

In the Name of Allah, the most Merciful, the Most Gracious...

Our Lord! Bestow on us mercy from Thyself, and dispose of our affair for us in the right way!

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and may peace and blessings be upon the most noble of prophets, our guide, Prophet Muhammad, and upon all his Family and his companions.

Esteemed Members of the Council of Oman, Today, we convene to inaugurate the first annual session of the eighth term of the Council of Oman. We commence with profound gratitude and praise to Allah the Almighty for His bounteous gifts bestowed upon our beloved country - gifts of peace, stability, and prosperity. We earnestly solicit His grace for continued progress and development for our homeland, aspiring for a future that is even more luminous and prosperous.

In the initiation of our current assembly, we extend our profound gratitude for the unwavering dedication and significant initiatives undertaken by the esteemed members of the Council of Oman during preceding sessions. We commend the Council's evolving maturity and its cohesive integration with the other esteemed institutions of the State, a collaboration that fortifies the effectiveness of our collective national endeavours. It is our earnest desire to ensure that such national efforts receive augmented focus and support, thereby enabling us to accomplish our established goals and fulfil our vision of prosperity for all our citizens.

We seize this moment to extend a cordial welcome to the members of the State Council, selected by us from among the most distinguished experts in our nation. In a similar vein, we greet the members of the Majlis A'Shura, elected by our citizens through the utilisation of advanced electronic voting technology.

The Council of Oman represents an indispensable partner within the structural framework of our State. This partnership confers upon you a weighty responsibility. We urge you to uphold this duty with the utmost integrity, championing the interests of our country, guided by the principles set forth in the Basic Law of the State and the regulatory statutes that govern your responsibilities, along with the authorities granted to you by the Law of the Council of Oman. With the confidence we have vested in you, we anticipate that your endeavours will significantly contribute to the ongoing progress and development, integral to the prosperous renaissance of our nation.

Priority to social sectors

The citizens of Oman have rendered an indispensable contribution to the continuous achievements witnessed during the past four years of the nation's comprehensive development. Their endeavours have been effectively fortified by the steadfast commitment of various state institutions, assiduously implementing the strategies that have been meticulously devised. These strategies are propelled by a vision emphatically prioritising the enhancement of social sectors and the preservation of the advancements secured hitherto.

By the grace and guidance of Allah the Almighty, our country has successfully attained notable results and significant accomplishments across social and economic sectors, as well as in fiscal performance, in spite of the global economic challenges. These challenges have notably impacted our economy and national programmes. Our plans, intricately crafted with specific objectives, strive to address the exigencies of the present and aim for sustainable development through efficacious resource management, ultimately seeking to diminish public debt burdens. A portion of our fiscal surplus has been judiciously allocated to invigorate social sectors and stimulate economic growth.

The implementation of our Fiscal Sustainability Plan has profoundly and positively influenced the consolidation of the country's financial standing and augmented the efficiency of our spending. The national programmes initiated



H M commits to progress, prosperity

8TH TERM OF COUNCIL OF OMAN

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik presided over the first annual convening of the Council of Oman's eighth term at its premises in Muscat on Tuesday. Upon arrival of His Majesty the Sultan at the premises of the Council of Oman, he headed to the Dais of Honour where the Royal Anthem was played while the artillery fired a 21-gun salute. His Majesty the Sultan then proceeded to the Hall of the Council where verses from the Holy Quran were recited at the commencement of the eighth term of the Council of Oman.



have been instrumental in bolstering economic growth and catalysing investments in burgeoning sectors. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to continuing our efforts to diversify the sources of national income, emphasising the enhancement of non-oil revenues, to ensure the long-term stability of the State's public finances. Simultaneously, we envisage that the Social Protection System, recently introduced, will be comprehensive, extending its benefits to all segments of society, thereby guaranteeing a dignified life for all. Our dedication remains steadfast in sparing no effort to achieve the objectives and aspirations delineated in Oman Vision 2040.

Improving efficiency of governance

The restructuring of the State's Administrative Apparatus has been pivotal in augmenting the efficiency and effectiveness of government operations. We have meticulously implemented

systems designed to optimise the decision-making process and to conduct rigorous evaluations of institutional performance. We remain dedicated to rigorously overseeing the implementation of endorsed principles for procedural streamlining, with the objective of integrating these principles as a prominent aspect of governmental performance.

Recognising the judiciary as an integral component of the State's framework, we are committed to advancing the judicial system and fortifying it with skilled professionals. We pledge our steadfast focus to the judiciary, enabling it to administer justice with unparalleled competence.

Developments to meet growing population

By the grace of Allah, our national endeavours have catalysed the continuous development of the health, education and service sectors, which

have been diligently expanded in proportion to our population's growth. We have focused on implementing well-conceived initiatives in these sectors, grounded in realistic, thoroughly researched strategies and plans, to ensure comprehensive and inclusive development. These enhancements have reached every governorate and wilayat without exception.

Our emphasis on the development of the governorates and the reinforcement of the decentralisation principle have been realised through the enactment of the System of Governorates and the Law of Municipal Councils. This strategy aligns with our vision for locally administered governance based on decentralisation principles. It also dovetails with our objectives to empower local communities in managing their affairs and actively participating in the nation-building process. We assert that the role of municipal councils transcends local municipal affairs; these bodies are vested with extensive

powers, duties and a broad spectrum of tasks. We urge members of municipal councils to fully utilise the authority and resources at their disposal, innovating in ways that substantially enhance the well-being and welfare of our citizens.

Adhering to the principle of gradual progression in our policies and decisions, we remain committed to an ongoing evaluation of the outcomes anticipated from the policy of decentralisation of the governorates. We are determined to continuously reassess and expand this approach, aiming to broaden its scope to encompass various sectors and multiple aspects. This endeavour is focused on significantly enhancing and strengthening the active participation and engagement of local communities in the developmental process, ensuring the local administration initiative is diligently pursued to achieve its specified objectives, thereby contributing effectively to our comprehensive journey of economic and social development.

Family, the cornerstone of our society

As we discern the challenges pervading our society and recognise their intolerable impacts on its ethical and cultural fabric, we underscore the imperative to assiduously address, scrutinise and continuously monitor these issues. This endeavor is paramount to augment society's resilience in confronting them and to fortify our national identity and foundational values and principles. Furthermore, it is imperative to accord paramount attention to the family, the cornerstone of our society, which acts as a bulwark in safeguarding our progeny from harmful ideologies that are in direct opposition to the tenets of our venerable religion and core values. Such detrimental trends also conflict with our Omani traditions, which are deeply ingrained in our history and national character.

Empowerment for educational sector

Recognising that educational institutions, research and cultural centres at all levels constitute the foundation of our society's scientific and intellectual advancement, and act as drivers for our technological and industrial progression, we reaffirm our steadfast commitment to empowering the educational sector. This includes adapting academic curricula to meet the demands of economic development, broadening opportunities for our youth to engage in scientific expertise, and immersing themselves in the broad realms of science and knowledge. We encourage them to utilise their cognitive and intellectual abilities for creative and innovative endeavours, thereby laying a robust groundwork for authentic investment and establishing themselves as leaders in economic growth.

In light of rapid global advancements in frontier technologies and their applications, including artificial intelligence (AI) and its potential to amplify productivity and efficiency across myriad sectors, and with our profound recognition of the necessity to diversify sources of income through knowledge, technology and innovation, we are resolutely intent on positioning the digital economy as a pivotal and central pillar of our national economy. We have promulgated directives to inaugurate a national programme for the adoption and localisation of AI and to expedite the establishment of legislations that will enable AI technologies to become an instrumental force in our developmental sectors.

Moreover, driven by our firm belief in addressing climate change's impacts and our commitment to sustainable and renewable energy, in line with the government's goal to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 - a target we endorse - we have directed efforts to expedite the development of the renewable energy sector. This encompasses the development of its legal and policy framework, and the provision of incentives to encourage foreign investment and local industries, thereby fostering the domestic growth of this vital technology.





Sultanate of Oman
سلطنة عُمان
وزارة التجارة والصناعة وترويج الاستثمار
Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Investment Promotion

Announcement of Tender No. (80/2023)

 The Internal Tender Committee of the Ministry announces the re-tendering of the following tender:

Tender No.	Tender Name	Company Rating Grade	The value of the tender documet (non-refundable)	Deadline for obtaining the tender document	Deadline for submitting bids in the electronic system
Re-tendering 80/2023	Providing consulting services to study and assess the accounting and auditing profession (audit profession) in the Sultanate of Oman.	Specializd	OMR 300	Wednesday, November 22, 2023	Before 10:00 AM on Monday, 12/4/2023

Documents containing the terms and specifications can be obtained through the eTendering service on the website <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> until the date mentioned in the table above, with payment for the document to be made through the site's electronic payment gateway.

All companies are required to submit their bids through the eTendering service on the mentioned website before 10:00 AM on the specified day for bid submission. Bids submitted after this time will not be considered, regardless of the reasons for the delay.

The Ministry is not obligated to accept the lowest bids or any other bids.

Correspondences:

- For inquiries and clarifications related to the tender: Submit inquiries related to the tender electronically through the Electronic Tendering System website (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>).
- For inquiries and clarifications on the Electronic Tendering System: Submit inquiries related to technical support for the Electronic Tendering System through the email and phone number provided below:

Phone: +968 24402200
E-mail : etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om

 www.tejarah.gov.om

 [Tejarah_om](#)

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His Majesty commits to progress and prosperity

Continued from Page 01

Firm stand on establishment of a Palestinian state

As we observe with profound concern the grave predicament of our brethren in the occupied Palestinian territories, enduring relentless Israeli aggression and an unjust siege, we reiterate our firm stance on the establishment of a Palestinian state, with Al Quds al Sharqiyyah (East Jerusalem) as its capital. We urge the international community to fulfil its obligations and honour its commitments pertaining to the Palestinian cause. It is of utmost urgency that effective and fundamental solutions be expedited to actualise the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people in establishing their sovereign state, a cornerstone for the realisation of lasting peace in our region and the security of the global community.

We reassert our firm political tenets, solidly anchored in the principles of good neighbourliness and non-interference in the internal affairs of other sovereign nations. Our position is further rooted in a steadfast belief in the establishment of a just and equitable system for mutual benefit and exchange of interests, aimed at establishing solid foundations for stability and peace, and to make a positive contribution towards these noble objectives.

Praise for civil, military and security sectors

In conclusion, we extend our profound gratitude and appreciation to the civil, military and security



sectors of the State for their steadfast dedication to the success of our development initiatives and the realisation of our national goals and aspirations. The preservation of these achievements would not have been feasible without the establishment of safety and security across our nation. The vigilance and dedication of our military and security forces have been vital in ensuring peace and safety in every corner of our land. We salute our valiant troops who stand guard in every location within our borders, safeguarding our homeland and securing our accomplishments. We highly commend the invaluable contributions of these services and all their personnel.

We implore Allah the Almighty to grant us success and guide us on the path of righteousness. We pray for His continued grace to bestow bountiful blessings and prosperity upon the people of our country and all those residing within its territory, preserving its tranquility.

We extend our sincere wishes for continuous prosperity to our beloved country and its loyal citizens, year after year.

May the peace and blessings of the Almighty be upon you all.

The convening was attended by members of the Royal Family, members of Council of Ministers, Chairman of State Council, Chairman of Majlis A'Shura, Commanders of Sultan's Armed Forces and Royal Oman Police, members of State Council and Majlis A'Shura, heads of diplomatic missions accredited to the Sultanate of Oman, undersecretaries, governors, members of the Supreme Judicial Council, prominent business persons, CEOs at Oman Investment Authority, editors-in-chief of local newspapers and representatives of committees and professional associations.

May the Almighty Allah protect His Majesty the Sultan and guard him as a source of pride for his homeland and people.

ONA

NSSG Awarded Cybersecurity Company of the Year at OER Corporate Excellence Awards 2023

National Security Services Group (NSSG), Oman's leading cybersecurity service provider, proudly announces its latest distinction as the Cybersecurity Company of the Year at the OER Corporate Excellence Awards 2023, held on November 8th. This prestigious accolade, conferred by His Excellency Sayyid Saud bin Hilal al Busaidi, Minister of State and Governor of Muscat, and accepted by Mr. Warith Al Maawali, Acting Chief Executive Officer of NSSG, underscores NSSG's exceptional proficiency in cybersecurity and its pivotal role in the MENA region.

NSSG: Oman's Pillar for a Secure Digital Future
"At NSSG, we are steadfast in our commitment to being Oman's trusted partner in crafting a secure and resilient digital future, in line with the nation's 2040 vision," declared Mr. Warith Al Maawali, Acting Chief Executive Officer of NSSG. "Our dedicated team, spread across five operational departments, delivers bespoke cybersecurity solutions using specialized tools to combat cybercrime. Achieving CREST accreditation for penetration testing and an ISO 27001 certification first in the MENA region demonstrates our leadership in providing high-quality and innovative cybersecurity solutions."

