Stojkovic.

"Sometimes the tensions come

and some maybe bad words can create some uncomfortable behaviour, but it's nothing special. It's normal, let's say, for this kind of game."

SHAQIRI STRIKES

Shaqiri missed Switzerland's 1-0 defeat to Brazil but returned with a bang, firing his side in front on 20 minutes.

Ricardo Rodriguez speared a cross into the box which was cleared straight to Djibril Sow, who laid off for Shaqiri to sweep home via the leg of Strahinja Pavlovic in front of the Serbia fans.

This time there was no double-eagle gesture. Instead, Shaqiri put his finger to his lips and pointed to the name on his shirt as a

handful of bottles rained down.

Serbia hit back within minutes as Switzerland lost the ball in midfield, Dusan Tadic bending in a cross for Mitrovic to meet superbly and nod into the far corner.

Shaqiri steered wide under pressure from Pavlovic after timing his run perfectly to meet Rodriguez's raking diagonal pass, but the Swiss then paid for another lapse in concentration.

They again ceded possession and Freuler watched on in dismay as his attempted interception served only to tee up Vlahovic to roll the ball beyond goalkeeper Gregor Kobel. But Switzerland equalised just before the break as Sow picked out Silvan Widmer in acres of space on the right and his

driven low cross was turned in by Embolo.

The Cameroon-born striker's pressure on a lumbering Pavlovic gave Switzerland their third goal right after half-time, a brilliant team effort finished by Freuler.

Shaqiri clipped in a delicate ball after Embolo chased it down high up, and Ruben Vargas's cushioned backheel left Freuler to guide in from around the penalty spot.

Serbia appealed in vain for a penalty when Mitrovic theatrically fell to the ground, sparking an ugly flashpoint that led to reserve Serbia goalkeeper Predrag Rajkovic being booked. It was one of 11 yellow cards on the night — the most in a World Cup game since the 2010 final. — AFP

ABOUTAKAR
HEADS IN
STOPPAGE-TIME
WINNER

Cameroon's Vincent Aboubakar celebrates scoring their first goal. – Reuters

CAMEROON

STUN BRAZIL BEFORE GOING OUT

DOHA: Vincent Aboubakar headed in a stoppage-time winner and was then sent off as Cameroon claimed a memorable 1-0 victory over favourites Brazil at the World Cup on Friday, but still failed to go through to the last 16.

Aboubakar, who had come in to captain Rigobert Song's team, connected with a cross from substitute Jerome Ngom Mbekeli to break the deadlock in the 92nd minute at Doha's Lusail Stadium.

He was booked for removing his shirt in the wild celebrations that followed and, having already been cautioned, had to leave his team-mates to see out the remainder of the game.

They did so to record a famous win, the first for an African side against Brazil at the World Cup, but Switzerland's 3-2 defeat of Serbia at the same time meant the Swiss advanced from Group G along with the already-qualified Brazilians.

"Despite the fact we won we are disappointed because we realise we could have done better," admitted Song.

"It is a shame to stop here but we just need to see the positives and we will keep working."

Having won their first two matches in Qatar, Brazil topped the group and advance to a last-16 tie against South Korea when their many key players who were rested for this game will return.



Coach Tite sent out a second-string side and the result was Brazil's first defeat in the group stage of a World Cup since 1998, when they were beaten by Norway.

Tite made nine changes, including handing a start to 39-year-old Dani Alves, making him Brazil's oldest ever men's international player.

"Tonight we all lost, it is a collective defeat," Tite said.

"Nobody has won all three group games at this World Cup and the three teams who won their first two matches lost the next one. It just shows how difficult these matches are."

The spine of Brazil's second-string side still featured Manchester City's Ederson in goal, Real Madrid's Eder Militao in central defence, Fabinho of Liverpool in midfield, and

Gabriel Jesus of Arsenal supported by Rodrygo up front.

MARTINELLI IMPRESSES

They also had the 21-year-old Gabriel Martinelli on the left and the Arsenal prospect was their standout performer.

