

P10

VETERAN MODRIC SPEARHEADS CROATIA CAMPAIGN



P13

VALUE OF OQ GROUP ASSETS PEGGED AT \$31.633 BN



P20

THIS NEWLY FOUND CAVE MIGHT JUST BE WHERE KOHL WAS MINED



MUSCAT

HM THANKED BY IRAQI PRESIDENT

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from President Abdul Latif Jamal Rashid of the Republic of Iraq, in reply to His Majesty's congratulatory cable on being elected as his country's president. In his cable President Abdul Latif expressed his sincere appreciation for His Majesty the Sultan's heartfelt sentiments. He affirmed his keenness to bolster the bilateral relations between the two countries in various fields. President Abdul Latif also wished His Majesty good health and well-being and the Omani people further progress and prosperity. — ONA

EQUESTRIAN FESTIVAL SET FOR DECEMBER 7

HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, will preside over the launch of Oman Equestrian Festival and associated race on December 7. The event, jointly organised by the Oman Equestrian Federation and the Royal Cavalry, will take place at Al Rahba Farm's racecourse in the Wilayat of Barka. The race and festival reflect HH Sayyid Theyazin's interest in equestrian sports and his keenness on developing it in the Sultanate of Oman. The race consists of different competitions and Olympic and international activities.

DETAILS ON P10



INSIDE



\$4.5 BILLION IMF SUPPORT FOR BANGLADESH

P6



US MIDTERMS OFFER BIDEN HOPE IN DEFEAT

P9

OMAN, US UNDERSCORE HISTORICAL, STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

US-Oman Strategic Dialogue to boost bilateral relations

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken received here Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, to celebrate the Treaty of Amity, Economic Relations and Consular Rights, signed on December 20, 1958, as well as the long history of cooperation that began with its predecessor, the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, signed 189 years ago on September 21, 1833.

Recognising the strength of the bilateral relations, the two sides announced the commencement of the first US-Oman Strategic Dialogue, which will include three working groups focusing on education and cultural exchange, trade and investment, and renewable energy.

The working groups intend to meet regularly and tangibly advance shared goals. The two sides underscored the historical, strategic and growing partnership between



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken receives Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, in Washington. — ONA

the United States and the Sultanate of Oman on regional security.

The Secretary of State thanked Sayyid Badr for Oman's steadfast

support in humanitarian issues, including its role in securing the freedom of American citizen Baquer Namazi from Iran.

TURN TO P2

Sultan Qaboos Awards announced

KABEER YOUSUF

@kabeeryousef

The Sultan Qaboos Higher Centre for Culture and Science on Wednesday unveiled the names of winners of the 9th edition of the Sultan Qaboos Award for Culture, Arts and Literature. This year's prize was made exclusive to Omanis only and it researched Omani heritage, notably the areas of culture, theatre and essay writing.

The winners were announced at a press conference here by Habib bin Mohammed al Riyami, Secretary-General of the Sultan Qaboos Higher Centre for Culture and Science.

In the field of investigating Omani heritage, the award was won by Harith



Habib Mohammed al Riyami

bin Mohammed al Battashi for his analysis of a book titled "Introduction to Rules of Faith and Restricting the Swings of Judgment and Religions", originally authored by Shaikh Said bin Khalfan al Khalili.

The troupe of "Al Dann" bagged

the prize for theatrical performances — credit to its drama titled "Qarn Al Jaria", while Dr Mona al Sulaimi won the award for essay writing.

Al Riyami said that as many as 96 contestants met the conditions of candidacy; 11 in the field of investigating Omani heritage, 12 in drama performances and 73 in the field of essay writing.

The Sultan Qaboos Award for Culture, Arts and Literature is a biennial prize, contested by Omani candidates one year and by all Arabs the next edition.

The Sultan Qaboos Award for Culture, Arts and Literature was established in 2011 by late Sultan Qaboos.

TURN TO P2

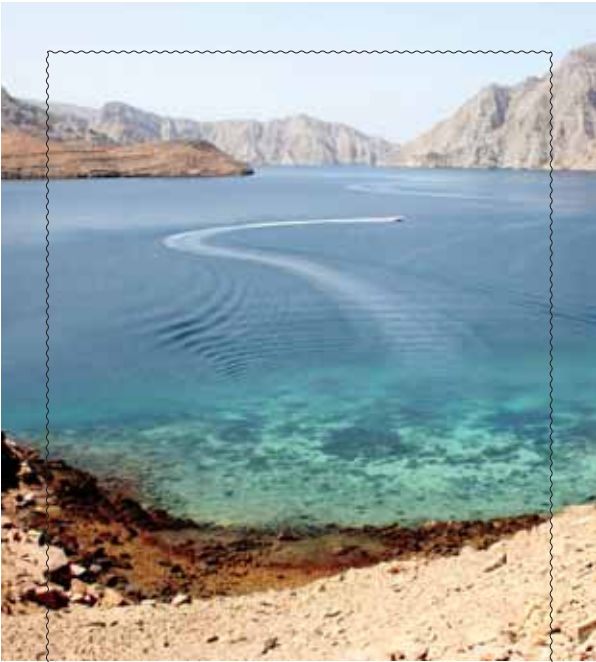
HM issues Royal Decree

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Wednesday issued Royal Decree No 72/2022 endorsing the Sultanate of Oman's joining the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation, drafted in Beijing on September 10, 2010.

Articles (1) endorses the Sultanate of Oman's joining the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation in accordance with the version attached to this Decree.

Article (2) instructs the departments concerned to deposit the Joining Document to the aforesaid convention as per its provisions.

Article (3) says that this Decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from its date of issue. — ONA



MORE PROJECTS IN MUSANDAM

The Governorate of Musandam will see a number of projects including in the fields of free zones, renewable energy. There is a trend in the governorate to revise the dam projects and prepare a comprehensive study of the paths of wadis to determine the best locations for the constructing wadis and utilising the

DETAILS ON P3

Oman seeks sustainable, clean energy at affordable cost

CAIRO: The Sultanate of Oman is pressing ahead with its engagement in the Climate Summit at Sharm el Sheikh (COP27). On the sidelines of the summit, Eng Salim bin Nasser al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, discussed energy-related issues with Dr Fatih Birol, CEO of the International Energy Agency (IEA).

The discussion covered areas of cooperation in studies related to production and storage technology and knowledge transfer of carbon neutral technologies and hydrogen.

It also covered capacity building in energy transformation towards a sustainable future.

Al Aufi also held a meeting with Henry Gonzalez, Deputy Executive Director of the Green Climate Fund. The meeting touched on boosting cooperation in funding green energy projects and related programmes and policies.

The fund is responsible for promoting climate financing programmes within the purview of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.



People walk at the green zone of the Sharm el Sheikh International Convention Centre on Wednesday. — AFP

The minister also participated as a speaker in the Global Energy Future Meeting organised by the IEA. During the meeting, the minister stressed the importance of providing sustainable and clean energy at an affordable cost.

Oman's delegation also took part in summit meetings of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East region, as well as a two-day presidential COP27 summit meeting which concluded on Tuesday.

TURN TO P2



■ SHURA CHAIRMAN RECEIVES MESSAGE FROM ALGERIA



MUSCAT: Khalid bin Hilal al Maawali, Chairman of the Majlis Ash'shura, received a written message from his counterpart Ibrahim Boughali, Speaker of the People's National Assembly of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, in Muscat on Wednesday. The written message deals with coordination on various topics in a bid to enhance bilateral relations between the two sides. The written messages were handed over to Al Maawali by Filali Guenni, Ambassador of Algeria to the Sultanate of Oman. During their meeting, Al Maawali lauded the bilateral relations between Oman and Algeria. The meeting was attended by Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohammed al Nadabi, Secretary-General of the Majlis Ash'shura.

Oman seeks sustainable and clean energy at affordable cost



FROM PAGE 1

Oman's pavilion at the summit continues to receive participants keen on learning about investment opportunities in the field of energy and Oman's efforts to cut carbon emissions. The pavilion organises discussion sessions on the green hydrogen economy, as well as opportunities and challenges of carbon capture and storage in the Sultanate of Oman.

Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali al Harthi, Foreign Ministry's Under-Secretary

for Diplomatic Affairs, and Shaikh Humaid bin Ali al Ma'ani, Head of the Global Affairs Department at the Foreign Ministry, participated in a discussion on forging local and international cooperation in climate issues and attracting green energy investments.

On the sidelines of the summit, Dr Abdullah bin Ali al Amri, Chairman of the Environment Authority, held a meeting with the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional and International

Cooperation in the United States.

During the meeting, the American side was briefed about the Sultanate of Oman's efforts in preserving the environment, limiting carbon emissions and utilising renewable energy and green hydrogen.

The two sides also explored means of cooperation by which the United States could provide technical support towards capacity building and research in Oman. — ONA

US-Oman Strategic Dialogue to boost bilateral relations

FROM PAGE 1

Secretary of State Blinken and Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr reaffirmed that there is no military solution to the conflict in Yemen, and underscored their support for Yemen's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence. They called for a comprehensive extension of the UN-mediated truce and launch of an inclusive political process that will allow all Yemenis to determine the future of their country.

A truce extension will provide immediate relief to the Yemeni people through the release of salary payments and other measures. They also affirmed that only a political resolution to the conflict can address Yemen's dire humanitarian crisis and enable a more stable and prosperous future.

Blinken thanked Oman for its important role in securing the truce over the last several months and expressed his hope that, with Oman's support and the overwhelming consensus in the region and beyond, the Yemeni parties will reach an agreement on a comprehensive truce extension soon and put the country back on the path to peace. Underscoring the importance of people-to-people ties, the two governments are committed to moving forward to discuss the resumption of academic and cultural programmes, such as the Fulbright programme for Omani scholars, and expanding professional and research-led academic exchanges, to include collaboration in support of the Agreement on Science and



Technology Cooperation, signed on January 22, 2016.

Both countries lauded the 2009 US-Oman Free Trade Agreement as a basis on which to expand commercial opportunities. They welcomed the upcoming signing of a memorandum of understanding between Oman and the Export-Import Bank of the United States, which will deepen cooperation in key economic sectors ranging from renewable energy to manufacturing.

Both countries reiterated their joint commitment to strengthening global climate action, and supporting access to affordable, dependable and clean energy.

Blinken praised Oman's recent announcement of a net zero carbon emissions by 2050 goal, as well as Oman's target of producing one million tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030. Both countries highlighted this goal as

a useful focal point in the context of their shared desire to deepen public and private cooperation on clean energy innovation and deployment.

The United States welcomed Oman's continued leadership in hosting the Middle East Desalination Research Centre (MEDRC) and advancing regional peacebuilding through shared solutions to freshwater scarcity.

Blinken and Sayyid Badr also discussed their strong commitment to a negotiated two-state solution as the basis for peace between the Palestinians and Israelis. Both Blinken and Sayyid Badr also affirmed that international disputes must be resolved by peaceful means, and in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter, and discussed the importance of protecting the fundamental freedoms and values enshrined therein. — ONA

Sultan Qaboos Awards announced



FROM PAGE 1

Speaking to the Observer, Al Riyami said the response to this year's award had been overwhelming, and various subcommittees were formed to adjudicate the winners.

"Sultan Qaboos Award for Culture, Arts and Literature is the result of Royal thought towards intellectual and cognitive accomplishment,

underlining the historical role of the Sultanate of Oman as a peace-loving nation and its interest in cultural awareness as the most important link in peace progress of civilisation of mankind, supporting glorious intellectuals, artists and writers," Al Riyami said.

The broad categories for this year's award were — Culture (Omani Heritage), Arts

(Theatrical Troupes), and Literature (Articles).

Each winner will receive a citation and RO 50,000 for excellence in their chosen field.

Consolidation of accumulated knowledge process, instilling authentic values and passing it to the younger generations are the motto of the award which was announced under the auspices of Habib bin Mohammed al Riyami.

Symposium on cultural role of Shabab Oman



MUSCAT: The Royal Navy of Oman, acting in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and the German University of Technology on Wednesday organised a symposium titled "Shabab Oman: A Cultural Role and a Civilisational Dimension". The symposium was held under the auspices of Salim bin Mohammed al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage and Tourism.

The symposium is a step forward in efforts to prepare for Shabab Oman's candidacy in the Unesco's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Working papers presented during the symposium dealt with the cultural message of the sail ship and society's response to its voyages.

Al Mahrouqi said in

a statement that "today's symposium is an important step in promoting the registration of Shabab Oman in the Unesco List of Intangible Cultural Heritage". His statement touched on the ship's important civilisational role in sustaining Oman maritime history—its traditions and concepts of cultural heritage. He hoped that the outcomes of this symposium would advance the vessel's candidacy file.

The minister described Shabab Oman as an instrument for honing the skills and capabilities of trainees, who have been offered exposure to challenges and difficulties faced by sailors in various circumstances. He underscored the significance of utilising knowledge and expertise gained from the ship's voyages to implement relevant projects.



STREETS DECKED UP FOR 52ND NATIONAL DAY



MUSCAT: All important streets of the Sultanate are wearing a festive look as they have decked up with colourful lights in different shapes and themes as part of the National Day celebrations. The Sultanate of Oman's flag has been hoisted in the Governorate of Muscat starting from the Al Bustan roundabout along the main road to the Al Barakah Palace roundabout, while illuminations were installed on either side of the road. One wilayat from each governorate in Oman has been decorated as part of the celebrations of the glorious occasion, which will see the launch of drone and laser shows. Lively carnivals will be held in two different sites of the Governorate of Muscat on November 18 and 19. Similar shows will be held in the Governorate of Dhofar on November 18 and the Governorate of Musandam on November 23.

Oman Air launches special fares for World Cup

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 9

Getting the ball rolling this football season, Oman Air, the national airline of the Sultanate of Oman, is offering special GCC fares to Muscat for those planning on heading to the World Cup. All GCC nationals and residents can purchase the specially priced tickets at RO 149 for Economy Class and RO 309 for Business Class, with Oman Air also providing easy onward connections to the games, available separately. Whether a convenient stopover or an extended getaway in Muscat, it's the perfect excuse to experience Oman's breathtaking natural beauty and signature warm hospitality.

Football fans opting to fly via Muscat can head to the match on one of Oman Air's daily Match Day Shuttle Flights, at just RO 49 return. Operating between Muscat and Doha from November 21 to December 3, the service is designed to seamlessly connect fans to their respective matches, just an hour's flight away. A no-check-in baggage policy also allows guests to plan an easy-in, easy-out travel itinerary.

Guests booking a fare must hold a valid Hayya Card and a match ticket.

More tourist projects in Musandam

MUSCAT: The Governorate of Musandam will see a number of projects including in the fields of free zones, renewable energy (solar, wind and green hydrogen).

There is a plan to revise the dam projects and prepare a comprehensive study for constructing wadis and utilising the groundwater reserves.

The office of the minister of state and governor of Musandam signed an agreement for organising international sports and tourist activities in the governorate and to highlight the natural beauty which exists in all four wilayats of Musandam Governorate.

Commenting to ONA, Nofal bin Mohammed al Kamzari, Assistant Director of the Department of Heritage and Tourism, said that the department stepped up its efforts to promote the governorate as a model tourist attraction through receiving large ships carrying a large number of tourists of various nationalities.

He added that the zip line project, expected to be operational by the end of this year, would boost adventure tourism. Besides, contracts were signed for the construction of three hotels in the wilayats of Bukha and Mad'ha in a bid to increase the number of resorts to meet the growing number of tourists arriving in the governorate, the official said.

In reference to the Royal Decree establishing the National Natural Park Reserve in Governorate of Musandam,



Zip line project, expected to be operational by end of this year; Contracts signed for the construction of three hotels in Bukha and Mad'ha

surveys conducted by the Environment Authority in cooperation with the Office of the Governor of Musandam indicated that the reserve occupies an area of 1,149.40 km², and encompasses nine offshore islands, coasts, offshore shoals, creeks and bays.