Dual Recognition: OER Excellence and Comex Cybersecurity Awards
2023 marks a significant year for NSSG,



having been recognized not only at the OER Corporate Excellence Awards but also receiving a cybersecurity award at Comex in May. These acknowledgments

collectively affirm NSSG's preeminent position in the cybersecurity landscape and its continuous dedication to excellence and innovation.

CEO's Vision and NSSG's Global Aspirations
Under the visionary leadership of Mr. Warith Al Maawali, renowned developer of the

globally recognized security and privacy operating system, Linux Kodachi, the NSSG R&D team has made significant strides. This includes the development of internationally acclaimed tools such as DCapusla, Hash-Stike, and PassRay, further cementing NSSG's position as a leader in cybersecurity innovation. His trailblazing efforts are central to NSSG's ethos of quality, innovation, and integrity in cybersecurity. Looking forward, NSSG envisions expanding its bespoke services and proprietary products globally, leveraging its expertise and esteemed recognition to fortify its status as a global cybersecurity authority.

NSSG's Comprehensive Approach and Future Outlook
NSSG adopts a holistic approach to cybersecurity, addressing both technological innovations and the human aspect of security to ensure a robust defense against cyber threats. The organization's commitment to staff training and awareness is integral to its comprehensive security strategy.
As NSSG moves forward, it continues to prioritize its role as a leader in the cybersecurity sector. Expansion plans include broadening services, intensifying research and development endeavors, and persistently delivering cutting-edge cybersecurity solutions. These recent awards serve as milestones in NSSG's ongoing journey and commitment to safeguarding Oman's digital future.

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Celebrating 53 years of growth and progress

Congratulations and warm wishes to
His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik - may the Almighty protect him -
and the people of Oman on the occasion of the 53rd National Day.
We look forward to a bright future full of possibilities
under his wise leadership.

Safety | ESG | Respect | Vision | Integrity | Caring | Empowerment

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Our Correspondent

Muscat

South Batinah is commencing a series of vital and strategic projects in its efforts to achieve comprehensive development. These initiatives align with the decentralisation and sustainable development goals outlined in Oman Vision 2040.

The governorate is witnessing a surge in development and service projects across various sectors, including education, health and transport infrastructure. Additionally, its rich tourism potential, stemming from diverse natural landscapes, including coasts, mountains, springs, valleys and caves, is being harnessed. South Batinah's unique heritage, witnessed in its castles, forts, traditional markets and archaeological sites, further enhances its appeal.

One of the flagship projects is the Rimal Park in Khubbat al-Qad-an, wilayat of Nakhal. This project is set to significantly boost tourism in the region. Efforts are underway to develop

key tourist attractions, including Rustaq Gate, the Ain al Kasfa project and various sites in the niyabat of Hoqain. Waterfront areas in the wilayats of Barka and Musannah are also being developed.

In addition to tourism, the governorate is focusing on revitalising traditional markets and constructing modern markets with contemporary designs. Development projects are in progress at the Abu Tamanan market in Rustaq, Al Turaf market in Musannah and the Nakhal market. New markets are also being established in the wilayats of Al Awabi and Wadi al Ma'awil.

Masoud bin Saeed al Hashemi, Governor of South Batinah, highlighted upcoming projects of 2024, including the design and paving of internal roads totalling 150km, a new roundabout at the entrance to Wadi Bani Kharous, and the construction of box culverts over wadis in Rustaq and Al Awabi. Efforts to develop the entrances and centres of the governorate's



wilayats are also underway, alongside establishment of new slaughterhouses in Rustaq and Wadi al Ma'awil.

The governorate is also focusing on community involvement in project proposals and designs, including enhancing spending efficiency, digital transformation and developing human compe-

tencies, particularly the youth sector. An electronic portal for the governorate is being developed to improve access to services and information.

The municipal sector is making significant strides in enhancing services and creating a sustainable environment. This involves studying, planning, de-

signing and implementing development projects. Efforts are also directed towards improving efficiency and effectiveness of services, better regulation of food establishments and managing public property.

The governorate is actively working to attract investments by increasing contracts awarded

to small and medium enterprises and offering sites for private sector investment. This initiative includes hosting forums and promoting investment opportunities on social media platforms.

On the economic front, South Batinah is home to Khazaen Economic City in Barka, which has attracted substantial investment. The city includes the Khazaen Land Port, the first of its kind in Oman, and the Khazaen Central Fruit and Vegetable Market, which is nearing completion. Additionally, Sandan Industrial City in Nakhal is a model for integrated industrial cities, providing comprehensive service facilities for investors.

The number of entrepreneurs registered with the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development in the governorate is steadily increasing, with Barka leading in the number of registered institutions. Oman Development Bank has also granted a significant number of loans for various projects in the region.

The governorate's housing and urban planning sector is im-

plementing a comprehensive programme, identifying land for investment along the Batinah coastal road. Projects include parks, markets and smart gas stations. The programme also focuses on providing land for agricultural projects to enhance food security.

The governorate boasts numerous castles and forts, with ongoing restoration efforts to preserve these historical landmarks. The number of licensed tourist establishments continues to grow, reflecting the governorate's tourism potential.

In healthcare, the Directorate General of Health Services in South Batinah is implementing projects to raise the quality of health services. These include expanding health centres and introducing state-of-the-art medical procedures.

On the environmental front, Environment Authority is working on conservation and biodiversity preservation programmes, including a national initiative to plant 10mn indigenous trees in a ten-year period.

MAFWR offers 28 plots to boost fisheries sector

Our Correspondent

Muscat

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources (MAFWR) is taking significant steps towards achieving food self-sufficiency and bolstering the fisheries sector. The ministry has announced the availability of 28 plots of land for investment opportunities in the fishery industry.

A spokesperson of MAFWR informed that out of the 28 plots, 12 are marked for establishment of fish markets and collection facilities across various governorates, and ten sites designated for aquaculture projects. One site is set aside for development, management and operations of a project at Darsait fishing port in Muttrah.

The ministry has also allocated land for construction and management of a project in the fishing port of Musannah, a fuel station in the fishing port of Khabourah, a marine workshop and shops to sell fish in Suwaiqi and for projects in Sohar fishing port and the Al Ashkhara area.

Additionally, bids have been invited to manage and operate fish marketing activities in several locations, including fishing ports in Sur, the Raysut wholesale market, Seeb fish market and Barka fish market. The management and operations of fuel stations in



Khasab and Saham fishing ports are also open for bids.

Submission deadline has been set for December 21.

In an effort to diversify investment opportunities, MAFWF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, has offered 40 investment opportunities through the Tatwir platform this year. These initiatives aim to enhance the fisheries and agriculture sectors, including production of potatoes and green leafy vegetables, increase the agricultural sector's contribution to local production, adopt modern agricultural technologies and irrigation methods, and stimulate agricultural investment activities.

MAFWR data indicates that in 2022, there were 28 integrated fish farms, 114 fish factories, 25 fishing ports and 62 fish markets, and the volume of fish production reached 748.3 tonnes, valued at RO469mn.

Oman braces for heavy rains from Thursday

Our Correspondent

Muscat

The Civil Aviation Authority has issued an advisory regarding heavy rains expected in several regions of the country starting Thursday.

According to the latest weather maps and analysis of the National Multi Hazard Early Warning Centre, Oman is set to experience an upper air trough, leading to thunderstorms of varying intensity.

The Oman Meteorology Department stated, 'We anticipate cloud advection and development, with chances of thunderstorms accompanied by fresh downdraft winds and hail from Thursday.'

The weather conditions are expected to first impact Musandam on Thursday and gradually extend over the weekend to the governorates of Buraimi, North Batinah, South Batinah, Dhahira, Dakhliyah and Muscat.

Isolated rain is also forecast in North Sharqiyah and South Sharqiyah on Saturday and Sunday.

In light of these predictions, the Met Department urged the public to exercise caution. It advised against venturing into low-lying areas and wadis and cautioned against swimming or attempting to cross water bodies.

GROWTH THROUGH TOURISM


TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Omran Tourism Development Company (OMRAN Group) would like to invite competent and experienced companies to participate in the following Tender:

Tender No.	31/2023
Tender Title	Development of OMRAN Group's New Corporate Website
Tender Submission Closing Date	6.12.2023
Tender Process Details	Please visit: www.omran.am/tenders/



omran.am/tenders/

Omran Tourism Development Company (OMRAN Group)
Tel: +968 21 26 11 11
info@omran.am
Bldg 100001



Farsi triumphs at Jiu-Jitsu World Masters

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Abdullah bin Khamis al Farsi, a 29-year-old athlete from the wilayat of Sur in South Sharqiyah, won silver medal at the prestigious Abu Dhabi World Masters Jiu-Jitsu Championship, held from November 1 to 11.

In an interview with *Muscat Daily*, Farsi dedicated his victory to Oman on the occasion of the 53rd National Day, encouraging the youth of Oman to embrace



I dedicate this victory to Oman on the occasion of the sultanate's 53rd National Day

ABDULLAH AL FARSI

this sport.

The championship, a global event attracting the elite in Jiu-Jitsu, witnessed participation of over 6,000 athletes representing

107 countries, including the US, Italy, France, Spain and Russia.

Farsi secured second place in the 62kg light featherweight category professional (brown belt), amidst fierce competition.

Farsi spoke about the challenges he faced, including the financial burden associated with the sport. He described his journey to the finals as one requiring immense concentration and unwavering determination. To prepare for the championship, Farsi underwent rigorous training,

dedicating five hours daily to hone his skills.

He expressed a strong desire to continue representing Oman in international tournaments and take the Omani flag to global arenas. Farsi extended his gratitude to those who supported him during his training, and emphasised the need for financial backing to sustain participation in international events.

Here he pointed out that about 16 Omani players participated in the tournament, but they did not

achieve any good results due to the lack of financial support.

He believes that finding a sponsor would not only provide much-needed financial support but also offer promotional opportunities for the sponsor at the international stage where Omani athletes compete. He also expressed his eagerness to establish an official committee for the sport in Oman, noting, "Oman is one of the few countries that doesn't have a committee or federation for the sport."

Omani film Al-Zeeg wins Best Documentary Award at Mumbai Film Festival

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Omani documentary film *Al-Zeeg* won the Best Documentary Award at the Mumbai International Film Festival in India.

This festival - oldest and largest film festival for non-feature films in South Asia - is organised by the Films Division functioning under India's federal Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Produced by the Oman Film Society, *Al Zeeg* is a captivating exploration of the deep-rooted bond between Omanis and sugarcane cultivation. It intricately portrays the trials of producing sugarcane syrup, while also illuminating the manifold human, economic and social dimensions

that encompass this activity.

Expert opinions and perspectives from relevant authorities have provided additional depth to the narrative. The film's geographical scope has been termed impressive, traversing through key Omani regions like Nizwa, Bahla, Hamra, and Manah.

Al Zeeg has won several local and international awards and has been selected for screening at numerous film events, showcasing Oman's rich cultural tapestry.

A notable highlight was its inclusion in the 12th Arab Film Festival in South Korea last month. The documentary was screened alongside ten films from nine Arab nations - Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Algeria, Jordan, Egypt, Qatar and the Palestinian Territories.

Efforts intensified to combat illicit trade in cultural property

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism is proactively working to curtail illicit trade and trafficking of cultural property, which includes prevention of unauthorised excavations, production of counterfeit artefacts, and smuggling of heritage items.

"The ministry is collaborating with international and regional organisations in this regard," said Rahma bint Saeed al Zawaidi, who heads the Cultural Heritage Register and Combating Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property Department at the ministry.

Rahma emphasised the crucial role of coordination between the ministry and the Royal Oman Police, ensuring that heritage and archaeological pieces are not exported without a permit issued by the ministry after thorough inspection.

In 2019, the ministry established the Cultural Heritage Register and Combating Illicit Trafficking Department, making



it the central unit to coordinate preventative measures, besides monitoring risks associated with cultural property preservation, managing risks, and ensuring that warning regulations are implemented at various archaeological sites throughout the sultanate.

Rahma also mentioned the ministry's initiative to encourage citizens to submit any found antiquities to the ministry.

The legal framework in Oman stipulates stringent penalties for illegal possession of cultural heritage - ranging from one month to three months and a fine between RO500 and RO10,000.



الأنوار للاستثمارات ش.م.ع Al Anwar Investments SAOG

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Directors' Report

Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to present the un-audited consolidated results of Al Anwar Investments SAOG (AAI) for the six-month period ended on 30 September 2023.

Financial Overview of Al Anwar Investments Group ("AAI")

The Company reported net profit of OMR 898,000 for the six-month period ended on 30 September 2023 as against a net loss of OMR 651,000 for the period ended on 30 September 2022, primarily as a result of fair value gain of OMR 1,003,000 generated on company's marked to market investments listed on stock exchange in Oman and realised gain of OMR 342,000 on the sale of AAI stake in Almondz Global Securities Ltd, India, which was classified at fair value. The total comprehensive income for the six-month period ended on 30 September 2023 was OMR 2,753,000 as against a loss of OMR 218,000 for the period ended on 30 September 2022, primarily as a result of fair value gain of OMR 1,348,000 recorded on investments classified as Fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI).