He almost scored the opening goal in the 14th minute when he leapt unmarked but saw his

header tipped over by Cameroon 'keeper Devis Epassy. Martinelli also threatened in first-half stoppage time with a dribble across the edge of the area and a shot that Epassy turned behind.

It was a piece of play reminiscent of Neymar, who is still recovering from a sprained ankle and watched the action here from just behind the Brazilian bench.

The Brazil fans, who unfurled a banner with a "Get Well Soon" message for Pele, cheered loudly when Neymar appeared on screens inside the stadium. Needing a win, Cameroon almost went in front just before the interval when a Bryan Mbeumo header forced a flying save from Ederson.

Brazil had won all seven previous meetings with African opponents at the World Cup, including beating Cameroon in 1994 and in 2014, and Martinelli was their most likely source of a goal.

He forced Epassy to tip over another strike that was arcing towards the top corner early in the second half, and the Cameroon shot-stopper — continuing in place of Andre Onana who was dropped for unspecified disciplinary reasons — turned a Militao shot around the post moments later.

Eager to study all his attacking options, Tite sent on the Flamengo duo of Everton Ribeiro and Pedro, but he also saw Alex Telles come off hurt in the second half. Telles is the third Brazil full-back to succumb to injury in Doha after Danilo and Alex Sandro. Aboubakar grabbed the late winner just when a goalless draw looked likely, and Cameroon deserve huge credit for taking four points from such a difficult group even if they now go home. — AFP

FAN



A Cameroon fan with a painted face cheers on his team against Brazil. – AFP

Supporters of Switzerland celebrate after the team defeated Serbia 3-2 to qualify to the last 16 round. – AFP



Japan fans gather in Souq Wakif in Doha. – AFP



Netherlands supporters wait for the start of the Qatar 2022 World Cup round of 16 match against USA at Khalifa International Stadium in Doha. – AFP



Serbia fans during the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group G match against Switzerland at Stadium 974. – AFP



A Cameroon fan and two Brazil fans pose for a picture in the stands. – AFP



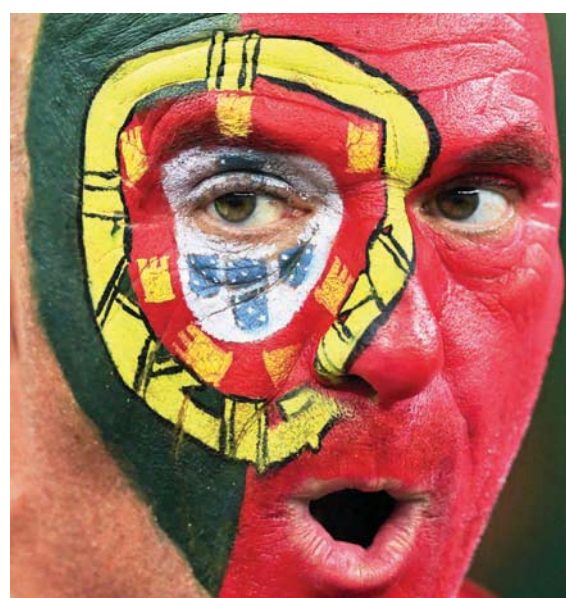
Z O N E



A Cameroon fan wearing a face mask in the Cameroon colours at the stands. – AFP



Portugal's supporters cheer during the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group H match against South Korea. – AFP



A supporter of Portugal attends the match against South Korea. – AFP



A USA supporter cheers before the start of the match against the Netherlands. – AFP

USA supporters cheer ahead of the start of the Qatar 2022 World Cup round of 16 match against the Netherlands. – AFP



Brazil supporters celebrate with a replica of the World Cup trophy as they cheer for their team. – AFP

James, Davis propel Lakers past Bucks

HEAT COOL OFF CELTICS FOR OT VICTORY

LOS ANGELES: LeBron James hit another NBA milestone on Friday as he and Anthony Davis fuelled the Los Angeles Lakers’ hard-fought 133-129 win over the Milwaukee Bucks.

