



50
GLORIOUS YEARS

MUSCAT DAILY

AN APEX MEDIA PUBLICATION

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MAQBOOL AL SALEH REMINISCES ON LIFE IN HIS MEMOIRS
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Royal Commendations conferred on three media professionals

Muscat - His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has conferred the Order of Royal Commendation, 3rd Class, on three media professionals in recognition of their contribution to Omani media.

The awardees include Ibrahim bin A'mir bin Nassir al Yahmadi, Hassan bin Salim bin Juma al Farsi and Mohammed bin Ali bin Saleh al Marjabi.

They were presented the Order of Royal Commendation by Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham

bin Tarik al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, when he received them in his office on Monday.

Dr Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa al Harrasi, Minister of Information, hailed the Royal Commendations by His Majesty Sultan Haitham to the three media professionals.

On the occasion, Dr Harrasi said, "The recognition from His Majesty the Sultan to these skilled media professionals is a tribute to Omani media encom-

passing print, audio, visual and electronic institutions."

He also affirmed that it is a tribute to genuine, serious and constructive media that presents patriotic message, provides knowledge and spreads positive values among the people of the nation. He appreciated the efforts of the awardees throughout their careers and called on all Omani media professionals and journalists to exert more efforts to spread knowledge.

The awardees expressed

their happiness following the recognition.

"The Royal Commendation of media professionals by His Majesty the Sultan is a great honour," said Yahmadi.

While expressing his sincere gratitude and appreciation to His Majesty the Sultan, Marjabi called on young Omanis to work hard. Farsi added that the recognition is a great moral booster for him to continue to work with more creativity and diligence.

ONA

50 bikers ride together to mark 50th National Day

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To mark the 50th National Day, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, in cooperation with the Al Mamari Global Group of companies, organised a motorbike ride on Saturday.

The event was held under the patronage of Sayyid Khalifa bin al Murdas bin Ahmed al Busaidi, secretary general of Governorates Affairs in the Ministry of Interior, in the presence of H E Rashad bin Ahmed bin Mohammed al Hinai, Undersecretary for Sports and Youth in the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, and representatives of several organisations that supported and participated in the rally.

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Ali al Ajami, one of the organisers of the Oman Route Riders team, said, "Fifty bikers from different governorates of the sultanate rode 50km, starting from Burj al Sahwa at 8.15am to Al Alam Palace and ended the ride in the Children's Museum in Qurm. The 50km drive - called Ride of Loy-



(Supplied photo)

alty and Love for Oman - was done symbolically in 50 minutes."

The ride was organised with the prior approval of the Supreme Committee tasked with dealing with the situation arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, which allowed it to be held in coordination with Royal Oman Police.

"The event aimed to celebrate the 50th National Day and spread awareness on the importance of sports, especially motorbike sports. Our team, called Oman Route Riders, consists of 60 bik-

ers. We organise many activities to spread awareness on voluntary work, including blood donation drives and helping orphans in North Batinah and other wilayats," said Ajami.

He added, "We will continue to organise such events to raise awareness on sports among the youth and call for community participation. I hope that the youth follow traffic rules and safety measures when riding motorbikes. They should join official clubs to help them practise this sport in the correct way."

Our congratulations on 50 years of prosperity

Congratulations to
His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik
- may the Almighty preserve him -
and the people of Oman on this
50th National Day of the Renaissance.

We mark this National Day with pride and commitment. We stand ready to continue our support of Oman and its people under the guidance of His Majesty.

bp.com/oman





His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik
-May God Protect Him-

A Renewed Renaissance



His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said
-May his soul rest in peace-

A Glorious Legacy

OMRAN Group is honoured to congratulate

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik

and the people of Oman on the

50th National Day of the Renaissance

As the Sultanate commemorates its long-standing renaissance,
OMRAN Group affirms its commitment and great passion
to vigorously pursue the national efforts towards the
development of the country's prospering tourism sector.



النمو عبر السياحة
GROWTH THROUGH TOURISM



Subsidiaries

OMAN CONVENTION
& EXHIBITION CENTRE
مركز عُمان للمؤتمرات والمعارض



Hospitality Assets



Development Partnerships



Development Partnerships - Hospitality Assets



Partners



Destinations



On the occasion of the 50th National Day, Oman Arab Bank (OAB) has written off over 150 defaulting loans. This initiative is part of the bank's social responsibility towards society and was prompted by the special circumstances of the account holders which include the elderly, widows and people with disabilities.

For you ... For Oman



034 744 022338



We salute the visionary leadership of **His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik** and extend our greetings to His Majesty and the people of Oman on the occasion of the **50th National Day**



Head Office: 24839999, Wattayah Branch: 24839848
Barka Branch: 26883603, Sohar Branch: 26845939
Nizwa Branch: 25414420, Al Kamil Wal Wafi Branch: 95391691

Ihsaan Association, Nizwa Hospital pact to help elderly

Our Correspondent
Muscat

As part of its efforts to support the elderly and provide them with care, Ihsaan Association has launched an initiative and signed an agreement with Nizwa Hospital. The initiative is called 'Barakat Musin 2020-2022'.

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Jokha Mohammed Khamis al Farsi, head and founder of Ihsaan Association, said the initiative aims to provide the elderly in the Dakhliyah governorate with health, psychological and social care, in order to ensure them a better life for them.

In addition to providing ambulance services, the initiative will also provide prosthetic limbs to individuals with limited income.



(Supplied photo)

Jokha said Ihsaan Association is launching the services of its third ambulance on Tuesday under the patronage H E Sheikh

Rashid bin Ahmed al Shamsi, Undersecretary in the Ministry of Social Development, at the headquarters of the association in

We provide ambulance services to help the elderly and the disabled reach hospitals for routine check-ups and other health-care needs. We provided 62 persons access to hospitals in Muscat

JOKHA AL FARSI

South Ma'abala.

"We received more than 700 families during the month of October at our headquarters to ac-

quaint them with the services of the association. We raised awareness on respecting and valuing our elderly," Jokha said.

"We provide ambulance services to help the elderly and the disabled reach hospitals for routine check-ups and other healthcare needs. We provided 62 elderly persons access to hospitals in Muscat in October alone."

All safety measures, like sterilising the ambulances daily, are undertaken to avoid the spread of the coronavirus, she said.

"We provide medical aid for the elderly at low cost.

"We will continue our awareness campaigns in other wilayats as well. We hope to get financial support from private companies for our efforts."



329 COVID-19 cases, 12 deaths reported on Monday

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Health (MoH) on Monday confirmed 329 new cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), taking the total to 120,718. There were 12 deaths and 350 recoveries reported in this period.

'The number of recoveries has increased to 111,446, while the number of deaths has reached 1,350,' an MoH statement said.

As of Monday, a total of 300 patients were admitted in health institutions, including 140 in ICUs.

MoH calls upon all to adhere to the isolation procedures by staying in an isolated room with an attached toilet and serving the isolated person from outside the room as instructed. It said that social distancing also helps curb the spread of the virus.

MoH advises all citizens and

CASES FROM NOV 10 TO NOV 16	
Nov 10	381
Nov 11	302
Nov 12	256
Nov 13 to Nov 15 (Average - 315)	947
Nov 16	329

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

SCHOLARSHIP AGREEMENT



The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation signed an agreement with Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) to provide 150 scholarships to students in the company's Block 6 concession area (Supplied photo)

Ministry sets guidelines for expats leaving Oman during grace period

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Labour has issued a set of instructions for expatriates who wish to leave the sultanate permanently during the grace period (from November 15 to December 31) wherein they don't have to pay fines.

In a statement, the Ministry of Labour said registration can be done at their respective embassies, the ministry's website (www.mol.gov.om) or at Sanad centres.

Seven days after registration,



(Photo for illustrative purpose)

the expatriate workers can leave the country.

They should visit the Ministry of Labour office at Muscat International Airport seven hours be-

fore the departure of their flight.

They should have a valid ticket, travel documents and a PCR test done within 72 hours of departure, the ministry said.

Muscat receives first Air Arabia Abu Dhabi flight; bi-weekly service on offer

Muscat - With a traditional water salute, Muscat International Airport celebrated the first flight of Air Arabia Abu Dhabi, which will operate bi-weekly flights on Monday and Friday between Muscat and Abu Dhabi.

The inaugural flight, an Airbus 320, arrived on Monday at 7.45am and was greeted by a group of executives of Oman Airports, Muscat International Airport and representatives of UAE's airlines at Muscat International Airport. The flight departed at 8.45am.

As per a statement, the inauguration of Air Arabia Abu Dhabi flights comes in response to the increasing demand for business and tourism flights between Oman and UAE, as well as to further strengthen the development of air transport between the two countries.

Saud Nasser al Hubaishi, vice president of Muscat International Airport, said, "The launch of Air Arabia Abu Dhabi flights to Muscat International Airport comes as part of Oman Airports'



(Supplied photo)

ongoing efforts to boost business and tourism traffic between Oman and the world through direct flights. This reflects the efforts that Oman Airports has been making to promote tourist and economic exchange between the sultanate and the neighbouring countries, as well as various other countries across the globe, considering that businessmen and tourists are more likely to visit the country more frequently with the option of di-

rect flights being available."

Hubaishi further noted that since the resumption of operations in October, Oman Airports is focused on attracting regional and international flights to Oman's airports, given the significant position Muscat International Airport has among the world's airports after receiving the global airport health accreditation certificate, in recognition of the quality of the services provided for both airlines and travellers.

In view of the global pandemic, precautionary measures followed at Muscat International Airport are in line with the best international standards adopted and an indication of the extent of Oman airports' commitment to applying health and safety measures according to the highest international standards

Air Arabia Abu Dhabi, the first low-cost economy airline based in the UAE capital, launched its first flight in mid-July from Egypt.

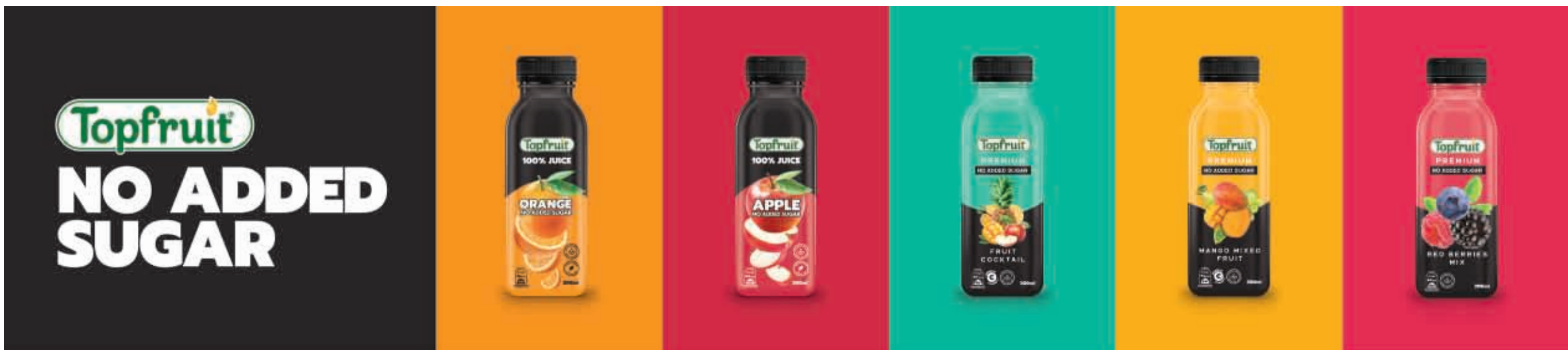
HOTLINES

24-hour pharmacies

Scientific Pharmacy: Qurm
24566601, Ruwi 24702850
Muscat Pharmacy: Ruwi
24702542, Salalah 23291635
Al Hashar Pharmacy: Ruwi
24783334

Hospitals and Clinics

Al Hayat International Hospital, Al Ghubra-
22004000, 94267068 / 97049520
94442000 (Emergency)
Al Raffah Hospital: Muscat -
24618900/1/2/3
Sohar - 26704639/49/50
Apollo Hospital Muscat, Hamriya: 24787766, 24782666, 24787780
Abeer Hospital, Ruwi, Muscat 24770800, 90999335, 90999334 (Emergency)
Starcare Hospital: 24557200
Emergency number: 24558333
Dr Harub's Clinic: 24563217, 2456381, 99254940 (Emergency)
Emirates Medical Center: 24604540
KIMS Oman Hospital: 24760105
Lama Polyclinic: CBD 24799077, 24788881, 24788577, 24707566, 24799655, Al Khuwair 24478817, 24478818, Sohar 26751128



Businessman gives goods worth RO8,000 to charity

Our Correspondent
Muscat

An Indian businessman in Muscat has handed over clothes and shoes worth RO8,000 to a charity to be given to deserving Omani families.

Najeeb Abdul Rehiman, 50, said the donation is a gesture of love and appreciation for the country where he has been doing business for the last three decades.

"I chose the occasion of the National Day to show my honour and respect to the Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos and His Majesty Sultan Haitham, and my love to the people of Oman," he said.

Rehiman runs sports shops in OC Centre, Ruwi, and Seeb.

Speaking about the donation, Rehiman said, "In the last 30 years, Oman has provided me more than enough. I have received many incredible things from the country. It has provided



(Supplied photo)

me livelihood and happiness, and this donation is my way of showing my gratitude to the people of Oman for making me who I am today."