Net asset per share of the Group has increased to 160 Baisas per share on 30 September 2023 as against 146 Baisas per share on 30th September 2022.

Investment update

1. Al Maha Ceramics SAOG

The Company has reported revenue of OMR 3,537,431 for the six-month period ended on 30 June 2023, as compared with OMR 5,024,354 during the previous period, a decline of 29.6 %. Net Loss after tax for the period was OMR 148,611 as compared to a profit of OMR 1,323,468 in the previous period. This is primarily attributed to the decline in revenue due to increased competition from low cost imported tiles in the GCC and the impact of new custom duties in KSA. Additionally, the company recorded a share of loss of OMR 786,721 from its newly acquired associate, Al Hael Ceramics LLC.

2. Voltamp Energy SAOG

The Company has reported revenue of OMR 12,922,272 for the six-month period ended on 30 June 2023, as compared with OMR 17,142,950 during the previous period, a decline of 24.6%. Net profit after tax (attributable to shareholders of Parent Company) for the period was OMR 39,497 compared to net loss of OMR 946,942 in the previous period. The company reported a loss in the first quarter of 2023. However, it has shown improvement in the second quarter of 2023. This improvement is evident in both revenue and net profit, primarily due to enhanced gross margins from sales during the period.

3. Arabia Falcon Insurance Company SAOG

The Company has reported Gross Written Premium of OMR 14,614,630 during the six-month period ended on 30 June 2023 as compared to OMR 12,867,613 for the previous period, a growth of 13.6%. The Net profit after tax for the period was OMR 271,090 compared to OMR 340,158 in previous period, a decline of 20.3%, due to increase in motor claims.

4. Al Ruwad International for Education Services SAOC

The Company has reported lower revenue and loss for the six months period ended on 31 July 2023. This is primarily due to lower number of students enrolled in the school during academic year.

The school has signed a Governance agreement with Ellesmere College, UK on 4th November 2022. This should improve the school's competitive position and support it in attracting higher number of students in future years.

5. National Biscuits Industries Ltd. SAOG

The Company has reported revenue of OMR 7,494,000 for the six months period ended on 30 June 2023, compared with OMR 6,242,000 during the previous period, an increase of 20.1%. Net profit after tax for the period was OMR 174,000 as compared to OMR 143,000 in the previous year, an increase of 21.7%.

6. The National Detergent Co. SAOG

The Company has reported revenues of OMR 10,665,529 for the six-month period ended on 30 June 2023, as compared with OMR 10,205,904 for the previous period, a growth of 4.5%. Net profit for the period was OMR 279,643 compared to loss of OMR 146,271 in the corresponding period of last year. The company exercised control over costs including materials cost, which has contributed to an improvement in the profitability of the company compared to the last year corresponding period. The Company's flagship brand BAHAR is maintaining its market position in Oman. The sales have also grown in both Oman as well in Export markets during the period.

7. Oman Chlorine SAOG

The Oman Chlorine Group (Consolidated) has reported revenue of OMR 16,140,000 for the six-month period ended on 30 June 2023 as compared with OMR 15,445,000 in the previous period, a growth of 4.5%. Net Profit (attributable to Parent Company Shareholders) for the period was OMR 1,426,000 as compared to profit of OMR 1,762,000 in the previous period, a decline of 19.1 %. Oman Chlorine, the parent Company, has reported revenue of OMR 6,417,000 as compared to OMR 6,694,000 of last year, a decline of 4.1%. Net profit for the period was OMR 1,086,000 compared to previous period profit of OMR 1,575,000, a decrease of 31.1%, mainly due to the lower selling prices of Caustic products and its value-added products

Future Outlook

Oman's economy is expected to continue to improve as oil prices recovers from the lows witnessed in prior years. S&P Global Ratings has revised Oman's rating outlook to positive from stable, citing improving fiscal position, progress on reforms and rising oil prices.

AAI has maintained a prudent and active approach towards managing its investment portfolio. Our objective this year is to:

- continue to support and pro-actively manage our investment companies and,
- take advantage of investment opportunities available in the market

We are confident that AAI and its Group companies will continue to play a pivotal role in Oman's economic growth, create job opportunities for Omani nationals, and attract foreign investments in the Sultanate of Oman.

Thanks, and Appreciation

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to take this opportunity to express our greetings and good wishes to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, and pray to Allah to grant him and his government success to lead the country and the people to greater prosperity and progress.

The Board records its sincere appreciation to Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Investment Promotion, Capital Market Authority, Muscat Stock Exchange, Bankers, Auditors for their continued support to AAI and the group companies.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to the Board of Directors of all Al Anwar associate companies for direction given to the managements of the respective companies. I place on record my sincere thanks and appreciation for the dedicated efforts of the management team and all employees

of the group companies.

I would also like to convey my sincere thanks to the Shareholders of AAI for the confidence they have reposed in the company and its Board.

For & on behalf of the Board of Directors of
Al Anwar Investments SAOG
Masoud Humaid Malik Al Harthy
Chairman
November 12, 2023

UNAUDITED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	30 September 2023 OMR'000	30 September 2022 OMR'000	Audited 31 March 2023 OMR'000
Assets			
Investment in associates	31,750	31,852	31,048
Investments at fair value	14,327	13,152	14,176
Property and other assets	2,308	2,302	2,308
Receivables	178	254	1,116
Cash and bank balances	504	124	183
TOTAL ASSETS	49,067	47,684	48,831
Equity			
Share capital	20,600	20,000	20,000
Legal reserve	4,603	4,568	4,603
Fair value reserve	3,007	(30)	1,152
Retained earnings	4,849	4,581	5,551
Equity attributable to shareholders of Parent Company	33,059	29,119	31,306
Liabilities:			
Bank borrowings	15,625	18,163	17,142
Payables	383	402	383
TOTAL LIABILITIES	16,008	18,565	17,525
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	49,067	47,684	48,831
Net assets per share attributable to shareholders of the Parent Company (in Baisas)	160	146	157

UNAUDITED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE SIX MONTH PERIOD ENDED

	30 September 2023 OMR'000	30 September 2022 OMR'000
Share of results of associates	268	555
Interest income	58	152
Realised Profit / (loss) on sale of investment	342	(3)
Net increase / (decrease) in value of investment	1,003	(655)
Other income	16	9
Net income	1,687	58
Administrative expenses	(175)	(158)
Financing charges	(507)	(497)
Corporate social responsibility	-	(8)
Director Remuneration and sitting fees	(107)	(46)
Total expenses	(789)	(709)
Profit (loss) for the period before tax	898	(651)
Income tax expense	-	-
Profit / (loss) after tax for the period	898	(651)

Other comprehensive income (expense):		
Share of other comprehensive profit / (loss) of associates	507	(90)
Net increase / (decrease) in value of investment	1,348	523
Other comprehensive profit for the period	1,855	433
Total comprehensive Income (loss) for the period attributable to Equity holders of Parent Company	2,753	(218)
Earnings profit (loss) per share attributable to shareholders of Parent Company (in Baisas)	4	(3)

Note 1) The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholders who requests them in arabic or english as requested, within 7 days of receipt of the request.
2) Financial statements are available on MSX website.



The Egyptian school - Muscat

The Egyptian school - Muscat announces its need for the following vacancies for the recent academic year (2023-2024):-

1. A Math teacher (high school)

All applicants should have the following:-

- A degree of education
- Experience not less than 5 years
- CVs are to be sent on egymuscat@yahoo.com
- Deadline is within One week of the advert date.

Galfar's order book rises to RO589mn on new projects

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Galfar Engineering and Contracting Company, Oman's largest construction firm, announced that its order book has increased to RO589mn, driven by new contracts awarded this year.

For the first nine months of 2023, Galfar received new project awards worth RO393mn, according to the company's quarterly financial report submitted to the Muscat Stock Exchange on Tuesday.

'For the [nine months] period ending September 30, 2023, the company achieved a higher turnover compared to the same period last year, driven by the increase in the company's order book and new projects. The company's financial position continues to be positive, supported by a strengthening order book,' Galfar said in the report.

The company's consolidated net profit increased to RO1.528mn for the first nine months of 2023, compared to a consolidated net profit of RO110,000 reported for the same period last year.

However, Galfar's operating profit margins were affected by higher operating costs, mainly driven by 'geopolitical challenges, escalation in material prices, resource availability due to increased regional demands, and extended stays in some projects'.



Galfar's consolidated net profit rose to RO1.528mn for the first nine months of 2023, compared to a consolidated net profit of RO110,000 for the same period last year

'Despite the challenges, the company continues to sustain a positive margin due to various initiatives taken as part of turnaround efforts to improve project performance and manage costs,' it said.

Major contracts won by Galfar this year include a signature award by Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) for the off-plot delivery contract in the Qarn Alam area and an OQ contract for the EPC works of the Bisat permanent power supply project. Galfar said these awards strengthen the company's presence in the oil and gas sector,

aligning with its turnaround strategy objectives.

Galfar stated that its group performance improved significantly compared to the same period last year. Its subsidiaries in Oman, including Aspire Readymix, Aspire Projects, and Al Khali Heavy Equipment, have overall improved their financial performance and reported profit.

Turnaround strategy

Galfar pointed out that it is determined to turnaround and improve financial performance with a continued focus on implement-

ing the company's turnaround strategy priorities.

'As the flagship for Oman's contracting and engineering business, Galfar looks forward to building on its strength, supporting the government and local market endeavours for economic growth, and pursuing significant development and infrastructure projects across various sectors,' the company said.

Galfar further mentioned that it continues to explore avenues to strengthen the company's financial position in a challenging and highly competitive economic environment.

Abraj unveils outstanding third quarter performance

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Abraj Energy Services, Oman's leading provider of oil and gas services, announced its outstanding performance for the third quarter of 2023. With a commanding 28% share in Oman's drilling market and an impressive over 15% in key well services, Abraj is solidifying its position and has set a new benchmark in the industry.

Abraj has successfully completed 93 wells ahead of the planned time. This achievement is further highlighted by the significant reduction in rig move duration, the company said in a press statement.

The year 2023 marks a milestone for Abraj, celebrating more than ten years of unparalleled safety performance. Operating a robust fleet of 30 units, including 25 drilling rigs and five workover rigs, the company has maintained an impeccable safety record. In the current year alone, Abraj marked 675 days without a Lost Time Injury, 61 days without Total Recordable Cases, 294 days without Road Traffic Accidents, and 36 days without High Potential Incidents.

Abraj's commitment to operational efficiency is evident in its Non-Productive Time (NPT) performance, achieving an NPT of 1.33%. This surpasses the industry-standard NPT of 1.5% and significantly outperforms the international allowable NPT of 3%.



Eng Saif al Hamhami, CEO of Abraj Energy Services, said, "Abraj has consistently demonstrated exceptional performance, setting new benchmarks in the oil and gas sector. Our remarkable achievement of a 28% market share in drilling and over 15% in key well services this quarter is a testament to our operational excellence and strategic foresight. We are not just meeting industry standards; we are redefining them, as evidenced by our significant advancements in drilling efficiency and safety protocols."

The company continues to demonstrate its operational prowess, with all 25 rigs and five workover hoists operating at full capacity. This has led to the drilling of 193 wells, totalling an impressive 458,000 meters in

depth, averaging 32.2 wells per month, including workover wells.

In well services, Abraj thrives with a formidable fleet and five business lines. The company's integrated fracturing services, a first in the MENA region by a local company, have shown exceptional operational excellence and technical advancement, completing hydraulic fracturing for over 200 wells.

The stimulation business of Abraj has seen significant growth, marked by the addition of another hydraulic fracturing fleet dedicated to high-rate acid stimulation treatments. This expansion is supported by strong technical collaboration with clients, as demonstrated by notable presentations at prestigious international forums.



OMAN CHLORINE S.A.O.G. عمان كلورين ش.م.ع.م
P.O. BOX 193, POSTAL CODE 134, MUSCAT, SULTANATE OF OMAN TEL: 24695839 - FAX: 24695768

Chairman's Report For the nine months period ended 30 September 2023

Dear Shareholders,

After greetings,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to present parent and consolidated unaudited results for the nine months period ended 30 September 2023.

The summarized operating result for the above period is as below.

Details	Parent			Consolidated		
	30th Sept. 2023	30th Sept. 2022	Variance	30th Sept. 2023	30th Sept. 2022	Variance
	RO'000	RO'000		RO'000	RO'000	
			% YOY			% YOY
Revenue	9,784	9,808	-0.2%	24,357	23,470	3.8%
EBITDA	2,611	3,262	-19.9%	7,223	7,271	-0.7%
Net Profit After Tax for the period	1,404	2,127	-34.0%	1,732	2,776	-37.6%
Profit After Tax attributable to parent co. shareholders	1,404	2,127	-34.0%	1,613	2,536	-36.4%
Share of profit/(loss) After Tax attributable to minority shareholders	-	-	-	119	240	-50.4%

1. Performance Overview of Parent Company:

The Parent Company has continued to maintain its performance in terms of capacity utilization at a higher level (99%). Due to decline in Global caustic prices, the price of Caustic and its value-added products selling prices were lower as compared to 2022. Acid and its value-added products selling prices were higher compared to last year. The company continues its focus on cost management and financial discipline to maintain its performance.

