



THURSDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2021

www.muscatdaily.com

Email: muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om

To subscribe, call toll free no: 80076000



33°C/24°C

UK HEALTH LEADERS CALL FOR CURBS AS INFECTIONS RISE

GO TO PAGE 10 WORLD

HM VISITS THE SULTAN'S SPECIAL FORCE CAMP



His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik visited the Sultan's Special Force at Al Samoud Camp in Halban on Wednesday and met senior officials at the camp. He was briefed on the developments of the Sultan's Special Force during the visit (Supplied photo)

'Oman-Greece trade relations need boost'

Shaddad al Musalmey
Muscat

Greek Foreign Minister Nikolaos Georgios Dendias, who is on a short official visit to Oman, asserted the importance of ties between Muscat and Athens, and said more interaction is needed to boost trade and identify areas of collaboration between the two countries.

In his interaction with media personnel at the Foreign Ministry on Wednesday after signing a memorandum of understanding with H E Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, Dendias said, "We need more interaction at the trade level and to identify areas of cooperation between the two countries for stronger bilateral relations. The MoU signed today will initiate the process and take us where we are supposed to be. This is our first step to our future plans."

He informed that his visit is aimed at enhancing ways of diplomatic contacts and bilateral consultations between the two countries. "Geographically, it may seem that the two countries are far away but not really. We are four hours away by flight but we serve many things in common.

"These include our commitment to uphold world peace, stability and prosperity. As a maritime nation, Greece is very interested in the fundamental right to freedom of navigation."



Visa waiver agreement and MoU on political consultations inked

Muscat - Oman and Greece signed an agreement on mutual visa waiver for holders of diplomatic, special and service passports at the Foreign Ministry on Wednesday.

The agreement was signed by H E Sayyid Badr Hamad al

Busaidi, Foreign Minister of Oman, and Nikolaos Georgios Dendias, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece.

The two sides also signed a memorandum of understanding for political consultations between Oman and Greece.

Digital Economy Programme launched

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Council of Ministers has approved the national Digital Economy Programme (DEP), which will be endorsed as one of the goals to build a vibrant economy. DEP envisages a set of medium-term and long-term approaches aligned with Oman Vision 2040. Its salient features include creating national industries based on the digital econ-

omy, fostering in-country value, establishing strategic partnership with the private sector, and empowering economic sectors listed in the tenth Five-Year Development Plan.

H E Said Hamoud al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, informed that endorsement of DEP will speed up digital transformation in the public sector, upgrade the level of electronic services rendered to citizens, and

Endorsement of DEP will speed up digital transformation in the public sector and upgrade the level of electronic services rendered to citizens

H E SAID AL MAAWALI

serve as a strategic reference point for coordination among components of the economy in the sultanate.

In a statement to ONA, the minister said that DEP will expedite and facilitate the digitisation of tasks in economic and strategic sectors. It will focus on cloud services, cybersecurity and techniques of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, among other measures to spur economic growth and attract foreign investment.



GOLF BEACH RESIDENCES

GOLF DISTRICT




A limited release — of 5 & 6 bedroom luxury villas

DISCOVER EXCLUSIVE GOLF LIVING

Complimentary golf cart and electric car charger

Easy payment options

Exclusive beachside gated neighbourhood

almouj.com | To book your private appointment, call 800 77776

الموج
almouj
مسقط

Oman wary as COVID-19 cases rise in Europe

Our Correspondent
Muscat

While the number of COVID-19 cases in the sultanate has dropped significantly, several European countries are witnessing a spike prompting health officials and concerned citizens to call for caution as authorities continue to be on the alert to check a resurgence of infections in Oman.

Omar Saeed al Hashemi tweeted, "We have lived in anxiety for almost two years; life has come to a standstill. Many lives were lost and our economy suffered. We must adhere to the precautionary measures and continue the vaccination drive so that the maximum number of people are immunised."

He described the Ministry of Health's decision to vaccinate all expatriates for free as a positive step. "This will help us return to a normal life."

Alerting about the resurgence of COVID-19 in several countries, twitterati Yosef al Shibli said, "We must take care and be cautious in crowded places such as auditoriums, schools, colleges and markets. And we must continue to wear masks and observe social distancing."



According to Dr Zakaria bin Yahya al Balushi, infectious diseases consultant at The Royal Hospital, in countries which are witnessing a spike in cases, those infected are mostly unvaccinated. "Also, many who are infected are over 65 years old. Some studies recommend a

booster dose for this age category, as they are often immunocompromised." He said it is imperative to monitor the situation in Britain and all epidemiological data as numbers rise.