The goods, mostly sports items like shoes, jackets and jerseys, will be distributed among needy people across the sultanate.

According to Rehiman, this is the second year he has made such a donation. Last year, he donated goods worth RO10,000.

Village spread at Sheraton Oman

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To delight culinary enthusiasts, Sheraton Oman Hotel on Friday launched its Sabla Night at its garden serving dishes unique to the sultanate's villages.

Twelve live stations, including sea food, meat, barbecue and shuwa, are the main attraction of the evening, held every Friday.

Shuwa is prepared in the traditional Omani way by cooking it over 24 hours in a pit.

Adil Shaikh, executive chef of Sheraton Oman Hotel, said, "Sabla means gathering and our evening is indeed a gathering for food lovers of Oman. We are celebrating an array of food from interior areas of the country. Every dish is exclusively Omani made with special spices. There are no fusion food or non-Omani items."



(Muscat Daily)

He said the aim of the hotel is to attract Europeans and non-Omanis who can enjoy traditionally made Omani food items. He said the Sabla Night was

also launched to celebrate the sultanate's 50th National Day.

A team of ten chefs, including six Omanis, delight the guests during the Sabla Night.

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr	5.04am	Duhr	11.57am	Maghrib	5.26pm
Sunrise	6.23am	Asr	3.04pm	Isha	6.39pm



Sultan Qaboos University

TENDERS NOTICE

The Investment & Revenue Department at Sultan Qaboos University would like to invite companies to submit their quotations for:

S/N	Type of Business	Shop Location	Duration of contract in years	Date of site visit	Class	Tender #
1	Office supplies and stationery	Main library- The Cultural Center	2	30/11/2020 09:00 am	All classes	SQU.IRD. 1/20
2	Sales & maintenance of computer equipment & mobile phones	Shop No (1) - The Commercial Center	2	30/11/2020 11:00 am	All classes	SQU.IRD. 2/20
3	Construction, leasing and operation Coffee Shop	On the plot opposite the Administration Building (Annexure)	10	30/11/2020 01:00 pm	All classes	SQU.IRD. 3/20

- The priority will be for the Small and Medium Establishments (SME), which fulfils the quality requirements.
- Tenderers who wish to participate in this Tender may collect Tender Documents from The Section of Revenue And Expenditures at the Investment & Revenue Department, Sultan Qaboos University, during the working hours for an amount of OR.25 for each tender document (non-refundable). The last date for collecting the Document is 14/12/2020.
- The Site Visit for the selected shop is necessary. It will be on the above mentioned date and time. The assembly point will be at the Investment & Revenue Department.
- The last date for submission of the quotations: 17/12/2020. The quotations should be submitted in a sealed envelope addressed to the Director of the Investment & Revenue Department, Sultan Qaboos University and deposited in the Tender Box kept in the Department, before 10:00 a.m.
- The exterior of the envelope should be marked with the name and number of the Tender being presented and should bear no identification or mark of the Tenderer.
- The Tenderer should submit (enclose) with his tender a Bank Guarantee Document for sum of 1% of the total Duration of contract rental value quoted by the Tenderer and valid for 90 (ninety) days from the date specified for submission of Tender. Tender documents submitted after the deadline or without a Bank Guarantee will be excluded.
- The Tenderer should prepare the outlet in accordance with the health requirements of Muscat Municipality and the requirements of civil defense in cooperation with the concerned authorities.
- Sultan Qaboos University reserves the right to reject any quotation not fulfilling the requirements and does not bid itself to accept the highest rent or any other quotations.

The Investment & Revenue Department
P.O BOX 50, P.C. 123, ALKHOD, SULTANATE OF OMAN
Tel: 24142691 – 24142682 Fax: 24142688



Send your comments to muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om



Gulf International Chemicals SAOG

(An ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company)

P.O.Box 132, Rusayl, Postal Code: 124, Sultanate of Oman, E-mail: info@gicom.com

Website: www.gicom.com, Tel: 24446800, Fax: 24446808

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Gulf International Chemicals SAOG (GIC), I am pleased to present you a brief report on the company's activities for the third quarter of 2020.

Total revenue for the period under review for the group was RO 1,810,168. The net profit after taxation amounted to RO 136,583 and the net asset per share stood at 132 Baiza.

During the third quarter of 2020, the regional construction markets have shrunk due to Covid 19 pandemic and its effect on the markets. In Oman, the construction sector has further slowed down during the period mainly due to the pandemic and that there are no new governmental construction and infrastructure projects. In UAE, the construction sector pace was adversely affected by the continuing general situation of the region. Both our markets, Oman and UAE, remain in over-supply and less demand situation for construction chemicals for the period. The construction sector situation in both countries has put pressure on the margins which affected profitability.

The outlook for the remaining of the year 2020 is very conservative as it is linked to the improvement of regional circumstances, improvement in the investment climate in the construction sector and improvement in the marketplace after the repercussions of the spread of Covid 19 virus.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to His Majesty and the Government for the generous support and for paving the way for growth and prosperity.

Best Regards,

Chairman

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 SEP 2020

	Group 30-Sep-20 RO	Parent 30-Sep-20 RO	Parent 30-Sep-19 RO
ASSETS			
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	160,918	160,918	208,056
Right-of-use assets	17,103	17,103	-
Intangible asset	85,009	85,009	92,919
Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income	284,955	284,955	375,679
Investment in subsidiary	-	100,000	-
Deferred tax asset	83,817	83,817	76,354
Total non-current assets	631,802	731,802	753,008
Current assets			
Inventories	265,045	265,045	305,290
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	327,419	-	305,789
Trade and other receivables	1,230,154	1,566,946	984,414
Cash and bank balances	715,793	617,091	575,127
Income tax receivable	19,991	21,229	-
Total current assets	2,558,402	2,470,311	2,170,620
Total assets	3,190,204	3,202,113	2,923,630
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Capital and reserves			
Share capital	2,100,000	2,100,000	2,100,000
Legal reserve	579,871	578,630	565,732
Fair value reserve	(69,346)	(69,346)	(42,991)
Revaluation reserve	8,708	8,708	8,708
Retained earnings	161,760	154,770	75,808
Total capital and reserves	2,780,993	2,772,762	2,707,257
Non-current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	10,820	10,820	-
Employees' end of service benefits	64,614	64,614	59,116
Total non-current liabilities	75,434	75,434	59,116
Current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	6,086	6,086	-
Trade and other payables	327,689	347,829	145,806
Income tax payable	-	-	11,451
Total current liabilities	333,775	353,915	157,257
Total equity and liabilities	3,190,204	3,202,113	2,923,630
Net assets per share (OMR)	0.132	0.132	0.130

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 SEP 2020

	Group 30-Sep-20 RO	Parent 30-Sep-20 RO	Parent 30-Sep-19 RO
Income			
Revenue from contracts with customers	1,810,168	1,808,008	1,601,911
Cost of sales	(1,370,048)	(1,370,048)	(1,156,607)
Gross profit	440,120	437,960	445,304
Other income	97,862	30,884	76,988
	537,982	468,844	522,292
Expenses			
General and administrative expenses	(290,192)	(218,122)	(336,870)
Selling and distribution expenses	(88,469)	(88,469)	(98,353)
	(378,661)	(306,591)	(435,223)
Profit before tax for the period	159,321	162,253	87,069
Taxation	(22,738)	(21,500)	(11,864)
Net profit after tax for the period	136,583	140,753	75,205
Earnings per share	0.007	0.007	0.004

Omran Group: A decade and a half of progress in Oman's tourism industry

As the sultanate celebrates its 50th National Day of renaissance, the year 2020 also marks a special milestone for Omran Group, as the company commemorates its 15th anniversary.

During the commemoration of its 15 years of progress, the group renews its pledge to the nation to continue its mandate towards creating sustainable and authentic tourism assets, lifestyle communities and destinations that drive economic growth, contribute to economic diversification, in line with Oman's Vision 2040 and the National Tourism Strategy.

Deemed as the sultanate's leading executive arm for tourism development, the group proudly recalls the milestones achieved over the years and its strategic role in shaping the country's tourism sector.

The group was established by the Omani government in 2005 to unlock the potential of the tourism industry. According to the Royal Decree No 61/2020, Omran Group became one of the government companies under the umbrella of the Omani Investment Authority (OIA). As part of Omran's affiliation to OIA, Omran will work on supporting OIA's goals to align the policies with Oman Vision 2040, which focuses on developing sources of economic diversification, enhancing non-oil revenues' contribution to national GDP and attract foreign direct investment to the sultanate.

Omran works closely with the



Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, government entities and stakeholders to identify priorities, projects and opportunities that will maximise the potential of the sultanate's tourism sector, in line with the National Tourism Strategy. The strategy has identified the tourism sector as a crucial economic diversifier and accelerator.

Omran Group's Operating Framework is driven by four key

pillars: Tourism, Master Development, Hospitality and Development Partnerships.

The group is the key instigator for master developments in Oman that transforms tourism-oriented government plots into purposeful infrastructure that meet the demand for multi-use destinations and facilities, which contribute to the national economic growth. Few of Omran's prominent master developments

include the sultanate's largest urban project - Madinat al Irfan, Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC), Mina Sultan Qaboos Waterfront and Muscat InterContinental Urban Re-Development.

Omran also owns and oversees the management of a growing portfolio of hospitality properties across Oman, with 24 hotels and resorts encompassing over 3,800 hotel rooms ranging

from luxury retreats, eco-reserves and large-scale beach resorts to convention and city center business hotels and eco-tourism and heritage destinations. These include the Millennium Resort Musannah, Alila Jabal Akhdar Resort and Atana Musandam, Atana Khasab, Crowne Plaza Duqm, City Hotel Duqm, Crowne Plaza OCEC, W Muscat, JW Marriot Muscat, Dibba Beach Resort and other hospitality assets in the country.

The Omran destinations also include, Al Hoota Cave, Nizwa Fort, Harat al Bilad and Majlis al Jinn Cave.

The group also carries out a set of main tasks through which the group's role is to create a rich environment for the tourism sector across various aspects.

These tasks cover a range of activities that include the below:

- Development and asset management of distinctive hotels and resorts.
- Entering development partnerships with local and foreign developers and investors to create new tourism and mixed-use master planned communities.
- Managing heritage, cultural and outdoor activity sites and experiences.
- Developing and managing strategic tourism and business infrastructure such as the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre which participates in the regional MICE industry.
- Promoting Oman as a destination through hosting international sporting events and emphasising Oman's maritime heritage by competing in international sailing events.
- Preparing Omanis for a career in tourism through training and educational programs at the Oman Tourism College.

Making headway as a catalyst of investment, one of Omran's core objective is to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the tourism sector to advance social and economic growth of the sultanate.

To date, the group has attracted RO186mn as investments in Oman. This has been achieved through a number of avenues, most noticeably through strategic development partnership agreements with renowned regional and global developers. Omran's portfolio vaunts several dominant projects and assets that are situated in various strategic locations and tourism clusters across the sultanate.



Quality vital for Haya Water

Sulaiman bin Khamis al Qasimi, Haya Water acting CEO, affirmed that the quality management is among the company's priorities at the level of projects, services and products it provides. The company has taken advanced steps in the field of quality management by spreading and promoting the concepts of quality culture among its employees, as well as urging the support companies to adhere to the quality criteria that are followed in the company.

Qasimi stated that during the

company's celebration of the International Quality Day, which came this year under the theme 'Creating Customer Value'.

He said, "Haya Water continues to work on developing its services, as well as in the field of environment, health and occupational safety.

"We are also proud of what we have seen among the company's employees in terms of continuous passion for improving work. Haya Water, in cooperation with PDO, implemented the 'Lean' programme, which

aimed to simplify procedures, complete services more smoothly, and move away from duplication in the implementation of work."

The CEO honoured the company's divisions that won the Haya Water Quality Day Competition which is annually organised by the company. The Directorate of Asset Management won the first place, and the Projects Directorate won the second place, while the Directorate of Strategic and Organisational Affairs won the third place.

British Council set to resume face-to-face English courses

The British Council is set to resume face-to-face English courses for kids and teens in Oman following the start of the new academic year.

Classes for secondary students, primary students and adults are now available and are combined with online guided learning that students can do independently at home.

This news comes on the back of local health authority and government guidance and sees the teaching centres adhere to a number of health and safety precautions to protect staff, teachers and students.

Speaking about the resumption, Helen Mehta, country director - Oman said, "We started IELTS, the English language test, in June and that's gone really well. Since then, we have been working hard over the last few months to ensure that our face-



to-face classes can be delivered in a secure and enjoyable environment using similar health and safety measures in line with government guidance. We then started our courses for adults on November 1 and are going to start the courses for kids and teens on November 21."

Helen said, "The British Council, following the directives of the Supreme Committee, has decided to reduce the class size, so

whereas we used to have 12 or 14 students in a class, we now have only seven or eight. Not only does it help reduce the risk of the virus spreading, but it creates the best possible learning environment and each student gets more individual attention."

In addition to physical distancing, other precautionary measures in place include temperature screening at the entrance, the use of face masks,

regular sanitation of all communal places and classrooms before and between lessons, isolation room and availing.

"Feedback from our initial groups of adult students has been overwhelmingly positive about the safety and hygiene measures in place. That's given us the confidence to open our classrooms to all ages now," Helen added.