2. Performance overview of Subsidiaries – Union Chlorine LLC (UAE), Gulf Chlorine WLL (Qatar) and Oman Industrial Development Company SAOC

Union Chlorine (UAE Subsidiary) was operating at almost full capacity during the year. It further capitalized on the overall demand by securing more contracts at higher realizations enabling it to achieve higher price realization on its Acid and its value added products except caustic soda which was lower this year.

Gulf Chlorine, Qatar has further strengthened its long-term agreements and its position with the major players in Qatar and GCC whilst targeting all major customer both locally and in the region including government entities for a sustainable products supply. The company has further expanded its export market in the region and will strive to improve its presence over various geographies for better price realization.

Oman Industrial Development Company is fully owned by Oman Chlorine and the company holds an 11.1% economic interest in Union Chlorine LLC – Abu Dhabi.

The decline in Global caustic prices in Q3 2023 has put pressure on the Caustic Soda selling prices in the subsidiaries.

3. Outlook

The Group continues to monitor the Oil price fluctuations and chemical commodities prices globally. The Group continues to remain optimistic for its products demand and price realization in the near future provided the oil and gas activities continue to remain at this level.

4. Acknowledgement

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Management, we wish to express our loyalty and thanks to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik May God protect Him and guide him for the benefit of Oman and its People in line with Oman Vision 2040.

The Board records its sincere appreciation to Government Authorities for their support and encouragement in particular the Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Investment Promotion, the Capital Market Authority as well as all the partners, customers and suppliers and employees of the company and management for their sincere efforts, leading to the continued success of the company.

Sheikh. Said Mohamed Ahmed Al Harthy
Chairman of Board of Directors

Unaudited condensed interim Separate and consolidated statement of financial position as at 30th September 2023

	Parent		Consolidated	
	30/09/2023	31/12/2022	30/09/2023	31/12/2022
	RO'000	RO'000	RO'000	RO'000
ASSETS				
Non-current assets				
Property, plant and equipment	15,861	16,417	74,831	76,433
Investment in subsidiaries	14,353	14,353	-	-
Subordinated Loan	2,302	2,302	-	-
Investment in Joint Venture	-	-	1,391	1,157
Right of use assets	757	788	2,401	2,467
Total non-current assets	33,273	33,860	78,623	80,057
Current assets				
Inventories and consumables	1,980	1,528	3,938	3,675
Trade and other receivables	4,047	2,902	7,386	6,056
Cash and bank balances	838	2,560	1,299	4,013
Total current assets	6,865	6,990	12,623	13,744
Total assets	40,138	40,850	91,246	93,801
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES				
Capital and reserves				
Share capital	7,151	6,810	7,151	6,810
Statutory reserve	2,848	2,848	3,012	3,012
General reserve	900	900	900	900
Cashflow hedge reserve	-	-	(217)	(243)
Retained earnings	18,473	19,113	13,022	13,452
Equity attributable to the Parent Company's shareholders	29,372	29,671	23,868	23,931
Capital contribution from Non-controlling interest	-	-	7,903	7,903
Non-controlling interest	-	-	(579)	(716)
Total equity	29,372	29,671	31,192	31,118
Non-current liabilities				
Term loan	4,411	5,117	42,263	43,534
Liability on land lease non current	802	816	2,570	2,544
End of service benefits	152	162	378	354
Cashflow hedge reserve	-	-	286	300
Deferred tax liability	911	865	911	865
Total non-current liabilities	6,276	6,960	46,408	47,597
Current liabilities				
Trade and other payables	3,230	2,808	7,458	7,845
Liability on land lease current	73	73	118	117
Current portion – Term Loan	944	939	3,948	5,316
Short term borrowings	-	-	1,804	1,304
Cashflow hedge reserve	-	-	75	105
Provision for income tax	243	399	243	399
Total current liabilities	4,490	4,219	13,646	15,086
Total liabilities	10,766	11,179	60,054	62,683
Total equity and liabilities	40,138	40,850	91,246	93,801
Net asset per share	0.411	0.436	0.334	0.351

Unaudited condensed interim Separate and consolidated statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the 9 months period ended 30th September 2023

	Parent		Consolidated	
	30/09/2023	30/09/2022	30/09/2023	30/09/2022
	RO'000	RO'000	RO'000	RO'000
Revenue	9,784	9,808	24,357	23,470
Cost of sales	(6,601)	(5,817)	(16,526)	(14,919)
Gross profit	3,183	3,991	7,831	8,551
Selling and distribution expenses	(899)	(848)	(1,952)	(2,040)
General and administrative expenses	(709)	(746)	(1,370)	(1,434)
Operating profit	1,575	2,397	4,509	5,077
Finance charges	(244)	(177)	(2,891)	(1,965)
Other income	323	226	130	123
Share of loss of Joint Venture	-	-	234	(140)
Profit before taxation	1,654	2,446	1,882	3,095
Current tax	(205)	(287)	(205)	(287)
Deferred tax	(45)	(32)	(45)	(32)
Profit for the period	1,404	2,127	1,732	2,776
Attributable to:				
Owners of the Parent Company	1,404	2,127	1,613	2,536
Non-Controlling Interest	-	-	119	240
	1,404	2,127	1,732	2,776
Other comprehensive income:				
Items that are or may be reclassified to profit or loss:				
Currency translation difference of foreign subsidiaries	-	-	-	-
Net changes in cash flow hedge reserve	-	-	44	19
Total comprehensive income	1,404	2,127	1,776	2,795
Total comprehensive income attributable to:				
Parent Company shareholders	1,404	2,127	1,639	2,546
Non-controlling interest	-	-	137	249
	1,404	2,127	1,776	2,795
Earnings per share on profit attributable to the Parent Company shareholders – Basic and diluted	0.0196	0.0312	0.0226	0.0372

The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder who request them, in either Arabic or English, within 7 days of receipt of a written request.

Bank Muscat Al Bahja branch relocated

In line with its customer-centric vision, Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in the Sultanate of Oman, inaugurated the relocated branch in Al Mouj Street under the patronage of Captain Nasser bin Ahmed al Salmi, Acting Chief Executive Officer - Oman Air and in the presence of members of the bank's executive management.

This comes as part of the bank's strategy to provide a comfortable environment for customers to complete their transactions with ease and enjoy a unique banking experience.

Featured with its distinctive location and spacious area, the relocated branch is designed to meet the needs of different groups of the society and thus align with the financial inclusion concept. It includes a number of facilities including dedicated financing desk for Baituna, in addition to a sales desk and a special centre for Asalah Priority



Banking customers.

It is also designed to facilitate access of persons with disabilities to various banking services. The services provided by the branch can be availed during weekdays from Sunday to Thursday, from 8 in the morning until 2 in the afternoon.

On this occasion, Abdulnasir

N al Raisi, General Manager, Personal Banking, Bank Muscat, said, "The bank has been keen to enhance its branch network, which will contribute to provide variety of banking services and facilities to our extended family of customers across Oman. Through the past few months, the bank inaugurated a number

of new branches considering that this wide network is an important channel and a direct link with customers to provide them with the best services and products possible. "The bank will continue its efforts to upgrade its services and provide an enjoyable banking experience. I would like to take this opportunity to

thank all our customers for their confidence and trust in the bank's services and products."

Saleh Mohammed al Maaini, Deputy General Manager, Capital Regions, Bank Muscat, said, "We are pleased to inaugurate the new location of Bank Muscat's branch in Al Mouj Street. The branch will provide various banking services and facilities to customers, who can accomplish a wide range of banking transactions easily and comfortably.

"The bank will continue the process of development and improvement, translating its vision 'To serve you better, everyday'. I take this opportunity to invite customers to visit the branch and take advantage of the various banking services and facilities offered by Bank Muscat."

Bank Muscat has an extensive branch network with 147 retail branches and more than 820 devices, including ATMs, CDMs and omnichannel devices.

Malabar Gold launches RO53 rings, pendants

To pay tribute to the glorious spirit of the nation on the occasion of Oman's 53rd National Day, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the 6th largest jewellery retailer globally with over 335 showrooms across 11 countries, has launched a special collection of diamond pendants and rings.

Priced at RO53, the collection has been crafted in Omani theme, making it an ideal option for self-gifting or gifting to loved ones during the National Day celebration. Available across all of the brand's outlets in Oman, the exclusive collection is available in ten designs and is part of the brand's Mine Diamond jewellery array.

"We are very excited to join in the 53rd Oman National Day celebrations by launching a limited-edition collection of pendants and rings," said Najeeb K, Regional Head - Oman, Malabar Gold & Diamonds.



"As the country and its residents celebrate this momentous occasion, Malabar Gold & Diamonds is proud and honoured to be a part of Oman's rich legacy of culture and heritage. With 13 world-class showrooms across the sultanate and more showroom openings in the pipeline, our stature as the go-to jewellery retailer in Oman will further be strengthened in the coming years." The company is six-time winner of Oman's Most Trusted Brand Award.



شركة عمان والإمارات للاستثمار والقابضة (ش.م.ع.)
OMAN & EMIRATES INVESTMENT HOLDING CO. SAOG

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Website: www.omanemirates.com

Board of Directors' Report – 30th September 2023

Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board, I take this opportunity to present the financial performance of Oman & Emirates Investment Holding Co SAOG for the nine months period ended 30th September 2023.

Financial Results:

The Company (Group & Parent) recorded **Net Profits** of **RO 4,034** and **RO 106,382** respectively during **January to September 2023**, compared to (Group & Parent) Net Profits of RO 2,166,940 and RO 2,295,922 respectively during January to September 2022. The Break-up details are as under:

Particulars	Equity Holding %	Jan– Sep 2023 RO	Jan – Sep 2022 RO
Profit/(Loss) before share of results of Subsidiaries and Associates		(418,859)	2,439,939
FINCORP Al Amal Fund	-	-	-
FINCORP SAOG	51.2	137,430	(151,038)
Oman Hotels and Tourism Co. SAOC	31.72	(51,887)	(163,658)
Oman Fiber Optic Co. SAOC	20.97	439,698	170,679
Net Profit/(Loss) - Parent		106,382	2,295,922
Oman Euro Food Industries Co. SAOG	80.84	(102,348)	(128,982)
Net Profit/(Loss) - Group		4,034	2,166,940

Stock Market Indices:

During the period January to September 2023, MSM and ADX decreased by (3.69%) and (4.17%) while DFM increased by 24.8% respectively (January–September 2022: MSM, ADX and DFM increased by 9.66%, 14.87% and 4.48% respectively.

Net Equity, Investments and Borrowing:

The Net Equity of the Group and the Parent Company decreased by (3.9%) and (3.3%) respectively during the period ended September 2023. The Net Equity of the Group reached RO 22.245 Million at 30.9.2023 (30.09.2022: 23.240 Million) down from RO 23.157 Million at 31.12.2022. The Net Equity of the Parent reached RO 23.410 Million at 30.9.2023 (30.9.2022: RO 24.239 Million) down from RO 24.220 at 31.12.2022.

The Total Investment Values of the Group and the Parent Company were RO 32.136 Million and RO 29.678 Million respectively as at 30.9.2023 (30.9.2022: Group RO 32.407 Million and Parent Company RO 31.105 Million).

The total borrowing of the Group and the Parent Company have reduced to RO 12.952 Million and RO 9.231 Million respectively as at 30.09.2023 (30.09.2022: Group RO 16.176 Million and Parent Company RO 12.455 Million).

Future Outlook:

Recoveries across the GCC will remain subjected to the impacts of inflation in medium term and valuations across the markets are likely to be corrected in the coming months. The World Bank moderated its forecast for the GCC economies expansion to 3.7 per cent in 2023.

Oman's GDP growth is moderated to 2.5 per cent in 2023. Oman continues to balance between growth and economic diversification on one hand and fiscal reform and debt reduction on the other. Improvements in financials have led rating agencies to raise Oman's credit rating.

Acknowledgement:

I take this opportunity to convey our heartfelt gratitude to the Governments of the Sultanate of Oman and United Arab Emirates for their support to our Company. I also thank the stock market authorities, banks, shareholders and employees of the Company for their guidance, cooperation and efforts.