"The situation is still not worrisome, but we must definitely monitor it. I urge the mainstream

Ministerial group formed to monitor schools

Our Correspondent
Muscat

A joint working group with representatives from departments in the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Ministry of Education (MoE) has been formed to conduct field visits to schools to monitor the precautionary health measures, and identify the challenges faced in implementing school health services.

The joint working group includes MoH's Department of School and University Health, and the Directorate General of Nursing Affairs, and the MoE's Guidance and Awareness Department.

The formation of the working group comes within the



(Supplied photo)

framework of continuous co-operation between the two ministries in line with Supreme Committee's directions to study mechanisms to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The group is divided into three teams, each consisting of

the MoE and the MoH officials, which will cover all the governorates in the sultanate according to an agreed schedule.

A common supervision visit form has been prepared for all teams that will visit school clinics and cafeteria.

variants are now Variants Being Monitored (VBM), a new class of variants that no longer pose a significant health risk in the US."

According to international reports, Britain is monitoring a new strain of the Delta variant, amid a wave of infections that is the highest in months, while Russia is imposing health restrictions to counter the spread of the virus.

35 cases in two days

The sultanate is witnessing a marked progress in controlling the spread of COVID-19 as the number of vaccinated individuals of the target population grows.

According to figures released by the Ministry of Health, 35 new cases of coronavirus were registered in two days - Monday and Tuesday. This takes the total number of cases in the sultanate to 304,101, and COVID-19 related deaths to 4,107.

The ministry stated that 46 COVID-19 patients have recovered in this period, accounting for a total of 299,480 recoveries.

The MoH confirmed that vaccines are available free of charge at Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre for expatriates. It urged residents to book appointments through the Tarassud app.

EA to replant trees in cyclone-hit areas

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In its efforts to conserve indigenous flora, the Environment Authority (EA) has launched a new initiative.

According to an EA official, a large number of volunteers and representatives of relevant authorities are participating in a

drive to re-plant trees uprooted during cyclone Shaheen.

The two-day drive in the cyclone-hit areas will end on Thursday, October 21.

The authority called on volunteers to participate in the drive.

"This initiative aims to preserve wild plants, spread the culture of environmental awareness among members of society, and

encourage cooperation among all community members in the efforts to return life to normalcy in the areas affected by the cyclone," the EA official said.

Additionally, the drive will help preserve biodiversity, develop vegetation, reduce desertification and rehabilitate degraded vegetation cover, he informed.

Over 22,800 people affected by cyclone

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Over 22,800 people were directly affected by cyclone Shaheen, according to the National Committee for Emergency Management (NCEM).

A statement issued by the NCEM said, 'A total of 22,807 cases were reported in the wilayats affected by the tropical cyclone till October 19. Of these, 4,175 were in the wilayat of Mus-sanah, 11,801 in Suwaiq, 5,791 in Khabourah, and 1,040 in Saham. A field team is continuing the process of counting the remaining cases.'

86% of field survey completed

H E Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed al Shamsi, Undersecretary in the Ministry of Social Development, informed that 86 per cent of a field survey has been completed in the affected wilayats.

Two hundred and twenty ministry employees and 300 social researchers are working in the field to assess damages suffered by citizens, some of who have lost all basic necessities and essentials. Initial emergency aid material is being distributed among such families.



(Supplied photo)

"Close to 2,480 food convoys and 553 four-wheel vehicles provided relief material in the affected areas. All foodstuff were provided by the Public Authority for Stores and Food Reserve, Oman Charitable Organisation, civil society institutions and the private sector," the undersecretary said.

A total of 1,114 refrigerators, 1,041 washing machines, 454 air conditioners and other electronic appliances were received from

civil society institutions and zakat committees from various governorates to be distributed among affected families.

544 people rescued

The Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority (CDAA) dealt with 416 reports, the most serious among these being of people stranded inside vehicles in flowing wadis.

The CDAA also rescued 544 people in the governorates af-

ected by the tropical storm and dealt with incidents of fire, flooding and others.

The CDAA teams dealt with 1,925 emergency reports since October 8, following activation of a field centre. The reports dealt with opening internal roads in residential areas, removal of uprooted trees from roads and houses, supplying drinking water in affected areas, draining waterlogged areas, and distribution of food and essentials.



MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No. 43 /2021

specialized Companies in the field of tender shown below and registered with **Tender Board**, may obtain tender documents from the website through the following link: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) against non-refundable fees until the end of deadline stipulated below.