James scored 28 points and handed out 11 assists — passing former Lakers great Magic Johnson for sixth on the NBA’s all-time assists list.

Los Angeles weathered a late Bucks surge to emerge with the victory in coach Darvin Ham’s return to the city where he won a title in 2021 as an assistant to coach Mike Budenholzer.

It was also close in Boston, where Miami star Jimmy Butler returned from a seven-game injury absence and helped the Heat grab a 120-116 overtime victory that snapped the Eastern Conference-leading Celtics’ 10-game home winning streak.

In Milwaukee, the Lakers delivered arguably their best victory of the season.

Davis scored 44 points and grabbed 10 rebounds and Russell Westbrook added 15 points, seven rebounds and 11 assists.

Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 40 points and Jrue Holiday added 28 points for the Bucks, who had All-Star forward Khris Middleton for the first time this season after his recovery from off-season wrist surgery.

The Lakers led by 14 in the first half and by 10 in the third quarter, but the fourth quarter was a back-and-forth battle featuring half a dozen lead changes.

A Davis dunk after a James steal put the Lakers up 132-127 with



Los Angeles Lakers’ LeBron James (6) grabs the ball and jumps over Milwaukee Bucks’ Khris Middleton (22) in the second half at Fiserv Forum. — USA Today Sports

just over a minute remaining.

Brook Lopez pulled the Bucks within three but Grayson Allen and Holiday both missed three-pointers in the waning seconds.

“It was awesome to see everybody coming together and competing against that team,” Ham said. “The focus, the attention to detail... everybody being engaged. This just can’t be a one-game thing.

“This is something we have to

do every time we step on the floor.”

James took his career assists tally to 10,144, moving past Johnson (10,141) on the assists list, which is headed by John Stockton’s 15,806.

He also shook off an injury scare, grabbing his left ankle in pain after tangling with Middleton and limping to the bench, but soon returned to the game.

There was drama in Boston, where Celtics star Jalen Brown

scored 37 points and banked in a stunning three-pointer to force overtime against Miami.

Two days after dropping a 134-121 decision to the Celtics, the Heat rallied from a 13-point third-quarter deficit, mounting a 26-8 scoring run that put them up by five with 7:16 to play.

Butler’s jump shot put Miami up 108-105 in the final minute of regulation. Jayson Tatum then

answered with a dunk before Butler struck again — only for Brown to put the Celtics level at the buzzer.

It was tied with 1:02 left in overtime, but Bam Adebayo made two free throws for Miami and, after Tatum missed a three-point attempt, Butler drained a step-back jump shot that proved the game-winner.

ROCKETS STUN SUNS

Houston’s Jalen Green scored 20 of his 30 points in the third quarter as the Rockets overcame a 16-point deficit to bring down the Western Conference-leading Phoenix Suns 122-121.

The Suns erased a six-point deficit with less than two minutes to play as Devin Booker and Cameron Payne made back-to-back three-pointers.

Green made a free throw with 28.8 seconds left to put the Rockets ahead and the Suns missed four attempts in the final 19 seconds.

Booker led the Suns with 41 points, but missed at the final buzzer.

In Atlanta, Dejounte Murray scored 34 points and rookie AJ Griffin — playing in place of late injury scratch Trae Young — tied his career high with 24 as the depleted Hawks beat the Denver Nuggets 117-109.

Denver’s two-time defending Most Valuable Player Nikola Jokic scored just four points in the first half before finishing with 24 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists.

The Brooklyn Nets notched a fourth straight victory in dominant style, leading by as many as 36 points on the way to a 114-105 wire-to-wire home win over the Toronto Raptors.

Kyrie Irving scored 27 points and Kevin Durant and Joe Harris chipped in 17 apiece for Brooklyn.

In San Francisco, NBA champions Golden State held on for a 119-111 victory over Chicago, Jordan Poole scoring 30 points off the bench to lead the Warriors.