All British Council courses are supported by new digital content that gives students more personalised and flexible ways to develop their communication skills.

"Over the last few months, we have successfully brought our classes online through a new learning platform and this has made it possible for students to continue to learn with us. It has also given us the opportunity to gather feedback and shape and develop our offer."

Qatar Airways announces National Day offers

Qatar Airways will commemorate Oman National Day on November 18 with special offers for tickets booked between November 10 and 19. With these incredible fares, Qatar Airways is inviting Omani travellers to rediscover the world or visit their loved ones abroad on this special occasion.

Qatar Airways is currently operating more than 700 weekly flights to over 100 destinations, providing more global connectivity than any other airline. Passengers travelling from Muscat now enjoy enhanced connectivity to many key destinations across the airline's expanding network including London, New York, Houston and Montreal via the



award-winning Hamad International Airport.

Qatar Airways' vice president for Middle East, Levant and Caucasus region, Bennet Stephens, said, "Qatar Airways would like to congratulate Oman and all the wonderful Omani nationals on this very special occasion, and celebrate the longstanding and important ties Qatar and Qatar Airways shares with the Sultanate of Oman. Oman has always been a key market for us, and today is an opportunity for us to reaffirm our commitment to the country."

Qatar and Oman have a rich history of partnership and collaboration, including in the aviation industry, with Oman Air and

Qatar Airways working closely together. Qatar Airways currently operates two weekly flights from Muscat and another two weekly flights in codeshare with Oman Air connecting to over 100 destinations via Doha.

During the COVID-19 crisis, Qatar Airways has been committed to bringing people home and reuniting family and friends with their loved ones. The national carrier of the state of Qatar operated three special repatriation flights from Oman in conjunction with Oman Air.

Qatar Airways ensures the highest levels of hygiene standards including the deployment of Honeywell's Ultraviolet Cabin System.

Infiniti QX55 SUV reveal on Nov 18

Check. Check one, check one-two.

The curtain is coming up on the all-new Infiniti QX55 SUV soon, and we can't wait for it to take the spotlight.

On Wednesday, global superstar Aloe Blacc joins Infiniti to uncover the brand's newest star during a unique performance from the iconic Belasco Theater in Los Angeles, produced by Live Nation Entertainment. The outstanding performance features Blacc's unmistakable sound and hits including *The Man, My Way*, and more, along with 'virtual drop-ins' from Infiniti chairman

Peyman Kargar, senior vice president for Global Design Alfonso Albaiza, and general manager of Infiniti Product Strategy and Planning Eric Rigaux from Japan.

The show-stopping 2022 Infiniti QX55 takes centre stage, of course. And it's a performance you won't want to miss.

Watch Infiniti global reveal by going to [Infiniti.com/QX55](https://www.infiniti.com/QX55) beginning at 5.55am GST Nov 18.

Check. Check this one out.

SBA is largely committed to supporting Infiniti Oman's growth in the sultanate through major emphasis on customer satisfaction.

BankDhofar celebrates 50th National Day, marks 30 years

As the sultanate celebrates its 50th National Day, BankDhofar is marking the joyous occasion with three decades of business excellence, reaffirming the ongoing contributions of the Omani banking sector to the national development and the growth and diversification of the economy.

Abdul Hakeem Omar al Ojaili, CEO of BankDhofar, said, “We are celebrating 50 years of a nationwide comprehensive renaissance that commenced by the founder of modern Oman Late HM Sultan Qaboos and continues under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. Today, the sultanate continues moving ahead towards further progress and prosperity, translating His Majesty’s vision of sustainable development led by strong and diversified economy that is driven by the participation and contributions of the private and public sectors, and all segments of the civil society. These collaborative efforts will definitely pave the path for a



growing, competitive and sustainable economy.”

He added, “Oman enjoys a strong and stable banking sector, thanks to the significant and constant support by regulators and official authorities. We are also happy with the role BankDhofar has played in the development of the finance industry across the sultanate. We have proudly facilitated various large-scale national level infrastructure projects and worked on different investment and business partnerships nationwide, serving an

expansive base of customers, investors, stakeholders and strategic partners.”

Established in 1990, BankDhofar has grown from a small transactional bank to the second largest bank in Oman, operating as a key financial advisory and strategic investment partner to various key government and private institutions. It has also been supporting developmental initiatives by the government in addition to aiding and nurturing SMEs and entrepreneurial projects to keep the economy cycle running. The bank introduced several programmes to attract local and foreign investors, and has facilitated key strategic partnerships across government, quasi-government and private sector organisations.

BankDhofar went from a one-branch and 80-employee organisation to one of the top Omani financial institutions with over 1,600 employees, more than 93.5 per cent of which are Omani, and a large network of

branches across all governorates. As part of its strategic growth vision and to set an example for best banking practices in the region, BankDhofar has implemented major programmes within its organisational transformation journey, laying out a solid infrastructure to get ready for its next phase of business growth and development. The bank is currently formulating its upcoming strategic plan within the context of the national priorities and the economic aspirations of the sultanate.

Applying world-class methodologies with the aim of improving efficiency and effectiveness, BankDhofar has re-engineered all its internal processes, revamped digital channels, upgraded core banking and customer relationship management systems, and introduced an enterprise resources planning programme as part of its comprehensive transformation journey.

Moreover, talent development is one of the key pillars in the bank’s operational strategy. In translation of its strategy, BankDhofar inaugurated a state-of-the-art Performance Academy with the latest facilities to provide internationally certified courses through an advanced digital learning system. In addition, the bank is committed to make training available to all employees to enhance their professional efficiency, hence providing best customer services with a number of tailored comprehensive training and development schemes, launched jointly with strategic partners.

BankDhofar has set the foundation and infrastructure for further digitisation, providing instant international money transfer service via Western Union through its mobile banking app. It has also launched a flagship drive-thru banking service for the first time in Oman, as well as a number of multifunction kiosks in selected outlets.



Kempinski Hotel to host photo expo on National Day

On November 18, Kempinski Hotel Muscat will hold a photo exhibition in celebration of Oman’s 50th National Day, featuring exclusive photos from when Oman established the first colour-TV station in 1974.

Manfred Klupsch, the head engineer who was in-charge of the project, gifted the hotel about 40 of his photographs memorialising the first steps of building Oman TV.

Klupsch managed to provide training to 100 of his Omani colleagues to take over the organisation of the broadcasting, which created greater opportunity for the citizens of Oman.

Kempinski Hotel Muscat is thrilled to be organising this photo exhibition and would like to thank Manfred Klupsch for helping to bring the history of the sultanate to life and honouring the developments the country has had since 1970.

Get cashback of up to 10% of salary by opening a Meethaq Salary Account

Meethaq, the pioneer of Islamic banking in Oman from Bank Muscat, in line with the bank’s vision ‘To serve you better, everyday’, has announced a very attractive promotion that will allow its customers to receive up to 10 per cent of their salary or RO500, whichever is lower, as a one-time cashback reward for opening a salary account with the bank.

The cashback will be a confirmed amount, which will be paid out of the shareholders’ funds as Hiba (gift) to the salary account holder. To be eligible for the offer, customers have to open a savings account and transfer his/her salary during the campaign period, which will run till December 31. Customers may note that the applicable cashback will be credited to the customer savings account within 15 days of receiving the first salary credit. If a customer has two salaries and he/she transfers both of them separately, then he/she will get two cashbacks under this campaign with each cashback capped to a maximum of RO500. Customers who receive a cashback are required to maintain their salary accounts (with credit of salary) for a minimum of 12 months from the account-opening date.

Customers transferring their salary to a Meethaq account are eligible to avail a host of offers and services in addition to earning attractive profit on their savings. Attractive Mudarabah



profit rates are offered for savings account deposits with profits being paid each month to encourage a strong savings culture. The more the saving, the more the earnings, which ensures an additional monthly income for customers.

Meethaq salary account holders are also entitled to free life Takaful coverage if they maintain the required balance in their savings account. With the Takaful coverage, the beneficiary of the account holder will receive a lump-sum amount through the Takaful company in case of any specified untoward incident to the account holder.

Meethaq salary account-holders can also avail Meethaq’s savings plan, which is aimed at helping customers make regular savings at their own convenience. This will help them achieve financial security for long-term goals such as marriage, education, retirement or personal savings. A preferential profit rate will be available

to customers on Meethaq financing products.

More details about Meethaq Salary Account is available at <https://www.meethaq.om/en/depositproducts/Pages/details.aspx#salary>.

In order to further enhance its leadership role, Meethaq Islamic Banking recently opened branches at the bank’s head office at Airport Heights in Seeb and in Sinaw. Meethaq branches are strategically distributed across various governorates of the sultanate, including 11 in the Governorate of Muscat and 11 branches in the interior. It also has 40 ATMs and CDMs located across Oman and also facilitates access to the ATM-CDM network of Bank Muscat in Oman.

Meethaq extends support to all key economic sectors with innovative Sharia’a based products and is well positioned to provide Islamic financial expertise to all segments and thereby promote the good of society as a whole. Meethaq Islamic Banking, which has been recognised as the Best Islamic Bank in Oman in 2019 by Islamic Finance News, has adopted the best practices in Islamic banking and finance worldwide to combine a robust model which protects customers and complements the Islamic banking industry. Every Meethaq product goes through the process of Sharia’a compliance certification by the Sharia’a Supervisory Board.

Oman Air flies to Chennai, Hyderabad

Oman Air, the national carrier of the Sultanate of Oman, is adding twice-weekly service to the Indian cities of Chennai and Hyderabad with service set to start on November 19.

Flights to and from both cities will be operated on Thursdays and Saturdays. These schedules are confirmed until December 31. Additional information is available at omanair.com, the airline’s offices and travel agents.

Oman Air will maintain its comprehensive safety programme throughout all elements of the travel journey to ensure that guests fly confidently. Masks are required when guests are on board the aircraft and in Oman’s airports.

Distancing is maintained while guests board and exit the



aircraft, which are carefully cleaned after each flight and at the end of every day.

Cabin crew all wear a full set of personal protective equipment, meal service has been

modified to increase safety and a number of other steps have been taken to ensure that the airline’s guests and crew are safe at all times.

Guests who are planning to

depart from Oman should ensure that they are aware of all pre-departure requirements, which are provided at omanair.com, as well as the requirements at their destinations.

Wyndham Garden Muscat is SGS certified

The safety of the guest has always been a priority for the Wyndham Garden Muscat hotel. To mitigate risks from COVID-19, its existing stringent cleaning and disinfection protocols have been tightened and enhanced. By partnering with SGS, the Wyndham Garden Muscat is ensuring that the hotel is complying with strictest sanitary guidelines.

The Wyndham Garden Muscat hotel has successfully completed the SGS Disinfection Monitored and Cleaning Checked mark by SGS.

SGS is the world’s leading inspection, verification, testing and certification company. They are recognised as the global benchmark for quality



and integrity. With more than 89,000 employees, SGS operates a network of more than 2,600 offices and laboratories

around the world.

The ‘Disinfection Monitored, Cleaning Checked Mark’ certification is including an on-site in-

spection couple with fluorescent marking and ATP sampling and testing. The methodology validates, amongst others, the effectiveness of cleaning procedures, the adequacy of products used and the implementation of enhanced cleaning schedules, especially on high frequency touch points.

For your safety and protection, every guest visiting the hotel, their temperature is monitored. Your key cards are UV sanitised by our front desk team to ensure we mitigate physical contacts. Sanitisation kits are provided to all our in-house guests. The hotel, its rooms, facilities and common areas are regularly cleaned, disinfected and sanitised.

Indian School Board to organise third edition of Avenir from Nov 20

The Board of Directors, Indian Schools in Oman is poised to launch the third edition of ‘Avenir’ - the mega educational and career guidance programme for the Indian school students across Oman, with a plethora of programmes facilitated by highly renowned speakers.

The 2020 edition of Avenir, hosted by Indian School Muscat is a virtual event in light of the pandemic and is scheduled to be organised as a mega nine-day

event, from November 20 to November 28.

Avenir 2020 will be inaugurated by Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal, Minister of Education, Government of India. Shri Manoj Ahuja IAS, chairman, CBSE, and H E Shri Munu Mahawar, Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman, will be the Guests of Honour on the occasion.

Internationally acclaimed motivational speakers such as Shiv Khara, Major General Dilawar

Singh, Yogesh Chabria, Kehkashan Basu and Prof (Dr) L S Ganesh are among the scores of resource persons who will be addressing the students and parents of Indian schools during the nine-day programme.

Additionally, an array of high profile professionals from different domains will offer their insights on various careers and their prospects in the 21st century. This will enable the students to choose the right course

of studies and pursue a career close to their heart. Success stories of illustrious entrepreneurs are yet another segment of Avenir 2020 that will pave the way for creating future entrepreneurs from among Indian school students.

Prof (Dr) Harish Chaudhury from IIT Delhi, Dr Vineet Joshi IAS, director general of National Testing Agency, Ira Singhal (IAS Topper 2015), Prof Srikrishna Deva Rao, vice chancellor, Na-

tional Law University, Sundar Ramaswamy, vice chancellor of KREA University, Dr Shyam Mohan, project director for Reusable Launch Vehicle from ISRO, Dr Biswajit Saha, director (CBSE), Dr Kiran G R (dean, Middle East College, Muscat) and Annie Mathew, director, Microsoft Inc are a few of the most notable speakers on different careers.