Tender No.	No E- Tender	Description of Tender	Tender Fee	Last date to collect the tender	Tender return date	Grade
PRE/21/002	2021/MM/QS-12	Proposed Public Walkway in AL Amerat	Rial 25	13/11/2021	28/11/2021	First
PRE/21/043	2021/MM/QS-13	Maintenance of Landscaping and Cleaning Works at As Seeb (A)	Rial 55	30/10/2021	09/11/2021	Excellent / First
PRE/21/044	2021/MM/QS-14	Maintenance of Landscaping and Cleaning Works at As Seeb (B)	Rial 50	30/10/2021	09/11/2021	Excellent / First
PRE/21/045	2021/MM/QS-15	Maintenance of Landscaping and Cleaning Works at As Seeb (C)	Rial 50	30/10/2021	09/11/2021	Excellent / First
PRE/21/048	2021/MM/QS-16	Maintenance of Landscaping and Cleaning Works at Bousher (C)	Rial 55	30/10/2021	09/11/2021	Excellent / First
PRE/21/049	2021/MM/QS-17	Maintenance of Landscaping and Cleaning Works at Muscat & Matrah	Rial 45	30/10/2021	09/11/2021	Excellent / First

Tender Conditions :-

- Bidders shall submit their offers electronically accompanied with an electronic copy of a bond issued by any local bank in Oman addressed to Muscat municipality. The bond shall be (1%) of the tender value valid for ninety (90) days starting from the date of bids submission. Any tenders which do not meet the required bond shall not be accepted.
- Original Tender Bond envelope should be sealed with red wax and entitled to His Excellency/ Head of Internal Tender Committee and to be placed in the Tender Box at Muscat Municipality HQ, Third Floor, before 10:00 am as per the date Mentioned in the above table. All envelopes are to be clearly marked with the name of the Tender being presented and no other marks.
- For any inquiries regarding tenders, please visit e-tendering website: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) .
- For technical support of e-tendering system please send an email to (etenderhd@ita.gov.om) or call (+968 24402200).

'Oman-Greece trade relations need boost'

Continued from Page 01

"This is in addition to business-to-business meetings. We will work together and we have to realise that there is huge scope for improvement from where we are now. There is so much we can do more."

Dendias said that Greece believes in supporting countries that uphold the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea which Oman signed 30 years back. "Greece is also with Oman for peaceful resolution of issues through dialogue like we did for Albania, Egypt and Italy. The same is done by Oman in resolving issues peacefully in this very important part of the world, mainly the humanitarian crisis in Yemen," he said.

"I also condemn terrorism activity in any country, lately in Saudi Arabia and especially on civilian targets. We have also expanded cooperation with the

Gulf Cooperation Council of which Oman is a proud member."

H E Sayyid Badr described the talks held between Oman and Greece as 'positive'.

He added that the talks touched on a wide spectrum of cooperation opportunities in various spheres, particularly in economic and investment fields.

The meeting "discussed many agreements and memoranda of understanding that the two sides are willing to sign in the future. These agreements cover fields of civil aviation, trade and investment to bolster economic cooperation between the two countries," H E Sayyid Badr said.

He further said that an agreement on mutual visa waiver for holders of diplomatic, special and service passports between the two countries, as well as a memorandum of understanding on political consultations were signed on Wednesday.

H E Sayyid Badr said various issues of common interest also came up for discussions so as to achieve further stability and security in the region and the world at large. He affirmed that the talks between the two sides shared identical views, which back endeavours to deepen understanding and to resolve regional and international issues.

During his visit, Dendias also met the Minister of Royal Office of Oman, H E General Sultan bin Mohammed al Nu'amani, and Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, H E Ali bin Masoud al Sunaidy.

Their talks focused on strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries, as well as developments in the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East, the Gulf region and on co-operation with the Gulf Cooperation Council.

@shadadm

'Digging sans permits punishable'

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Muscat Electricity Distribution Company (MEDC) has appealed to all companies engaged in field works and other projects to obtain digging permits before commencing any work in the Governorate of Muscat.

A statement issued by the MEDC said, 'This step comes after the failure of some companies in taking necessary drilling and digging permits from the company that resulted in damage of electrical cables, which caused 86 power outages in 2020 and 72 outages until the end of September in 2021.'

The company said failure to obtain drilling permits before commencing work and field projects exposes one to accountability and legal punishment.