Musallam bin Mubarak al Mahri, Director of Environment of Department, said that the department devised a programme for implementing more than eight tourism campaigns this year in addition to beach clean-up campaigns and intensifying environment awareness campaigns.

The department drew up a plan to boost afforestation in the governorate and develop coral reefs by implementing the national initiative to plant 10 million trees in the governorate during the first quarter of 2022. A total of 8,600 seedlings were planted in cooperation with public and private establishments and the local community in a bid to instil the culture of afforestation, improving the vegetation cover and spreading green areas, the official said. — ONA

ROHM presents Omani Traditional Music on Nov 14



MUSCAT: The Royal Opera House Muscat is delighted to present a special show, Omani Traditional Music, to be performed on the Maidan Al Bahri, at the Royal Opera House Muscat. Come and experience the richness of Omani music: a heritage of songs and music which has been treasured over generations, reflecting historic moments and customs. Oman Traditional Music offers a vibrant evening, bright with the cultural history of Oman.

The concert will showcase the richness of the traditional music of Oman, demonstrating the variety of genres from

the different governorates and corners of the country. Performers will represent their regions, displaying the different costumes, the range of drums and drum techniques as well as the contrasting regional styles of dance. Each unique presentation reflects a heritage which has been handed down in oral tradition from father to son over many years, each generation bearing the pride and honour of its customs. The concert seeks to inspire the preservation of these traditions and to offer a platform for audiences to enjoy a vibrant evening, bright with the cultural

history of Oman.

Do you want to hear the music of your childhood? The music from your family town or village? Omani Traditional Music aims to keep the memories, the magic and the art alive.

How does your native country music make you feel? Connected? Emotional? Inspired? Come and discover the range we have here in Oman.

The Oman Traditional Music will be shown on November 14, at 7 pm at Maidan Al Bahri.

For details or to book tickets, visit the ROHM box office, website or app.



MULTIPLE FOODS, ONE KITCHEN

CLOUD KITCHENS
ALLOW
RESTAURANTS TO
SHARE SPACE,
SAVE RENTALS,
OVERHEADS AND
EMPLOYEE
COSTS



KABEER YOUSUF

[@kabeeryousef](#)

Cloud kitchens, ghost kitchens, or shared kitchens are fast making inroads into the Sultanate of Oman. They are centralised food production facilities where many restaurants rent space to make food.

The advantage of this system is that multiple brands can work under one roof, and save rentals, overhead and employee cost.

These tech-powered and optimally efficient cloud kitchens are progressively changing the way the world eats while helping to reimagine the food industry.

Many global food companies use artificial intelligence to track quality, which varies from checking on the cleanliness of their cooks to

adherence to HSE guidelines.

According to experts, the success of cloud kitchens depends not just on technology alone. It is a combination of rent for the space used, the quality of the brands that operate in it, the food delivered out of the cloud kitchen and the cost of the delivery.

“This kind of business model empowers a service platform for restaurants, international brands and Omani entrepreneurs, partnering with them to reach a wider audience with scalability through turnkey delivery solutions for the preparation, distribution and expansion of food without any investments,” says restaurateur and entrepreneur Aankush Bhatia.

Bhatia, along with two other co-founders, launched Oman’s

first cloud kitchen, KitchenomiKs, in October 2021. KitchenomiKs’s mission is to revolutionise food and dining using innovative technology.

Adding In-Country Value (ICV) to the Sultanate, KitchenomiKs is in the process of creating the largest chain of virtual multi-brand restaurants and establishing delivery hubs in Oman, with plans to move into the rest of GCC by early 2023.

KitchenomiKs has partnered with Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC) to operate state-of-the-art, and one of the largest kitchen spaces in Oman. This forms part of the strategic ICV plan, designed to contribute to the local economy and propel Oman, which is presently the 4th largest market for the cloud

kitchen industry and valued at \$180 million, to greater heights.

Marking clearly that cloud kitchens are the future of the restaurant business, KitchenomiKs is liaising with various Omani food connoisseurs to offer the best food from around the globe under one roof.



UK PM regrets appointing minister accused of bullying

LONDON: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak expressed regret on Wednesday for appointing a disgraced ally whose resignation drew harsh criticism of the new leader’s political judgment.

Gavin Williamson (pictured) resigned on Tuesday from Sunak’s new government following allegations that he had sent menacing messages to lawmakers and former colleagues.

Sunak named Williamson as an all-purpose fixer and policy enforcer when he became prime minister last month, despite his ally being twice forced to resign from the cabinet in the past.

“I obviously regret appointing someone who has had to resign in these circumstances,” Sunak told opposition Labour leader Keir Starmer in parliament.

“Unequivocally the behaviour complained of was unacceptable,” he added, while stressing he did not know of “specific concerns” about Williamson arising from his past government roles.

Starmer used the resignation to portray Sunak as weak, after he also appointed Suella Braverman as interior minister to appease Conservative right-wingers despite questions over her own competence.

The Labour leader noted that Williamson, when he served as the government’s chief whip in charge of party discipline, had kept a tarantula in his office.

If Sunak is unable to stand up to a “cartoon bully with a pet spider... what chance does he have of running the country?” Starmer said.

The prime minister insisted his government would be characterised by “integrity, professionalism and accountability”, after the rapid-fire exits of his predecessors Boris Johnson and Liz Truss this year.

Williamson, 46, was sacked twice as a minister in the past by Johnson and



by former premier Theresa May — the latter for leaking classified information when he was defence secretary.

Williamson came under increasing pressure since the emergence of a series of expletive-laden text messages allegedly sent by him to Tory colleague and former chief whip Wendy Morton.

They said she was seeking to “punish” MPs out of favour with then-premier Liz Truss by excluding them from Queen Elizabeth II’s funeral, warning: “There is a price for everything.”

On Monday a senior civil servant told The Guardian newspaper Williamson had bullied them and told them to “slit your throat”.

“As you know, there is an ongoing complaints process concerning text messages I sent to a colleague. There have been other allegations made about my past conduct,” Williamson said in his resignation letter.

“I refute the characterisation of these claims, but I recognise these are becoming a distraction for the good work this government is doing for the British people.

“I have therefore decided to step back from government so that I can comply fully with the complaints process that is underway and clear my name of any wrongdoing,” he wrote. — **Agencies**

‘Rich nation ‘gestures’ on climate damage only a start’

SHARM EL-SHEIKH: A trickle of climate “loss and damage” funding pledges from rich countries at the COP27 summit in Egypt have been welcomed by observers and developing nations, who say they must pave the way for a broad global financing deal.

The controversial issue is a key focus of the UN meeting, as a relentless surge of impacts wreak death, destruction and mounting economic losses on developing nations least responsible for planet-heating emissions.

A handful of European nations and regions have announced small funding pledges during the Sharm el-Sheikh talks, with Germany, Austria, Ireland and Belgium saying they would make contributions.

“These are good gestures. It shows that the issue has been acknowledged after years of advocacy,” said Harjeet Singh, head of global political strategy at the Climate Action Network.

But he said that this should not distract from calls by developing nations for a robust framework that can pay out when countries are hit by increasingly ferocious floods, heatwaves and droughts, along with slow-onset impacts such as sea level rise.

Pledges so far are miniscule in comparison to the damages already incurred.

Austria has offered \$50 million and Belgium says it will give \$2.5 million to Mozambique, adding to \$13 million that Denmark has earmarked for loss and damage in North Africa and the Sahel.

Scotland, which kicked off the loss and damage pledges last year when Britain hosted the COP26 summit, has also upped its contribution to \$8 million.

Meanwhile, Germany is touting its “global shield” project, due to be officially launched



Attendees at the COP27 climate summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on Thursday. – **Reuters**

A handful of European nations and regions have announced small funding pledges during the Sharm el-Sheikh talks, with Germany, Austria, Ireland and Belgium saying they would make contributions

in Egypt next week, as a way to provide climate risk insurance and prevention to vulnerable countries.

It announced \$170 million for the project this week, while Ireland said it would contribute \$10 million for 2023.

These countries “have begun to show the

way” by recognising the need to provide funds to countries already being slammed by the impacts of climate change,” Gaston Browne, the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, told delegates on Tuesday.

“It would be right for the major polluters — particularly those that have been involved in the historical use of fossil fuel energies — to follow this example.”

The summit is taking place at as a devastating drought is threatening millions with starvation in the Horn of Africa.

Heatwaves and droughts have caused crops to wither on four continents, while Pakistan is still reeling from catastrophic flooding that destroyed homes, roads and bridges and swallowed vast areas of farmland. — **AFP**

RUSSIA ABANDONS UKRAINIAN CITY IN MAJOR RETREAT

LONDON: Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu on Wednesday ordered his troops to withdraw from the occupied Ukrainian city of Kherson and take up defensive lines on the opposite bank of the River Dnipro.

The announcement marked one of Russia’s most significant retreats in the war, now nearing the end of its ninth month.

In televised comments, General Sergei Surovikin, in overall command of the war, reported to Shoigu that it was no longer possible to keep Kherson city supplied.

“Having comprehensively assessed the current situation, it is proposed to take up defence along the left (eastern) bank of the

Dnipro River,” said Surovikin, standing at a lectern and indicating troop positions on a map whose details were greyed-out for the TV audience.

“I understand that this is a very difficult decision, but at the same time we will preserve the most important thing — the lives of our servicemen and, in general, the combat effectiveness of the group of troops, which it is futile to keep on the right bank in a limited area.” The news followed weeks of Ukrainian advances towards the city and a race by Russia to relocate more than 100,000 of its residents by ferrying them to the opposite side of the river.

Kherson is the main city of the

region of the same name — one of four Ukrainian regions which President Vladimir Putin proclaimed in September he was incorporating into Russia “forever”, and which the Kremlin said had now been placed under Moscow’s nuclear umbrella.

Shoigu told Surovikin: “I agree with your conclusions and proposals. For us, the life and health of Russian servicemen is always a priority. We must also take into account the threats to the civilian population.

“Proceed with the withdrawal of troops and take all measures to ensure the safe transfer of personnel, weapons and equipment across the Dnipro River.” — **Reuters**

France to put 13 on trial over alleged Macron plot

PARIS: Thirteen people from far-right political circles have been ordered to stand trial for allegedly plotting to attack President Emmanuel Macron, according to legal sources.

A total of 11 men and two women who were part of a Facebook group called the “Barjols” (Crazies) are suspected of plotting attacks on Macron and members of his government, as well as mosques and migrants.

Jean-Pierre Bouyer, a retired man, is suspected of being the leader and had allegedly discussed attacking Macron in public with a ceramic knife which could not be detected in advance by security services. — **AFP**



MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No. (43/2022)

Muscat Municipality invites interested companies to the following bidding :

Serial	Bidding No.	Bidding Description	Document Fee	Last Date for obtaining bidding docs.	Last Date for inquires submission	Last Date for submission
1	RE-Bidding BB/01/2022	Selling of used (Oils, Batteries and Tires)	25/- OMR	08/12/2022	01/12/2022	12/12/2022

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

- Pay the specified document fee for the requested bid via bank deposit to Muscat Municipality’s Bank account as follows:
Bank Muscat 0423010702710024
- A copy of the transaction’s receipt **MUST** be send to the following e-mail (**MM.PC@mm.gov.om**), provided with the company data (name and bid number, company name, commercial registration number of the company, delegate name, office phone number, mobile number and email address approved by the company).
- The bidding documents will be send to the company via email.
- 2:00 PM** on the above mentioned dates, is the last timing for obtaining Bidding Documents. Any bid’s document request received after the specified time will not be considered.

Submitted offers must be accompanied with a bond mentioned in the tender document valid for a period not less than (90) days issued by any local bank in Oman addressed to Muscat Municipality. Bidding that do not meet the required bond **will not be accepted**.

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

NOTES:

- Companies which are not registered in Muscat Municipality or their registration has been expired shall register through the municipality’s website (**www.mm.gov.om**). For technical support, please contact Muscat Municipality through email (**crm@mm.gov.om**).
- If the bidders have any inquiries regarding the scope of the work, they have to send their inquiries through the following e-mail (**MM.PC@mm.gov.om**)
- 10:00 AM** on the above submission mentioned dates, is the last timing for receiving bids. Offers submitted after the above mentioned date & time shall not be accepted for any reason.
- Muscat Municipality has the right to accept or reject any offer without assigning any reason.

Website: www.mm.gov.om



SULTANATE OF OMAN

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Directorate General of Khoula Hospital



ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Health invites specialized companies to participate in the following Tenders:

Tender Ref.	Description	Last date for Collection of Tender Document	Bid Submission Closing is Saturday at 02:00	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
2869/2022/ MOH/DGKH-1	SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION FURNISHINGS AT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF KHOULA HOSPITAL	17-November-2022	03-December-2022	Specialized Companies registered with Tender Board	R.O 25.000

- All Specialized and interested Companies registered with Tender Board on the above mentioned Grade may obtain Tender documents from the E. Tendering website: **https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om** against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document.
- Tenders should be submitted on line on the given website signed and sealed. The Tenderer should enclose scan copy of Bank Guarantee or a certified Cheque issued by a Local bank for not less than One percent (1%) for the Tender value validity for (90) days from the Tender Submission date, addressed to The Chairman of the Tender Committee before one day of date submission.
- The Original Bank Guarantee should be submitted to the office of Director of Purchase and Tenders one day before the submission date for all Tenders.
- Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any tender.

(https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om)

Any Clarification, you may contact via
Telephone: 24166670
Email id etenderhd@ita.gov.om



US-China rivalry, North Korea to dominate Asean summit

PHNOM PENH: The US-China rivalry and growing fears of a new North Korean nuclear test will loom over a meeting this week of Southeast Asian leaders attended by US President Joe Biden.

Leaders from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) will meet in Phnom Penh from Friday, kicking off a diplomatic blitz in the region that also takes in next week's G20 in Bali and an APEC summit in Bangkok.

Biden's administration has identified China as the only global rival to the United States, saying Beijing is attempting to remould the world order in "its own model".

Making his second trip to Asia this year off the back of bruising midterm elections at home, Biden faces another tough battle to woo Asean leaders, many of whom are wary of overtly taking sides against a giant neighbour and key trading partner. A senior US official said Biden would push the importance of peace in the region and respect for the "rules-based international order".

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang stole a diplomatic march on Biden on Tuesday, arriving in Phnom Penh for talks with Cambodian leader Hun Sen.

At a summit with Asean leaders in Washington in May, Biden pledged \$150 million in support



Balloons are released at the Independence Monument during a ceremony marking Cambodia's 69th Independence Day celebrations in Phnom Penh on Wednesday. – AFP

for Southeast Asian nations — dwarfed by the \$1.5 billion that China promised to the region last year in Covid aid alone.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has said Beijing and Washington must "find ways to get along", but

at the same time has continued to enforce a far more muscular foreign policy that shows no deference to the United States.

Xi is expected to attend the G20 summit in Bali, where he will have his first face-to-face meeting

with Biden on its sidelines.

In Phnom Penh, Li can expect a warm reception, having cultivated close ties with most Asean members, including host Cambodia.

"China will seek to consolidate

her relationships with Southeast Asian countries, in order to either shore up regional support for Beijing or make sure that they do not end up being on the US side against China," analyst Yongwook Ryu of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy said.

The war in Ukraine is also likely to weigh on leaders' minds at Asean. Kyiv will sign a "treaty of amity and cooperation" with Asean on Thursday, a first step towards establishing formal relations with the bloc.

And Cambodia has said it is considering a request by President Volodymyr Zelensky to address the meeting by video link. China has refused to join Western sanctions on Russia, and Washington has accused Beijing of providing diplomatic cover for Moscow's war on Ukraine.

Russia has been invited to the Asean summit but it is not clear who will represent it.

Leaders are also expected to discuss the growing crisis on the Korean peninsula, where Pyongyang carried out a spate of weapons tests last week.