Across the nine-day event, a wide range of topics on different

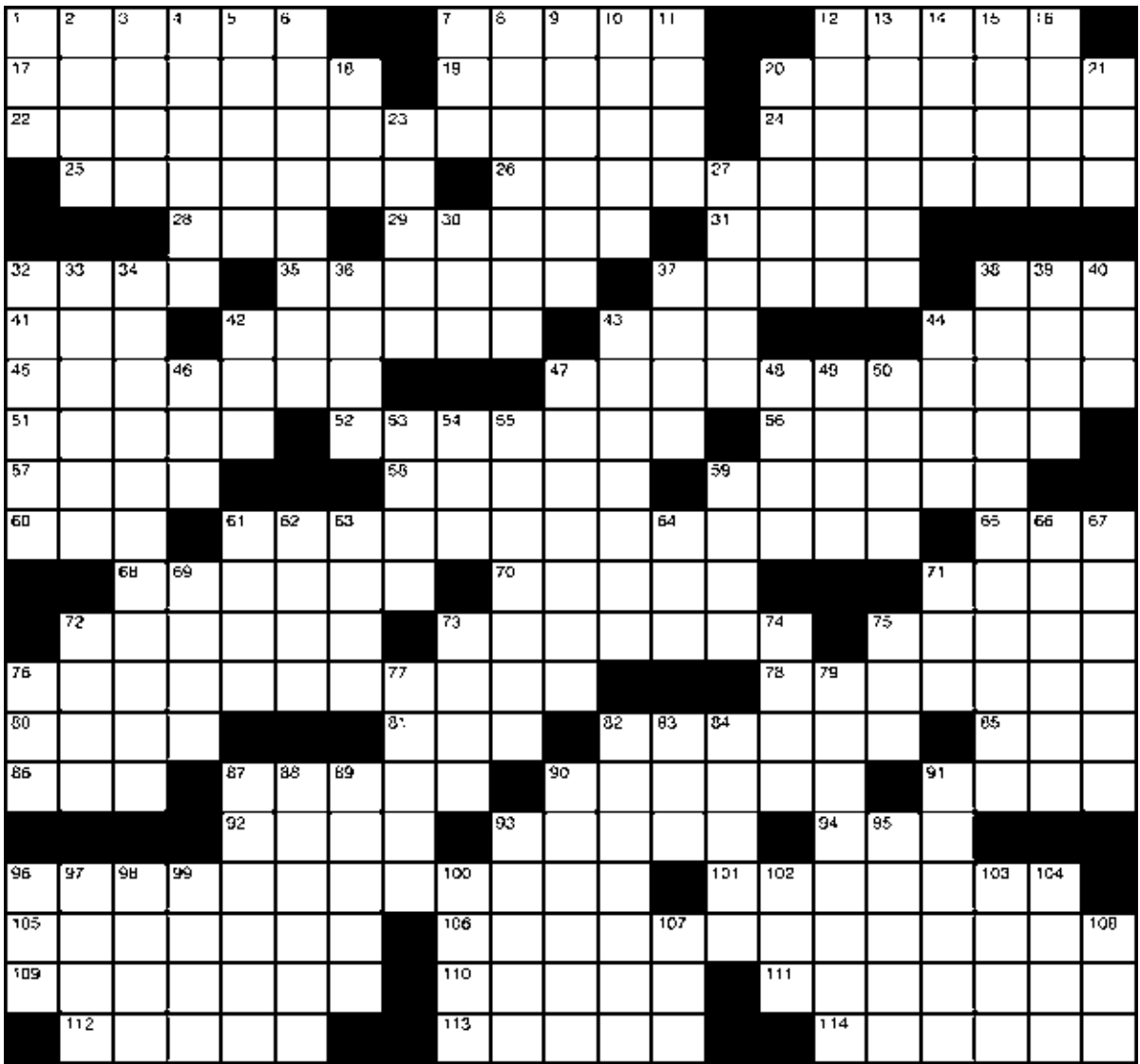
careers will be covered in Avenir by subject experts: Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, Banking and Finance, Insights into the UN and Civil Services, Neurosciences, Robotics, Fashion Designing, Defence Services, Hospitality and Culinary Arts, Aviation, Sports, Digital Media, Law, Music, Agriculture, Rural Management, Visual Arts, Media Literacy and Public Relations.

Another highlight of the event is the presence of International

universities; the vice chancellors, professors and representatives of over 60 universities across the globe will conduct webinars on unique courses available in their respective universities and prospects of pursuing these courses to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

The annual event is aimed to familiarise students with the educational opportunities available with renowned universities across the globe.

DAILY CROSSWORD



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- ACROSS**

1 Deadly

7 Send without stamps

12 Cowboy cry

17 Cause of Weakness

19 Small error

20 Ancient region of Asia Minor

22 It allows you the freedom to be scared

24 Operating independent of the main computer

25 Use up

26 Garment district load

28 Sushi serving

29 Reprimand

31 Middleweight champ, Tony ____

32 Kiddies' song starter

35 Habituates

37 Revealed everything

38 Fido's foot

41 To and ____

42 Some drums

43 Spoil

44 Icicle holder

45 Rock group staff

47 Fisherman's purchase

51 No votes

52 Referential words

56 Human resources personnel

57 Alligator logo-brand

58 Biblical verb after pride

59 Ranier's realm

60 OED entry

61 Competition that's for the birds

65 Not agin

68 "The ____ Queene": Spenser

70 Singer Tucker

71 '70s do

72 "The ____ the Wild"

73 Farrell and Ford

75 Sea of Japan port

76 Autumnal equinox

78 She-devil

80 Spherical beginning

81 Ending for acid

82 Kind of solution

85 Log entry

86 Roman tens

87 Reunion attendees

90 Early Mitsubishi

model

91 D-Day landers

92 Actress Kadrova

93 With modesty

94 ____ Jima

96 Snowy country

101 Stargazers' instruments

105 Flatterer

106 Metropolis with many airports

109 Without pretensions

110 ____ maid

111 Young hare

112 Busy bees

113 Notched, as a leaf

114 Blood components

DOWN

1 Test site

2 Author Bagnold

3 Story

4 Gave a hand

5 Soap substitute

6 Safety device

7 Connecticut collegian

8 Chatterers

9 Plant pests

10 Cordage fiber

11 ____ majesté

12 Hem and haw

13 Nobel or Noyes

14 Sign of a saint

15 Ear-related

16 Porker plaint

18 Fore opposite

20 Succeed

21 JFK's UN ambassador

23 Happen periodically

27 ____ Mountains of Missouri

30 Charlemagne's realm: abbr.

32 Chicken?

33 Third place

34 Agricultural apparel

36 Political cartoonist

37 Famed family of music

38 Janus feature

39 Ways to go: abbr.

40 Director Craven

42 Family nickname

43 Political organization

44 Part of GE

46 Accomplished

47 Unexpected danger

48 Worrier's words

49 Dandy's complement

50 Italian brothers

53 S shaped molding

54 Court

55 With some weight behind it

59 Thom, the shoe man

61 Moolah

62 Buck addition?

63 Annoy

64 Bill, the science guy

66 Wandering

67 Ways to go

69 ____-ran: loser

71 Peach State cap.

72 Give a ticket

73 Grub

74 Leg part

75 " ____ Miss"

76 Copier cousin

77 Big exam

79 Authorizes

82 Agrees to

83 Totality

84 ____ the land

87 Deal maker

88 Full-term inmates

89 Actress Woodard

90 Blighted area

91 Maxi compared with mini

93 Vail visitor in winter

95 Exempt from

96 CD predecessors

97 Waterless

98 One billionth: comb. form

99 Rolled cubes

100 Summit

102 Grey Cup org.

103 Traffic sign word

104 Pipe part

107 Pay dirt

108 Religious abbrs.

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Tuesday's skies are full of little surprises. Mercury locks into a tense encounter with erratic Uranus this morning, prompting breakthrough revelations or conversations on the intimacy front. It's hard to hold back your voice today, so work to free up whatever's been waiting to be shared. Elsewhere, the moon enters hardworking Capricorn, stirring up energy around the career front.

LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

The pieces of the puzzle are beginning to fall into place. Mercury stumbles into an electrifying meet-up with revelatory Uranus, inviting important conversations or major revelations around your home and family life. The moon's entrance into slow and steady Capricorn helps you stay on task with any obligations or responsibilities requiring stamina and patience.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Keep a close eye on the messages swirling out of your subconscious. Mercury spends the afternoon entangled in a hard interaction with Uranus, sending breakthrough messages up from the deep dreams, visions, or vulnerable conversations. The Capricorn moon makes it easy to centre yourself, so try your best to tap into the undercurrents of your thinking.

TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

Your whole approach to building lasting relationships has been changing. Tuesday's skies only serve to push that story a little further. Mercury spends the morning deep in talks with Uranus—delivering important news or conversations to the partnership arena. Luna moves forward into steady Capricorn, helping keep emotions rational and stable (if not a bit stifled).

VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

You might feel as if you've shoved a fork into an electric socket. Tuesday's skies feature the exciting, if not slightly unstable, opposition of Mercury and Uranus. You're hardwired into this stimulating energy. Thus, you can expect rebellious attitudes, truth-revealing conversations, and an excess of excitable energy to properly manage.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

You're likely to be extra sensitive. The moon treks forward into your sign, intensifying your emotional responses and individual needs. Mercury gets trapped in a meeting with Uranus, prompting unexpected, surprising, or erratic interactions with friend groups or community members. Breakthrough moments are possible with goals and creative projects as well.

GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

You're on the verge of a breakthrough. Your ruling planet, Mercury, finds itself tangled up in an electric union with Uranus, brimming your mental world over with fresh perspectives and inviting stimulating conversations into your environment around identity and work. You're likely to be high energy and talking faster than you can formulate thoughts. Be mindful of your pace.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

There's no hiding your truth. Tuesday's skies have you openly sharing your story, as Mercury locks eyes with erratic Uranus. This union is likely to bring shocking revelations or surprise turn of events to matters concerning your resources, talents, and intimate life. On top of that, you're likely to be in an introverted, privacy-seeking mood, as the moon treks into solitary Capricorn.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

It's hard to inhabit two worlds at once. That's precisely where Tuesday's skies place you. The moon trots into solitary Capricorn, pulling you away from the desire to socialise and increasing your need for peace, quiet, and restorative action. Yet, Mercury tangoes with Uranus, prompting exciting or surprising news on the career front. This can place you back into a more public setting.

CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

All eyes are on your relationship story. The moon trots into Capricorn, redirecting your attention away from your workload and back towards the partnership dynamics you've been exploring. Messenger Mercury spends the afternoon entangled in an uncomfortable arrangement with Uranus, prompting breakthrough conversations around sex, romance, and intimacy.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Dissecting everyone around you is easy. But discovering your own emotional needs tend to be a mystery. Tuesday's cosmic landscape prompts important revelations around your identity and individuality in relation to partnership, as Mercury locks into a tense interaction with truth-revealing Uranus. Be prepared to share your voice and state your side of the story.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Take a break from plowing ahead career-wise. The moon slides into earthy Capricorn, reminding you to slow down and reconnect with the friends and community. Excitement dashes itself through the day, as communicator Mercury and electric Uranus duke it out. This brings sudden revelations or changes to plans around educational pursuits or travel plans.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Light Year is related to

a. energy

b. speed

c. distance

d. intensity

2. Liquid asset is

a. a type of asset that is in cash in the current account of the commercial bank

b. a type of asset that is in the form of a deposit in the current account of the commercial bank

c. either of these

d. None of the above

3. Jeevan Rekha (Life line) express is

a. first hospital on wheels in the world

b. first railway express

c. oldest train

d. None of the above

Answers: 1: c, 2: c, 3: a

KIDS COLOURING

DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

BOGGLER

F	T	H	M
G	E	Qu	M
E	A	D	E
U	S	I	A

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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

DAILY CROSSWORD ANSWERS (NOVEMBER 16)

WORD BUILDER

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

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

MEDICAL SUPPLY SERVICES for Home, Hospital, Clinic, School, College, Ministry, Club, Company/Factory



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• Electrical Technician	• Maintenance Engineer
• VRF Technician	• Site Supervisor
• Electronics Technician	• Carpenter
• Multi Technician	• Cleaner
• BMS Technician	• Painter
• Swimming Pool Technician	• Mason

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FOOTBALL ROUND-UP

QUICK RUN

Bach 'very confident' Tokyo Olympics will have fans

Olympic chief Thomas Bach said on Monday he is 'very, very confident' that spectators will be able to attend next year's Tokyo Olympics, as he kicked off a Japan trip to boost momentum for the pandemic-postponed Games. Bach pledged the IOC would work to ensure as many participants at next year's Games as possible were vaccinated, if a vaccine is available, but added that would not be a requirement for the event. Spiralling infections and new lockdowns around the world have caused renewed scepticism that the Games will be possible if the pandemic is not under control by the time of the opening ceremony, scheduled for July 23, 2021.