MARKET WATCH

MSM30	3,981.38
BSE Sensex	61,259.96

FOREX RATES
(RO1 equals)

Indian Rs	194.24
Pakistani Rs	448.06
Bangladeshi Taka	222.27
Philippine Peso	131.78
Sri Lankan Rs	520.76

*Rates as on October 20
Source: xe.com

BRIEFS

IMF's Gita Gopinath to leave post in Jan

Gita Gopinath, the chief economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will leave her post and return to Harvard University's economics department in January. Harvard extended Gopinath's leave of absence by one year, which allowed her to serve at the IMF for three years.

"Gopinath's contribution to the fund and our membership has been truly remarkable - quite simply, her impact on the IMF's work has been tremendous," IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva said.

US-Oman bilateral trade surpasses \$2bn this year

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Bilateral trade between Oman and the United States has seen a significant growth since the end of 2020, according to the figures released by the US Census Bureau.

Total trade between the US and Oman reached over US\$2bn as of the end of August 2021, surpassing the total trade recorded for the full year 2020.

This year Oman is running a trade surplus of US\$151mn with the United States, according to the latest figures. In 2020, the top Omani exports to the US were aluminium, plastics, chemicals, other commodities, and goods in transit to Canada.

"In January 2021 alone, the US imported over US\$200mn worth of Omani products," Ali Daud, president and chairman emeritus of the Oman American Business



Ali Daud

Council (US Chamber of Commerce affiliate in Oman), said in a press statement.

"This is more than twice the average we've seen in the past ten years. The trade surplus is a very healthy indication that the world's largest economy, with which Oman has a unique trade

Oman runs a trade surplus of US\$151mn with the US in the first eight months of 2021. Omani exports to the US include aluminium, plastics and finished products

agreement, is buying Omani products," Daud said.

He emphasised that the time is now to strengthen the relationship further by establishing a commercial presence for Oman in the United States. "This will make it easier for Omani exporters to navigate and pene-

trate the US market. Oman is one of only two GCC countries that have free trade agreements with the US. As a nation, Oman should build on this impressive growth in 2021, and take this success to even greater heights."

The US Ambassador to Oman H E Leslie M Tsou said that the increased trade is a sign of the overall strength of the US-Oman relationship. "The partnership between our countries is rooted in strong historical ties of friendship, bolstered by a flourishing economic relationship."

"We see this increase as a sign of Oman's desirability as a destination for US investment," she added.

The Oman American Business Center (OABC) was founded in 2003 with a mission to foster the development of commercial activity between Oman and the United States.



Construction of Duqm fishing port completed

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) on Wednesday announced the completion of multi-purpose fishing port in Duqm.

SEZAD has handed over the fishing port to the consortium of companies led by the Oman Investment Authority (OIA). The OIA is represented in the consortium by the Oman Fisheries Development Company (FDO) and Oman Food Investment Company. The consortium also includes the French Lorient Port Company.

In a press statement, Eng Yahya bin Khamis al Zadjali, in-charge of managing the operations of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, said, "All the construction works of the fishing port have been completed and it has been handed over to the consortium, which will be responsible for developing the superstructure works and operating the port."

He said the multi-purpose fishing port in Duqm has high potential to serve a number of sectors, including fisheries, fruits

and vegetables, livestock, and tourism.

"The fishing port brings additional yards that can be used for tourism purposes and containers handling food activities, and it can attract the wooden ships supplying food-stuff. Further, the port is characterised by its ability to host commercial fishing activities," Zadjali said.

Being the largest fishing port in the sultanate, the multi-purpose fishing port in Duqm is 10m deep, consisting of two breakwaters that are 3.3km long, a 1.3km fixed berth and six other floating berths.

In addition, there is a land designated for tourism purposes associated with the port, which is connected with the Fisheries Industries Zone and other projects in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm via a road network.

The multipurpose fishing port is one of the key projects in the SEZAD that seeks to enhance the zone's capacity to take advantage of the fisheries available in the zone and the surrounding areas and utilise the distinctive location of Duqm in general at the Arabian Sea.

SETTLE DOWN IN THE COUNTRY OF YOUR CHOICE

CHOOSE THE BEST
OMAN / UAE / QATAR / SRI LANKA

M-J GLOBAL
Visa and Residency Solutions

CANADA
Get Permanent Residency of Canada through Express Entry/ Provincial Nominee Program in 6-12 months OR Get Permanent Residency through Owner operated LMA within 12 months with minimum investment of CAD 150,000 OR Start your business in British Columbia with minimum CAD 250,000 and get residency in 11 to 13 months.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
USA EB-3 Visa: Direct employment and US Green Card for you and your family. Processing Time 15 months. Occupation in Demand: Caregiver, Janitor, Production Helper, General Laborer.