Washington and Seoul have warned that the launches could culminate in a nuclear test, which would be the reclusive communist state's seventh.

— AFP



Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif delivers a speech at the leaders summit of the COP27 climate conference at the Sharm el Sheikh International Convention Centre. – AFP

World is 'burning up faster' than it can recover: Pakistan PM

SHARM EL SHEIKH, Egypt: Climate change is outpacing the capacity of developing nations to cope with its devastating impacts, the Pakistani premier told COP27, as his country reels from historic floods.

Talks at the UN climate conference in Egypt have been dominated by calls for wealthier nations to fulfil pledges to financially help poorer nations green their economies and build resilience.

"The world is burning up faster than our capacity for recovery," Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif warned in his speech before the summit in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el Sheikh. "The current financing gap is too high to sustain any real recovery needs of those on the frontlines of climate catastrophe."

Sharif argued Pakistan exemplifies the extreme vulnerability of nations in the developing world struggling to grow their economies while confronting a perfect storm of inflation, soaring debt and energy shortages — all compounded by global warming.

Catastrophic floods in Pakistan in August coming on the heels of a crippling two-month heat wave earlier in the year upended the lives of 33 million people and inundated a third of the country, he said.

"Raging torrents" from melting glaciers in northern Pakistan ripped up thousands of kilometres of roads and railway tracks, Sharif added. The floods, which also swamped vast areas of key farmland, incurred damages exceeding \$30 billion, according to the World Bank. — Agencies

IMF agrees \$4.5 billion support package for Bangladesh

DHAKA: The International Monetary Fund said on Wednesday it reached a preliminary agreement to provide Bangladesh with a \$4.5 billion support package to help it cope with soaring energy and food prices.

Bangladesh in common with other Asian economies has been hit hard by the sharp rise in prices in the wake of Russia's attack on Ukraine, prompting angry street protests.

The South Asian nation of around 170 million people approached the IMF earlier this year for support.

An IMF delegation and Dhaka representatives "reached a staff-level agreement to support Bangladesh's economic policies" with a total of \$4.5 billion under various facilities, the institution said in a statement, adding the deal was subject to IMF

management approval.

Bangladesh plans to use the IMF loan to prop up its foreign exchange reserves, which have nosedived from \$46 billion to \$34 billion. The Bangladeshi taka has depreciated some 25 per cent against the greenback in recent months, while according to official figures inflation has approached 10 per cent — but independent economists say the true figure is closer to 20 per cent.

Household budgets have been hit hard and the government has pledged to cap the price of several staple foods, including rice, to quell public discontent.

"Bangladesh's robust economic recovery from the pandemic has been interrupted by Russia's war in Ukraine, leading to a sharp widening of the current account deficit, rapid decline of foreign exchange reserves, rising inflation and slowing growth," said IMF



IMF representative Rahul Anand speaks during a press conference in Dhaka on Wednesday. – AFP

team leader Rahul Anand.

"Even as Bangladesh tackles these immediate challenges, addressing long-standing structural issues remains critical, including threats to

macroeconomic stability from climate change," he added.

The depreciating currency and dwindling foreign exchange reserves have left Bangladesh unable to import sufficient fossil fuels. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government has been forced to close diesel plants, leave some gas-fired power stations idle and impose lengthy power cuts of up to 13 hours a day to conserve existing stocks.

Last month at least 130 million people were left without power after a grid failure caused widespread blackouts.

And tens of thousands of mosques around the country have been asked to curtail the use of air conditioners to ease pressure on the electricity grid. The blackouts have sparked widespread public anger and helped mobilise large demonstrations on the streets of Dhaka.

BRUSSELS

EU extends Myanmar sanctions

The EU extended its sanctions on Myanmar's junta, targeting 19 more individuals and entities including a minister and a chief justice.

The measures against Myanmar were announced by the European Council because of "the continuing escalation of violence and grave human rights violations following the military takeover two years ago".

It was the fifth package of EU sanctions on the southeast Asian country, under military rule



since 2020 when the military staged a coup against a civilian government led by Aung San Suu Kyi, now in prison on corruption charges judged spurious by Europe.

SHARM EL SHEIKH

China says committed to climate fight

China's top climate envoy told a UN summit his country would not retreat from the fight against global warming, a day after Beijing and Washington were urged to boost efforts.

"Energy and food crises have hit the world one after another, and the climate action process is facing serious challenges," Xie Zhenhua said at the gathering of some 100 world leaders at the United Nations COP27 climate summit in Egypt. "China has been actively responding to



climate change with sustained and pragmatic actions," he added.

"China's determination of actively participating in global climate governance will not retreat, let alone change."

NAIROBI

Kenya Airways pilots return to work

Kenya Airways pilots returned to work on Wednesday, after a court ordered them to end their days-long strike which had led to hundreds of flight cancellations and stranded thousands of passengers.

The strike, which began on Saturday, exacerbated the woes facing the troubled national carrier, which has vowed to "do everything possible to return to normalcy in the shortest time".

Hours after a Nairobi court ordered the pilots to return to



work, the Kenya Airline Pilots Association (KALPA) said its members would "resume duty" by 06:00 am (03:00 GMT) on Wednesday — the deadline stipulated by the judge.



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In brief

■ TEL AVIV



TWO PALESTINIANS KILLED IN CLASHES

Two Palestinians died in separate incidents with Israeli security forces in the occupied West Bank on Wednesday, Palestinian officials said, the latest in a wave of violence that has intensified in recent months.

A 15-year-old Palestinian was killed during a firefight with Israeli soldiers in Nablus and a Palestinian man succumbed to his wounds after Israeli forces fired at him near Jenin, Palestinian officials said.

The head of the Palestine Red Crescent in Jenin, Mahmoud al Saadi, said that the ambulance service was called to transfer the man to hospital after he sustained gunshot wounds in his legs.

■ BELFAST



UK NI HEALTH WORKERS VOTE TO STRIKE

Hundreds of health workers in Northern Ireland have voted to strike in a dispute over pay and staffing levels. GMB members — including nurses, ambulance workers, hospital porters, cleaners and caterers, clerical staff, technicians, care workers, social workers and transport workers — voted for industrial action, with 86 per cent backing the move in a ballot.

The union said it would meet with members to discuss next steps, with strike action possible before Christmas.

The development comes in a week when the Royal College of Nursing will announce whether its members have voted in favour of the first UK-wide strike by nurses.

■ NEW YORK



META TO LAY OFF 11,000 STAFF

Facebook owner Meta will lay off more than 11,000 of its staff in “the most difficult changes we’ve made in Meta’s history,” boss Mark Zuckerberg said on Wednesday.

He said the cuts represented 13 per cent of the social media titan’s workforce and would affect its research lab focusing on the metaverse as well as its apps, which include Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.

The tech industry is in a serious slump and several major firms have announced mass lay-offs — Twitter’s new owner Elon Musk fired half its staff last week.

Democrats hold back ‘red wave’ in cliff-hanger US midterms

WASHINGTON: Republican hopes of a “red wave” carrying them to power in the US Congress faded on Wednesday as Joe Biden’s Democrats put up a stronger-than-expected defence in a midterm contest headed for a cliff-hanger finish.

With a majority of Tuesday’s races called, Republicans seemed on track to reclaim the House of Representatives for the first time since 2018, but the Senate was still in play, with forecasts tentatively leaning Democratic.

And the midterms delivered a decidedly mixed bag for Donald Trump, who though not on the ballot loomed large over the contest, teasing a 2024 run and airing unsubstantiated allegations of Election Day fraud.

While the night saw wins by more than 100 Republicans embracing Trump’s “Big Lie” that Biden stole the 2020 election, several high-profile, election-denying acolytes of the former president came up short.

Aiming to deliver a rebuke of Biden’s presidency, against a backdrop of sky-high inflation and bitter culture wars, Republicans needed one extra seat to wrest control of the evenly divided Senate.

But by early on Wednesday the only seat to change party hands went to the Democrats, with John Fetterman, a burly champion of progressive economic policies, triumphing in Pennsylvania.

In the House, early results suggested Republicans were on track for a majority — but only by a handful of seats, a far cry from their predictions.

Top Republican Kevin McCarthy — who hopes to be the lower chamber’s next speaker — struck an upbeat note, telling supporters in the early hours: “It is



Pennsylvania Democratic Senatorial candidate John Fetterman waves onstage at a watch party during the midterm elections in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. — AFP

clear that we are going to take the House back.”

But Senator Lindsey Graham, a top Trump ally, bluntly conceded to NBC that the election is “definitely not a Republican wave, that’s for darn sure.”

The president’s party has traditionally lost seats in midterm elections, and with Biden’s ratings stuck in the low 40s and Republicans pounding him over inflation and crime, pundits had predicted a drubbing.

That would have raised tough questions on whether America’s oldest-ever commander in chief, who turns 80 this month, should run again. Instead Biden stands to emerge in much better shape than either of his Democratic predecessors, Barack Obama or Bill Clinton, who both took a hammering at the midterms.

Control of the Senate hinged early on Wednesday on four key races that were still on a

knife-edge.

Democrats need two more wins to successfully hold the chamber, while Republicans need three to flip it.

In Arizona, Nevada and Wisconsin, counting the remaining votes for Senate could take days. And Georgia may well go to a runoff scheduled for December 6.

On a night of close contests, one of the most decisive wins was for rising Republican star Ron DeSantis, who won the gubernatorial race overwhelmingly in Florida, cementing his status as a top potential White House candidate in 2024. DeSantis, who has railed against Covid-19 mitigation measures and transgender rights, was projected to have won by nearly 20 points against a folksy ex-governor, four years after squeaking by in his longtime swing state. — AFP

France-UK to hold defence summit in early 2023

TOULON, France: Britain and France will hold a summit in the first quarter of 2023 aimed at reinforcing their military and defence cooperation, French President Emmanuel Macron announced on Wednesday.

Macron unveiled the summit while laying out his strategic defence priorities for France and Europe in the coming years, not least in response to Russia’s war on Ukraine.

“Our partnership with the United Kingdom must also be raised to another level,” Macron said onboard a helicopter carrier at the Mediterranean naval base at Toulon.

“I hope that we will actively resume our dialogue on operations, capacities, nuclear and hybrid areas and renew the ambitions of our two countries as friends and allies,” Macron said.

France is banking on a reset with Britain under its new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, following years of tense relations under Boris Johnson and later Liz Truss.

Macron also insisted on the need for deeper military cooperation with Germany, and “indispensable partner” for building up Europe’s military autonomy.

The two countries have agreed to work notably on next-generation fighter jets and tanks, but both projects have reportedly stalled on divergences over technical needs and how to share production.

“The success of the European project depends in large part, I believe, on the balance of our partnership,” Macron said. “In that regard I hope that we can make decisive progress in the coming weeks.”

France also plans to revamp its partnerships and operations in Africa, where its forces have been



France’s President Emmanuel Macron delivers a speech on defence strategy to present the La Revue nationale strategique, a new military programming law, on the amphibious helicopter carrier Dixmude docked in the French Navy base of Toulon, Southern France on Wednesday. — AFP

trying to help local governments contain insurgencies in the Sahel region for the past decade.

“Over the coming months we must determine how to profoundly change our methods and our commitments alongside our African partners... which should lead to lighter and more integrated deployment with them,” he said.

French forces have faced growing hostility from some who see them as the ineffective occupying force of a former colonial power, and Macron pulled them out of Mali this year as relations soured with the country’s military rulers.

Around 3,000 French soldiers remain in Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger, though Macron plans to end the decade-long Barkhane operation as part of the strategic overhaul.

“Our military support for African countries in the region will continue but based on new principles that we will have defined with them,” Macron said. — AFP

North African youth chase football dreams

TUNIS: From a Tunisian teen seeking a career in women’s football abroad to a Moroccan eyeing the national team, the beautiful game offers opportunity and hope to youth across the Middle East and North Africa.

In a video project looking into young people’s aspirations in the region, where more than half of the population is under 30, AFP speaks to athletes about what football offers them as the 2022 World Cup in Qatar nears kick-off.

The first part of the series focused on artists in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the Gaza Strip, Israel and Iraq. For 17-year-old Tunisian Eya Mejri, a football career is her only goal.

“My life today is training. I left school because I wanted to focus on football,” she says after a session with her club in the capital Tunis. Her long hair tied back and sporting Neymar socks, Mejri hones her skills on the field with her all-girls team — or in the street with the boys in her working-class neighbourhood. She says she always knew what she wanted to do with her life, but hopes for a career away from home.

“There’s no future in football



Eya Mejri, a 17-year-old Tunisian athlete, poses for a photo on a football pitch in Sidi Hassine, on the outskirts of Tunisia’s capital Tunis. — AFP

in Tunisia,” she says, adding that country is “at a standstill.”

In five years’ time, Mejri wants to be playing with French club

Olympique Lyonnais — and to have her family with her.

She will be rooting for Tunisia during the World Cup, but her

focus remains firmly on her own career.

“I’m making more sacrifices to make my dream a reality,” she says.

“I hope I can go back to school soon.”

On a beach under the clear blue Algerian sky, Abdelmadjid Kourtel dribbles a football along the sand, weaving through coloured markers as the waves roll in.

“In the mornings I go to train... in the afternoons, I come back home and see my friends,” he says.

“My daily life is cool.”

The 21-year-old striker plays for second-league team Olympique de Medea, based southwest of the capital Algiers. He too has set his sights set on a career overseas.

“If you work hard and stay serious, it’s possible to have a future as a footballer in Algeria. But apart from that, if you can go abroad, it’s much better,” Kourtel says.

In Algeria if you are injured, “there are some teams that take care of you, but in general you’re on your own,” he says. “In Europe, they look after you.”

Within five years, he aims to be on the national team, who he was disappointed failed to qualify for Qatar 2022.

“You have to work. Everything comes through work and hard training,” Kourtel says. “The rest is down to God.” — AFP

UK, France look to reset frayed ties under Sunak

ADAM PLOWRIGH

Paris: After years of public rows and even a brief naval stand-off in the Channel, Britain and France are looking to reset their relations under new UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.

Sunak and French President Emmanuel Macron met for the first time as leaders on the sidelines of the UN’s COP27 climate summit in Egypt on Monday.

“Friends,” wrote Sunak over a tweeted picture of the two statesmen in an obvious reference to his short-lived predecessor Liz Truss, who said in August she was undecided on whether the French leader was a “friend or foe”.

On Wednesday, Macron followed up by announcing that

the countries would hold a defence summit at the start of next year, ending years of minimal bilateral meetings.

“Our partnership with the United Kingdom must also be raised to another level,” the 43-year-old said during speech in the southern French naval base in Toulon.

The objective was to “renew the ambitions of our two countries as friends and allies,” he explained.

Macron and Sunak, 42, have much in common at a superficial level, being of similar height and age, as well as sharing a love for slick communications and sharply tailored navy-blue suits.

But the similarities run deeper: their fathers were medics, both are privately educated, and each

RELATIONS BETWEEN LONDON AND PARIS WENT THROUGH ONE OF THEIR MOST TURBULENT PERIODS IN DECADES DURING JOHNSON’S PREMIERSHIP DUE TO TENSIONS OVER BREXIT AND PERSONAL ANIMOSITY.

of them had a career in banking before entering politics — Macron at Rothschild, Sunak at Goldman Sachs.

Political differences remain, with Sunak a conservative Eurosceptic free-marketeer, while Macron is fervently pro-EU and a believer in

strong state intervention.

But most importantly, Sunak is seen as a “serious, reflective person” in Paris — unlike his one-time boss Boris Johnson who stepped down as premier in September, former British ambassador to Paris Peter Ricketts said.

“The style is important because Boris Johnson’s style clearly grated on the French: the mockery, the playing of the UK-French relationship as a political football for domestic effect, the fact they could never trust what he said,” Ricketts added.