Nadal cruises; Thiem takes revenge against Tsitsipas

Rafael Nadal launched his bid for a first ATP Finals trophy in style on Sunday, taming in-form Andrey Rublev in London after Dominic Thiem beat Stefanos Tsitsipas. The Spanish world No 2, chasing the biggest prize missing from his glittering resume, barely broke sweat as he outclassed the Russian debutant 6-3, 6-4 at the empty O2 Arena. Earlier, US Open champion Thiem avenged his defeat by Tsitsipas in the title match last year, beating the Greek sixth seed 7-6 (7-5), 4-6, 6-3. Earlier, Novak Djokovic received the ATP Tour No 1 trophy after finishing the year at the top of the rankings for a record-equalling sixth time. AFP

Belgium end England hopes; Italy eye finals



Youri Tielemans celebrates after opening the scoring for Belgium against England in Leuven, Belgium, on Sunday

UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE

Paris, France - Belgium ended England's hopes of reaching the Nations League finals with a 2-0 win in Leuven, Belgium, on Sunday while Italy edged closer to next year's title shake-up.

Belgium were just five minutes from joining world champions France at next October's finals when Iceland pulled level at 1-1 with group rivals Denmark in Copenhagen. However, a stoppage time

penalty by Christian Eriksen gave the Danes a 2-1 win and kept alive their chances of pipping Belgium to top spot in Group A2.

Youri Tielemans and Dries Mertens scored the goals which gave world No 1 Belgium victory over Gareth Southgate's England. A second consecutive defeat leaves England down in third place, five points adrift of Belgium, with just one game remaining. Denmark's late winner over Iceland means Belgium

still need a point when they host the Danes on Wednesday to secure their place in the final four.

Italy brushed off the absences of several players and coronavirus-hit coach Roberto Mancini with an impressive 2-0 victory over Poland. The Azzurri took top spot in Group A1 from the Netherlands, who beat Bosnia and Herzegovina 3-1 earlier in the day.

Italy will be sure of a place in next October's finals with victory

over the Bosnia on Wednesday.

Chelsea midfielder Jorginho opened the scoring in the 27th minute with a penalty. In the 77th minute, Poland had Jacek Goralski sent off before the Italians added a second goal from Domenico Berardi.

Frank de Boer won his first match as Netherlands coach after Georginio Wijnaldum scored twice in the win over Bosnia. The Dutch go to Poland in their final group game but even a win won't be good enough should Italy prevail.

In promotion ties, Scotland were beaten 1-0 by Slovakia while Wales winger David Brooks sealed a 1-0 win over the Republic of Ireland.

OTHER RESULTS:

League B: Group 1: Austria 2 Northern Ireland 1; Group 2: Czech Republic 1 Israel 0; Group 3: Turkey 3 Russia 2, Hungary 1 Serbia 1; Group 4: Bulgaria 1 Finland 2.

League C: Group 2: North Macedonia 2 Estonia 1, Georgia 1 Armenia 2, Group 3: Moldova 0 Greece 2, Slovenia 2 Kosovo 1, Group 4: Albania 3 Kazakhstan 1, Belarus 2 Lithuania 0.

AFP

Mane strikes to send Senegal into AFCON finals

AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS

Johannesburg, South Africa - Liverpool star Sadio Mane scored as Senegal won 1-0 in Guinea-Bissau on Sunday to become the second qualifiers for the 2021 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON)

finals after hosts Cameroon.

The reigning African Footballer of the Year struck after 82 minutes against opponents reduced to ten men by the red-carding of Jorge 'Bura' Nogueira midway through the second half in Bissau.

Another Liverpool star who scored was Guinea midfielder Naby Keita, but Ahmat Abdaraman levelled just before half-time for Chad, who forced a 1-1 Group A draw in N'Djamena for their first point. Comoros moved within one

point of reaching the finals for the first time after a 2-1 home win over Kenya.

Meanwhile, hosts Burundi threw Group E wide open through a 3-1 win over Mauritania in Bujumbura.

AFP



Dustin Johnson is presented with the Masters Trophy during the Green Jacket Ceremony after winning the August Masters

Johnson captures Masters crown

Augusta, US - Top-ranked Dustin Johnson won the Masters in record-smashing fashion on Sunday, capturing his second major title with the lowest total score in Augusta National history.

The 36 year old American, known for keeping his cool on the course, was in tears after winning the green jacket only an hour's drive from where he grew up. "It's a dream come true," a crying Johnson said. "As a kid I always wanted to become a Masters champion. It's just incredible."

No one in Masters history was better as Johnson, whose other major victory came at the 2016 US Open, fired a four-under-par 68 to finish on a Masters record 20-under-par 268.

That was good enough for a five-stroke triumph over South Korean Im Sung-jae and Australian Cameron Smith with third-ranked American Justin Thomas fourth on 276.

Johnson's score in relation to par matched the lowest in major history and smashed the old 72-hole Masters mark of 18-under 270 set by Woods in 1997 and matched

by Jordan Spieth in 2015.

Im had the lowest score for any Masters newcomer but couldn't become the first debut winner since 1979. "My goal was to make the cut," Im said through a translator.

Smith closed on 69, becoming the first Masters player to shoot all four rounds in the 60s.

Four-time major winner Rory McIlroy, needing a green jacket to complete a career Grand Slam, shot 69 to share fifth on 277 but never threatened Johnson.

Woods, a five-time Masters winner and 15-time major champion, found Rae's Creek three times on his way to a septuple-bogey ten at the par-three 12th, his worst score ever on a major hole. He responded with birdies on five of the last six holes to close on 76 and finish on 287.

Germany's Bernhard Langer, at 63 the oldest to make any Masters cut, shot 71 to finish on 285, one stroke better than US Open champion Bryson DeChambeau, who closed on 73 and never threatened to overpower Augusta, nagged by dizziness.

AFP

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Sreelal's 75 in Jotun victory; Pitspot and Vanderlande win

LOCAL CRICKET

Sreelal Pillai hit a solid 75 to help Jotun CT post a 68-run win against OCT Mabela in an Oman Cricket D Division T20 game at Al Amerat on Friday.

Jotun scored 192 for five with Sajith Pillai (39) and Amal Raj (38 n.o.) making key contributions. OCT Mabela was then restricted to 124 for eight.

In other D Division games, Fahad Hamsa's display helped Pitspot to a thrilling one-run win over Safar International and Mohammed Muzaiyen struck a half-century and picked three wickets to steer Vanderlande to a 29-run win over Spanio VDD.

BRIEF SCORES:

D Division: Jotun CT 192-5 (Sreelal Pillai 75, Sajith 39, Amal Raj 38 n.o.) beat OCT Mabela 124-8 (Zafarullah al Balushi 35; Satish 3-29, Roymon Basil 2-24).

D Division: Pitspot 159-8 (Rajesh



Muzaiyen of Vanderlande

Periyanan 38, Wajid Ali 37; Sandesh Pusalkar 2-12, Shameel Mohammed 2-23, Amol Dhotre 2-30) beat Safara International 158-9 (Adeel Anwar 36; Monty Navani 2-17, Fahad Hamsa 2-29).

D Division: Vanderlande 170-6 (Muzaiyen 50, Barathwaj Vinayagam 36; Jibin Joseph 2-24) beat Spanio VDD 141-9 (Shinu Prasad 36; Muzaiyen 3-29, Navin Joseph 2-32).

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on the occasion of the
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EMIRATES TOPS GLOBAL RANKING

Emirates has been ranked as the safest airline in the world in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic according to the Safe Travel Barometer

BUSINESS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2020 | MUSCAT DAILY | 13



Devoted to our Country and Leader Celebrating the 50th National Day of the Renaissance

On the occasion of the Glorious 50th National Day of the Renaissance,
it is an honour to offer our heartiest congratulations and
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**His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik,
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We pledge to work together and ensure a bright future
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Japan exits recession as GDP grows 5% in Q3



People walk on a pedestrian crossing in Tokyo, Japan on Monday (AFP)

Tokyo, Japan - Japan's economy exited recession in the third quarter, growing a better-than-expected 5 per cent, government data showed on Monday, following a record contraction.

A rise in domestic demand as well as exports helped drive the quarter-on-quarter growth, after the coronavirus pandemic and a consumption tax hike slammed the economy into reverse earlier in the year.

The positive figures come after three quarters of contraction in the world's third-largest economy, with revised data showing the economy shrank 8.2 per cent in the second quarter, more than the previously esti-

mated 7.9 per cent.

That was the worst figure for Japan since comparable data became available in 1980, exceeding even the brutal impact of the 2008 global financial crisis.

The third quarter growth will be welcome news for Japan's government, which has avoided the tough lockdown measures seen in some other countries as it tries to balance preventing the spread of coronavirus with protecting the economy.

The results also beat economist expectations of 4.4 per cent growth, and analysts said the recovery was likely to continue into the final quarter of the year.

"Between July and Septem-

ber, economic activity in Japan experienced a return to a somewhat normal status as the government lifted the state of emergency in the country," said Naoya Oshikubo, senior economist at Sumitomo Mitsui Trust.

"Looking ahead, we believe that GDP figures in the next quarter should continue to show signs of recovery, albeit at a slower pace," Oshikubo said in a note before the official release of the data.

"Pent-up demand should decelerate, mainly due to second waves of COVID-19 overseas," he added.

Japan was already struggling with a stagnating economy and

the impact of a consumption tax hike implemented last year before the pandemic hit.

It has seen a smaller coronavirus outbreak compared to some of the worst-hit countries, with infections approaching 120,000 and deaths at slightly under 2,000.

But Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga last week issued a warning over a recent rise in infections, though he said the government's campaign to promote domestic tourism would not be halted for now.

Japan imposed a nationwide state of emergency in April as cases spiked, but restrictions were significantly looser than in

many countries, with no enforcement mechanism to shutter businesses or keep people at home.

The emergency was lifted in June, and the government has been reluctant to reintroduce curbs.

Suga instructed his ministers last week to draw up a fresh economic stimulus package to help the economy weather the pandemic.

Earlier this year, the government unleashed massive spending, including sending approximately US\$900 in stimulus funds to every adult and child in the country.

Tom Learmouth, Japan economist at Capital Economics, said the effects of the stimulus efforts were clear in the latest figures, with a 2.2 per cent quarter-on-quarter rise in public spending.

"We expect GDP to rebound a further 1.2 per cent quarter-on-quarter this quarter and to reach pre-virus levels - although not pre-sales tax hike levels - in the second half of next year," he wrote in a note.

In October, the Bank of Japan (BoJ) lowered its economic growth and inflation forecasts for this fiscal year, but its governor said officials were ready to unveil fresh support measures if needed.

For the year to March 2021, the BoJ expects the economy to shrink 5.5 per cent, against a 4.7 per cent contraction in the July estimate.

AFF

Virus-hit Europe, US imperil world recovery: Moody's



A testing centre specialists assist drivers at a drive-in COVID-19 testing site in south Los Angeles, US on Saturday (AFP)

Ankara, Turkey - Global economic recovery is under threat due to the resurgence of coronavirus infections in Europe and the US, according to international rating agency Moody's.

In a recent report, the agency said economic recovery has been picking up around the world but still remains fragile.

'A tentative economic recovery is underway but the path is beset by uncertainty,' said the report.

'Effective pandemic management, the development and distribution of a coronavirus vaccine, and the continuation of government policy support to households and businesses will determine the economic trajectory over the coming year.'

The speed of recovery will vary between countries since the impact has been more severe for some economies, Moody's said.

It stressed that sustainable recovery is not possible in countries where new virus waves

continue to disrupt economies.

The agency also revised its growth forecasts for G20 economies, saying they are expected to shrink by 3.8 per cent this year and grow 4.9 per cent in 2021 and 3.8 per cent in 2022.

In August, Moody's estimated that G20 economies will contract by 4.6 per cent this year and grow 5.3 per cent in 2021.

China's economy is projected to fall by 2.2 per cent in 2020 and rise by 7 per cent next year, according to the latest projections.

Moody's now expects India's economy to shrink by 8.9 per cent this year, lower than its earlier forecast of a 9.6 per cent contraction.

The agency did not amend its projection for Turkey, saying its economy will narrow by 5 per cent this year, before rebounding to 3.5 per cent and 4 per cent growth in 2021 and 2022, respectively.

Anadolu Agency

China's consumer spending picks up in October

Beijing, China - China's retail sales continued a general recovery in October, official data showed on Monday, on the back of a national holiday and policies aimed at boosting spending.

Although China has largely brought the coronavirus under control, spending has been slower to recover as the world still grapples with the impact of the pandemic.

Retail sales in the world's second-largest economy rose 4.3 per cent on-year last month, Beijing's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said on Monday.

At a press briefing, spokesman Fu Linghui said the pandemic 'has dealt a second blow to countries' including the United States and those in Europe, and that global recovery

had 'further stalled' as a result.

"The domestic economy is still in recovery, with multiple challenges to be conquered before a full recovery," Fu added.

While the retail figure is lower than the 5 per cent growth expected by analysts polled by Bloomberg, it still continued an upward trend as spenders gradually began to open their wallets again, particularly around the week-long national holiday in October.

Catering sector revenue growth turned positive for the first time this year, the NBS said.

Industrial production growth in October remained the same as the month before, but continued to rise more than expected at 6.9 per cent.

AFF

European stocks surge on Moderna vaccine news

London, UK - Europe's major stock markets spiked on Monday after Moderna announced its experimental COVID-19 vaccine was shown to be 94.5 per cent effective according to early trial results, sparking fresh hope of a return to normality, dealers said.

"This positive interim analysis from our Phase 3 study has given us the first clinical validation that our vaccine can prevent COVID-19 disease, including severe disease," said Stephane Bancel, Moderna's CEO.