Mohamed Darwish Al Khoori
Chairman
12th November 2023

CONSOLIDATED AND SEPARATE CONDENSED INTERIM STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

	30 September 2023 (Un-audited)	Group 30 September 2022 (Un-audited)	31 December 2022 (Audited)	30 September 2023 (Un-audited)	Parent Company 30 September 2022 (Un-audited)	31 December 2022 (Audited)
ASSETS						
Cash and bank balances	1,336,728	4,933,154	2,588,582	579,128	3,111,082	964,158
Trade and other receivables	1,378,287	1,910,767	1,487,530	64,683	34,844	206,666
Inventories	498,557	502,584	456,254	-	-	-
Investments at fair value through profit or loss	13,993,997	14,719,029	14,641,548	9,533,280	11,314,649	10,883,176
Investment in associates	16,047,501	15,585,746	15,798,771	14,316,868	13,966,118	14,231,630
Investment in subsidiaries	-	-	-	3,733,466	3,722,204	3,596,035
Financial assets at amortised cost	2,093,971	2,101,966	2,099,271	2,093,971	2,101,966	2,099,271
Investment properties	2,857,500	2,981,700	2,950,650	2,587,500	2,711,700	2,680,650
Property, plant and equipment	2,058,619	2,328,496	2,257,421	344,526	439,967	414,810
Right-of-use asset	385,565	43,577	385,565	-	-	-
Deferred tax asset	39,272	78,494	78,367	-	-	-
TOTAL ASSETS	40,689,997	45,185,513	42,743,959	33,253,422	37,402,530	35,076,396
EQUITY						
Capital and reserves						
Share capital	12,187,500	12,187,500	12,187,500	12,187,500	12,187,500	12,187,500
Legal reserve	4,991,892	4,991,892	4,991,892	4,062,500	4,062,500	4,062,500
Retained earnings	5,065,431	6,060,159	5,977,493	7,160,089	7,988,739	7,969,803
Total capital and reserves of Parent Company	22,244,823	23,239,551	23,156,885	23,410,089	24,238,739	24,219,803
Non-controlling interest	3,282,467	3,311,099	3,175,730	-	-	-
TOTAL EQUITY	25,527,290	26,550,650	26,332,615	23,410,089	24,238,739	24,219,803
LIABILITIES						
Lease liabilities	399,715	53,454	399,715	-	-	-
Bank overdrafts	68,308	211,952	79,890	-	143,644	11,582
Term loans	1,730,762	2,311,176	2,121,833	1,730,762	2,311,176	2,121,833
Trade and other payables	1,810,922	2,405,281	2,656,906	612,571	708,971	1,223,178
Loans from Governments	11,153,000	13,653,000	11,153,000	7,500,000	10,000,000	7,500,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES	15,162,707	18,634,863	16,411,344	9,843,333	13,163,791	10,856,593
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	40,689,997	45,185,513	42,743,959	33,253,422	37,402,530	35,076,396
Net assets per share	0.183	0.191	0.190	0.192	0.199	0.199

CONSOLIDATED AND SEPARATE CONDENSED INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE NINE-MONTH PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

	Group				Parent Company			
	1 January 2023 to 30 September 2023	1 January 2023 to 30 September 2022	1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023	1 July 2023 to 30 September 2022	1 January 2023 to 30 September 2023	1 January 2023 to 30 September 2022	1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023	1 July 2023 to 30 September 2022
Interest income	192	308	65	308	192	308	65	308
Rental income	111,347	89,057	32,943	32,852	111,347	89,057	32,943	32,852
Brokerage commission income	118,017	115,690	32,128	53,184	-	-	-	-
Dividend income	650,075	645,804	54,209	76,988	465,191	541,743	11,765	62,709
Realised profit / (loss) on sale of Investments at fair value through profit or loss	141,990	1,961,516	42,072	14,125	761	1,872,507	-	(14,756)
Unrealised (loss)/profit on investments at fair value through profit or loss	(434,185)	708,575	(287,522)	406,909	(346,645)	791,989	(238,327)	425,607
Share of profit / (loss) from investments in associates and subsidiaries	551,302	(278,315)	187,458	(23,072)	525,242	(144,017)	191,517	28,302
Gross profit on sale of food products	174,767	146,749	7,037	31,127	-	-	-	-
Asset management fees	68,662	76,005	23,474	23,479	-	-	-	-
Other income	40,715	45,840	12,432	30,530	-	318	-	318
Total income	1,422,882	3,511,229	104,296	646,430	756,088	3,151,905	(2,037)	535,340
Expenses								
Staff costs-	(547,231)	(568,589)	(181,334)	(180,466)	(225,144)	(223,694)	(72,368)	(65,736)
Administrative expenses	(519,116)	(516,206)	(166,765)	(166,104)	(300,484)	(282,333)	(90,992)	(87,022)
Investment related expenses	(8,353)	(7,995)	-	(2,694)	(8,353)	(7,995)	-	(2,694)
Total expenses	(1,074,700)	(1,092,790)	(348,099)	(349,264)	(533,981)	(514,022)	(163,360)	(155,452)
Operating profit for the period	348,182	2,418,439	(243,803)	297,166	222,107	2,637,883	(165,397)	379,888
Finance costs	(198,318)	(426,038)	(79,183)	(69,570)	(115,725)	(341,961)	(50,995)	(41,791)
Profit/(loss) before tax for the period	149,864	1,992,401	(322,986)	227,596	106,382	2,295,922	(216,392)	338,097
Income tax	(39,093)	-	15,869	-	-	-	-	-
Net profit/(loss) after tax and total comprehensive income/(loss) for the period	110,771	1,992,401	(322,986)	243,465	106,382	2,295,922	(216,392)	338,097
Net profit/(loss) after tax attributable to:								
Parent Company	4,034	2,166,940	(291,642)	282,288	106,382	2,295,922	(216,392)	338,097
Non-controlling interest	106,737	(174,539)	(31,344)	(38,823)	-	-	-	-
	110,771	1,992,401	(322,986)	243,465	106,382	2,295,922	(216,392)	338,097
Earnings per share basic and diluted	0.000	0.018	(0.002)	0.002	0.001	0.019	(0.002)	0.003

Indian rescuers battle for third day to save trapped workers

Dehradun, India - More than a hundred rescuers in northern India struggled for a third day on Tuesday to save workers trapped underground after the road tunnel they were building collapsed.

Excavators have been removing debris since Sunday morning from the site in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand to create an escape tunnel for the 40 workers, who are all alive.

"Our biggest breakthrough is that we have established contact and there is a supply of oxygen and food," Uttarkashi district's top civil servant Abhishek Ruhela told AFP on Tuesday. "Whatever is necessary for their survival is being done."

Oxygen was being pumped into the tunnel and small food items such as dry fruit were being provided to the workers, he added.

The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) said on Tuesday rescuers had spoken to the trapped workers via radio.

Ranjit Kumar Sinha, a senior disaster management official, told reporters at the site he was hopeful workers could be freed



Rescue workers gather near the site after a tunnel collapsed in the Uttarkashi district of India's Uttarakhand state on Monday (AFP)

by Wednesday, adding that there was enough oxygen where they were trapped 'for about five to six days'.

'Huge amount of debris'

Construction worker Hemant Nayak told AFP that he had been in the tunnel early on Sunday when the roof caved in, but he had been on the right side of the collapse and escaped.

Small amounts of dirt had been falling into the tunnel, but 'everyone took it lightly', he said.

"Then suddenly a huge amount of debris came and the tunnel was closed," he added.

Photos released by government rescue teams soon after the collapse showed huge piles

of rubble blocking the wide tunnel, with twisted metal bars from its roof poking down in front of slabs of concrete.

Teams are using heavy machinery to drive a steel pipe with a width of 90 centimetres (nearly three feet), wide enough for the trapped men to squeeze through the rubble, the government's highway and infrastructure company said.

The 4.5km (2.7-mile) tunnel is being constructed between the towns of Silkyara and Dandagaon to connect Uttarkashi and Yamunotri, two of the holi-

est Hindu shrines.

The tunnel is part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's road project aimed at improving travel conditions between some of the most popular Hindu shrines in the country as well as areas bordering China.

Accidents on large infrastructure projects are common in India. In January, at least 200 people were killed in flash floods in ecologically fragile Uttarakhand in a disaster that experts partly blamed on excessive development.

AFP

Xi looks to steady ties with Biden

The two leaders will meet on the sidelines of the APEC summit

Shanghai, China - The last time Xi Jinping travelled to the United States was six years ago to meet an effusive Donald Trump, who had promised 'a very, very great relationship'.

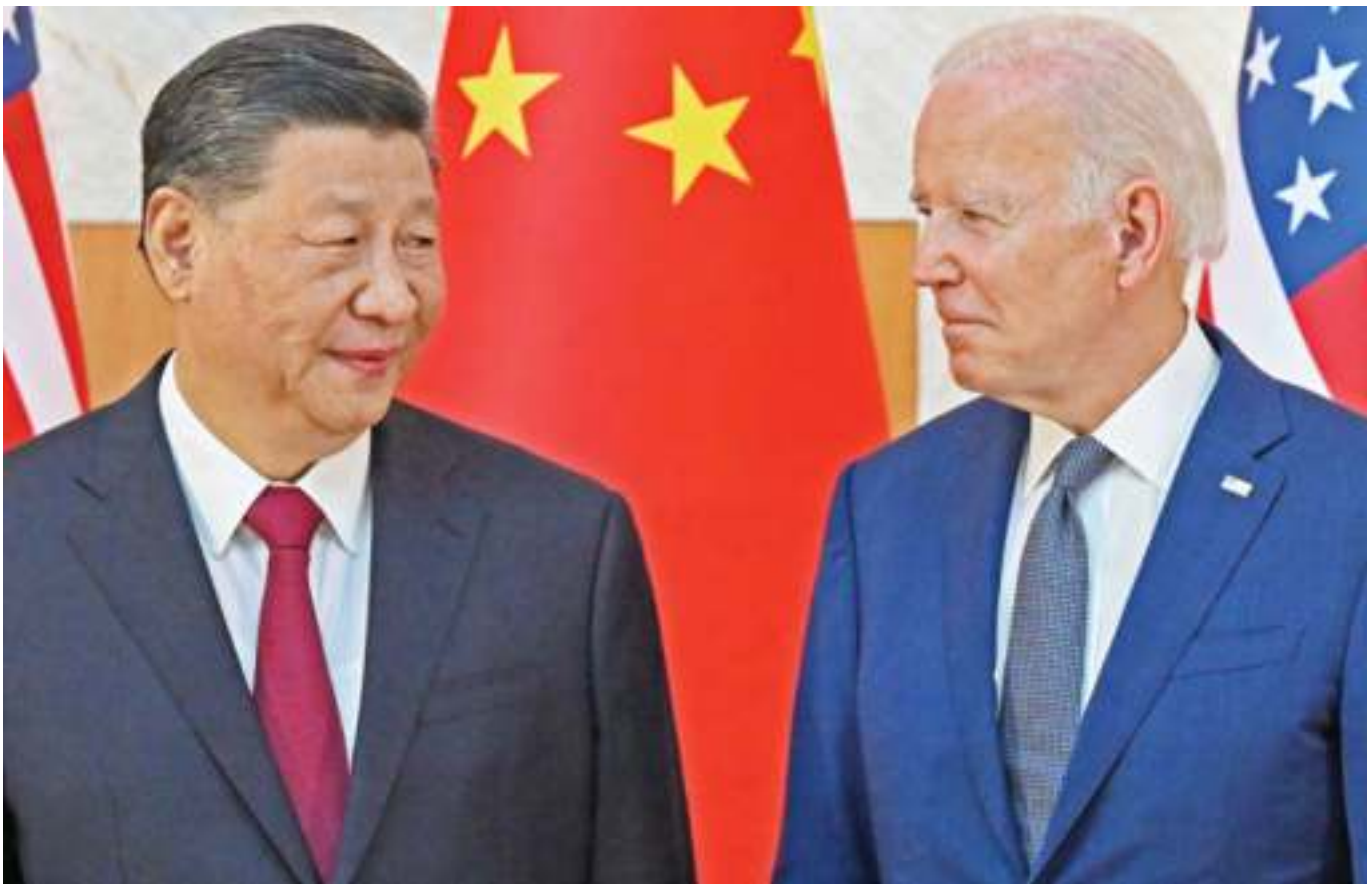
Instead, US-China relations spiralled to lower and lower depths, with the Chinese president now looking to stabilise ties when he sits down with Joe Biden in San Francisco this week.

The two leaders will meet on the sidelines of the APEC summit in the California city, their first encounter in a year despite trade tensions, sanctions, and the question of Taiwan feeding quarrels between the world's largest economies.

Positive momentum from November 2022 talks between Xi and Biden in Bali was derailed when the United States shot down an alleged Chinese spy balloon, delaying a planned visit by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Since then, a flurry of high-level diplomacy, including Blinken's eventual trip to Beijing in June, has signalled ambitions on both sides to mend ties.

"I don't think anyone really has high hopes for the meeting in terms of there being concrete outcomes," said Joseph Liow



This file photo shows US President Joe Biden and China's President Xi Jinping (L) meet on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Bali on November 14, 2022 (AFP)

I don't think anyone really has high hopes for the meeting in terms of there being concrete outcomes

JOSEPH LIOW

from Singapore's Nanyang Technological University.

"This meeting is important for the symbolism that the leaders do want to set relations on a more stable footing."

Asked about Beijing's expectations for the meeting, China's foreign ministry remained vague, mentioning 'in-depth communication' and 'major issues concerning world peace'.

"China attaches great importance to positive efforts to stabilise US-China relations," Chen Dingding, president of the Guangzhou-based think tank Intellisia Institute, told AFP.

Tactically for Beijing, 'the key at present is to seek points of co-operation', said Lyu Xiang, US-Chinese relations expert at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS).