“I think there has been a fundamental shift in the tone between ourselves and the French,” British Work and Pensions Secretary Mel Stride told Sky News on Tuesday.

Relations between London and Paris went through one of their most turbulent periods in decades during Johnson’s premiership due to tensions over Brexit and personal animosity.

A senior former French ambassador once claimed ties had “never been as bad since Waterloo”.

Low points included Johnson sending a navy ship to the Channel during a dispute over fishing rights and telling Macron in a mix of French and English that he should “prenez un grip” (get a grip) after a row about submarines.

In London, Macron’s repeated denunciations of Britain’s departure from the European Union — the flagship policy of Johnson’s government — were seen as inflammatory and hostile. — AFP

Study: Thinning Greenland ice sheet may mean more sea level rise

JENNY VAUGHAN

Part of Greenland’s ice sheet is thinning further inland than previously believed, which will likely lead to greater sea level rise by the end of this century, a new study found on Wednesday.

The findings pertain to a northeast section of the giant ice block covering, but the trend is likely happening elsewhere on Greenland and Earth’s other ice sheet, in Antarctica.

The implications are worrying, as sea level rise already threatens millions of people living along coasts that could find themselves underwater in the decades and centuries to come.

Scientists have previously focused on the edges of Greenland’s ice sheet to examine active melting as global temperatures rise, largely using satellite data.

But the authors of Wednesday’s study looked further inland, over 100 kilometres from the coast.

What they found was alarming: thinning from Greenland’s coast stretched back 200 to 300 kilometres (125 to 185 miles).

“What we see happening at the front reaches far back into the heart of the ice sheet,” said first author Shfaqat Abbas Khan in a press release about the study, published in Nature.

“The new model really captures what’s going on inland, the old ones do not... you end up with a completely different mass change, or sea level projection,” he told AFP in an interview.

The researchers installed GPS stations on the ice sheet to gather more precise information, and also used satellite data and numerical modelling, all of which provided a new set of data likely to alter global sea level rise projections.

The research was conducted at the Northeast Greenland Ice Stream (NEGIS), which covers an estimated 12 per cent of Greenland, according to co-author Mathieu Morlighem.

It found that the thinning could add between 13.5 and 15.5 millimetres to sea levels by the end of this century — equivalent to the entire Greenland ice sheet’s contribution during the past 50 years. “The NEGIS could lose six times more ice than existing climate models estimate,” the report found.

One reason for the inland thinning is the intrusion of warm ocean currents, which in 2012 caused the floating extension of the NEGIS to collapse. That event “has accelerated ice flow and triggered a wave of rapid ice thinning that has spread upstream”.

The Greenland ice sheet is currently the main factor in swelling the Earth’s oceans, according to NASA, with the Arctic region heating at a faster rate than the rest of the planet. — AFP

The immensity of Seoul’s sadness



Suki Kim

The writer is a journalist, novelist and essayist, is the author of Without You, There Is No Us: Undercover Among the Sons of North Korea’s Elite.

In April 2014, South Koreans watched in horror as TV news showed live footage of a huge ferry tilting 50 to 60 degrees, sinking into the sea. Aboard were over 300 high school students on a school trip to Jeju Island, the country’s most popular resort. Initial reports said the students were all rescued, but it soon emerged that they were, in fact, still on the ship. The nation watched in real time — for two and a half hours — as the ship sank completely and disappeared from view. It would turn out that rescue efforts had been botched, and the captain and crew had escaped in lifeboats after telling the students and other passengers to stay put. The trapped teenagers sent final video messages to their parents, some of which were broadcast on the news. No statement came from either the Blue House or President Park Geun-hye, whose whereabouts was not clear. Seven hours later, President Park finally appeared, visiting the Central Disaster Safety and Countermeasures Headquarters and asking: “Why is it so hard to find or rescue the students if they are wearing life jackets?”

Within two years, Park’s approval rating was 5 per cent, the lowest of any president in modern South Korean history. Over a million Koreans took to the streets, demanding her resignation. I was among them.

On October 29, 2022, another tragedy consumed the nation when 156 people were crushed to death at a Halloween gathering in Itaewon, Seoul’s liveliest neighbourhood. The news footage showed bodies strewn around the pavement, with people performing CPR while club music pumped through the air. Most of the victims were in their 20s.

As hundreds of casualties were transported to hospitals and a nearby gymnasium turned morgue, it was once again parents who were summoned, to administer care or to identify the bodies. They told interviewers how their sons had just finished taking an exam and were looking forward to a night out, or how their daughters had just been accepted to their first jobs and were meeting friends to celebrate. Such innocent fun is the privilege of youth, and beholding it is supposed to be a reward for parenthood. Since the ferry disaster, multiple parents and relatives of victims have committed suicide.



A mourner visits a memorial for the victims of Saturdays crowd surge that killed more than 150 people during a Halloween celebration, in the Itaewon neighborhood of Seoul.

IF THE RITUALS OF PUBLIC GRIEF ARE WELL ESTABLISHED, HOWEVER, THE RITUALS OF THE HOLIDAY THAT THE ITAEWON VICTIMS WERE CELEBRATING ARE FAIRLY NEW IN SOUTH KOREA — NEW ENOUGH THAT NEWS ANCHORS HAD TO KEEP EXPLAINING, FOR THE PRESUMABLY OLDER VIEWING DEMOGRAPHIC, WHAT HALLOWEEN IS

If the rituals of public grief are well established, however, the rituals of the holiday that the Itaewon victims were celebrating are fairly new in South Korea — new enough that news anchors had to keep explaining, for the presumably older viewing demographic, what Halloween is. It’s only been a decade or two since the American tradition, as part of the English learning boom, entered the cultural life of Seoul in full force. Along the way something was lost, or perhaps gained, in translation. The holiday was partly co-opted by Korea’s selfie

generation for what they call “cospre” — an abbreviation of “costume play,” after the similar tradition of Japanese youths in the Harajuku district — in which they dress up as characters from animations and computer games.

Halloween now exists in the shifting space — cultural and geographic — between the United States and South Korea. Those shifts are nowhere more visible than in the Itaewon neighbourhood itself.

Situated in the heart of Seoul at the foot of Namsan, or “South Mountain,” hilly with narrow alleys, Itaewon is an attractive backdrop for fun as well as the setting of a blockbuster K-drama. It’s a neighbourhood known for exotic restaurants and counterfeit goods. In the past, I would often wander its winding roads in search of fake designer bags to bring back to the United States as gifts. Later, as the neighbourhood gentrified, the seedy ambience gave way to nightlife with an international flair. Yet through most of South Korean history Itaewon was known as a playground for American G.I.s; within walking distance was Yongsan Garrison, a 617-acre compound made to look like an American suburb for over 20,000 military personnel until 2018, when the United States, after seven decades, moved its base out of Seoul.

Our concern for the missing ‘mother’

Every nook and corner of Oman is now standing in sympathy and support on an issue which has pained the hearts of the entire nation. A mother Hamida has not returned home in Izki for more than a month. Each one of us can imagine the pain and horror, if anyone of us loses his or her mother. There is no end to this trauma. There is no word to express the family’s anguish.

Mother is the backbone of a house, family, or a society. No one can think of any harm to a mother. We share this pain with the children of Hamida and her family. We can just hope and pray for her return hale and healthy. Nothing is impossible for the Almighty Allah.

All the efforts are being made by the authorities concerned to find Hamida . Entire country is searching to find her. These efforts will not stop until she reaches home without any harm.

At this juncture, we need to discuss certain issues which are important for the safety and security in a society. We need to look at this aspect with objectivity. All traditional means are being utilised for search. We need to press ahead the use of modern technology in finding her. There is huge scientific and technological advancement in the country and we still need to make optimum use of such advanced methods.

Most of the roads do not have surveillance cameras working round the clock. If they have been at place, they could have helped the security agencies to trace her. Such facilities always help in solving issues or incidents which take place any time. These cameras give clues which help in finding solution to similar problems. Night vision technology is also available everywhere in the world.



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NO ONE CAN THINK OF ANY HARM TO A MOTHER. WE SHARE THIS PAIN WITH THE CHILDREN OF HAMIDA AND HER FAMILY

Therefore, day and night are not an issue for reaching conclusions on such incidents if such facilities are in place. There is sufficient capacity with the agencies and these are to be used to provide safety and security to the people of the country and deal with their problems.

There is no doubt that the missing of Hamida is now talk of the town and a prime concern, not only in the Sultanate of Oman, but even beyond our borders. The word has spread through social media. Every passing day, the pain of the society is aggravating and extending further. It is a tough time for the society. Every next day without ‘Mother Hamida’ is a pain and concern. Nobody can sit in peace without her getting back to her family.

Any delay in her coming back will be a concern for children about their mothers when they walk out of their houses and for husbands if their wives venture out. Everybody is worried about this. Only Hamida’s return to home can calm down the sentiments.

Such incidents bring to the fore the importance of cameras for surveillance of vehicles and activities on main roads, at fuel stations, outside public toilets, commercial and other vital places. Every wilayat should have surveillance cameras working round the clock to ensure the safety of common people and help the authorities concerned in solving such issues.

If there is any complaint about somebody going missing, these cameras can help in reaching them. Even when there are incidents of theft and crimes, these cameras will be handy in catching the culprits. Such facilities are a must to not only for the safety and security of the people, but also to help the authorities concerned if they come across similar challenges in future. We pray for ‘Mother Hamida’s’ return.

A ‘MOTHER’S STATUE’



Britain’s King Charles III unveils a statue of his late mother, Queen Elizabeth II, during a visit to York Minster in York, northern England on Wednesday as part of his two-day tour of Yorkshire. The statue of Queen Elizabeth II is one of a number of projects emerging from the York Minster Neighbourhood Plan and funded by the York Minster Fund (YMF), and was designed and carved by York Minster stonemason Richard Bossons. – AFP

Midterms offer Biden hope in defeat as Republican hopes fizzle out

AURÉLIA END

Joe Biden’s Democrats seem to have escaped a feared drubbing in Tuesday’s midterm elections, but it remains to be seen whether that will revive the US president’s flagging fortunes until 2024 — or beyond.

The 79-year-old, who framed the race as a clash between defenders of democracy and the “extremist” camp of Donald Trump, spent election night in back-to-back calls with Democrats savouring their wins in Senate, House and gubernatorial races around the country.

“Just got off the phone with some of tonight’s winners — including some folks I saw on the road this year,” Biden tweeted as the results came in — alongside a picture of himself in a turtle neck and baseball cap, seeming happy to take at least some of the credit.

White House staff, according to the former press secretary Jen Psaki, were “giddy and gleeful” as results came in.

The outcome taking shape was far from ideal for Democrats, who stand to lose the House of Representatives in what Biden has admitted will make his life much more “difficult” — likely hobbling parts of his agenda.

But if overnight predictions hold and the Democrats lose the House

by a handful of seats, with the Senate still in play, Biden’s camp will have vastly outperformed expectations.

The president’s party has traditionally lost seats in midterm elections and with Biden’s approval ratings stuck in the low 40s, and sky-high inflation topping voter concerns, Republicans had high hopes of seizing both chambers of Congress in a “red wave.”

Such a drubbing would have raised tough questions on whether America’s oldest-ever president, who turns 80 this month, should run again.

Instead Biden stands to emerge in much better shape than either of his Democratic predecessors, Barack Obama or Bill Clinton, who both took a hammering at the midterms.

Nevertheless, Biden will be headed into choppy waters if the House flips.

In a country whose divisions run deeper than ever, even a longtime senator and moderate Democrat like Biden will likely struggle to find common ground with a Republican-led chamber.

Large parts of his legislative agenda could utterly stall as a

result.

Another open question is whether a new Republican leadership would keep its promise to aggressively hold the president to account — which even a slim House majority gives it the power to do.

That could easily translate into endless congressional investigations targeting Biden, his record and his family.

One of the loudest voices,

far-right Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene, has already promised stepped-up scrutiny of Biden’s son Hunter, who Republicans accuse of exploiting his father’s connections to do business with Ukraine and China.

With control of the House, Republicans would also be able to apply considerable budgetary pressure on the president — with the potential to cut funding to the federal government.

As for the Senate — which confers greater powers — its fate still hangs in the balance.

But beyond, the big question facing Biden — and his Democrats — is who will carry the party’s colours into the 2024 White House race.

Until now the US president has consistently said he intends to seek a second term, and any suggestion to the contrary would have immediately undermined his authority.

But there is little appetite among the US public — or within his own party — for a second White House run by an octogenarian commander in chief.

Biden leaves on Friday on a diplomatic marathon taking him from the COP27 climate conference in Egypt, to Cambodia for an Asean summit, and on to Indonesia for the G20 gathering.

The veteran Democrat may keep America guessing some time yet about his intentions for 2024.

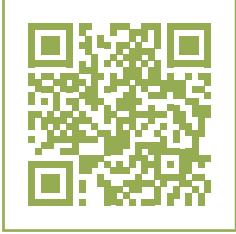
But with the president far from US shores, his rival Trump will be pressing ahead — promising a big reveal, widely expected to be a new White House run, next Tuesday in Florida. — AFP



Supporters of Pennsylvania Democratic Senatorial candidate John Fetterman react at a watch party during the midterm elections at Stage AE in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on Tuesday. – AFP

sport

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VETERAN MODRIC SPEARHEADS CROATIA CAMPAIGN

ZAGREB: Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic named his World Cup squad on Wednesday, with the 2018 runners-up led by veteran captain Luka Modric.

Dalic guided the side to the final four years ago, where they lost to France, a historic achievement for a country of 3.9 million people.

“We are optimists with a reason but have to be realistic,” Dalic told reporters presenting his 26-man squad.

“We’ll go step by step, we are rather self-confident after the Nations League matches,” added the 56-year-old.

In September, they secured their place in the last four of the Nations League.

“There is no pressure, no big euphoria. The first game will be the most important,” Dalic said.

“Now we think (on how) to pass the group first,” he added.

Croatia play Morocco in their opening Group F match on November 23 before meeting Canada and Belgium.

Modric, 37, said recently he would end his international career after the World Cup in Qatar.

Apart from the Real Madrid star, veteran players include defenders Domagoj Vida and Dejan Lovren, both of whom Dalic stressed are in good shape.

Asked to compare the team with the one four years ago Dalic said the then squad “played together for ten years before being rewarded in Russia”. “They are potent and capable, but it (Croatia success) will not be possible without older ones.” — AFP

SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS: Dominik Livakovic (Dinamo Zagreb), Ivica Ivusic (Osijek), Ivo Grbic (Atletico Madrid/ESP)

DEFENDERS: Domagoj Vida (AEK Athens/GRE), Dejan Lovren (Zenit Saint Petersburg/RUS), Borna Barisic (Rangers/SCO), Josip Juranovic (Celtic/SCO), Josko Gvardiol (RB Leipzig/GER), Borna Sosa (Stuttgart/GER), Josip Stanisic (Bayern Munich/GER), Martin Erlic (Sassuolo/ITA), Josip Sutalo (Dinamo Zagreb)

MIDFIELDERS: Luka Modric (Real Madrid/ESP), Mateo Kovacic (Chelsea/ENG), Marcelo Brozovic (Inter Milan/ITA), Mario Pasalic (Atalanta/ITA), Nikola Vlasic (Torino/ITA), Lovro Majer (Rennes/FRA), Kristijan Jakic (Eintracht Frankfurt/GER), Luka Sucic (RB Salzburg/AUT)

FORWARDS: Ivan Perisic (Tottenham Hotspur/ENG), Andrej Kramaric (Hoffenheim/GER), Bruno Petkovic (Dinamo Zagreb), Mislav Orsic (Dinamo Zagreb), Ante Budimir (Osasuna/ESP), Marko Livaja (Hajduk Split)

10 days to go for RS Venture Connect World sailing event

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman will welcome 39 teams representing 19 nationalities to the 2022 RS Venture Connect Class World Championship, the first exclusively para sailing event to be held in the country. Racing begins on November 23 at the Barcelo Musannah Resort and takes place daily until the Grand Final on November 27, in both ‘Para’ and ‘Open’ categories.