— AFP

Qatar determined to bring 2036 Games next

DOHA: Qatar is determined to bring the 2036 Summer Olympic Games to Doha, according to a source familiar with the Olympic bidding process.

The success so far of the ongoing Fifa soccer World Cup has emboldened the Qataris and strengthened their resolve to host the Olympics.

No timeframe has been announced by the International Olympic Committee on when it plans to award the 2036 sports extravaganza.

Were the Games to go to Doha it would be the first to be staged in a Muslim country.

Qatar failed to make the cut for the shortlist for both the 2016 and 2020 Games, partly due to concerns over the summer temperatures in the desert state, with those Games ending up in Rio de Janeiro and Tokyo.

It is expected Qatar would push to move any Olympics later in the year, like it has done with the World Cup, and the Gulf state has made use of advanced air-conditioning systems in stadiums to mitigate the heat for the football.

Doha staged the World Athletics Championships in 2019 at the Khalifa International Stadium, from late September to early October.

The IOC has revamped the process for awarding the Games since then, changing from a traditional bidding process to selecting a preferred candidate from interested cities.

Brisbane 2032 were the first Games to be awarded using this method.



Children play football in front of a mural of former Brazilian player Ronaldo in Doha. — Reuters

INFRASTRUCTURE READY

With the Games going to Paris in 2024, Los Angeles in 2028 and then Brisbane, a bid from Qatar might be expected to be received warmly if the IOC were to rotate continents, although the IOC said in October it was in preliminary discussions with 10 cities.

Countries who have expressed an interest in staging the 2036 Games include India, Indonesia and South Korea. Germany is also considering whether to launch another Olympic bid despite strong domestic opposition to the Olympics.

Qatar will feel in a very strong position, one source said. “The success so far of this World Cup puts Qatar in a strong position

— they have shown they can do this... it is a proof of concept.

“They hosted the Asian Games in 2006; and will be hosting them again in 2030. All of the infrastructure is here — the stadiums, the metro, the new airport.”

The Qatar Olympic Committee did not respond to a request for comment.

Qatar built seven of the eight World Cup stadiums from scratch, but it will struggle to find regular use for all of them. The Olympics would be seen as a natural fit given the extended infrastructure upgrade of the country. Gas-rich Qatar, in an attempt to emulate the dramatic transformation of Dubai and Abu Dhabi, has spent at least

\$229 billion on infrastructure in the 11 years since winning the bid to host the World Cup, and now boasts a gleaming new subway system as well as state-of-the-art sports facilities.

Much of the work was planned independently as Qatar pushes to diversify its non-energy economy, with ambitions to become a regional business hub and to triple tourist numbers to 6 million a year by 2030, a government official said earlier this year.

As one of the world’s biggest liquefied natural gas (LNG) producers, Qatar has become one of the wealthiest nations per capita with a population of a little over 3 million, of which 85 per cent are expatriates. — Reuters

China F1 GP cancelled for fourth year in row

LONDON: Formula One’s Chinese Grand Prix was cancelled for the fourth year in a row on Friday due to strict local measures to curb the spread of Covid-19, with the sport looking for a possible replacement.

The 2023 race in Shanghai would have been the first since 2019 and had been scheduled for April 16 as the fourth stop on a record 24-round calendar that also promises a spectacular debut in Las Vegas.

The cancellation came as no surprise, with the race recognised as being uncertain by Formula One Chief Executive Stefano Domenicali in a Liberty Media third-quarter earnings call with analysts this month. “Formula One can confirm, following dialogue with the promoter and relevant authorities, that the 2023 Chinese Grand Prix will not take place due to the ongoing

difficulties presented by the Covid-19 situation,” a statement said. “Formula One is assessing alternative options to replace the slot on the 2023 calendar and will provide an update on this in due course.”

China, which has stuck to a zero-Covid policy, has the world’s toughest measures in place to counter the spread of the virus including enforced quarantine in centralised facilities for positive cases.

Formula One and local organisers had tried to find a solution to enable the race to go ahead but, with 10 teams and large numbers of people set to fly in, found the obstacles too great.