European equities accelerated gains on the news, which comes just one week after Pfizer and BioNTech sparked a stock market boom after announcing that their COVID-19 vaccine candidate had proved 90 per cent effective.

Shortly after midday on Mon-



day, London stocks were up 1.7 per cent, extending early gains.

In early afternoon deals in the eurozone, Frankfurt added 1.2 per cent and Paris soared 2.4 per cent, while Madrid and Milan jumped 3.9 per cent and 2.3 per cent, respectively.

"Just as their initial dose of vaccine bullishness appeared to be waning, the markets got another injection of good news this Monday," Spreadex analyst Connor Campbell told AFP.

"One-upping BioNTech and Pfizer, Moderna has claimed its

preparation is nearly '95 per cent effective' after a trial involving 30,000 Americans.

"As with Pfizer, there is still a way to go before Moderna's vaccine is approved. However, investors were only thinking about the long-term, flashing forward

to the end of this nightmare."

World oil prices soared by more than 3.5 per cent as the Moderna news stoked hopes of a recovery in energy demand.

Prior to the midday announcement, global stock markets were already staging a rally on bright economic data and last week's Pfizer vaccine as they waited on Moderna's expected announcement.

Equities also bounded higher after US President-elect Joe Biden's team pledged not to impose an economically damaging nationwide lockdown to contain the virus, which has now infected more than 11mn Americans.

In addition, traders cheered the signing of the world's biggest free-trade deal by 15 Asia-Pacific countries.

AFF

After European Union, what is next for 'Global Britain'?

by Jitendra Joshi

A brave new world or a dangerous leap into the unknown? After nearly 50 years of integration with Europe, Britain starts an uncertain new chapter on January 1.

Without a deal, imports and exports face serious disruption with the abrupt return of barriers that have not existed for decades. There are fears that certain foodstuffs and medicines could run short.

But even with a deal, the future won't be seamless.

UK exporters will still need to file reams of new customs paperwork to prove their goods have authorisation to enter the EU's single market.

Britain is urging business to be ready either way but industry players say the government has failed to deliver vital IT systems and support staff in time, heightening the risk of chaos after January 1.

What is Global Britain?

Brexiteers argue the EU has held

Britain back through onerous regulation and it can now embark on a buccaneering new mission to support free trade around the world - 'God's diplomacy', according to a February speech by Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

But if heaven was listening, it



had other plans in mind: A month after Johnson's speech, Britain was forced into national lockdown by the coronavirus pandemic.

If the world ever gets back to normality, the idea is that Britain will not shrink inwards after

Brexit but will look outwards, as far afield as a free-trade pact with Pacific rim countries.

"Now Global Britain is back, it is time for the makers, the doers and the innovators to help us write our most exciting chapter yet," International Trade Secretary Liz Truss declared in October, touting UK exports of everything from clotted cream to robots.

Truss has signed a post-Brexit trade deal with Japan, and is negotiating others with the United States, Australia, Canada and New Zealand - Britain's partners in the 'Five Eyes' collective of English-speaking intelligence powers.

Further deals in the pipeline will cover 80 per cent of overseas trade by 2022, according to the government, which has shaken up the Foreign

Office to integrate aid and development into Britain's diplomatic agenda.

What about at home?

Johnson's pitch to voters in last December's general election was to 'get Brexit done' and focus both money and attention on parts of the country that have failed to benefit from London's finance-driven growth.

That 'evelling up' agenda to bring new investment such as high-speed rail to northern England has been side-tracked by the pandemic.

But the government insists its long-term goals remain in place and that membership dues sent to the EU will be better spent at home.

Some Brexiteers want a radical overhaul of Britain's eco-

nomic model, to turn the country into 'Singapore on Thames' - a lightly regulated, lightly taxed rival to supposedly sclerotic Europe.

Yet the government stresses that any free-trade deals won't sacrifice its 'red lines': The state-run National Health Service, food standards and UK farming.

All of those sacred cows could be carved up if the United States forces post-Brexit Britain to yield the same kind of concessions on trade that the world's most powerful economy has negotiated elsewhere.

And Joe Biden's election as US President could restrict Johnson's plans to bind Northern Ireland into the post-January 1 UK internal market, free of EU influence.

AFF

Syria's Foreign Minister Walid Muallem no more



This file photo shows Syrian President Bashar Assad (centre) with his Foreign Minister Walid Muallem (right) and Arab League chief Amr Mussa, at Damascus airport on March 28, 2008 (AFP)

Damascus, Syria - Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Muallem, a stalwart of Bashar Assad's regime who held his job through a decade of conflict and several reshuffles, died on Monday at the age of 79.

The veteran diplomat was hit with US and European sanctions early on in the conflict that has torn Syria apart since 2011 and was known for his tirades claiming that the war was the result of a Western plot.

Muallem, who had been foreign minister since 2006, started his career in the diplomatic service in 1964. In 2012, he also became deputy prime minister.

The government announcement did not specify the cause of his death, but his health was understood to have been deteriorating for some time.

His last public appearance was at the end of last week in Damascus at the opening of a conference on refugee returns. He looked weak and was helped into the hall by two men.

At the same conference, which was snubbed by most in-



A file photo of Walid Muallem (AFP)

ternational humanitarian players, foreign attendees and Assad took part via video link.

Muallem was wearing a surgical mask and appeared to have lost weight.

He was targeted by US sanctions as early as August 2011, less than six months after the eruption of protests demanding regime change - demonstrations that the Syrian authorities bru-

tally repressed.

Muallem has 'continued to beat this drum of international conspiracy and has attempted to cover up the regime's horrific activities by making claims that terrorists or others were responsible', Washington said at the time.

Muallem was one of the most

2015, was the first nation to pay tribute to Muallem.

Mikhail Bogdanov, Russia's deputy foreign minister, hailed Muallem as a diplomat who 'understood the importance of Syrian-Russian relations'.

"We have lost a very reliable partner and sincere friend," said Bogdanov, who was formerly

al Shara, a fellow Sunni who was foreign minister for over two decades and came from the Daraa governorate, which is considered the birthplace of the revolt that erupted against the regime nearly ten years ago.

Shara, vice-president when the protests began, was the only senior regime official to advocate a political compromise as a way to end the civil war. He was subsequently removed from Baath party leadership and completely sidelined from political life.

During more than half a century in the foreign service, the unfailingly loyal Muallem held posts in Tanzania, Saudi Arabia, Spain and the United Kingdom, among other countries.

He was appointed ambassador to Romania in 1975, five years after Bashar al-Assad's father Hafez came to power.

Muallem was Syria's envoy in Washington throughout the 1990s and also played a key role in Damascus' peace talks with Israel during that same period. He was a father to three children.

AFP

Muallem was one of the most recognisable figures in a Syrian government which remains very isolated internationally despite recent efforts to normalise ties with Gulf countries

recognisable figures in a Syrian government which remains very isolated internationally despite recent efforts to normalise ties with Gulf countries.

'Very reliable partner'

Russia, long a close ally of the regime and the main foreign broker in Damascus since its war-changing military intervention in

stationed in Damascus.

He stressed that he had been in 'almost constant contact' with Muallem in the 35 years he had known him.

Muallem, a Sunni Muslim from Damascus, never allowed any daylight between his statements and the official stance of Bashar Assad, who hails from the ruling Alawite minority.

Muallem had replaced Faruq

Libya talks end without naming government

Gammarth, Tunisia - UN-led talks aimed at appointing an executive to help lead Libya out of a decade of conflict ended on Sunday without discussing names, the world body said.

"We have agreed to reconvene in about a week in a virtual meeting (to) agree on the selection mechanism for the coming authority," the UN's interim Libya envoy Stephanie Williams told journalists.

But she said 'no names... were discussed' during the meetings in neighbouring Tunisia.

Libya has been riven by conflict since the 2011 NATO-backed uprising that toppled and killed veteran dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

The latest phase in renewed efforts for peace in the North African country brought together 75 delegates selected by the UN to represent a broad range of constituencies.

They were charged with laying out a roadmap towards elections, setting the mandate of an interim executive and naming its members.

But observers have criticised the way the delegates were chosen and cast doubts over their clout in a country where two administrations, as well as an array of armed groups and foreign powers, are already vying for power.

Libya is currently dominated by a unity government in Tripoli that emerged from previous UN-led talks in 2015, and its rival, the eastern-based House of Representatives elected the previous year and which never recognised the unity government.

In 2019, HoR-allied commander Khalifa Haftar, who was backed by Russia and the United Arab Emirates, launched an offensive to seize Tripoli.

But after a year of bloody stalemate on the edges of the capital, his forces were repelled by pro-unity government forces boosted by Turkish military support.

Military talks led to a formal ceasefire deal in October, and recent developments on parallel economic and political tracks have raised hopes for progress.



The UN's biggest difficulty is that there are permanent Turkish and Russian military bases and Emirati officers on the ground... foreign interests could easily derail the process

JALEL HARCHAOUI

Williams said on Sunday she was 'very pleased with the outcome' of the Tunisia talks.

Foreign presence

But observers have noted major obstacles to a lasting solution.

Jalel Harchaoui, a Libya specialist at the Clingendael Institute in The Hague, warned that foreign interests could easily derail the process. "The UN's biggest difficulty is that there are permanent Turkish and Russian military bases and Emirati officers on the ground," he told AFP.

But the UN's former envoy to Libya and the architect of the current UN process, Ghassan Salame, told AFP on Friday he had higher hopes than ever for peace, citing 'an accumulation of positive factors'. He noted that Libyans were increasingly hostile to foreign interference and the presence of mercenaries.

Salame also said Turkey and Russia could see the fruition of infrastructure contracts worth billions of dollars, signed with the Gadhafi regime, but which Libyans were still keen to honour.

AFP

Armenian leader calls for halt to violence over peace deal

Yerevan, Armenia - Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, who has fuelled outrage over a controversial peace deal with Azerbaijan, called on Monday for a halt to violence after reports of an attempt on his life.

Last week, Pashinyan announced a Moscow-brokered peace deal that ended weeks of heavy fighting over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh that left at least 2,400 dead and displaced tens of thousands.

Armenia agreed to cede parts of the region to Azerbaijan as well as other territories controlled by Armenian separatists since a 1990s post-Soviet war.

After the deal was announced, thousands of protesters took to the streets of the Armenian capital Yerevan, calling Pashinyan a 'traitor' and demanding his resignation. Protesters also stormed government buildings.

On Monday, Pashinyan appealed for calm.

"Today I clearly stated that violence or the provoking of violence (especially armed violence) cannot in any way be a means of action for the government," Pashinyan said on Facebook.



A relative mourns at the grave of an Armenian soldier killed during war with Azerbaijan, at a military cemetery in Yerevan on Saturday (AFP)

Pashinyan said he expected the opposition to also declare that it did not back 'any violent action'.

Authorities on Saturday said they thwarted a plot to assassinate the prime minister and arrested opposition leader Artur Vanetsyan, the former head of Armenia's security services.

Vanetsyan, leader of the centre-right 'Homeland' party, was released on Sunday after a court ruled that his detention lacked legal grounds.

A dozen opposition leaders

were detained last week for inciting riots but were also released by courts.

Nagorno-Karabakh declared independence from Azerbaijan nearly 30 years ago but it has not been recognised internationally, even by Armenia.

Clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenian separatists broke out in late September and persisted despite efforts by France, Russia and the United States to mediate ceasefires that collapsed as both sides accused the other of violations.

Peace: Turkey to send soldiers

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan asked parliament on Monday to authorise sending soldiers to Azerbaijan to establish a 'peacekeeping centre' with Russia to monitor a truce over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Erdogan's request followed two days of talks in Ankara with Russian officials about how the two regional powers intend to jointly implement a Russian-brokered ceasefire signed last week.

Turkey is one of Azerbaijan's closest allies and has strongly defended its right to reclaim lands it lost to ethnic Armenian separatists in a 1988-94 war.

The Russia-brokered deal brought an end to more than six weeks of fighting that claimed more than 1,400 lives and saw ethnic Armenians to agree to withdraw from large parts of the contested region of Azerbaijan.

Erdogan asked parliament on Monday to deploy a mission to 'establish a joint centre with Russia and to carry out the centre's activities'.

AFP



Palestinians perform exercises on the Mediterranean beachfront promenade, in Gaza City on November 11 (AFP)

Trapped inside the Israel-blockaded enclave, Gazans take coastal walks

Gaza City, Palestinian Territories

- At sunrise in Gaza, the strip's coastal path begins to fill up with pedestrians, as growing numbers of Palestinians have taken up walking to relieve stress trapped inside the Israel-blockaded enclave.

Life in Gaza, controlled by the Hamas since 2007, was mentally taxing even before the novel coronavirus outbreak brought additional hardship, including nightly curfews and tight movement restrictions.

"There's a lot of mental pressure in Gaza. We suffer from it," said Walid al Louh. "People come out to walk along the seashore, just to let off steam."

As the pandemic has dragged on, larger crowds of men in tracksuits and women stroll, or stride briskly, along Gaza's Mediterranean coastline.

"I used to walk before coronavirus," Louh told AFP. "There were maybe dozens of people walking then, but now its hundreds and hundreds."

One of the new devotees is Hanadi al Akawy (32), who said she walks 5km a day with her husband 'to get rid of psychological pressure'.