Before racing gets underway, The RS Venture Connect Class Association will be delivering a two-day Coaching Clinic to provide high-level training for team coaches and their sailors.

The Coaching Clinic will be delivered alongside an International Classification Seminar which will allow four candidates put forward by the Oman-based Al Amal Occupational Therapy Centre, to undergo a final assessment in order to become International Classifiers. These candidates, if successful, will join 11 International Classifiers appointed by the world governing body for sailing in what would be a major step forward for Para sailing in not just Oman but also globally.

Maryam al Jadidi, Senior Project Manager at Oman Sail, said, “We are excited to welcome para sailors from around the world to Oman for the RS Venture Connect World Championship and help the sport to grow. Para sailors are among the most courageous and resilient athletes, and it is a great honour to host Oman’s first ever event exclusively for para sailing. This championship has a wider importance to the international sailing community by providing the platform for four candidates to become International Classifiers and help coaches and athletes develop the sport further, while also continuing to show the inclusivity of sailing on a worldwide stage.”

Oman Sail’s own ‘SailFree’ team, the region’s first sailing programme for people with



Maryam Al Jadidi

disabilities, will also be taking part. Six two-person teams will compete in the para category; Hassan al Lawati and Sami al Sulaimi, Sultan al Wahaibi and Muayad al Sheryani, Adil al Siyabi and Ahmed al Shukaili, Malik al Qartoubi and Ghalya al Jabri, Raiyan al Mujaini and Hamed al Subhi, and Zaher al Atbi and Ali al Ghasaini.

Dan Jaspers, Manufacturers Representative for the International RS Venture Connect Class, said, “Sometimes it pays to take risks and to think outside of the box, and I am confident that when I look back at this event in years to come, this event will be seen as the catalyst for shaping a new era not just for the RS Venture Connect Class but for para sailing on the whole. When this event in Al Musannah was initially envisioned, there was no guarantee that it could go ahead, let alone with the kind of numbers of teams attending that we now see signed up for this event. Oman Sail committed to the event, and the rest is history!”

“Thanks to Oman Sail, bp Oman, the Barcelo Musannah Resort and Oman Air, the possibilities for growing this discipline of our amazing sport are truly limitless. I feel very lucky indeed to be able to do the work that I do and be surrounded by like-minded people and organisations like those involved in staging this event. The platform for what promises to be an epic competition has been built.”

First Oman Equestrian Festival to be held in December

WALEED AL JAHWARI
MUSCAT, NOV 9

HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, directed to launch the Oman Equestrian Festival 2022 at Al Rahba race course in Barka on December 7.

The inaugural equestrian festival will be part of the country’s celebrations of the 52nd National Day. The event will be organised by the Oman Equestrian Federation (OEF) incorporated with the Royal Cavalry.

The first edition of Omani Equestrian Festival will include international Olympic equestrian competitions and activities, horse racing, show jumping, tent pegging and endurance race, in



addition to traditional horse race ‘Al Arza’ and other equestrian sports activities.

This is the first time in Oman to that all equestrian competitions are brought together in one event.

Sayyid Munther bin Saif al Busaidy, OEF Chairman, stressed that “the first edition of Oman

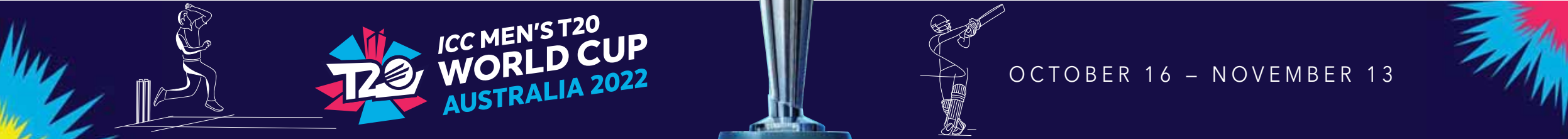
Equestrian Festival 2022, comes within high interest of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik in equestrian sport. In furtherance of this interest, HH Sayyid Theyazin instructed to hold Oman Equestrian Festival in order to continue the government support to raise the level of equestrian sport in Oman.”

“The equestrian festival comes within the country’s celebrations of the 52nd National Day. Also it coincides with the football World Cup activities which will be held in Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre in Muscat, which have economic and tourism impact, where there will be valuable prizes for the winners,” he ended.

Dr Sarhan bin Salim al Zaidi, Director-General of the Royal

Cavalry, said: “Horse racing and equestrian sports are considered one of the components of Omani history, and it has all the attention from the government. The first edition of Oman Equestrian Festival 2022 will be under the auspices of HH Sayyid Theyazin as kind of encouragement to horse racing and equestrian sports.”

The Director-General of Royal Cavalry explained, “the Oman Equestrian Festival 2022 is witnessing great cooperation between the Royal Cavalry, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and the Oman Equestrian Federation. The horse races will include five races, four races devoted to purebred Arabian horses, and one round to purebred hybrid horses.”



PAKISTAN

THUMP NEW ZEALAND TO REACH FINAL

RIZWAN AND AZAM SLAM HALF CENTURIES

SYDNEY: Mohammad Rizwan and Babar Azam slammed half centuries as Pakistan powered past New Zealand by seven wickets and into the Twenty20 World Cup final on Wednesday, moving within one win of a second title.

They will meet either England or India — who play on Thursday in Adelaide — in the November 13 decider at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Pakistan set the tone at the Sydney Cricket Ground with some razor sharp fielding and disciplined bowling that restricted New Zealand to just 152-4.

In front of 36,443 strongly pro-Pakistan spectators, Rizwan (57) and Azam (53) took apart the Black Caps’ renowned bowling attack in a 105-run opening stand.

Despite a slightly nervy finish after both fell, Mohammad Haris’s 30 off 26 balls helped complete a deserved victory with five balls to spare.

“Obviously, me and Babar decided to go after the new ball and the pitch was difficult,” said Rizwan, who was named player of the match.

“When we finished the powerplay, the discussion was one of the guys to go deep. The guys have worked hard and we have always believed.”

Pakistan last claimed the title in 2009 at Lord’s in England when they beat Sri Lanka by eight wickets, and it has been a



rollercoaster ride in Australia to make another final.

After agonising last-ball losses to India and Zimbabwe in the group phase, they bounced back to

topple the Netherlands and South Africa.

Then against the odds they went through when the Proteas were stunned by the Dutch and Pakistan

eased past Bangladesh.

New Zealand, who topped Group 1, were aiming to make the final for the second consecutive time, but their hunt for a maiden

SCOREBOARD

New Zealand	
F Allen lbw Afridi	4
D Conway run out	21
K Williamson b Afridi	46
G Phillips c and b Nawaz	6
D Mitchell not out	53
J Neesham not out	16
Extras (b2, lb4)	6
Total (4 wickets, 20 overs)	152
Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-38, 3-49, 4-117	
Bowling: Afridi 4-0-24-2, Shah 4-0-30-0, Rauf 4-0-32-0, Wasim 2-0-15-0, Khan 4-0-33-0, Nawaz 2-0-12-1	
Pakistan	
M Rizwan c Phillips b Boult	57
B Azam c Mitchell b Boult	53
M Haris c Allen b Santner	30
S Masood not out	3
I Ahmed not out	0
Extras (b4, lb3, w3)	10
Total (3 wickets, 19.1 overs)	153
Fall of wickets: 1-105, 2-132, 3-151	
Bowling: Boult 4-0-33-2, Southee 3.1-0-24-0, Ferguson 4-0-37-0, Santner 4-0-26-1, Sodhi 4-0-26-0	

suffered a big blow when Glenn Phillips was caught and bowled by Mohammad Nawaz for six. Daryl Mitchell and Williamson began taking more risks after reaching the 10-over mark at 59-3 with the first six coming in the 13th over.

Williamson was undone on 46 by an Afridi yorker after a knock that yielded only two boundaries before Mitchell, unbeaten on 53, and Jimmy Neesham, who scored 16, added 29 runs in the final three overs. “At the halfway mark we thought we had a competitive total but it was disappointing not to make Pakistan work harder,” said Williamson who saw his side shell a series of catchable chances in a sloppy fielding display.

“It’s a tough pill to swallow,” he said. “I think if we want to be honest, we wanted to be more disciplined with our areas. Like I said, Pakistan deserved to win.”

Pakistan skipper Azam, who was desperate for runs after making just 39 in five matches before the semifinal, was dropped first ball by wicketkeeper Conway off Trent Boult in the reply.

But after his nervy start he hammered a four off Boult and partner Rizwan also helped himself to two boundaries in a costly 15-run over for the Kiwis. They plundered more boundaries off Tim Southee in another 15-run over, racing to 55-0 from the powerplay and bringing up their century stand in the 12th over. — AFP



India's Rohit Sharma bats during a net practice session at Adelaide Oval in Adelaide. — AFP

Rohit takes heart from wins in England

ADELAIDE: Skipper Rohit Sharma says beating England in their back yard just a few months ago gives his India team confidence they can do it again in their Twenty20 World Cup semifinal on Thursday.

The world’s two top-ranked teams will clash at the Adelaide Oval for a place in Sunday’s final at the MCG against Pakistan or New Zealand.

India made the semis after winning four of their five Super 12 matches to top their group, but it’s victories in July in the English summer that has buoyed Rohit.

India edged out England 2-1 in both the T20 and 50-over series

on their white-ball tour.

“Certainly going into the game it’ll give us some confidence because beating a team like England in England, obviously it’s a big challenge, and we overcame that challenge pretty well,” Rohit said on Wednesday. “But again, we do understand the dynamics of this T20 cricket. You just have to be good on that particular day, otherwise it’s not good enough.”

England ended second in their World Cup Super 12 group and needed a nervy win over Sri Lanka to make the final four, but Rohit said Jos Buttler’s team remain “dangerous”.

“They’ve played some really

good cricket in the tournament as well, which is why they’re here. So we’ve got to be at our best to win the game.”

Rohit has been far from his best with the bat at the World Cup, but said he and the likes of in-form superstar Virat Kohli will not be defined by what happens in the semifinal. “I think there’s a lot of effort that goes into putting ourselves and playing for the country and getting those efforts, getting those runs, getting those wickets,” said Rohit.

“So I really don’t believe that one bad game in the knockout can truly define what kind of player you are.” — AFP

England to give Malan, Wood maximum time

ADELAIDE: England will make last-minute fitness calls on Dawid Malan and Mark Wood as they look to spoil the party in Thursday’s Twenty20 World Cup semifinal against India, skipper Jos Buttler said.

The world’s two top-ranked teams will clash at the Adelaide Oval for a place in Sunday’s final at the MCG against Pakistan or New Zealand.

England are sweating on the availability of number three batsman Malan and pace spearhead Wood.

Wood has bowled the fastest ball of the tournament at 154.74kph (96.15mph).

“We will see how they pull up. We are trying to give them as long as possible,” Buttler said on Wednesday. “Dawid was out the other day with a small niggle, Woody has had a bit of stiffness. We trust the medical team, we trust the two guys as well.”

Malan looks doubtful after he injured his groin in England’s final Super 12 match against Sri Lanka and could be replaced by Phil Salt.

Buttler, who plays with hard-hitting Salt at county side Lancashire, backed him to take his chance if it comes against India.



England's Jos Buttler attends a practice session at the Adelaide Oval. — AFP

“I think he has a fantastic mindset, especially for the T20 format, he certainly doesn’t fear anyone and is someone who wants to get on the front foot and take the game on,” said Buttler.

“He embodies quite a lot of what we speak about as a team and how we ask guys to play.

“Certainly I wouldn’t expect to see anything else from him if he gets the chance to play.

“He’s certainly someone who’s not going to shy away from an occasion, I feel like he’s someone who will definitely take it on.”

Buttler knows that an India side which has batsmen Virat Kohli and Suryakumar Yadav in

sparkling form will have strong backing in Adelaide, as they have done throughout the World Cup.

“We are all really excited about the match, in my opinion one of the best stadiums in the world against a brilliant Indian team which I am sure will be well supported tomorrow,” Buttler said.

“It’s going to be a great occasion and these are the times you want to be involved as a player.”

Buttler also knows that those Indian fans will be hoping for victory to set up a blockbuster final against arch-rivals Pakistan.

“We certainly don’t want an India-Pakistan final,” the wicketkeeper added. — AFP



GROUP A

	QATAR
	ECUADOR
	SENEGAL
	NETHERLANDS

GROUP B

	ENGLAND
	IRAN
	UNITED STATES
	WALES

GROUP C

	ARGENTINA
	SAUDI ARABIA
	MEXICO
	POLAND

GROUP D

	FRANCE
	AUSTRALIA
	DENMARK
	TUNISIA

GROUP E

	SPAIN
	COSTA RICA
	GERMANY
	JAPAN

GROUP F

	BELGIUM
	CANADA
	MOROCCO
	CROATIA

GROUP G

	BRAZIL
	SERBIA
	SWITZERLAND
	CAMEROON

GROUP H

	PORTUGAL
	GHANA
	URUGUAY
	SOUTH KOREA



FIFA
WORLD CUP
2022
GROUPS

A total of 32 teams have been broken down into eight groups with the top two progressing to the knockouts. The groups are determined by a complex FIFA process.



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Renewables alone unlikely to satisfy global energy demand: Al Aufi

PRICE TRENDS: Oil prices will go down after winter

JOMAR MENDOZA
@JmObserver

Rising global energy demand growth means that renewable energy resources alone are unlikely to meet the planet's energy requirements, said Eng Salim bin Nasser al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals.

He noted in an interview with CNBC Middle East that other energy resources would continue to be required during the global energy transition journey.

Speaking on the sidelines of the UN COP27 climate conference in Egypt's coastal city of Sharm el Sheikh, Al Aufi stated: "The world will need all the energy it can get hold on off (and) we are still producing coal today. We have been talking about getting rid of coal production for quite some time.

"The world needs energy. If we go forward to 2050, there will be more energy demand, and not less. It will be foolish for us to assume that the world energy requirement



“Energy has to be affordable for every person to get access to. There is no point providing energy that is not affordable.”

ENG SALIM BIN NASSER AL AUFİ
Minister of Energy and Minerals

is going to go down and we can meet the demand with renewable energy, and so on.”

Al Aufi also stressed the importance of energy affordability if the energy transition is to succeed. "Energy has to be affordable for every person to get access to. There is no point providing energy that is not affordable," he said.

Asked to comment on the recent Saudi-led production cut, the minister said, "The production cut is helping to balance it (the price), and really helping to try avoid price spikes probably in the

future if we are not careful. We are trying to balance it." Opec+, at its meeting on October 5, agreed a 2-million barrel per day output cut that triggered mixed reactions from the West, with the US calling it "shortsighted".

He said he was not surprised at the West's reaction to the production cut. "It was expected. I would be surprised if the reaction was anything different. We still believe it was a right decision. Looking at the numbers now, we believe it was a right decision. The world needs a bit of reflection point, a bit of courageous move to try and balance it."

He further added: "There is no point making short term gains for a long term pain for everybody. We've been doing this since 2016 trying to play a very difficult act of balancing the supply and demand, and so on.

"It's not an easy task, and so far it was executed quite well, with all the pluses and minuses, of pros and cons and so on, and it will be foolish for us to assume that every decision Opec+ makes will be accepted by the international community."

Earlier, in remarks to journalists

on the margins of the Summit, Al Aufi said he foresaw oil prices prevailing at around \$90/barrel "until the end of winter, probably by end of Q1.

"Once winter has come and gone, hopefully with very little impact in terms of access to energy and so on, then the world will realise that the crisis was not as big as we thought, (then) the price will start to come down."