The cancellation will be a blow for China’s first and only F1 driver Guanyu Zhou, who made his debut with Alfa Romeo this season and has yet to race in front of his home crowd. — Reuters



This file photo taken on April 14, 2019 shows drivers setting off at the start of the Formula One Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai. — AFP

Improved Bangladesh ‘no cakewalk’, says India skipper Rohit

DHAKA: India skipper Rohit Sharma said on Saturday his side’s month-long tour of Bangladesh will be “no cakewalk”, with several veterans returning to bolster the tourists’ ranks after a lacklustre run abroad.

The three-match ODI series begins in Dhaka on Sunday, with India also playing two Tests during their month-long visit.

All-format captain Rohit, 35, is returning after being rested for last month’s 50-over series in New Zealand, which they lost 1-0.

“It’s going to be an exciting series,” Rohit told reporters in Dhaka. “They are playing in their own backyard so we expect them to challenge us in every bit — batting, bowling and fielding,” he said. “So we have to be at our best.”

India have a lifetime 30-5 lead over the hosts in 50-overs matches but lost their last series tour of Bangladesh 2-1 in 2015.

Rohit said Bangladesh have evolved into a “different team” since then and could be expected to put up a strong fight.

“They are a very challenging team and we have not had easy wins against them,” he said. “By no means do we come here thinking it’s going to be a cakewalk for us.”

Injuries have taken a toll on the hosts, with regular skipper

Tamim Iqbal and in-form fast bowler Taskin Ahmed both out.

Opening batsman Liton Das will make his debut as ODI captain and said he was looking forward to giving India a tough battle.

“India is a good side, they have both fame and form,” he said. “But we are playing good cricket against them these days. The big thing is that they don’t consider us the underdog anymore.”

‘BEST YOU CAN GET’
India’s big guns Virat Kohli and KL Rahul are also returning after taking time off from the New Zealand tour.

Rohit and Kohli, 34, have recently taken regular breaks to manage their workload.

“It’s impossible in this day and age that you will play with your best 15, it’s not going to happen,” Rohit said. “You will always need to rotate and see the best you can get from your players.”

With India hosting the ODI World Cup next year, every 50-over match will be seen as preparation for the showpiece event but Rohit said the tournament is not on their minds.

“We can’t think so far ahead but we will keep an eye on where we can improve as a team and see how it comes along for us,” he said. — AFP



India captain Rohit Sharma (L) and his counterpart Liton Das (R) hold the tournament trophy during a trophy unveiling programme ahead of their first ODI match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Dhaka. — AFP



Kraigg Brathwaite celebrates his century against Australia.

West Indies’ Brathwaite hits ton after Labuschagne milestone

PERTH, Australia: Dogged skipper Kraigg Brathwaite scored an unbeaten 101 on Saturday to lead West Indies resistance as they chase 498 to win the first Test against Australia after Marnus Labuschagne joined rare company in making a double and single century.

The home side declared at lunch on day four in Perth after reaching 182-2 to go with their first innings 598-4, having bowled out the Caribbean nation for 283.

The in-form Labuschagne belted 104 not out to go with his first innings 204 — only the eighth player to achieve the 200-100 feat in the same Test, joining the likes of Sunil Gavaskar, Brian Lara and Kumar Sangakkara.

In reply, the West Indies battled to 192-3 at stumps, still 306 runs behind, with Kyle Mayers yet to score alongside Brathwaite.

Tagenarine Chanderpaul (45), Shamarh Brooks (11) and Jermaine Blackwood (24) were the



wickets to fall.

Brathwaite said the team believed they could hang on for a draw or even a win. “It all starts from the first over (on Sunday). We don’t want to think too far ahead, just take it over by over, session by session,” he said.

“We’ve got to believe. It was good to get through today obviously and that first over tomorrow is very, very crucial. Australia are going to come hard and it’s important that we start extremely well.”