'Calmer waters'

Xi is under pressure at home because of a weak economy, but also because of 'the impression among at least part of the Chinese elites that the most important diplomatic relation for China... is being mismanaged', wrote Natixis CIB's Alicia Garcia Herrero in a note.

From Xi's perspective, 'the ability to project an image of strength, of being in control of the bilateral relationship, of staring into calmer waters, will be politically useful', added Amanda Hsiao of International Crisis Group (ICG).

But several thorny issues

could get in the way of smoothing out tensions.

In Beijing's view, Washington has 'failed to implement the consensus of the two sides' talks (in Bali), leading to a period of stagnation for US-China relations this year', said Intellisia Institute's Chen.

Chen was cautious about Washington's overtures to China, saying that Biden could switch to a harder line on Beijing ahead of elections if he ends up facing off with Republican predecessor Trump.

China has also made clear that it will not budge on issues it considers red lines, such as Tai-

wan, which Beijing claims as its own territory to be seized one day, and its military expansion in the South China Sea.

Cautious optimism

Washington and Beijing have recently made some progress on trade and economic relations, and climate change talks.

Ahead of the APEC summit, US climate envoy John Kerry met with his Chinese counterpart Xie Zhenhua, while US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen sat down with her opposite number last week too.

Xi will have dinner with top US business leaders on his trip, and is expected to push for a relaxation of US trade curbs in his talks with Biden.

"Trade tariff barriers, technology export controls, the blacklisting of Chinese companies, and restrictions on Chinese green energy products remain egregious and unacceptable," said CASS' Lyu.

"In these pragmatic areas, the US side must come up with serious measures for improvement."

The two leaders could also announce the resumption of military dialogue after a year-long suspension, which the ICG's Hsiao said would be 'an extremely positive and actually very important outcome'.

Yuan Zheng, also of CASS, told Chinese state media he thought the Russia-Ukraine and Hamas-Israel conflicts could also be discussed. "While China and the US have some differences on these issues, they also share some common interests and perceptions," he said.

AFP

Indian man gets death penalty for rape, murder of 5-year-old

Kochi, India - The Ernakulam POCSO Court in Kerala on Tuesday awarded death sentence to Asafaq Alam for the rape and murder of a five-year-old girl in Aluva, nearly four months after the incident that sent shock waves across the State.

Additionally, Alam was awarded five counts of life sentences for the remainder of his natural life under five sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

He was sentenced to five years for destroying evidence, three years for drugging the minor, life imprisonment for raping the minor and received the death penalty for the murder and rape of the minor.

"These five life sentences will run concurrently," read the court judgment.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs 7,20,000 on Alam, a migrant labourer hailing from Bihar.

The court sentenced the accused under various sections of the IPC, POCSO Act and the Juvenile Justice Act. The accused Asafaq Alam was arrested on Friday, July 28 on the same night of the crime.

ANI

5,000 Myanmar citizens cross over to Mizoram

Aizawl, India - Over 5,000 Myanmar nationals have crossed over to neighbouring Mizoram in India following Monday's airstrike by the Myanmar army in its Chin state, said Lalbiakthanga Khiantge, Inspector General of Police, Mizoram Police.

"Now there are more than 5,000 people who took refuge in two Mizoram villages along the Myanmar border," the IGP said, adding that many got injured.

"About 20 are injured. Eight of them are taken to Aizawl for better medical treatment and the rest are being treated in Champhai," the IGP further said. He said one of the injured succumbed to his injuries last evening.

Asked what the status was on the ground and whether there was any possibility for commotion on the Myanmar side, he said: "Since last night there has been no commotion."

"Now it is quite calm but we don't know whether the Myan-



Mizoram IGP Lalbiakthanga Khiantge (ANI)

mar army will attack from the air. We cannot rule out air strike at present if the Myanmar government is willing."

The Mizoram IGP apprised that as many as 42 Myanmar army personnel have surrendered in front of Mizoram Police, and they have been handed over to the central force - Assam Rifles. "(Government of) India will decide their fate."

The injured are being taken care of by local Mizo non-governmental organisations. Many

Myanmar nationals were caught in the crossfire and got injured while crossing over to India on Monday.

The fighting reportedly started after the People's Defence Force (PDF) attacked two military bases at Khawmawi and Rihkhawdar in Chin state near the Indian border. In retaliation, the Myanmar army launched airstrikes.

Several Myanmar nationals who were injured in the Myanmar army airstrike have crossed the international border entered Mizoram's Champhai district and were admitted to a hospital for treatment.

The latest influx of refugees is in addition to the thousands who have already taken refuge in the northeastern state since 2021. Mizos share ethnic ties with the Chin community.

Myanmar's military junta is facing its biggest test since taking power in a 2021 coup.

ANI

US Supreme Court adopts ethics code

Washington, US - The US Supreme Court unveiled an ethics code on Monday following a series of scandals over lavish gifts and luxury vacations received by some of its justices.

The nine members of the nation's highest court are the only federal judges not explicitly subject to ethical oversight, and pressure has been mounting from Democrats in the Senate for them to adopt a code of conduct.

In a statement, the Supreme Court said the absence of a formal code had led to a 'misunderstanding that the Justices of this Court, unlike all other jurists in this country, regard themselves as unrestricted by any ethics rules'.

"To dispel this misunderstanding, we are issuing this Code, which largely represents a codification of principles that we have long regarded as governing our conduct," the court said.

"For the most part these rules and principles are not new," the court said. "The Court has long had the equivalent of common law ethics rules."



People walk past the US Supreme Court in Washington, DC, on Monday (AFP)

Adoption of the code comes some seven months after the non-profit ProPublica news outlet reported that Justice Clarence Thomas had accepted years of luxury travel trips from a billionaire Republican, including yachting in New Zealand and private jet flights across the globe.

ProPublica also reported in June that another conservative justice, Samuel Alito, had flown to Alaska in 2008 for a luxury fishing trip on a private jet owned

by a billionaire hedge fund manager who later had cases before the court.

Both Thomas and Alito have denied any impropriety.

The nine-page Code of Conduct, which was signed by all nine justices, requires them to 'uphold the integrity and independence of the judiciary' and 'avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all activities'. "A Justice should not allow family, social, political, fi-

nancial, or other relationships to influence official conduct or judgment," it says.

The code also includes rules on acceptance of gifts and bars justices from speaking at events 'sponsored by or associated with a political party or a campaign for political office'.

Staunch conservative Thomas, the longest-serving justice on the court, jetted to Indonesia and boarded a luxury superyacht on a trip estimated to be worth US\$500,000 - all paid for by real estate tycoon Harlan Crow, according to ProPublica.

Crow has made more than US\$10m in donations to Republican political groups, ProPublica said, including half a million dollars to a conservative lobbying group founded by Thomas's wife Ginni Thomas.

Crow also paid for the private school tuition of Thomas's grandnephew, whom he was raising, and bought from Thomas the house where the justice's mother lived, according to ProPublica.

AFP

Israeli tanks at Gaza hospital's gates

Jerusalem - Tanks were massed near the gates of Gaza's main hospital where Palestinians were trapped in dire conditions on Tuesday as US President Joe Biden pressed Israel to protect the complex.

After days of heavy air strikes around Gaza City's Al-Shifa hospital, witnesses said tanks and armoured vehicles were metres from the besieged facility, which has become a focal point of the five-week-old war.

The United Nations believes that thousands, and perhaps more than 10,000 people - patients, staff and displaced civilians - may be inside and unable to escape because of fierce fighting nearby.

Amid reports of premature babies dying for lack of electricity and patients facing gunfire, a surgeon working for Doctors Without Borders said the situation inside the hospital had become 'very bad'.

"We don't have electricity. There's no water in the hospital. There's no food," said the doctor, who was not named by his organisation. "It is inhuman."

Israel accuses Hamas fighters of using tunnels under the hospital as a command 'node', effectively engaging the sick and injured as human shields. It is a charge that Hamas denies.

Israel says it is not targeting the hospital, but has vowed to destroy Hamas in response to the attacks of October 7, which killed an estimated 1,200 people and resulted in 240 hostages being taken back to Gaza.



Patients and internally displaced people are pictured at Al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City, amid ongoing battles between Israel and the Palestinian Hamas movement (AFP)

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza says Israel's assault has already killed 11,240 people, also mostly civilians, including thousands of children.

Israel says 46 of its troops have been killed in fighting in Gaza.

Biden called on Israel to use 'less intrusive action relative to the hospital', some of his most pointed comments on Israeli operations to date. "The hospital must be protected," he told

reporters.

Israeli military spokesman Peter Lerner insisted Al-Shifa was 'central in Hamas's command and control capabilities', but said troops were currently 'stand-offish'.

"The idea is to try to evacuate the people, evacuate as many as possible," he said.

Underscoring the role that global public opinion is playing in the war, both sides have repeatedly given vastly different ac-

counts of events.

Lerner put the number of people inside the hospital at 'a few hundred', while the Hamas government's deputy health minister Youssef Abu Rish, who is present in the hospital, said about 20,000 displaced people had sought refuge there.

'Window of legitimacy'

Hamas's attacks of October 7 and Israel's massive response

have sparked protests around the world, with hundreds of thousands of people taking to the streets in the Middle East, Europe and beyond.

Israel's supporters insist it must protect citizens after the worst attack in the country's 75-year history - an attack that brought painful echoes of past pogroms against the Jewish people. But Israel's critics point to the toll of a blockade and near-relentless bombing campaign on

long-suffering civilians in Gaza.

International aid agencies speak of hundreds of thousands of people displaced and a rolling humanitarian catastrophe.

Israel's top diplomat admitted on Monday that his nation has 'two or three weeks until international pressure really steps up'.

Quoted by his spokesman, Foreign Minister Eli Cohen added that Israel is working to 'broaden the window of legitimacy, and the fighting will carry on for as

long as necessary.'

Truce talks

In the face of mounting pressure, Israel has agreed to daily pauses in military operations around specified humanitarian 'corridors' to allow Gazans to flee fighting.

Israeli leaders have so far insisted there will be no broader ceasefire before hostages are released. But Qatar is mediating talks on a possible deal to free the hostages.

Abu Obeida, a spokesman for Hamas's military wing, said on Monday that a possible deal would involve the release 100 Israeli hostages in return for 200 Palestinian children and 75 women held in Israeli prisons.

"We informed the mediators we could release the hostages if we obtained five days of truce... and passage of aid to all of our people throughout the Gaza Strip, but the enemy is procrastinating," Abu Obeida said in an audio statement.

Biden said he was 'somewhat hopeful' the Qatar-mediated talks could lead to a deal.

The war in Gaza has also spurred violence on other fronts.

In the northern West Bank, five Palestinians were killed in clashes around the city of Tulkerem, the director of a local hospital told AFP on Tuesday.

After repeated strikes on US forces in the Middle East, the United States launched air attacks that killed at least eight pro-Iran fighters in eastern Syria. AFP

Brazil's Lula says Israel response 'as grave' as attack by Hamas

Brasilia, Brazil - Brazil's president on Monday accused Israel of 'killing innocent people without any criteria' in the Gaza Strip, deeming its actions there 'as grave' as the October 7 attacks by Palestinian fighter group Hamas.

"After the Hamas attack, the consequences, the solution of the state of Israel, is as grave as that of Hamas," said Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva at a ceremony in Brasilia welcoming Brazilians and their families who had been evacuated from Gaza. "They are killing innocent people without any criteria," said Lula.

The leader of Latin America's largest country also accused Israel of 'dropping bombs where there are children, hospitals, on the pretext that a terrorist is there'.

"They are not killing soldiers, they are killing children," he told journalists at the Brasilia Air Base, claiming the number of women and children killed or



Lula da Silva welcomes Brazilians and Palestinians returning from the Gaza Strip at Brasilia Air Base on Monday (AFP)

missing was unheard of.

Lula, 78, who hugged and kissed the returnees on the tarmac, said he had 'never' seen 'such brutal and inhuman vio-

lence against innocent people'.

"This is inexplicable. First you have to save the women and children, then you fight with whomever you want," Lula said.

Representatives of Brazil's Jewish community denounced these remarks as 'erroneous', 'unfair' and 'dangerous'.

AFP

UN demands access to address humanitarian plight in Sudan

United Nations, US - The head of UN humanitarian operations on Monday denounced 'extreme violence' against civilians caught up in the war in Sudan, and said relief efforts reach only a fraction of those in need.

Martin Griffiths demanded unimpeded access for UN relief teams to help stem what he called the 'avalanche of human suffering' in Sudan. After nearly seven months of conflict between the Sudanese army, led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhane, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) of General Mohamed Hamdane Daglo, 'almost 25mn people in Sudan are now in need of humanitarian assistance', Griffiths said.

But 'access is a serious problem. Since mid-April, we have been able to reach only 4.1mn people with life-saving aid', Griffiths said at the first 'Humanitarian Forum on Sudan', attended by representatives of the army and the RSF.