The Sultanate of Oman is not banking on these prices to continue to stay high for next year, he said. "Our current strategy is the price will probably start to come down some time next year. Our budget is balanced on \$55 (per barrel), which is way below down the price today; just to make sure that we are not overinflating the price hike," he said.

"If the price continues to be where it is today, we have other things to worry about like cost of transportation, cost of material, and so on. We are equally impacted and therefore it is also in our best interest that prices will come down to a reasonable level, where the consumer and the supplier are both winning," he added. (Picture courtesy: CNBC Middle East)

Forum stresses importance of economic empowerment of women

BALQEES AL ORAIMI
MUSCAT, NOV 9

Under the auspices of HH Dr Mona bint Fahd al Said, Assistant Vice-Chancellor for International Cooperation at Sultan Qaboos University, the annual Women's Forum was opened at Sheraton Oman Hotel on the theme 'Women's Economic Empowerment'.

The forum witnessed the participation of a number of prominent women from different professional backgrounds. Presentations focused on efforts to empower Omani women and enhance their capabilities in Omani society.

The first edition of a book, titled "The Elite", was launched on the sidelines of the forum's activities. The book includes a review of some successful Omani women models, their experiences and achievements. Komal Beg from CUC Ulster University in Qatar presented a specialised workshop entitled "Women in Leadership".

Representatives from a number of government organisations, including Asyad Group and Oman LNG, were present. So were delegates from the banking and private sectors.

Later in the evening, the winners of the annual Women's Awards for Excellence were presented at a ceremony held under the auspices of Lujaina bint Mohsin Haidar Darwish, Member of the State Council.

The awards applaud the accomplishments of Omani women in various fields. Currently in its 11th year, the awards highlight the successes of women and showcase their inspirational and creative capabilities.

The award categories include women leaders in the corporate sector, fashion design, arts, and educational services, entrepreneurship and innovation, health services, sports, social responsibility, small and medium enterprises sector, human resources, tourism, and entertainment.

Two women will also be conferred with the Woman of the Year Award and the Promising Woman of the Year Award.

Value of OQ Group assets pegged at \$31.633 bn

LOCALISATION: OQ Group spends \$785.5m to enhance In-Country Added Value

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 9

OQ, a global integrated energy group, recorded earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) amounting to \$3.441 billion for the first half of 2022. These figures represented an increase of 110 per cent in comparison with the first half of 2021. On the other hand, the group recorded net profits of \$2.131 billion.

Additionally, the assets of the group increased to \$31.633 billion. OQ's achieved an average total production of oil from its operating assets and investment partnerships of 219 thousand barrels per day. This represents 12.6 per cent of Oman's total oil production.

OQ's oil production in the first half of this year was 33 per cent higher as compared to the production recorded during the same period last year. The production of Block 60 also increased to 53 million barrels of oil equivalent in the first half



of 2022 compared to 24 million barrels during the first half of 2021.

The availability ratio of OQ's gas network during the first half of 2022 was 100 per cent.

OQ's production of natural gas reached 494 million cubic feet per day including 28 million cubic feet from the group's operating assets. The production of OQ's partnership assets hit 466 million cubic feet of gas per day.

In the refineries and petrochemicals sector, OQ achieved an average refineries production of 268 thousand barrels per day in the first half of this year, while OQ's polymer production hit about 589 thousand metric tonnes.

The group's methanol production recorded about 565 thousand metric tonnes, while aromatics plant produced 577 thousand metric tonnes.

Finally, OQ LPG's production was 125 thousand metric tonnes, while OQ chemicals' production was 904 thousand metric tonnes.

OQ's total expenditure allocated to the in-country added value during the first half of 2022 amounted to about \$785.5 million, with an increase of 70.9 per cent

OQ'S OIL PRODUCTION H1 OF THIS YEAR WAS 33 PER CENT HIGHER AS COMPARED TO THE PRODUCTION RECORDED DURING THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR. THE PRODUCTION OF BLOCK 60 ALSO INCREASED TO 53 MILLION BARRELS OF OIL EQUIVALENT IN THE H1 OF 2022 COMPARED TO 24 MILLION BARRELS DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 2021.

from \$54.6 million spent in the first half of 2021.

OQ's spending on products made in Oman amounted to about \$68.5 million compared to \$47.7 million spent on these products in the first half of 2021.

Furthermore, the number of Omani graduates employed by OQ increased by 133 per cent to reach 42 graduates, compared to 18 graduates hired by the group in the first half of 2021, while OQ's social investment projects during the first half of 2022 amounted to about \$3.067 million, in line with the group's commitment to contribute to social development efforts by maximising the positive impacts of its operations.

NBO launches new escrow account services

MUSCAT: Continuing to bring new opportunities and create value for its customers, National Bank of Oman (NBO) has launched new escrow account services in support of government requirements for real estate development.

The bank will be able to act as an escrow agent by accepting and holding funds on behalf of customers during the purchase of a property and release the funds as per escrow agreement, ensuring transparency at every stage of the project, and safeguarding the interests of both buyer and developer.

Mohammed bin Yahya al Jabri (pictured), Assistant General Manager, Head of Global Transaction Banking at NBO, said, “NBO is committed to supporting the ongoing economic development of the nation



by offering customers industry-leading solutions in the real estate sector.

Alongside product innovation, customer experience is our topmost priority and

hence our escrow account services offering comes with NBO's best in class and trusted customer service and subject matter experts' resources that reflects the sophisticated advancements in real estate development.

This new service will make purchasing real estate more efficient and protect the funds paid to developers for off-plan properties, helping to increase investor and developer confidence and regulate an expanding sector for the benefit of all parties.”

Providing its customers with the confidence of having a trusted partner, NBO has developed a dedicated service desk attended by subject matter experts for escrow account clients to offer expert advice in line with international best practices and local regulations to enhance the daily

banking experience.

The need for an escrow account service is mandated by Royal Decree 30/2018 and Ministerial Decision 72/2019 issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, where developers are obliged to establish an Escrow Account with a local bank for each real estate development project.

NBO will manage the funds in accordance with the terms of the Escrow Account agreement and release the funds linked to the progress of the project.

To find out more information about NBO's corporate banking solutions, please visit www.nbo.om, contact the NBO Call Centre, or download the free NBO Mobile App.

ahlibank ends Q3 with robust growth

MUSCAT: ahlibank continues to leverage its portfolio of innovative products, services and digitalisation initiatives to record unstinted growth in the third quarter of 2022. It has supplemented its first and second quarter results with impressive results in the third quarter.

With Oman's outlook getting upgraded to stable and economic recovery gaining momentum with higher oil prices, ahlibank witnessed commensurate growth in its profits during the third quarter. It was able to achieve 18.8 per cent growth in profit, amounting to RO 25.06 million, for the period ending September 2022, in comparison to the same period last year.

Customer deposits increased by 9.2 per cent to reach RO 2,228.4 million; net loans, advances and financing grew by 7.3 per cent, reaching RO 2,538.1 million. Besides, the Bank's Operating income and expenses also increased to the tune of 13.0 per cent (RO 67.93 million), and 20.1 per cent (reaching RO 29.49 million), respectively, for the nine months period ending 30



September 2022.

Said Abdullah al Hatmi, CEO, of ahlibank, said, “Our third-quarter results succinctly demonstrate our commitment to pursue the business targets set for the year. We are reaching newer heights, and the coming months will bolster our expansion process and help us end the year on a high note, with our Total Assets showing a commensurate growth.

Our performance has been consistent over the last three quarters, and our growing customer base is a clear indication of our long-term plan to further enhance our connection with the society from different parts of the country, and achieve financial inclusion.”

Omantel launches Middle East's first 400GbE DCI service with Ciena

MUSCAT: Oman Telecommunications Company (Omantel), Oman's first and leading integrated telecommunications services provider, announced yesterday the launch of a 400GbE DCI service utilising Ciena's Data Centre Interconnect solution.

The service is designed to meet the rapidly rising connectivity demands of Omantel's wholesale, cloud and content provider customers while delivering a superior customer experience through optimised performance.

Omantel's 400GbE DCI service runs on Ciena's 6500 Packet-Optical Platform powered by WaveLogic 5 Extreme coherent optics and is managed by the Manage, Control and Plan (MCP) domain controller. The Ciena solution gives Omantel the ability to deploy 100G and, for the first time, 400GbE DCI connectivity over wavelengths up to 800Gb/s to accommodate increasing network traffic.

Our vision is for Oman to be the leading gateway to the region and beyond. We are bringing this



mission to life, and a recent example is our new 400GbE data centre interconnect service that we developed with Ciena.

At Omantel, considering the numerous benefits on technical, commercial and social levels, we acted upon a clear strategy for data centres by partnering with Equinix, the world's digital infrastructure company, to launch MC1, the premier carrier-neutral data centre in MENA.

We are now taking the next step by introducing an innovative new DCI service, the first of its kind in the region,” said Sohail Qadir, Vice President of Wholesale at Omantel.

He added, “Crucially, we were able to launch the service sustainably—without deploying additional platforms—doubling wavelength transmission capacity from 400G to 800G and improving



overall fibre capacity leveraging our existing footprint.

What this means for our customers is faster delivery of on-demand cloud applications and content with the highest quality.”

Virginie Hollebecque, Vice President and Leader of EMEA, Ciena, said: “With a flexible, scalable network foundation from Ciena, Omantel is able to get ahead of the growing demands on today's networks and provide its customers with unrivalled connectivity by way of its DCI service.”

Omantel and Ciena continue to work together on various levels to introduce advanced products based on the latest technologies in the industry. The collaboration has resulted in innovative products that reflect the leading role of both companies in the wholesale domain.

Bank Muscat hosts IBOR workshop for clients

MUSCAT: In line with its customer-centric vision, Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, recently hosted a workshop on Interbank Offered Rates (IBOR) for its corporate banking clients to help them adjust to the ongoing transition from London Interbank Offered Rate based (LIBOR) products used by the global financial community for many decades previously.

The event was inaugurated by Ilham bint Murtadha al Hamaid (pictured), General Manager - Corporate Banking, Bank Muscat, and attended by representatives from the leading corporates of the country.

Speaking at the event, Ilham bint Murtadha al Hamaid, warmly welcomed customers and thanked them for their continuing support and confidence in the bank. She said: “The importance of this workshop can be gauged from the fact that approximately \$ 74 trillion of LIBOR-based products are expected to mature globally beyond end-June 2023, the cessation date for LIBOR.

With nearly 90 per cent of them



being derivatives, there is no doubt that the transition process needs to be managed such that there is minimal disturbance to on-going market activities.

Hence, in line with our customer-centric vision and to continuously support and handhold our customers through different phases of their growth, Bank Muscat is delighted to host this workshop featuring some of the most renowned IBOR-transition experts. We hope that all our customers will leave today's session with a good understanding on how to manage the transition process in the future.”

Borrowing and lending in Foreign Currency and handling the associated transactions is an essential part of banking relationships in today's global economy. Bank Muscat as the leading bank in Oman plays an important role in servicing the Foreign Exchange requirements of the country's corporate segment.

Bank Muscat is also focused on offering a number of niche services to sustain its competitive edge and is the only bank in the country to offer a full suite of treasury products and services on a 24x7 basis through its Treasury & Capital Markets division. The bank

has been consistently winning the Best Foreign Exchange Provider in Oman award over the years and as well as awards by major international banks for outstanding performance in error-free remittance and fund transfers.

The prestigious publication “Metal Bulletin”, has consistently ranked the bank among the top 5 global institutions for commodity price forecast. A multi-award winning organisation, Bank Muscat, through its Global Financial Institutions division, has established more than 500 correspondent banking relationships across the world.

Its performance across different facets of banking and finance have been consistently lauded by the international financial and banking community for several years.

The treasury products and services include meeting foreign exchange requirements of customers and offering hedging solutions for foreign currency, interest rate benchmarks and commodity price risks.

The division offers streaming foreign exchange prices to its

counterparty banks and customers and is among the few regional banks to offer a comprehensive commodity hedging product suite to its customers via precious metals, base metals, agricultural and energy products.

The bank's Treasury & Capital Markets division continues to manage the bank's surplus liquidity through active participation in money markets instruments in line with bank's overall ALM policy and regulatory guidelines. The service encompasses East Asian as well as early New York time zones spanning all international and GCC working days.

The bank believes that its continued focus on synergy efforts and offering quality service to customers will create a sustainable competitive edge for its client-focused businesses in the years ahead.

As one of the enduring successes of the Sultanate of Oman's Renaissance, Bank Muscat has been playing a key role in transforming the Omani banking sector with a number of innovative products and services over the past four decades.

Toyota seals first place at Rally de España



MUSCAT: Toyota Gazoo Racing team wins title for second year running following seventh victory of the season during the penultimate round of the 2022 FIA World Rally Championship.

The Toyota Gazoo Racing (TGR) World Rally Team (WRT) completed an FIA World Rally Championship treble in style recently as Toyota clinched the 2022 manufacturers' title with a superb win at Rally de España for Sébastien Ogier in the No. 1 Toyota GR Yaris Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicle. The manufacturers' championship success follows the drivers' and co-drivers' titles secured by Kalle Rovanperä and Jonne Halttunen during the previous rally in New Zealand.

The victory marks the second year in a row that the team has achieved a clean sweep of the three available WRC titles, and the sixth occasion that Toyota has topped the WRC's manufacturers' classification.

The rally win in Spain was the team's seventh of the season. In his first asphalt rally since January's Rallye Monte-Carlo, Ogier was among the pacesetters from the start, winning three stages in the No. 1 Toyota GR Yaris Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicle during the first day despite the challenging roads and mixed weather conditions. He took three more stage wins in a commanding performance on day two as he pulled away from the pack, and went on to win the last two stages of the rally on the last day – including the final Power Stage – and clinch victory by 16.4 seconds.

Ogier's teammate Kalle Rovanperä was also in the battle for the lead during day one when he was fastest in four stages in the No. 69 Toyota GR Yaris Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicle, before eventually finishing in third position overall.

Akio Toyoda, President of Toyota Motor Corporation and TGR Team Founder, commented “Congratulations to everybody in the team! I'm really happy that the team achieved all three titles in the drivers, co-drivers, and manufacturers championships, just as we did last year. And above all, I'm so glad that the GR Yaris has become a triple champion. Four GR Yaris Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicles, ten drivers/co-drivers, all of the staff and partners who supported them, and the fans all over the world who kept supporting us – it's a championship we achieved thanks to all of them.”

Over the years, Toyota has been participating in many different forms of motorsports, including Formula One, the World Endurance Championship (WEC), and the Nürburgring 24 Hours endurance race.



What is in store for the Egyptian Pound?



HAIDER AL LAWATI
haiderdawood@hotmail.com

The author is a Muscat-based economic analyst who previously worked for the CBO and OCCI.

There is great disquiet in Egypt about over the government's decision to float the national currency, the Egyptian Pound, whose value has been declining against the dollar. Is this decision in the interest of the Egyptian economy or will it lead to an increase in poverty in Egyptian society?

Opinions in this regard differ among the large number of local and foreign economic experts currently debating on this issue.

The good thing is that Egypt is not one of the countries that are subject to economic embargoes, like some countries in the world that suffer from economic and financial restrictions, such as those imposed on Iran, which has been suffering from an embargo for more than forty years.

Most ordinary Egyptians are upset that the value of the US dollar rose to 24 pounds (at the time of writing), up from 19 pounds. But other experts and social media writers believe that the decision taken to liberalise the exchange rate will find stability and lead to attracting more foreign investment flows during the coming period. This, in turn, will boost the pace of the Egyptian economy and provide more job opportunities on the back of the many feasible projects established by Egypt

during the past few years.

The decision to float the Egyptian pound comes in the wake of the Central Bank of Egypt's decision several months ago to actually reduce the currency rate by 16 per cent in order to satisfy the demands of the International Monetary Fund, which sometimes prescribes unconvincing policies to governments in exchange for loans.