Gaza's densely-packed population of two million people was, in the early phase of the global pandemic, seen as uniquely protected given the movement re-

strictions already in place.

The coastal strip has only two entry and exit points, the Erez crossing to Israel and the Rafah crossing to Egypt.

The flow of people through Erez is tightly controlled by Israel, which has fought three wars with Hamas since 2008, and maintains a crippling blockade it says is necessary to contain a hostile Islamist group.

As the virus began to spread globally, both crossings were almost completely closed, and Hamas imposed strict quarantine measures for the small numbers of people allowed in and out.

AFP

UNSC out of 'useful solutions': Macron

‘Everybody is jointly responsible when some institutions become hostages of the crisis in multi-lateralism’

Paris, France - French President Emmanuel Macron said the UN Security Council no longer provides good solutions to global problems, in remarks published on Monday, and called for an overhaul of international cooperation mechanisms.

Multilateral frameworks ‘are weakened today, because they are blocked’, Macron said in an interview with website Le Grand Continent.

“I cannot help but observe that the United Nation’s Security Council no longer produces useful solutions today,” Macron said.

Except for one video conference in April, the Council - whose permanent members are the United States, China, Britain, France and Russia - has not communicated on the global COVID pandemic.

Macron said ‘everybody is jointly responsible when some institutions become hostages of the crisis in multi-lateralism’, such as the World Health Organization.

President Donald Trump has accused the WHO of being too close to the Chinese government and has started a procedure to withdraw the US from the organisation.

Now was the right time to ‘strengthen and structure a political Europe’ which could be at the heart of a ‘new multi-lateralism’, Macron said.

A strong Europe, he said, ‘is the only way to impose our values’ to avoid a Chinese-US duopoly and ‘the return of hostile regional powers’.



This file photo shows French President Emmanuel Macron speaking during The Paris Peace Forum at The Elysee Palace, in Paris on November 12 (AFP)

oly and ‘the return of hostile regional powers’.

In a speech before the UN General Assembly in September, Macron had already called on the international community to avoid being reduced to the status of ‘depressed observer’ of a China-US rivalry.

In Monday’s interview, Macron said he ‘deeply’ disagreed with German Defence

A strong Europe is the only way to impose our values’ to avoid a Chinese-US duopoly and the return of hostile regional powers

EMMANUEL MACRON

Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer who said recently that Europe would not be able to replace the United States as a guarantor of its own security.

“I think that is a misinterpretation of history,” Macron said. “Luckily, the Chancellor (Angela Merkel) does not share that view if I’ve understood correctly.”

The United States would respect Europeans as allies only ‘once we are serious about ourselves and once we have sovereignty over our own defence’.

AFP

No 2 behind Afghan varsity raid killed: VP

Kabul, Afghanistan - Afghan security forces have killed the number two mastermind of this month’s bloody Kabul University attack that left 22 people dead, the country’s vice president said on Monday.

Amrullah Saleh said the unnamed ‘second mastermind’ was killed in eastern Paktia province, and the number three in charge of the operation captured.

Three gunmen rampaged through Kabul University on November 2, detonating grenades and spraying automatic fire across the campus for several hours.

The attack was claimed by the Islamic State group, although the government blamed the Taliban.

Afghanistan is grappling with a surge in violence that has worsened despite the government holding peace talks with the Taliban in Qatar.

Those talks follow an agreement between Washington and the hardline Islamic group to withdraw all US forces from what has become America’s longest war.

Saleh said the perpetrators of the Kabul University attack had surveyed the campus and identified security weaknesses before launching their assault.



This file photo shows a security personnel standing guard outside the Kabul University after gunmen stormed the campus, in Kabul (AFP)

‘They dressed up as students and entered the campus with bags full of weapons,’ Saleh said in a report posted on his Facebook page. ‘No one checked their bags. Their plan was that if they got caught, they would shoot the police with sidearms.’

Tariq Arian, spokesman for the interior ministry, said Mon-

day that following an investigation, a number of police officers had been sacked for ‘neglecting their duties’. They were still being questioned, he said, without giving more details.

Other officials have said the lead organiser - Mohammad Adel - had also been arrested.

AFP

Turkey probes Istanbul mayor in fight over canal

Istanbul, Turkey - Turkey’s Interior Ministry has launched a probe into the Istanbul mayor over his opposition to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s dream of building an alternative to the Bosphorus Strait, the mayor’s spokesman said on Monday.

Erdogan argues that the new Istanbul canal, which he has dubbed one of his ‘crazy projects’, would relieve pressure on one of the world’s busiest shipping lanes.

The Bosphorus creates a border between Europe and Asia, splitting Istanbul in two as it runs between the Black and Marmara Seas.

The proposed 75bn lira (US\$9.8bn approx) alternative would run to the west of the Bosphorus along a new 45km route.

Istanbul mayor Ekrem Imamoglu, whose election last year saw Erdogan’s ruling AK Party lose its 25 year grip on Turkey’s largest city, has been a vocal opponent of the project on financial and environmental grounds.

AFP



A woman protester shouts at police officers during a demonstration, in Lima on Sunday (AFP)

Peru left without president as Merino resigns after protest

Lima, Peru - Peru was without a president on Monday after Congress failed to agree on a successor to interim leader Manuel Merino, who resigned following days of street protests against him.

Merino announced he was stepping down on Sunday, following an ultimatum from Congress for him to quit or face censure after a police crackdown on protesters left at least two dead and scores injured.

“I want to let the whole country know that I’m resigning,” said Merino (59) in a televised address, sparking celebrations in

the capital Lima following street protests against the ousting of his popular predecessor.

Congress now has to name Merino’s successor to become the country’s third president in a week.

Merino only assumed office on Tuesday, a day after the assembly impeached predecessor Martin Vizcarra on corruption charges. As speaker of Congress, he was next in line as the post of vice president was vacant.

A crisis session of Congress failed to agree on a new president on Sunday night. Leftist legislator and former human rights activist

Rocio Silva Santisteban, supposedly a consensus candidate, needed 60 votes but she only got 42, with 52 against and 25 abstentions.

“Congress had in its hands the solution to this political crisis that they generated. However, today they have turned their backs on the country,” former economy minister Vizcarra Maria Antonieta Alva tweeted.

Party whips then held a closed-door meeting as thousands of protesters remained peacefully on the streets, undisturbed by police.

AFP

Tributes pour in for India’s legendary actor Soumitra Chatterjee

Kolkata, India - Legendary actor Soumitra Chatterjee has been hailed as one of Indian cinema’s leading lights after his death at the age of 85 from health complications after he contracted the coronavirus.

Chatterjee appeared in around 300 films over six decades but was best known internationally for his work with

Oscar-winning director Satyajit Ray.

He was admitted to a Kolkata hospital after testing positive for COVID-19 last month and was kept there as he suffered further ailments linked to the virus, according to local media.

The acting icon’s condition deteriorated and he died on Sunday, his daughter Poulami Bose



A photo of Indian actor Soumitra Chatterjee in garlands placed next to his body during his funeral in Kolkata on Sunday (AFP)

wrote on Facebook.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Chatterjee’s death was ‘a colossal loss to the world of cinema’ and India’s cultural life.

‘International, Indian and Bengali cinema has lost a giant. We will miss him dearly,’ added West Bengal state chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Twitter.

Bollywood megastar Amitabh

Bachchan, who suffered his own bout of COVID-19 earlier this year, tweeted that Chatterjee was ‘one of the mightiest pillars’ of India’s film industry and ‘a gentle soul’.

Chatterjee appeared in 14 of Ray’s films and made his debut in the third instalment of the director’s acclaimed Apu Trilogy.

He was in 2012 presented

with Indian cinema’s highest honour, the Dadasaheb Phalke, and France awarded him the Legion of Honour three years ago.

Thousands of mourning fans gathered in Kolkata near the crematorium where his body was taken late on Sunday, carrying candles and photographs of the actor.

AFP

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

British PM in self-isolation as Europe tackles surge, protest

London, UK - British Prime Minister Boris Johnson went into isolation after a contact tested positive for the coronavirus, as a stay-at-home advisory came into effect for the United States' third-biggest city on Monday.

Global infections have soared past 54mn with more than 1.3mn deaths, and the worrying spikes have forced governments to reimpose deeply unpopular and economically devastating restrictions on movement and gatherings.

Europe has been hit particularly hard by a second wave of the pandemic, with curbs reimposed - often in the face of protests - from Greece to Britain, where PM and COVID-19 survivor Johnson went into self-isolation after coming into contact with an MP who later tested positive for the virus.

"He will carry on working from Downing Street," a spokesman said, adding that the prime minister, who spent three nights in intensive care during his April bout of COVID-19, did not have any symptoms.

Elsewhere on the continent, Germany warned that its anti-virus measures were likely to stay in place for several months.

In hard-hit France, health minister Olivier Veran warned that while strict containment measures had helped slow the virus, 'we have not won against the virus yet'.

Concerns of a resurgence also remain in parts of the world



A woman holds a placard reading 'We want the mass' as catholic faithfuls rally to protest against COVID-19 restrictions under which masses are banned in churches, in Versailles, outside Paris, on Sunday (AFP)

that have largely brought their caseloads under control, such as in Australia, where a new cluster suddenly emerged in a city that had gone seven months without a major outbreak.

And in Hong Kong, the government further tightened restrictions from Monday on the number of people in bars and restaurants, to guard against a spike.

'This winter will be hard'

Hopes for an end to the pandemic were boosted by trial results of a vaccine candidate by pharma giant Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech, which showed it was 90 per cent effective. Ugur Sahin, BioNTech's co-founder, told the BBC he was confident of a return to normal life next winter if uptake of the vaccine is strong.

'This winter will be hard' without any major impact from vaccinations, he predicted. But combined with a number of firms working to increase supply, 'we could have a normal winter next (year)'.

But Pfizer and BioNTech's vaccine needs to be stored at -70°C, presenting a huge storage and distribution challenge even for the richest countries in the world.

Their rival Sanofi's vaccine, however, will not need such extreme temperatures, the French drugmaker's chief Olivier Bogillot said on Sunday. "Our vaccine will be like the 'flu vaccine'," he told CNews. "You can keep it in your refrigerator."

Sanofi's vaccine candidate could begin Phase 3 trials soon, he added. Eleven candidates are already at that stage.

AFP



This file photo shows Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson at Downing Street, in London on November 10 (AFP)

SELF-ISOLATED JOHNSON 'FIT AS A BUTCHER'S DOG'

London, UK - British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Monday he was in 'good health' and had no symptoms despite self-isolating after someone he was in contact with tested positive for coronavirus.

"It doesn't matter that I'm fit as a butcher's dog, feel great...that I've had the disease and I'm bursting with antibodies," he said in a video released on Twitter.

"We've got to interrupt the spread of the disease and one of the ways we can do that now is by self-isolating for 14 days when contacted by Test and Trace," he added, saying he would lead the country's virus response from his Downing Street home.

Johnson spent three days in intensive care with coronavirus in April. This time round, Johnson said he was not suffering any symptoms and health minister Matt Hancock on Monday said he

sounded 'full of beans'.

The prime minister was informed he should self-isolate after being contacted by the country's Test and Trace scheme.

The announcement came after Johnson met a group of MPs at Downing Street on Thursday, including one who subsequently developed symptoms of COVID-19 and has now tested positive.

The British leader has said his coronavirus case was seriously worsened by being overweight, but that he had since lost 12kg. "I am going to continue that diet, because you've got to search for the hero inside of yourself, in the hope that that individual is considerably slimmer," he joked last month.

Britain has been the worst-hit country in Europe recording over 50,000 coronavirus deaths from 1.2mn positive cases.

AFP



Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro speaks during a televised speech at the Miraflores Presidential Palace, in Caracas on Sunday (AFP)

Venezuela to buy 10mn doses of Russian vaccine

Caracas, Venezuela - Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro said on Sunday that his government has agreed to buy 10mn doses of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine against COVID-19.

The vaccines will come in the first quarter of 2021, Maduro said at an event in Caracas broadcast on government television, adding that 'Venezuela will manufacture the Russian vaccine in the Venezuelan laboratories'.

In August, Russia became the first country to register a vaccine against COVID-19, which it named Sputnik V after the world's first satellite launched into space in 1957.

However, the announcement has been met with skepticism in the international community.

Its developers reported initial test results showing the vaccine to be 92 per cent effective, two days after pharma giant Pfizer and Germany's BioNTech said Phase 3 results found their vaccine to be more than 90 per cent effective, injecting hope into the battle against the virus.

The vaccines will come in the first quarter of 2021. Venezuela will manufacture the Russian vaccine in the Venezuelan laboratories

NICOLAS MADURO

In early October, Venezuela began participating in the Sputnik V clinical trials phase, with some 2,000 volunteers participating - among them Maduro's son Nicolas Maduro Guerra.

Since the pandemic arrived in Venezuela in March, the government has confirmed 96,933 infections and 848 deaths.

But opposition figures and non-governmental organizations question the figures, saying that due to underreporting, they could be much higher.

AFP

US adds 1mn cases in less than a week

Washington, US - The US surpassed 11mn coronavirus cases on Sunday, adding one million new cases in less than a week, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

The dizzying rise came as cities and states across the United States were implementing new restrictions to try to halt the spread of the virus, with stay-at-home orders set to be imposed on Chicago on Monday.