In a blow for Australia, skipper and pace spearhead Pat Cummins

SCOREBOARD	
Australia 1st innings 598-4 decl (M Labuschagne 204, S Smith 200 not out, T Head 99)	
West Indies 1st innings 283 all out (K Brathwaite 64, T Chanderpaul 51; Cummins 3-34, Starc 3-51)	
Australia 2nd innings	
U Khawaja c Da Silva b Roach	6
D Warner c Brooks b Chase	48
M Labuschagne not out	104
S Smith not out	20
Extras (lb2, nb1, w1)	4
Total (2 wickets, decl, 37 overs) -- 182	
Fall of wickets: 1-20, 2-101	
Bowling: Roach 7-2-30-1, Joseph 10-1-42-0, Holder 8-1-39-0, Chase 6-0-31-1, Seales 3-0-18-0, Brathwaite 3-0-20-0	
West Indies 2nd innings	
K Brathwaite not out	101
T Chanderpaul b Starc	45
S Brooks c Smith b Lyon	11
J Blackwood c Labuschagne b Lyon	24
K Mayers not out	0
Extras (lb6, nb5)	11
Total (3 wickets, 62 overs) -- 192	
Fall of wickets: 1-116, 2-133, 3-191	
Bowling: Starc 13-3-36-1, Hazlewood 13-3-39-0, Lyon 22-6-54-2, Green 10-0-42-0, Labuschagne 2-0-9-0, Head 2-1-6-0	

did not bowl after experiencing thigh soreness.

The experienced Brathwaite brought up his 5,000th Test run with a boundary off Cameron

Green before completing a second successive 50 after his first innings 64. Chanderpaul was dropped on 42 with the ball slipping out of Mitchell Starc’s fingers at full stretch in the deep after he hooked Green. But the speedster quickly made amends when he bowled the son of West Indies great Shivnarine Chanderpaul to snap a dangerous 116-run stand.

But Brathwaite was unmovable and brought up his 11th Test century off 157 balls. “For me it means everything ... you know Australia is going to be a tough place for batting and to do it really meant a lot,” he said.

Labuschagne confidently built on his overnight three to reach a ninth Test century and a slice of history with Smith, who hit an unbeaten 200 in the first innings, not out 20. “It’s always nice, it’s something I’ve never done in Test cricket (double century and century in the same match), very proud,” said Labuschagne. — AFP

England in charge in Rawalpindi despite Babar hundred

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan: Pakistan skipper Babar Azam became the seventh batsman to smash a century on Saturday, on day three of a veritable runfest in the opening Test against England in Rawalpindi, but the visitors remain on course for a solid first innings lead.

After an English quartet hammered hundreds on Friday, a trio of home batters helped themselves to centuries to power Pakistan to 499-7 on day three.

Agha Salman was batting on 10 with Zahid Mahmood on one at the other end when bad light stopped play, with Pakistan still 158 behind England’s massive first innings total of 657.

England batsman Joe Root told Sky Sports afterwards: “A brilliant day. That last session, all the work we put in came to fruition.

“It was attritional. We had to be creative throughout the day and we got our rewards at the end,” he said.

Batting records continued to tumble on the placid pitch, however, with all four openers hitting hundreds in the first innings of a Test match for the

first time. Resuming on 181 for no loss, openers Imam-ul-Haq (121) and Abdullah Shafique (114) duly brought up their hundreds before England struck with their spinners.

Imam and Shafique’s 225-run collaboration nearly matched the 233-run opening stand Zak Crawley and Ben Duckett had forged for England.

After 65 overs of denying England a breakthrough, the Pakistan openers, however, fell in quick succession.

Abdullah became Will Jacks’ (3-132) first Test victim after attempting a cut shot and instead deflecting the ball into Ollie Pope’s waiting gloves.

Abdullah’s third Test hundred included 13 fours and three sixes.

Jack Leach removed Imam by luring the left-hander into stepping out only to find Ollie Robinson at long on.

Imam smashed 15 fours and two sixes in his third Test hundred — all three of which have come at Rawalpindi.