Egypt needs loans and aid in light of the crises it is going through due to the large population growth, the decline in investments, grants and foreign aid. Besides, inflationary pressures are affecting the prices of goods and services due to the decision to raise the interest rate on deposits, which is directly reflected in global economies.

The decision to float the Egyptian currency was part of conditions set by the International Monetary Fund to approve a new loan that Cairo requested in the sum of \$3 billion.

This caused the Egyptian currency to decline in recent days. It has resulted in negative impacts to the Egyptian economy, particularly imports. It has also increased the value of locally manufactured products, especially those dependent on raw materials from abroad.

Most of the decisions of the International Monetary Fund with developing countries are related to the need to reduce the price of local currencies, especially countries that cannot find an alternative.

However, such a decision gives an opportunity for traders to get their desired hard currency to import what they see fit for their commercial and investment projects, while the decision will boost the flow of more tourists to Egypt in the next stage.

The lingering question is: Will the Egyptian economy achieve stability in the wake of the decision to devalue the pound by 16 per cent?

Netherlands eyes green hydrogen imports from Oman

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, NOV 9

The Netherlands has expressed hope that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on energy cooperation with the Sultanate of Oman, signed earlier this week, will facilitate, among other goals, the import of green hydrogen from Oman.

Salim bin Nasser al Aufi, Oman's Minister of Energy and Minerals, signed the MoU with Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte on the sidelines of the COP27 Summit taking place in the Egyptian resort city of Sharm el Sheikh.

The goal to secure green hydrogen supplies from Oman was made clear in a statement issued by Dutch Climate and Energy Minister Rob Jetten following the MoU signing.

"I am very happy with this step. In the long run, the Netherlands can start importing green hydrogen from Oman to meet the increasing demand here," Jetten noted in the statement.

Importantly, the MoU commits the two sides to cooperating across key areas of the green hydrogen



BOTH COUNTRIES WILL EXPLORE "COOPERATION AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN IMPORT AND EXPORT FACILITIES FOR CLEAN AND LOCALLY PRODUCED HYDROGEN."

value chain. It urges both sides to facilitate the efforts of companies operating in either country to "identify export and import corridors for green hydrogen, associated fuel sources and raw materials between the two countries as a gateway to Europe".

Additionally, the two countries will "consider potential interest and the interest of industries in the full value chain of green hydrogen".

Both Oman and the Netherlands

will facilitate interactions between the various bodies responsible for implementing the energy policy with the aim of sharing knowledge and information about green hydrogen. Besides, both countries will explore "cooperation and investment opportunities in import and export facilities for clean and locally produced hydrogen".

They will also cooperate in the application of standards and certifications for green hydrogen.

The MoU builds on a series of high-level interactions between the two countries this year.

In June, Oman's Embassy in the Netherlands, the Municipal Council of Amsterdam and the management of Port of Amsterdam held a meeting

to discuss opportunities for cooperation between Oman and the Port of Amsterdam.

The meeting also explored the potential for setting up joint ventures in green hydrogen, logistics and ports infrastructures. Last month, Dr Ali bin Masoud al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), led an official Omani delegation on a visit to the Port of Rotterdam in the Netherlands.

The two sides discussed avenues for joint cooperation between Port of Sohar, Port of Rotterdam and the free zones in the Sultanate of Oman. They also discussed ways harness renewable energy for the production and export of green hydrogen.

Islamic Development Bank delegation visits Madayn

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 9

A delegation representing the Islamic Development Bank visited the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) to get familiar with the expansion project of Al Rusayl Industrial City (Phase 2A). Madayn officials briefed the delegation on the progress of the project, which is located on an area of 2.4 million sq metres.

The project incorporates development of internal roads in the industrial city, infrastructure facilities (electricity, water, telecom, and rainwater and sewage networks), in addition to other services that meet



the needs of investment, industrial and logistical growth in Al Rusayl Industrial City. When completed, it will offer 120

land plots, which will include 11 km of road network, 15 km of water network, 11 km of electricity network, 17 km of

rainwater drainage network, 10 km of sewage network, in addition to sewage plant with a capacity of 4800 m3/day.

OTE celebrates grand opening of distinctive Genesis standalone showroom

MUSCAT: OTE – Oman's leading automotive group – celebrated the opening of its standalone Genesis showroom at its headquarters in Al Wattayah, Muscat on November 8, 2022, with a spectacular launch event that exemplified the iconic appeal and growing success of the Korean premium luxury brand.

HH Sayyid Harib bin Thuwaini al Said, Assistant Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers for Conferences, was the Chief Guest at the grand launch. Also present were a number of distinguished public and private sector guests, notably Kim Chang-kyu, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Sultanate of Oman. Representing the Genesis team were Mike Song, Global Chief Operating Officer – Genesis (HQ, Korea) and Omar al Zubaidi, Head of Genesis (Middle East and Africa), among other company officials.

In welcome remarks, Shaikh Saad Suhail Bahwan, Chairman – OTE Group, said: "The launch of this one-of-a-kind showroom, with its distinctive styling reflecting the signature brand identity of Genesis, is a testament to the impeccable standards that the brand has set since its launch nearly six years ago.

OTE Group is immensely proud to represent this truly iconic luxury brand in the Sultanate of Oman, and to position it



strongly for growth in the coming years."

Shaikh Salim Saad Suhail Bahwan, Director – Automotive, OTE Group, added: "We celebrate today not only the opening of this truly inspirational showroom dedicated to the Genesis brand, but also mark another highpoint in our thriving and fruitful partnership spanning nearly three decades. On behalf of OTE Group, I thank you most heartily for your trust in us to represent your world-class products in the Omani market."

The facility, first of its kind in the country, spans an impressive 1,112 m2 and



marks a new era for the luxury car brand in the Middle East. Located in Wattayah, the showroom comprises of two distinct

experience sections for customers, with 731 m2 dedicated to a brand cube and brand wall, as well as a display space for new models, and a Genesis coffee bar.

The remainder of the space, about 381 m2 located on the mezzanine floor, is dedicated to spacious open seating with additional area dedicated to new models.

The Genesis showroom is quite unlike conventional automotive display areas. It has been designed and fitted out in keeping with the distinctive design identity of the Genesis brand.

The dominant colour is black, which represents the understated elegance and sophistication of Genesis. Shades of ebony, symbolising subtle refinement, help unite the elements of the brand's design

framework. Complementing the colour landscape is copper – the oldest metal in human history, synonymous with purity and impact. Its progressive energy signals Genesis' pursuit of higher aspirations.

Strategically displayed around in the showroom – akin to exhibits in a studio or art gallery – are the latest offerings from the Genesis line-up. Taking centre-stage is the G90, the full-size luxury sedan that has only recently made its debut in the Middle East.

This flagship model of the Genesis range embodies stress-free luxury at a competitive price. Also vying for attention are the GV70 luxury performance SUV, the G70 luxury sport sedan with its stunning G70 Shooting Brake variant, as well as the G80 sedan and GV80 SUV.

As a standalone showroom, the strikingly differentiated space is designed to resonate with Genesis customers who can experience the signature features of the cars close-up. Multiple customer lounges enable visitors to have private consultations with the experienced Genesis team on hand. Other amenities add to a seamless customer experience reflecting the elegance of the Genesis brand.

For further details on the latest Genesis line-up, check out our website: <http://www.genesis.com/om> or call 80050003

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Sr. No.	Position	Qualification	Minimum Experience Requirement (in Years)	Job Description
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2	Construction Engineer - Electromech (Project Construction Coordinator)	BE Mech	10 to 15 years (out of which 5 years of Gulf experience)	Required Experienced professional with multi disciplinary experience in design, specification, construction and general construction management of Oil & Gas facilities activity. Additional Experience of working to and fully conversant with international codes (ANSI/ASME, ASTM, API, BS, EN, MSS/ISO, DIN etc.) used in oil and gas industry. ERDs, SPS, STDs (PDO documents), including Shell DEPs
3	Project Engineer - Electromech	BE Mech	10 to 15 years (out of which 5 years of Gulf experience)	Required Experienced professional with experience in design, specification, construction and general project engineering of Oil & Gas facilities, with a sound knowledge of project cost control / planning systems. Individual shall be responsible for – • Management of all Project Reporting; • Interface definition & Management; • Liaison with Company Project Engineers; • Maintain & control Project Variance logs, project Audit reports, early highlighting and resolution of project concerns; • Managing close-out of Audit action items; and, • Exercising control over manpower & material resources in order to execute the project within the budget, schedule, quality and HSE requirements.
4	Planning Engineer - Electromech	BE Mech	6 to 8 years (out of which 3 years of Gulf experience)	Required Primavera P6 certificate holder with experience in Project control & planning activities in Oil & Gas with knowledge of pipeline and piping construction, civil support activities, Overhead line construction and Control & Automation activities. Individual shall be responsible for – • Building overall plans & schedules for conceptual, front-end designs and for execution phase of projects; and, • Provide plans & schedules for ad-hoc construction service requests and integrated maintenance plans

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FROM: JULY 10, 2022 (SALAH, SALAH 10, 1444 AH)

HIS MAJESTY ADMINISTERS OATH TO NEW MINISTER

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This newly discovered cave might just be where kohl was mined in olden times

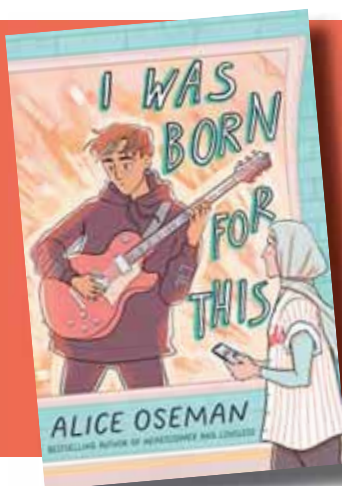
Allasif Cave has been discovered recently by a group of adventurers interested in exploring the wilayat of Al Amerat. It is located in an area called Alghbirtain, specifically in Wadi Baam. The cavers who discovered it think it is where antimony used in eyeliners in olden times was mined... **P20**

READ

I WAS BORN FOR THIS

BY ALICE OSEMAN

Angel meets the front man of her favourite boy band, the Ark.



TRAVEL TALES

Dancers perform the traditional Colombian and Venezuelan dance "Joropo" during a presentation to celebrate its inscription as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the Unesco in Bogota. — AFP



ENTERTAINMENT

Australian actor Elizabeth Debicki (6L) and English actor Dominic West (5L) pose with cast members and Netflix management, on the red carpet upon arrival to attend the World Premiere of "The Crown (Season 5)" in London. — AFP





Nile is in mortal danger, from its source to the sea

THE PHARAOHS WORSHIPPED it as a god, the eternal bringer of life. But the clock is ticking on the Nile.

Human-driven climate change, pollution and exploitation are putting existential pressure on the world's second-longest river, which half a billion people depend on for survival.

All along its 6,500-kilometre (4,000-mile) length, alarm bells are ringing.

From Egypt to Uganda, AFP teams have gone out on the ground to gauge the decline of a river that drains a

people from their homes.

What was once a bread basket has become the third-most vulnerable place on the planet to climate change.

Lake Victoria, the Nile's biggest source of water after rainfall, could also dry up due to drought, evaporation and slow tilts in the Earth's axis.

With such grim scenarios in store, governments have scrambled to capture its flow. But experts say dams are only hastening the coming catastrophe.



tenth of the African continent.

At its mouth on the Mediterranean, Sayed Mohammed is watching Egypt's fertile Nile Delta disappear. In Sudan, fellow farmer Mohammed Jomaa fears for his harvests, while at its threatened source in Uganda, there is less and less hydroelectric power for Christine Nalwadda Kalema to light her mud and wattle home.

"The Nile is the most important thing for us," said Jomaa, who at 17 is the latest generation of his family to work the river's rich banks at Alty in Gezira state.

"We certainly do not wish for anything to change," he said.

But the Nile is no longer the unperturbable river of myth. In half a century its flow has dropped from 3,000 cubic metres (10,600 cubic feet) per second to 2,830 cubic metres.

Yet it could get much, much worse. With multiple droughts in east Africa, its flow could fall by 70 per cent, according to the United Nations' most dire predictions.

Every year for the past six decades, the Mediterranean has eaten away between 35 and 75 metres (38-82 yards) of the Nile Delta. If the sea level rises even by a metre, a third of this intensely fertile region could disappear, the UN fears, forcing nine million

LAND LOST TO SEA

At the mouth of the Nile, the promontories of Damietta and Rosetta that once stuck out into the Mediterranean in northern Egypt have disappeared.

The concrete barriers that were supposed to protect them are half covered by water and sand.

The sea ate three kilometres into the Nile Delta between 1968 and 2009, with the river's weaker flow unable to hold back the Mediterranean, which rose around 15 centimetres (six inches) over the last century due to climate change.

The silt that for millennia formed a barrier to protect the land no longer makes it to the sea.

This rich dark sediment that was once swept along the river's bed has struggled to get beyond southern Egypt since the Aswan dam was built in the 1960s to regulate the Nile's floods.

Before its construction "there was a natural balance", Ahmed Abdel Qader, the head of Egypt's coast protection authority, said.

"Every Nile flood would deposit silt bulking up the promontories at Damietta and Rosetta. But this balance has been disturbed by the dam," he said. If temperatures keep rising, the Mediterranean will advance a further 100 metres a year into the Delta, the

UN's environment agency UNEP has warned.

POISONED BY SALT

Fifteen kilometres inland, the bustling farming community of Kafr El-Dawar seems as yet far from danger. But all is not well, said Sayed Mohammed, 73, who supports his 14 children and grandchildren growing rice and corn in fields sandwiched between the Nile and a road cacophonous with car horns.

Salt from the Mediterranean has already seeped into large swathes of land, killing and weakening plants. Farmers say their vegetables no longer taste the same.

To compensate for the salination of the soil, they have to pump more fresh water onto it from the Nile.

For 40 years, Mohammed and his neighbours used pumps that guzzled diesel and electricity. The cost strangled villagers whose income was already being eaten up by inflation and devaluations of the Egyptian pound.

So much so that in some parts of the Delta, fields were abandoned.

But the old man, who sports a djellaba and a traditional woolen cap, has been helped by a new irrigation system driven by solar energy which aims to increase farmers' incomes to stop more people fleeing the land.

Thanks to the 400 solar panels the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization financed for Kafr El-Dawar, he can water his half hectare (1.2 acres) of ground.

Solar power saves "farmers about 50 per cent" of pumping costs, local irrigation chief Amr al-Daqaq said. And they can also sell the surplus power the panels produce to the national grid.

Even so, none of Mohammed's descendants want to take on the farm.

The Mediterranean may eventually swallow up 100,000 hectares of the



region's prime agricultural land, according to UNEP, covering an area nearly 10 times the size of Paris.

Which would be a disaster for Egypt, with the Delta the source of between 30 and 40 per cent of the nation's agricultural output.

MEGA DAMS

More than half of Ethiopia's 110 million people have no choice but to live without electricity despite the country's having one of the fastest growth rates in Africa.

Addis Ababa is hoping that its GERD mega-dam project on the Nile will remedy that, and is ready to burn bridges with its neighbours if it has to.

Begun in 2011, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the Blue Nile — which joins the White Nile in Sudan to form the Nile — already holds nearly a third of its 74-billion-cubic-metre capacity. Addis Ababa claims it is the biggest hydroelectric project in Africa.

"The Nile is a gift of God given to us for Ethiopians to make use of it," Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed insisted in August.

But for Cairo it is a major headache, calling into question a deal signed with Sudan in 1959 which gave 66 per cent of the Nile's annual flow to Egypt and 22 per cent to Khartoum.

Although Ethiopia was not part of the accord, advisers to former Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi publicly floated bombing the dam back in 2013 to protect Cairo's vital interests.

The Egypt of President Abdel Fattah al-Sissi still fears a drastic fall in the Nile's flow because of the GERD dams.

And how much water Egypt is losing has sparked a heated debate within the scientific community, with some Egyptian researchers who minimise the effects accused of "betraying" their country.