The US had crossed the 10mn case threshold on Monday, November 9.

As of 8:30pm Sunday - just six days later - the Johns Hopkins University real-time tracker showed that the confirmed US caseload stood at 11,025,046.

There have been 246,108 deaths in the country. Both are the highest tolls in absolute terms in the world.

The US has seen a worrying surge in coronavirus cases since the start of November, forcing



Medical workers at a state run drive-thru testing site set up to provide free COVID-19 tests, on the University of Texas El Paso campus, in El Paso on Saturday (AFP)

local and state officials from coast to coast to take more drastic steps to reduce the disease's spread, with many hospitals already warning that they are running out of resources.

In addition to the stay-at-home orders in Chicago, the

country's third biggest city, its biggest - New York, the epicenter of the country's spring outbreak - is also rushing to fend off a second wave with new restrictions on bars and restaurants.

New York schools will remain open on Monday, even

though New York City mayor Bill de Blasio had warned that they could switch to fully remote learning by then.

President Donald Trump promised on Friday that the first Americans would start receiving a vaccine in 'a matter of weeks',

but said he remained firmly against new lockdowns - a measure taken in Europe, where cases are also on the upswing.

Further complicating matters is Trump's refusal to cooperate in the shift to President-elect Joe Biden's administration, denying the Democrat both federal funding for transition work and vital briefings by outgoing officials.

Democrats and Biden's chief of staff say this could have a damaging impact on his ability to face the grave and mounting challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic once he assumes office. Biden and his team currently are not even allowed to consult with experts like top government immunologist Anthony Fauci, who is still a part of the White House COVID-19 task force.

"Of course it would be better" if such talks could begin, Fauci told CNN on Sunday.

AFP

Merkel eyes schools, contacts in tougher virus curbs

Berlin, Germany - Chancellor Angela Merkel is pushing for tougher curbs including masks in all schools, smaller class sizes and drastic limits on contacts to bring down coronavirus infections in Germany.

Outside work or school, contact between people should also be 'restricted to those from another fixed household', according to a proposal by Merkel's office that would be put to regional leaders of Germany's 16 states later on Monday.

Europe's biggest economy began a new round of shutdowns in November, closing



A protester is detained by police during a demonstration against COVID-19 restrictions, in Frankfurt am Main on Saturday (AFP)

restaurants, cultural venues and leisure facilities to curb transmission of COVID-19.

But while new cases are plateauing, the daily numbers are still too high for officials to

determine the infection chain and thereby break the transmission.

During talks to take stock of the situation, Merkel will seek to get state premiers to sign up to drastically limiting contacts.

All private parties should be cancelled until Christmas, the document proposes.

Children and youths should pick just one specific friend to meet up with outside school hours.

To ensure that schools are kept open as long as possible, the chancellery has also suggested that classes "without ex-

ceptions be broken up into fixed groups, where the size of groups in classrooms are halved compared to normal operations".

An alternative is to use larger rooms for classes, according to the draft.

The document also urges anyone with signs of a cold, including a cough or runny nose, to self-isolate for five to seven days until they are free of symptoms again.

Germany has fared relatively well in the first wave of the pandemic, but numbers have dramatically shot up in the autumn.

AFP



FUSION OF

Fragrances

A new statement on the perfume landscape

The world of perfumes, in which the Middle East plays a significant role, just got richer. A new fragrance has been born in the 'land of frankincense' and is set to take the world by storm as this perfume has the power to blur the distinctions between time and eras and assert itself as a time-less fragrance.

OJAR, founded by Sheikha Hind Bahwan, is a fusion of fragrances from the East and the West. Created as a statement of modernity and traditional harmony, the brand pays tribute to the art and rituals of Middle Eastern perfume making. Available in Oman at the Perfumatory in City Centre Seeb, Ojar is now also available at Harrods, in London, UK.

The Omani founder is behind not just the fragrance collection, but also the design and visual campaign. Forseeing great potential for this new perfume, Sheikha Hind Bahwan says, "I see perfume as a

lifestyle, it is a signature that you bring wherever you go."

Ojar comes from the word Hojari, which is widely regarded as the finest quality of Frankincense resin in the world, located in Oman's Dhofar mountains. Frankincense is one of the key ingredients of the collection.

Ojar reveals the heritage of the region in a very modern and inspiring manner through its collection of unisex perfume oils created and produced by Givaudan. This renowned Swiss perfume house has created 18 individual fragrances based on six core ingredients - oud, rose, frankincense, honey, sandalwood and musk.

The hero product of the brand is its iconic 'Absolute'. The bottle elevates the perfume oil landscape with a never seen before double cap usage that features a roll on and a glass stick applicator. Absolute is an alcohol-free perfume oil, available in a 20ml travel-friendly format. The perfume is 25% concentrated

"I see perfume as a lifestyle, it is a signature that you bring wherever you go."

SHEIKHA HIND BAHWAN

and long lasting.

Terming Ojar as something that goes beyond a brand, as a unique lifestyle, the company states, 'Let innovation enhance your fragrance experience and discover the art of layering fragrances with Ojar.'

(For more details about the full collection available online, visit: www.ojarofficial.com. OJAR is available at Perfumatory, City Centre Seeb - Shop 211)



BOOK REVIEW: A LONG WALK - MEMORIES OF LIFE



Photos by Syed Fasiuddin

Hubert Vaz

You wouldn't detect any intensity in his gaze, neither any intent to scrutinise someone concealed within that unspoken word curled within his lips. But when Maqbool Hameed al Saleh, the doyen of Omani industry, meets someone, his intuitions and sixth sense come to play, to deliver cues that have rarely gone wrong over the past seven decades.

Armed with this unique ability and just one key asset to rely on – hard work – this young man had set out to realise his dreams in Oman at a time when the Blessed Renaissance had begun to take shape in the early 70s of the last century of the second millennium. And though providence saw him succeed in diverse fields of business over the past five decades, Maqbool al Saleh attributes every bit of success to every drop of sweat invested by him and his team, over the years, before he became chairman of the OHI Group.

Today, even as he revels in the fruits of his labour, the stark reality of his early life – a time when he chose to live with his paternal grandparents to ease the financial crunch that his father was reeling under, in a small house in Muttrah with many mouths to feed – remains etched on his memory as a driving force to succeed against all odds. And, to provide young Omanis formidable tips to survive and succeed in an unforgiving modern world, Saleh has compiled his own memoirs which provide glimpses of his illustrious life and insights into his passions and principles that have made him the successful business magnate that he is today.

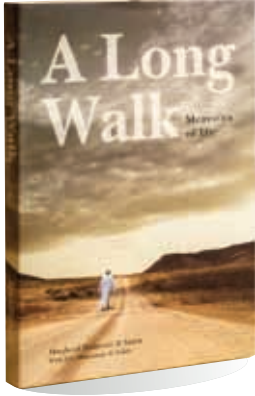
A Long Walk – Memories of Life, which was

released by H E Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, at Majlis Al Khonji, an online platform that brings together Oman's leading business personalities, was written by Saleh himself, with help from his sister Dr Masooma al Saleh.

The book was written over a period of three years and it contains, incidents, locations and personal memories of various events as accurately as he could remember. "There are many recollections of events that may be chronologically confusing for the reader at times, however, the floods of memories swarm as I begin to recall the details of my life," he states in his initial note.

Explaining the title of the book, Saleh said it was the title that occurred to him first, and apart from being synonymous with his reflective journey, it was also reminiscent of his early life when he had to walk long distances from Muttrah to Ruwi for his job in the army. "As I write about my journey, from childhood to now, it feels as if I have walked a long path. I know, when my road eventually ends, as all roads do, I would not want my story and my memories to end with me," he states.

Saleh's memoirs begin with his birth, with an interesting description of how his pregnant mother was ferried in an old pickup van from Nazi Moja, his first home in Muttrah which means 'one coconut' in Swahili, to the American Mission Hospital. From tracing his family roots, life in Muttrah, his childhood homes/amusements, school days, his early days in the army as a teenager, and his marriage, it then moves to the nitty-gritties of his career, professional challenges and the decision to club all his business



As I write about my journey, from childhood to now, it feels as if I have walked a long path

MAQBOOL HAMEED AL SALEH

activities under one umbrella by forming OHI in the early 70s.

It also has chapters on his love for travel and his passion for boats (though it was in defiance of his mother's instructions to stay away from boats) and how a deal to purchase a boat from an Indian business tycoon had run into rough weather. The final chapter on Adventures and Misadventures gives an account of some of Saleh's exceptional encounters which shaped his personality as well as outlook.

The chapters are interspersed with a select set of personal and professional photographs which indicate not just his humble beginning but also diverse shades of his acquired affluence. It ends with an epilogue wherein Saleh owes allegiance to his mentor – the Late HM Sultan Qaboos bin Said – who, he says, taught him three foremost skills that became the foundation of his success – discipline, authority and far-sightedness.

"I was skeptical myself about writing this book, though the idea about writing it came when I was serving in the Ministry of Social Affairs, through my advisor who was a university professor in Beirut. He encouraged me and sent one of his bright students to shadow me for three months to jot down various aspects of my life. However, that did not materialise as the young man unexpectedly left on leave and never returned," Saleh disclosed in a free-wheeling chat, adding that he finally took it up himself as a challenge and dared to be very frank about many aspects of his life.

Admitting that entrepreneurship was something built within himself, Saleh disclosed that he started out by venturing to open a small canteen,

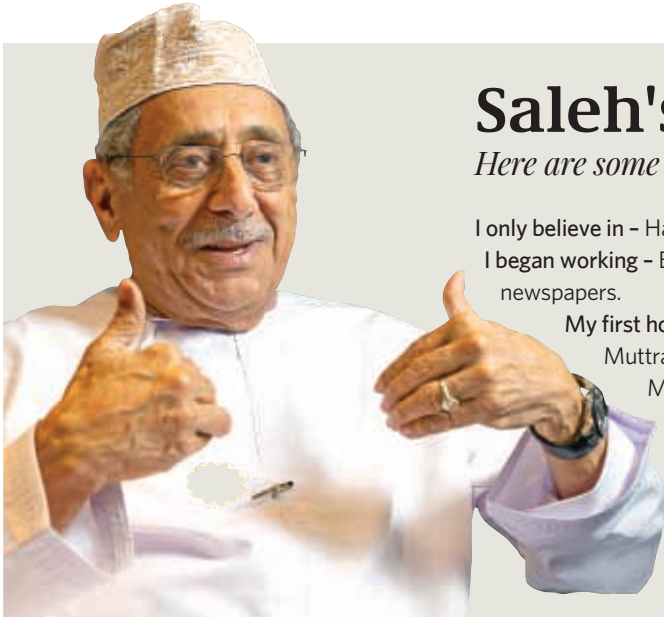
during his army days, in one corner of the camp, and later took many more risks that ultimately paid rich dividends in the form of successful business ventures.

Recalling early beginnings, he said the generosity of the government in encouraging Omanis settled elsewhere to come back to Oman and join in the process of nation building in the 70s is what sparked the spirit of enterprise and self-dependency in many young men like him. That spirit has somewhat eroded over the decades and you don't find it in the younger generation now, he said.

Disclosing that he made his own sons go out and seek jobs to develop their own industriousness, before getting a role in the family-owned business, Saleh stressed that there is no substitute for hard work and that people who rely on fate and miracles never get anywhere in life. "I don't believe in miracles, I believe only in hard work," he asserted.

As a clear cut message to young, budding businessmen who have a dream but no capital to begin with, Saleh has a simple message – "First, don't replicate (study the market); secondly, never fall in love with your assets; and thirdly, work hard, don't day dream."

The beauty of Saleh's memoirs is that they serve as a complete motivating guide for young Omanis, providing a blueprint for success based on reality which they can identify with. One may read it in one go or take up different chapters in any order and still find a cord of relevance running through each of them with lessons and inspiration cleverly concealed within the light-hearted tone of the narrative.



Saleh's secrets

Here are some unique aspects of Maqbool al Saleh's personality, some of which find mention in his memoirs:

I only believe in – Hard work.
I began working – By selling newspapers.

My first home – Was in Muttrah, called 'Nazi Moja', which means 'one coconut' in Swahili.
My first job – I joined the

army as a teenager to support my family.
My first entrepreneurial venture – A canteen in one corner of my camp in the army.
My conviction – If you cannot take up challenges, you cannot meet success.
My sporting past – I was a national level hockey player.
My honeymoon – Was spent in the

most beautiful place on earth – Kashmir (India).
Food I love – Indian. It is similar to Omani food, only spicier.
Music I love – Old Hindi film songs.
Favourite song – 'Tu Hindu banega na Musalman banega...' (Mohammed Rafi - *Dhool ka Phool* - 1959).
My love for art – I have paintings, sculptures and exclusive artefacts

from around the world put up in my home.
Favourite room in my villa – The TV room, where the family sits together to watch programmes.
My main door – Has a wicket gate; you have to bow as you enter (a sign of leaving your ego outside).
Favourite colour – Black. It is a strong colour.
My fitness regime – I swim every

day. I love walks.
My passion – Boats. Out at sea, it's a different world altogether.
I always rely on – My intuitions. They have never gone wrong.
I never forget – My roots; the struggles of my early life made me what I am today.
I am anxious about – 2021. We got by tough times in 2020 but what lies ahead is unpredictable.