Azhar Ali (27) got an extra life on 20 when Crawley spilled him at leg slip but could not capitalise and



Pakistan’s captain Babar Azam plays a shot during the third day of the first Test against England in Rawalpindi. — AFP

fell lbw to Leach a short while later.

Babar was rock solid as usual. His England counterpart Ben Stokes tried to bounce him out on an unresponsive pitch and Babar had no problem pulling him

repeatedly.

He eventually brought up his eighth Test hundred and first against England with a four off Stokes, making a little prayer before resuming batting.

England claimed four wickets in the final session to maintain their upper hand.

Robinson dismissed Saud Shakeel (37) in the first over after tea and Babar was the next to go,

SCOREBOARD	
England 1st innings 657 (Harry Brook 153, Z Crawley 122, O Pope 108, B Duckett 107; Zahid Mahmood 4-235, Naseem Shah 3-140)	
Pakistan 1st innings	
Abdullah Shafique c Pope b Jacks	114
Imam-ul-Haq c Robinson b Leach	121
Azhar Ali lbw Leach	27
Babar Azam c Leach b Jacks	136
Saud Shakeel c Pope b Robinson	37
Mohammad Rizwan c Stokes b Anderson	29
Agha Salman not out	10
Naseem Shah c Leach b Jacks	15
Zahid Mahmood not out	1
Extras (b7, nb2)	9
Total: (for seven wkts, 136 overs) ----- 499	
Fall of wickets: 1-225, 2-245, 3-290, 4-413, 5-473, 6-475, 7-497	
Bowling: Anderson 20-4-47-1, Robinson 18-2-64-1, Leach 42-5-160-2, Jacks 33-5-132-3, Root 16-3-54-0, Stokes 7-0-35-0	

fluffing a cut shot against Jacks. Babar’s 136 was studded with 19 fours and a six.

“We have three big wickets to take in the morning, then we will try and crash some around and get up to a reasonable total,” England’s Root said.

Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Ramiz Raja has described the state of the pitch at Rawalpindi as “embarrassing”, blaming it on the lack of Test matches played there. — Reuters

MBAPPE, LEWANDOWSKI FACE OFF IN KEY CLASH

DOHA: There is arguably no more thrilling player at this World Cup than Kylian Mbappe, who leads France into their last-16 clash on Sunday with a Poland side whose own hopes of pulling off a famous upset will depend to a large extent on Robert Lewandowski.

It is a sobering thought that Mbappe, not 24 until later this month, may not yet be at the peak of his powers but he has already scored seven goals in 10 appearances at the World Cup.

That tally includes one in the 2018 final when he was still a teenager as France beat Croatia in Moscow.

His mission now is to help his country become the first to retain the World Cup since Brazil, with an even younger Pele, did so in 1962.

Mbappe has already scored three times in Qatar, including a brace in a 2-1 victory against Denmark that secured qualification for the last 16, and there is a belief he is thriving as the undisputed star of Didier Deschamps' side.

The situation is different to that of Paris Saint-Germain, where he shares the limelight with Lionel Messi and Neymar, and in that sense it may be that Karim Benzema's withdrawal due to injury on the eve of the tournament does no harm to French hopes.

"Kylian has no ego," insisted Deschamps a few days ago, going against the perception of Mbappe in the context of PSG.

"He is a decisive player for us and his performances put him in the spotlight. He is not 18 anymore. He has experience now."

It wasn't just Mbappe -- who now has as many international goals as Zinedine Zidane -- that France missed as a second-string team lost 1-0 to Tunisia on Wednesday, a result that did not stop them topping their group.

He will be back along



with the likes of Hugo Lloris, Antoine Griezmann and Olivier Giroud as France and Poland meet at a major tournament for the first time since the 1982 World Cup.

'BEYOND REPROACH'

"Kylian is not the same player or person as in 2018," said Griezmann on Friday when asked about Mbappe's

role in a squad hit by injuries to several key players before the tournament.