- Disappearing silt -

But having already seen how the Aswan dam has reduced the flow of silt, farmers worry about being deprived of this precious natural fertiliser.

Over the years, Sudanese farmer Omar Abdelhay has found it harder and harder to grow the cucumbers, aubergines and potatoes in his luxuriantly green fields watered by the brown Nile water that passes close by his mud-brick home.

Eight years ago when this 35-year-old father began to cultivate his family's land, "there was good silt" to nurture his crops, he said.

But little by little as dam-building has increased, "the water has got clearer. Even if the water level rises" during floods, it "comes without silt", he added.

Stuck in a political and economic slump, and with ongoing protests against its military leaders, Sudan is struggling to manage its water resources.

STALKED BY HUNGER

Every year, the country is lashed by rainstorms that killed 150 people this summer and washed away entire villages. But the deluges are no help to its agriculture because of the lack of a

TRAVEL TALES

Qatar opens the largest luxury department store in time for the World Cup



A UNIQUE PARISIAN savoir-faire is made available to Qatar as Printemps Doha, the largest luxury department store in the Middle East opens a promising one-of-a-kind lifestyle destination available at Doha Oasis.

What's new about its opening is an immersive shopping experience as Printemps is known worldwide as a new-generation department store combining an immersive physical experience and new technologies in the service of an ultra-

wearable art and inviting shoppers to interact with the offerings on display. To echo the style and sophistication of Paris, Yabu Pushelberg outfitted the space with vast assortments of furniture the studio designed for iconic European houses.

Doha is represented through soft, organic architectural forms throughout the store, realised in thoughtful materiality and an earth-toned palette. Yabu Pushelberg's references to iconic



personalised customer relationship.

This ambitious project is the first Printemps outpost outside of France, the second-largest Printemps store worldwide and the largest luxury department store in the Middle East, spanning over 40,000 sqm across three floors.

Covering this wide expanse is the largest designer portfolio, carefully curated by a team of experts making it a house of the most iconic fashion houses under one roof, including Louis Vuitton, Dior, Valentino, Bottega Veneta, Balmain, Pinel & Pinel, Bäumer Vendôme, L'ETRANGE, as well as the most diverse selection of new and estab-

lished designers from all around the world.

The goal of the property is to be the main destination for the urban lifestyle, art de vivre and interior design, offering the most renowned luxury and contemporary home and audio brands. It also boasts the biggest beauty and wellness area in Qatar with 2,600 sqm and over 130 brands, ranging from the most iconic names in the industry to the latest sustainable and vegan brands and all-time consumer favourites.

AWESOME INSPIRING ARCHITECTURE

Weaving together the essence of Paris and the character of Doha, an award-winning global design studio, Yabu Pushelberg conceived the design of the department store.

Intended as if the department store were Parisian art galleries or museums of Qatari culture, Yabu Pushelberg provided ample space for exhibiting luxury garments as



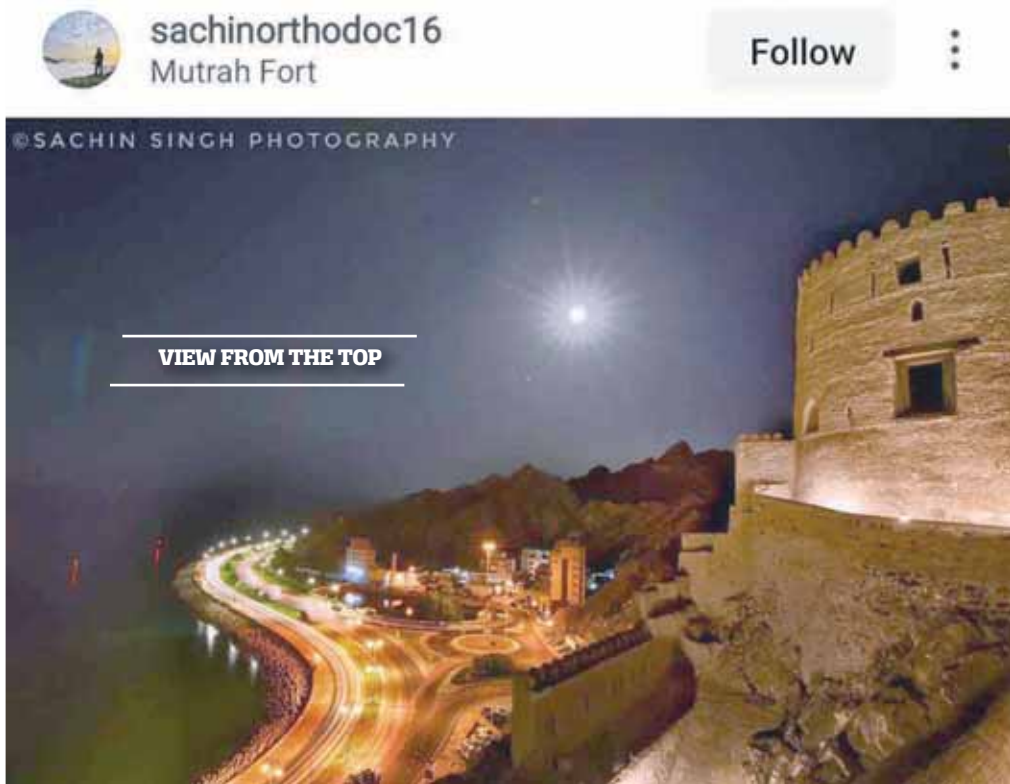
Also includes a customisation studio, a VIP concierge, personal shoppers and stylists available online and in-store. Shoppers can also pre-order the latest collections by international designers available upon request.

To punctuate the customer's journey with gastronomic surprises, an exciting variety of exclusive restaurants and cafés are made available to luxury shoppers. Among them: the Milanese institution Cova Montenapoleone, Monaco's lively restaurant Twiga, Maitre Choux, the choux pastry specialist from London, the renowned chocolatier Pierre Marcolini, Crazy Pizza and its innovative yeast-free concept, as well as Printemps' elegant salon de thé curated by French gourmet tea company Mariage Frères, the popular Parisian plant-based all-day café concept Wild & The Moon, and XYST and the vegan restaurant from NYC celebrity Chef Matthew.



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AROUND THE WORLD

ART

Microsoft co-founder's art may reap \$1bn at auction



AN ART COLLECTION is tipped to break the \$1 billion barrier at auction for the first time when Christie's sells works belonging to late Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen this week.

The two-day sale in New York comes as experts say the super wealthy are viewing art as a safe investment this year amid a tumultuous global economy and Russia's war in Ukraine.

Allen made his fortune with the establishment of the PC operating system with his better-known Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates in 1975.

He amassed a huge art collection which he used to lend to museums before his death in 2018 at the age of 65.

The 150 works, to be sold on Wednesday and Thursday at Christie's Manhattan headquarters, trace more than 500 years of art history, from Botticelli and Canaletto to Georgia O'Keeffe and Louise Bourgeois, via Claude Monet, Francis Bacon and Edward Hopper.

The collection is also unique for its value: several masterpieces are estimated to fetch more than \$100 million. They include French painter Paul Cezanne's "Montagne Sainte-Victoire" (1888-1890), which heralded cubism, and Georges Seurat's 1888 work "Les Poseuses, Ensemble (small version)", a renowned work of pointillism.

Also going under the gavel is Vincent Van Gogh's "Orchard with Cypresses" and a painting from Paul Gauguin's Tahitian period, "Maternity II" (1899), which controversially depicts his teenage mistress, Pahura.

Allen left Microsoft in 1983, due to health problems and a deteriorating relationship with Gates, who remained in charge of the company until 2000.

Despite their strained friendship, Allen signed Gates's "Giving Pledge" campaign and all proceeds from the auction are to be donated to charity.

Christie's hopes the total sales will become part of art market history and top \$1 billion.

The current auction record for a private collection was set this spring by the US couple Harry and Linda Macklowe, with \$922 million fetched in auctions conducted by Sotheby's.

This year is shaping up as one of the biggest ever in the art market.

Besides the Macklowe auction, an Andy Warhol portrait of Marilyn Monroe sold in May for \$195 million – a record for a piece of 20th-century art.

Another iconic Warhol, "White Disaster (White Car Crash 19 Times)" from 1963, depicting a series of images of a brutal car crash, is due to be sold on November 16 by Sotheby's, with a pre-sale estimate of over \$80 million.

"Clients want to diversify their assets, because they can enjoy it, and they know that most pieces continue increasing in value over time," Adrien Meyer, co-chairman of Impressionist & Modern Art at Christie's, said.

"There are more billionaires than they are masterpieces, in essence. The demand is very diversified," he added.

Jeremiah Evarts, vice-president at rival auction house Phillips, agreed that the art market is showing "no signs" of slowing down amid multiple world crises.

"A lot of collectors are looking at the 20th century and perhaps feel more secure buying a Picasso, a Chagall or a Magritte," he said. — AFP

ENTERTAINMENT

Despite some complaints, 'Black Panther' sequel receives rave reviews



THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED sequel to Disney's "Black Panther," "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" has received glowing reviews from the majority of critics.

The film, which arrives in theatres on Friday, scored a 94-per cent positive rating on Rotten Tomatoes, with only five out of 81 critics rating the film as rotten.

The Marvel Studios film follows Queen Ramonda, Shuri,

the movie became centred on Wakanda mourning their leader.

Aaron Perine of Comicbook.com wrote, "Through the collective efforts of a cast intent on doing right by the man who started it all, the film percolates with purpose. There is a new Black Panther, and they will figure into the future of this universe. After the credits, there's a big surprise."

Her 5/5 rating for the film is

Girl Nerds explained.

With that said, not all critics were satisfied with the movie. Robbie Collin of the Daily Telegraph gave the movie a 1/5 and explained that the long film was a struggle to watch.

He described the motion picture as "a near-three-hour endurance run of gloomy photography and turgidly staged, emotionally empty two-way conversations, all seemingly designed to sap cast and view-

ers' combined will to live."

Stephanie Zacharek from Time magazine had a similar takeaway, writing "Ticking boxes isn't the same as pulling magic – or even just insight – from thin air. The sad reality is that the show must go on, and without (Chadwick Boseman), it's just more of the same. Our job is to pretend it's enough."

— Reuters



M'Baku, Okoye and the Dora Milaje as they work together to protect Wakanda in the wake of King T'Challa's death.

Director Ryan Coogler scrapped his original script for the Disney project after the film's lead Chadwick Boseman passed away in 2020 due to colon cancer. Instead of T'Challa grieving lost time after "the blip," the driving force of

echoed by most other critics who believe the movie is a standout in Marvel's Phase 4.

"Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" is by far the best film in phase 4 of the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Phase 5 has some big shoes to fill after this one, and hopefully, the storytelling can create the same kind of authenticity and greatness this movie has," Jamie Broadnax of Black



Dr Yousuf Ali al Mulla

His pain, her pain!

YOU MAY NOT and will never forget the first time a doctor gave up: when they tell you they don't know what to do, they don't even have any more tests to do and there are no more cures to offer – you're on your own. This has happened to you or someone close to you and it happens to many others with chronic pain!

You may also have experienced that feeling when the pain stabbed you on a certain side of your body. This was followed by a need to take a sedative and then you felt better. However, as the hours passed, the pain turned into a constant nightmare, as if you were in a bad dream, and that sedative didn't make any difference. However, here he/she passes a night of hallucinogenic insomnia lying in bed, desperately trying to turn off that physical stimulus.

Moreover, here you are at your primary care physician and he reminds you of the possibility of catching a certain disease. Some tests are ordered for you, but they are negative – meaning the diagnosis has not been determined yet – you felt as a patient that something was definitely wrong, but the physician did not find any specific illness or infection! What followed was years of fruitless consultations, the last of which was a description, perhaps for chronic pelvic pain – which means it explains very little – the outlook is discouraging. The condition is poorly understood and there is no reliable treatment. That patient lives with the hum of pain and a noise echo – if I can say – pain after pain that destroys sleep from time to time. What more can be said about the

real harm of pain?!

On the other hand, we are all aware that physical pain represents a part of the body that has been damaged or in danger. Nevertheless, the pain can even be deceptive, so it is described with multiple characteristics and words, such as pulsing and burning! Realistically, that pain alerts us that the body is in distress, helps us focus on it and helps us better understand why it's hurting.

What is more, when you complain about pain – especially chronic – it cannot be ignored and it seems that it has been there forever, as that patient knows deep down that it will never disappear. As such, this leads me to draw an important point in our life: we should focus on the present and not on what is to come in the future. If you can treat the pain as a series of independent episodes, you can reduce its power. You can also enjoy a good day with pelvic pain – for example – as life is just one day after another.

In the end, we often notice and perhaps many of us realise that unfortunately pain is no longer shareable with time. While we bridge the gap now and then to sympathise with ourselves at other times, we must also sympathise with the suffering of others. I believe that there is solace in solidarity – and it should be – in sharing the experience of chronic pain, in the power of compassion to break the boundaries that separate us from others and ourselves!

Dr Yousuf Ali Al Mulla is a physician, medical innovator and writer.

art & life

Local Scene

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THURSDAY | NOVEMBER 10 | 2022

This newly discovered cave might just be where kohl was mined in olden times

By Arwa Al Hashimi
Photos by Mohammed Al Mashari

Caving is becoming one of the most popular activities in Oman. Many Omani adventurers, hikers as well as photographers took the mission of discovering the caves in Oman to give us an idea of what can be found inside. Several new caves have been discovered lately each of which is special for its location, geographical nature and view.

Allasif cave has been discovered recently by a group of adventurers interested in exploring the Wilayat of Al Amerat. It is located in an area called Alghbirtain, specifically in Wadi Baam.

According to Mohammed al Mashari, one of the photographers who visited the cave, "The way to the cave is very rocky and the cave is very dark due to the antimony stone that forms in layers inside the cave."

The cave has three entrances and many stories said that it was a mine where antimony stone was extracted and exported to the wilayats of Nizwa and Bahla.

There are many things to discover about the cave primarily how far it goes and whether it

served as a mine. Based on the initial things seen by the cavers, it is likely that antimony stones were mined from the cave and while they have no clue as to its age, it may go a very long way back.

Describing what they saw, the cavers shared that unlike other caves in Oman, this cave is relatively drier and formations of stalagmites and stalactites are not to be seen. Compared to the Al Hoota Cave, it is relatively smaller and there seemed to be no water source.

They also described that while one can enter the cave, as one goes deeper, one eventually has to crawl because of the space leading them to believe that it is very likely that antimony was mined from the cave.

Antimony stone is abundantly found in many Arab countries, such as Morocco, the Levant, Yemen and Oman. It is naturally found in a shiny silver colour, such as the Omani antimony stone, or a reddish-black colour, as is the case in the Shami antimony stone.

The antimony stone is well smashed to be used for different purposes especially making eyeliner. And this dates back to the ancient Pharaohs when eyeliner was a basic women's makeup.

The eyeliner is made by grinding the antimony stone until it becomes a fine powder, then mixed with olive oil or sesame oil. After that, it is kept in containers designated for it with a very thin and small stick to put the kohl around the eye. Surprisingly, some people mix the smashed antimony stone with musk and apply it to their eyes. As for Omanis, there is a special container for the kohl. It is made of silver and it usually comes cylindrical with a very wonderful inscription around it. It is called Marwad or Makhal.

The antimony kohl has great benefits as it purifies the eyes from dust, and helps treat eye infections and ulcers. It also gives longer and denser eyelashes and strengthens the eye's nerve. Additionally, scientific studies have proven that antimony stone helps to kill germs and parasites that enter the body. So it is now used in the composition of many medicines and skin ointments that treat skin ulcers and infections, and it is also used to treat some cases of baldness.

Despite the hardships that adventurers face while caving, it is all worth the effort after getting there and being surrounded by the beautiful scenes inside.