Women and girls have shouldered a particularly heavy burden, facing terrifying risks to their safety, including rape and kidnap

MARTIN GRIFFITHS

The parties to the conflict pledged last week at talks in Saudi Arabia to improve humanitarian access, tasking the UN with setting up the forum to facil-

itate the implementation of these commitments.

But Griffiths said most basic services in the country have come to an 'almost complete standstill', making efforts to contain a cholera outbreak difficult.

"Women and girls have shouldered a particularly heavy burden, facing terrifying risks to their safety, including rape and kidnap," he said, pointing out that 'more than 10,000 Sudanese have reportedly so far lost their lives' since mid-April.

As late as Monday, witnesses told AFP of 'bombardments' on houses that injured civilians, including children, in El Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan state, 350km south of Khartoum. Intense fighting has also taken place in Darfur in recent days. Last week, UN humanitarian coordinator in Sudan Clementine Nkweta-Salami described the violence in Sudan as bordering on 'verging on pure evil'.

AFP

Indonesian President Widodo urges Biden to help end Gaza 'atrocities'

Washington, US - Indonesian President Joko Widodo pressed US President Joe Biden during a visit to the White House on Monday to do more to end 'atrocities' in Gaza and help bring about a ceasefire.

The Israel-Hamas war overshadowed the talks, which had been meant to showcase an upgrade in ties between Indonesia and the United States ahead of Biden's meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping this week.

"Indonesia appeals to the US to do more to stop the atrocities in Gaza," Widodo, the leader of the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation, said as the two presidents met in front of a roaring fire.

"Ceasefire is a must for the sake of humanity."

The Indonesian president had said on Sunday he would bring Biden a 'very strong message' from a joint summit of Arab and Muslim leaders in Riyadh at the weekend which condemned Israel and called for a ceasefire.

Widodo had also said he would 'deliver a specific message from President Mahmoud Abbas of Palestine, who asked me to convey it to President Biden', regarding the war.

But Biden stayed focused on plans to upgrade cooperation with Indonesia to the highest level, a so-called comprehensive strategic partnership.

Washington has been trying



US President Joe Biden speaks with Indonesian President Joko Widodo during a meeting in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, DC, on Monday (AFP)

to build alliances in the Asia-Pacific region as China becomes an increasingly assertive presence.

"This will mark a new era of relations between the United States and Indonesia across the

board, affecting everything," Biden said, reading from a card. The leaders would also dis-

cuss cooperation on critical minerals for electric vehicle batteries and other clean energy technologies, of which Indonesia has large reserves, Biden said.

After talks in the Oval Office, the two leaders were due to have tea in the White House Cabinet Room accompanied by their aides.

'Global conflict'

The meeting comes two days before Biden is due to meet Xi on the sidelines of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in San Francisco.

Washington and Beijing are hoping to stabilise ties amid increasingly tense competition for alliances with nations like

Indonesia.

Indonesia and other countries will be watching the talks between the superpower rivals because 'they want a situation that is not risking global conflict,' a US official said on Sunday.

Biden unveiled a similar upgrade to ties with Vietnam on a visit to Hanoi in September.

Indonesia, like many emerging and developing countries, has received massive Chinese investment and loans, particularly for infrastructure projects.

But global concerns about the Israel-Hamas conflict were on the agenda in Washington, as they will be in San Francisco later this week.

AFP



BOTH TEAMS ‘START FROM ZERO AGAIN’

Hosts India braced for ‘pressure’ World Cup semi against New Zealand

Mumbai, India - India may be the outstanding team at the Cricket World Cup but New Zealand fast bowler Lockie Ferguson has insisted both sides will “start from zero again” when they meet in Wednesday’s semi-final in Mumbai.

Tournament hosts India head into the knockout match having won all nine of their group game, with star man Virat Kohli the event’s leading batsman with 594 runs and captain Rohit Sharma not far behind on 503.

Meanwhile, India boast a formidable fast-bowling line-up in Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj and Mohammed Shami.

If successful teams are fortunate as well as good, then India certainly had a lucky break when



India's top order of Virat Kohli (2R), Shubman Gill (L), captain Rohit Sharma (2L) and KL Rahul in fine form (AFP)

an injury to all-rounder Hardik Pandya paved the way for Shami’s return, with the experienced seamer having since taken 16 wickets in five matches at a stunningly low average of under 10.

In addition spinners Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav are also capable of taking wickets

without being flogged for runs.

And yet the fact remains India have been waiting since a 2011 triumph over Sri Lanka in Mumbai to win a third World Cup title, while their last major piece of silverware was the 2013 Champions Trophy.

New Zealand, losing finalists at the last two 50-over World

Cups, won their opening four games of this edition only to lose their next four.

But fast bowler Ferguson told reporters ahead of a training session in Mumbai on Monday: “We kind of all start from zero again. So come Wednesday, it’ll be a good challenge.”

Four years ago, New Zealand

defeated India by just 18 runs in a rain-affected World Cup semi-final in Manchester that spanned two days.

“That was obviously very pleasing for us at the time but four years have gone past, we’ve played a lot of cricket in between,” said Ferguson.

AFP

Williamson confident ahead of semi-final clash against India

Mumbai, India- New Zealand captain, Kane Williamson, was exuding confidence ahead of the highly anticipated World Cup semi-final against India.

Despite facing early defeats, the Kiwi team approaches the blockbuster match with renewed focus, recognizing the formidable challenge posed by the in-form hosts.



Kane Williamson

The team, starting the tournament with four straight wins, encountered setbacks against Rohit Sharma’s side amid injury issues. Nonetheless, they secured a semi-final spot with a late surge. Williamson, recovering from knee surgery and a fractured finger, foresees a tough battle against the unbeaten hosts from the group stage.

“We know it’s going to be a really tough challenge. They’re a side that’s been playing extremely well, but we also know come finals time everything starts again and it’s all about the day,” Williamson told reporters.

He emphasised that it would be a fresh start. “We’ve had a couple of narrow losses and a few wins along the way which have put us in this position we’re in.”

Unfazed by the underdog

label, Williamson remains confident, recognising India’s exceptional form but asserting that New Zealand stands a strong chance on their best day.

“One of the, if not the best team going around and playing cricket that matches that. But we know as well, on our day when we play our best cricket it certainly gives us the best chance. And come finals time anything can happen,” he said.

Drawing parallels with their successful 2019 semi-final against India, he underscores the unpredictable nature of finals where anything can happen.

Williamson was all praise for top-order batsman Rachin Ravindra.



India's fast-bowling line-up comprising Mohammed Shami, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj has performed admirably so far.

India wary of World Cup’s ‘glorious uncertainties’

New Delhi, India - India are the overwhelming favourites to lift a third World Cup but a star of the country’s 1983 breakthrough triumph has warned of the threats posed by cricket’s “glorious uncertainties”.

Rohit Sharma’s side have cruised into the semi-finals, where they will face New Zealand on Wednesday, with nine wins from nine matches in the group phase.

Now, Syed Kirmani, who played a major role in the 1983 title victory which set India on the road to becoming the sport’s financial powerhouse, has warned against complacency undermining the nation’s hopes.

Kirmani, 73, believes the West Indies, who arrived at the 1983 World Cup as two-time champions, paid the price for underestimating India.

“Superb,” Kirmani told AFP

when asked for his thoughts on the 2023 World Cup side who are looking for a third title and first since MS Dhoni’s team triumphed at home in 2011.

“They are playing like champions, like the West Indians did.

“Nobody is going to think that India is going to lose and I am very positive that India will win this World Cup. But with the glorious uncertainties of this great game you never know. You can-

not take things for granted like the West Indies in 1983.”

India had shown early signs of things to come at the 1983 tournament when they also beat the West Indies in their opening match.

Kirmani said that win was a “shot in the arm” to their confidence and India “capitalised on the complacency” of the bigger teams. The Kapil Dev-led squad went in as underdogs but also de-

feated Australia and then England in the semi-finals.

In a low-scoring final at Lord’s, India won by 43 runs despite only defending 183. Madan Lal dismissed Viv Richards for 33 with Dev running back to take a stunning catch which turned the tide.

“All along we played good cricket as a team,” Roger Binny, now the president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), told AFP.

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Luis Suarez

Suarez returns to Uruguay squad for Argentina clash

Montevideo, Uruguay - Uruguay's record goalscorer Luis Suarez on Monday received his first call-up under new coach Marcelo Bielsa who named the 36-year-old in his squad to face Argentina this week in a 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifier.

Suarez, with 68 international goals to his name, has been in superb form for Brazilian club Gremio with 16 goals in 29 games but has not featured for Uruguay since Bielsa took over in May. Thursday's match against Argentina will be his first for the national team since they were eliminated from the World Cup in Qatar in the group stages last year.

Edinson Cavani, who has 58 international goals to his name, was left out after picking up an injury playing for Boca Juniors.

If he plays, Suarez is likely to come up against his former Barcelona teammate Lionel Messi who scored both goals in the qualifier against Peru last month that ended 2-0.

Argentina has won all four of its qualifiers so far, topping the table with 12 points, five clear of Venezuela, Brazil and Uruguay.

Six teams from the continent will qualify for the FIFA World Cup 2026 hosted by Canada, Mexico and the United States.

'I FEEL I CAN WIN AGAIN'

Zverev overpowers Alcaraz, Medvedev prevails in ATP Finals Russian derby

Turin, Italy - Alexander Zverev battled back from a set down to beat Carlos Alcaraz 6-7 (3/7), 6-3, 6-4 at the ATP Finals on Monday as Daniil Medvedev won a Russian derby against Andrey Rublev in straight sets 6-4, 6-2.

Germany's Zverev, a two-time winner at the year-ending tournament, put on a powerful display to see off world number two Alcaraz who is not on top form after returning from injury at the end of last month.

Zverev is tough opposition on hard courts like the one at the Pala Alpitour in Turin and made full use of his height and power in the Red Group clash to see off Alcaraz who looks far from being the ageless Novak Djokovic's main rival for the title.

The 26-year-old Zverev rattled off 16 aces and was only broken once over the course of an impressive win in which he hit more winners and made significantly fewer unforced errors than out-of-sorts Alcaraz.

"In the beginning of this year, I was nowhere near at his level," Zverev told reporters.

"I'm just happy to be back at the level where I'm competitive with those guys, where I feel like



Germany's Alexander Zverev celebrates after winning the first round-robin match against Spain's Carlos Alcaraz at the ATP Finals in Turin on Monday (AFP)

I'm one of the players who has played most matches on tour... I feel good physically. I don't think I need more matches (to be in top condition)

CARLOS ALCARAZ

I can win, I feel like I can compete for tournaments again."

Wimbledon champion Alcaraz has struggled with lower

back and left foot problems which had kept him out of action since the Shanghai Masters in early October until the Paris

Masters.

He was dumped out early in the French capital by Russian qualifier Roman Safiullin and flagged towards the end of a bruising contest with giant Zverev, the number seven seed in Turin. However Alcaraz insisted that he was not struggling back to form after his lay-off.

"I'm one of the players who has played most matches on tour... I feel good physically," insisted Alcaraz. "I don't think I

need more matches (to be in top condition)."

Before Zverev's win Novak Djokovic was presented with the trophy for finishing the season as world number one. The 24-time Grand Slam winner secured that position after winning his thrilling Green Group opener with Holger Rune on Sunday, a match which lasted more than three hours.

Djokovic is red-hot favourite to claim his seventh Finals title which would put him out of his

own as the record winner, one ahead of retired great and old rival Roger Federer. "Winning Grand Slams and being number one in the world are probably the pinnacles of the sport," said Djokovic

Medvedev moved above Zverev - his next opponent - to top the Red Group with a straightforward win over his childhood friend Rublev who once again had the worst of a match between the two Russians.

Third Gary Kirsten Camp a success: Oman Cricket

Muscat - Oman Cricket's relentless commitment to providing world-class coaching to young cricket enthusiasts in the Sultanate has manifested in the success of the third edition of the Gary Kirsten Camp (GKC).

The four-day camp, held at the Oman Cricket Academy (OCA) grounds in Al Amerat recently, witnessed a satisfactory turnout, with a total of 46 players, including 26 in the under-14 category and the rest in the under-19 group.

Evert Laubscher, Oman Cricket Academy (OCA) manager, said, "The third GKC edition

turned out to be a success with a good number of participants attending."

He highlighted the consistent progress observed in the young cricketers who participated, a testament to the effectiveness of the world-class coaching provided.

The camp featured distinguished coaches from the Gary Kirsten Centre (GKC), including Jimmy Cook and Garreth Von Hoesslin.

Assisted by four OCA coaches, the GKC coaches emphasised the development of match temperament, organising



The four-day camp was held at the Oman Cricket Academy (OCA) grounds in Al Amerat

four T20 matches at the Al Amerat grounds for the under-19 cricketers.

Laubscher noted that the play-

ers gained valuable experience facing match situations, contributing to the enhancement of their cricketing skills.

Alkesh Joshi, OC treasurer, was impressed with the growing success of the GKC, noting that many children attended for the third time, underlying the enduring benefits of such world-class camps.

He stated, "Our goal is to ensure top-class coaching for young cricketers in Oman, and the positive response to the GKC aligns with this objective."