"He is much more a part of the squad now. He speaks a lot and has fun. He knows that the media, fans and even his team-mates will be watching everything that he does but he is beyond reproach."

France are clear favourites for Sunday's game but there is

the memory of what happened in the last 16 at last year's European Championship, when Mbappe missed the crucial penalty in a shoot-out defeat to Switzerland.

Poland only just scraped through their group ahead of Mexico on goal difference and Lewandowski's strike -- his first World Cup goal -- in the win over Saudi Arabia was therefore crucial.

"I'm aware it might be my last World Cup and I wanted to be able to say that I've played and scored at World Cups," he said after that game.

The 34-year-old also got nine goals in qualifying and there is nobody else quite on his level in Czeslaw Michniewicz's squad.

"We are happy because getting out of the group was our objective," said defender Jakub Kiwior after the team trained on Friday.

Seeing Mbappe and Lewandowski together on the same pitch is a rare treat.

Two of the most prolific forwards in the modern game, they are nevertheless different types of striker -- one all about explosive pace coming into the box from wide areas, and the other the ultimate penalty-box finisher now coming towards the end of his career.

Lewandowski left Bayern Munich for Barcelona in the last close season, but according to reports in France he might have ended up at PSG.

Le Parisien reported on Friday that PSG tried to convince Lewandowski to join them after tying Mbappe to a new contract in May.

PSG's failure to sign Lewandowski or another top-class number nine was given as one reason why Mbappe was reportedly so unhappy at his club just a couple of months ago.

Those reports have since died down and his focus is on the World Cup, with Lewandowski now standing in his way. — AFP



(L-R) England forward Bukayo Saka, defender John Stones and midfielder Declan Rice take part in a training session at Al Wakrah SC Stadium. — AFP

STONES WARNS OF COMPLACENCY AGAINST SENEGAL

DOHA: John Stones has warned England to treat Senegal with respect in Sunday's World Cup last-16 clash as Gareth Southgate's side aim to avoid becoming the latest title contender to suffer a shock defeat.

Four-time winners Germany and second-ranked Belgium were dumped out at the group stage in Qatar while Argentina, France and Spain all suffered defeats in the first round.

With England tipped to beat Senegal at the Al Bayt Stadium this weekend, Manchester City centre-back Stones urged his team-mates not to underestimate the Africa Cup of Nations holders.

"We've already seen big upsets. That's why it's the best tournament in the world," Stones said on Friday.

"It's always difficult when you see big teams or big players in teams that don't have the success that you want or don't live up to the expectation of the nation."

"We don't ever want to fall into that category. You never want to take anything for granted. All we can affect is what we're doing, what games we're playing and giving it our all."

Stones is confident that England will not rest on their laurels after topping Group B with an unbeaten record.

Pointing to the way they recovered from a six-game winless run heading into the tournament, Stones said: "After losing form as a team, as a unit in defence and how we've come through, I'm extremely proud of the group."

"I spoke before coming into

the tournament about why our form was getting brought up, and rightly so, because of the summer we had. Now we've come through these three games in a difficult group."

MAGUIRE BACK ON TRACK

After reaching the World Cup semifinals in 2018 and finishing as Euro 2020 runners-up, Stones believes England have the quality to lift the trophy in Doha -- provided they stay positive when the pressure mounts.

"That is not being over-confident, that is being humble enough to see what goes on in our training and how the staff prepare, and believing in ourselves too," he said. "We can be too negative but we should be more positive and think about all the things we've done and how it has got us here and be realistic about our expectations." The foundations of England's bid for a first major trophy since 1966 have been laid by Stones and Harry Maguire at the heart of the defence.

Southgate's team have kept two clean sheets in their first three games and Stones is delighted to see his long-time friend Maguire back on track after a long dip in form for Manchester United and England.

"From the first game he has given the best response. It's great credit to him," Stones said.

"Playing with someone for so many games with England, knowing what he's been going through at his club as well -- to come through that, it speaks volumes about him." — AFP



France forward Kylian Mbappe kicks the ball during a training session at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium in Doha. — AFP