Joshi revealed the board's eagerness to continue the partnership with Gary Kirsten, with plans for the next camp in early 2024.

He said, "We hope to build on this excellent partnership, which

is helping our players develop into better players."

The success of the GKC camps has been a consistent theme since October 2022 when OC first collaborated with the renowned South African cricketer Gary Kirsten.

Notably, the second camp in February 2023 saw Gary Kirsten personally visiting Muscat, and lauding the commitment of OC in providing top-class lessons for Omani cricketers.

During Kirsten's maiden visit, he highlighted the pivotal role of parents in nurturing young cricketers.

Vanderlande and Bank Muscat register wins

Muscat - Bank Muscat defeated AER by five wickets in the A Division League 2023-24 powered by Khimji Ramdas LLC on Friday.

Bank Muscat dismissed AER for 72 with Adnan Ul Haq, Deepak Kumar and Ali Hussnain three wickets each. In response Ali Raza made an unbeaten 36 as Bank Muscat reached the target with five wickets to spare.

In another match, Vanderlande trounced OCT Ruwi by 93 runs on Saturday.

Ciril Sebastian's 73 along with contributions from Abdulgani Sheikh (41) and Aravind Ramesh (36) helped Vanderlande post a total of 223. Mohammed Al Balushi picked three wickets conceding only 12 runs in his quota of ten overs. In response, OCT Ruwi only managed to score 130 with Shoaib Al Balushi making 41 and Mohammed Al Balushi scoring 32.

Aiyappan B took five wickets while Haja Hussain picked three.

Brief Scores : AER 72/10 in 23.4 overs (Adnan Ul Haq 3/6, Deepak Kumar 3/19, Ali Huss-



Ali Hussnain and Deepak Kumar of Bank Muscat

nain 3/24) lost to Bank Muscat 73/5 in 18.3 overs (Ali Raza 36(48) 5x4; Syed Amir Ali 2/5) by 5 wickets.

BRIEF SCORES:

Vanderlande 223/9 in 50 overs (Ciril Sebastian 73(80) 4x4,4x6; Mo-hammed Al Balushi 3/12) beat OCT Ruwi 130/10 in 30.2 overs (Shoaib Al Balushi 41(38) 8x4; Aiyappan B 5/38, Haja Hussain 3/14) by 93 runs.

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MET GALA

The Metropolitan Museum of Art on Wednesday unveiled the theme for the Costume Institute's 2024 exhibition and gala, the fashion world's party of the year - 'Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion'.

Every year, the Met Gala draws a who's who of A-listers from the worlds of fashion, film, politics and sports - a list tightly curated by Vogue editor-in-chief Anna Wintour.

Next year, the party will take place in Manhattan on May 6 to celebrate the opening of the exhibition, which the public can view from May 10 through September 2. Both are cosponsored by popular video sharing app TikTok.

The sweeping and immersive exhibition will feature about 250 garments and accessories spanning four centuries, from the Costume Institute's vast archives of 33,000 pieces - from a 17th century embroidered jacket to an Alexander McQueen gown from spring-summer 2001 made of shells.

"Using the natural world as a uniting visual metaphor for the transience of fashion, the show will explore cyclical themes of rebirth and renewal, breathing new life into these storied objects," the Met said.

Costume Institute curator Andrew Bolton explained that when items enter the museum's collection, "it can't be worn, obviously. So you don't see the movement. You can't smell it, you can't hear it, you can't touch it."

With the exhibition, he said he hopes to 'reawaken the sort of sensorial capacities within fashions in the Costume Institute, through various technologies'.

Fanned out on a large table in a room resembling a laboratory was a full silk satin House of Worth ball gown from the late 19th century, its embroidery, beads and sequins still resplendent despite the years.

The 1887 dress is now too fragile and damaged to be placed on a mannequin. So it will be displayed flat, but also restored to its original magnificence thanks to computer imaging and the use of a hologram - a nod to immersive exhibitions that are all the rage today.

Bolton said the museum approached Chinese-owned TikTok to cosponsor the event because of the platform's accessibility.

"We wanted to have the biggest, broadest sort of platform possible in terms of how the show is actually disseminated more globally," he said when asked if he feared backlash over choosing TikTok, given its alleged links to China's ruling Communist Party.

The Met Gala is the primary source of funding for the Costume Institute. Wintour took over the charity gala in the 1990s and transformed it into one of the world's buzziest fetes.

AFP



Head curator of the Anna Wintour Costume Center at the Metropolitan Museum of Art Andrew Bolton speaks at The Metropolitan Museum of Art's announcement of the Costume Institute's spring 2024 exhibition

Reawakening FASHION

Met unveils 'Sleeping Beauties' gala, exhibit theme for 2024



We wanted to have the biggest, broadest sort of platform possible in terms of how the show is actually disseminated more globally

ANDREW BOLTON



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A man with short brown hair and a beard is shown from the waist up. He is wearing a camel-colored topcoat over a light blue dress shirt and a striped tie. He is holding a grey suit jacket under his left arm. The background is a plain, light grey.

3 ATTIRE CHOICES FOR MEN

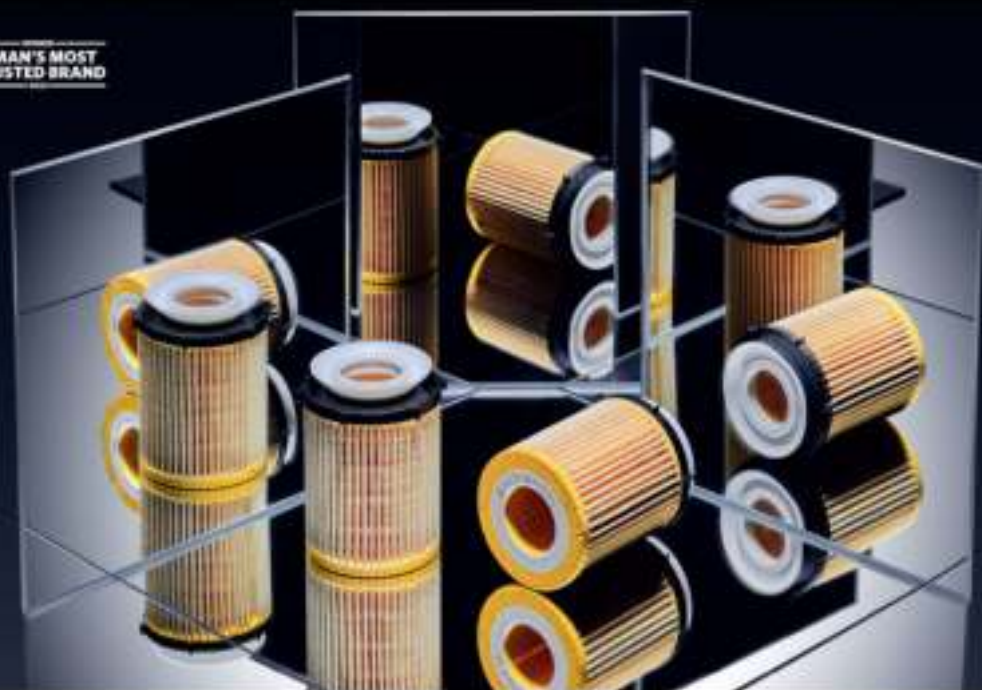
If there is one piece of outerwear every gentleman should own, it's without a doubt a camel topcoat, arguably the most versatile piece during cooler temperatures, simply because, it's such an easy item to wear. Consider this for your wardrobe:

1 **Office/Business Look**
Almost any professional suiting combo will look exceptionally well under your camel topcoat - it pairs seamlessly with both professional and business casual ensembles.

2 **Casual yet Dapper**
If its time to chill, simply grab your favourite turtleneck or crew neck sweater, slim-fitting denim, and a pair of loafers, Chelsea boots, or non-athletic/vintage sneakers. Khakis or Chinos are also a great choice here.

3 **Street Smart**
Lose the dressier elements of your wardrobe, and keep things comfortable yet stylish. As the mercury drops, throw on a hoodie as a base layer, and a pair of medium to light-wash distressed jeans.

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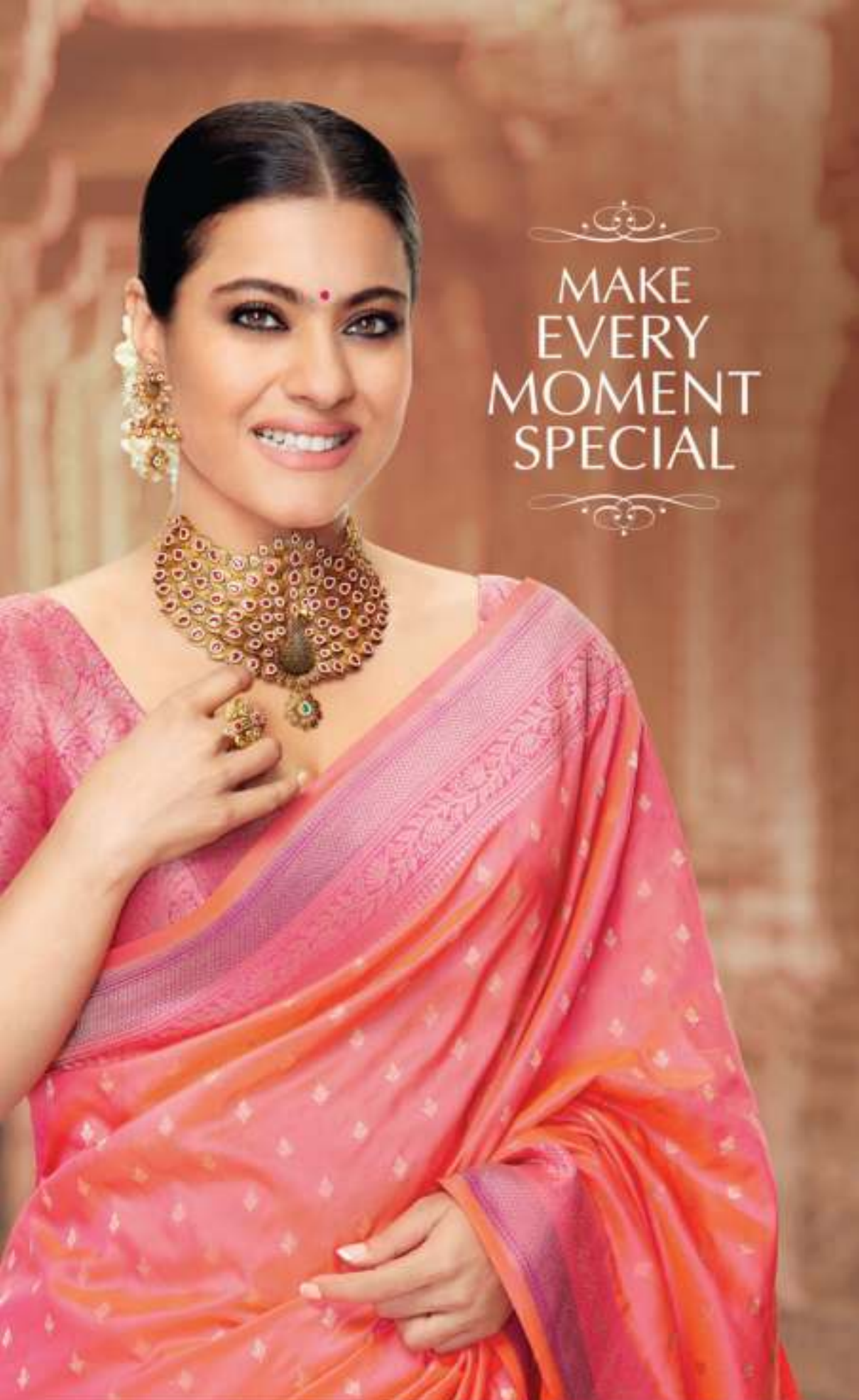
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A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a pink and orange saree with a gold border and small gold motifs. She is adorned with a large, ornate gold necklace featuring circular patterns, matching gold earrings, and a gold ring. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a warm, textured brown.

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and Biology (WFUMB 2023) Ultrasound World Congress at the Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre held last week. Centre-stage at the congress is the new portable, Compact Ultrasound

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more confidence - whether in a remote location, far from traditional care settings, or on-the-go across healthcare departments, for enhanced patient and staff experience," says Preesman.



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Sustainable attire – the latest trend

In the current era where sustainability and environmental awareness are buzzwords, making ethical choices in every field, including personal effects, is now on the rise.

This trend of moving towards sustainable fashion is making its way from the runway to wardrobes and bringing about a revolution of sorts in the fashion industry, besides empowering consumers to make smart lifestyle choices.

And celebrities in most countries have begun endorsing as well as adopting sustainable fashion in a bid to enhance their own images on positive line while also helping the sustainable fashion brigade get a better hold in the market.

Research shows that sustainability has also become a major concern for consumers and businesses alike, and the apparel industry is no exception. Consumers are becoming more conscious of their impact on the environment and are demanding clothing made from sustainable materials and produced in an environmentally responsible way.



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