GERMANY
Germany Business Immigration with minimum Euro 25,000 capital investment in business. Processing time is only 5 months. Resident Visa for entire family. Get Passport on the 5th year.

PORTUGAL
Invest in real estate of minimum Euro 280,000 and get the Portugal Golden Visa in 6 months. Get Portugal Passport in 5 yrs with access to 177 countries visa free travel. Stay requirement only 7 days per year in Portugal. Excellent returns on investment.

HUNGARY
Hungary Business Immigration • Euro 50,000* Minimum Investment • Temporary Resident Visa for entire family • Processing time only 4-5 months • 2yrs Business experience/Senior Management role preferred

CYPRUS
Cyprus: Get your Citizenship in 6 months by investment of Euro 2 million in Real Estate or Get a Permanent Residency in 3 months by investing in Real Estate with investment worth Euro 300,000.

DOMINICA
Dominica Citizenship by Investment • Starting from USD 100,000* • Direct Citizenship • Visa free travel to over 120 Countries • Processing time 4-5 months • No need to stay in Dominica

GRENADA
Grenada Citizenship by Investment • Starting from USD 150,000* • Direct Citizenship • Visa free travel to over 130 Countries • Processing time 6 months • Tax advantages

TURKEY
Turkey: Get your citizenship in 5 months by investment of USD 250,000 in Real Estate. Smooth and Fast processing with excellent returns.

OFFICE NO. 204, 2ND FLOOR, JASMINE COMPLEX, AL HADIQA STREET, AL KHUWAIR, MUSCAT.
PH: +968 24473363, +968 5337 1122, +968 7171 90 26. EMAIL: CS@M-JGLOBAL.COM

WWW.M-JGLOBAL.COM

TCL

Enjoy the football season with

TCL QLED TV ALIN C815

Beyond Your Imagination

androidtv

Ok Google

FAR FIELD VOICE

Dolby Vision | 120Hz MEMC

65"

ONKYO
Soundbar

Genetco
GENERAL ELECTRIC & TRADING CO. L.L.C.

50
YEARS OF SUCCESS

MUSCAT
97693496, 96742452

SALALAH
79011363

Available at
Major Hypermarkets & Electronics Retailers

FREE CLASSIFIED LISTING

Muscat Daily now offers free classified listings for individuals in the following categories:
Situations Wanted/Accommodation Wanted or Available/Sale of Household Items/ Car for Sale or Wanted/Matrimonial Alliances (Word limit is 35)
Please email your listing to dailyclassifieds@apexmedia.co.om or call 99104346

Special Discount

oman OASIS sifr
SODIUM FREE DRINKING WATER

22.72% DISCOUNT
~~NO 64,700~~ **NO 50 ONLY**

24.24% DISCOUNT
~~NO 26,400~~ **NO 20 ONLY**

- Hot & Cold Dispenser
- 2 Full Bottles
- 15 Refill Coupons
- White Tap Dispenser/ Tap Dispenser/ Manual Water Pump/ Cradle with Tap
- 2 Full Bottles
- 12 Refill Coupons

BUY & WIN 310 PRIZES

Get 1 Raffle Coupon for every RO 20 spent on 5 Gallon Products.

- Gold Coins
- Gift Vouchers
- Oman Oasis Sifr Water Coupons

Register your raffle coupon number at www.omanoasis.com/discount2021 to win.

CALL TOLL-FREE 800 71 222 or GSM: 9275 5522

Special discount valid from 20th August 2021 to 19th November 2021. Conditions apply.

C.R.No.: 1365452 HM 2021/634/06

Scan QR Code to Register

oman OASIS sifr

Sodium Free Drinking Water

OMAN'S ONLY SODIUM FREE DRINKING WATER

5 IN 5 GALLON BOTTLES

The healthy choice

It is beneficial to limit sodium intake if you have blood pressure, diabetes, heart or kidney disease.

Call Toll-Free **800 71 222** or GSM **9275 5522**

omanOasis **omanOasisOfficial** **omanOasisWater** www.omanoasis.com
OASIS WATER COMPANY SAOC, P.O.Box: 87, PC: 124, Rusayl, Sultanate of Oman.

C.R. No.: 1365452

MSX rises 0.3%; volumes up

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The benchmark index of the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) rose 0.3 per cent to close at 3,981.39 points on Wednesday.

Whiles turnover declined 15.23 per cent to RO2.23mn, volumes rose 23.96 per cent to 17.99mn shares.

While Services index remained flat, Financial index rose 0.27 per cent and Industrial index fell 0.19 per cent. The MSX Shariah index closed up



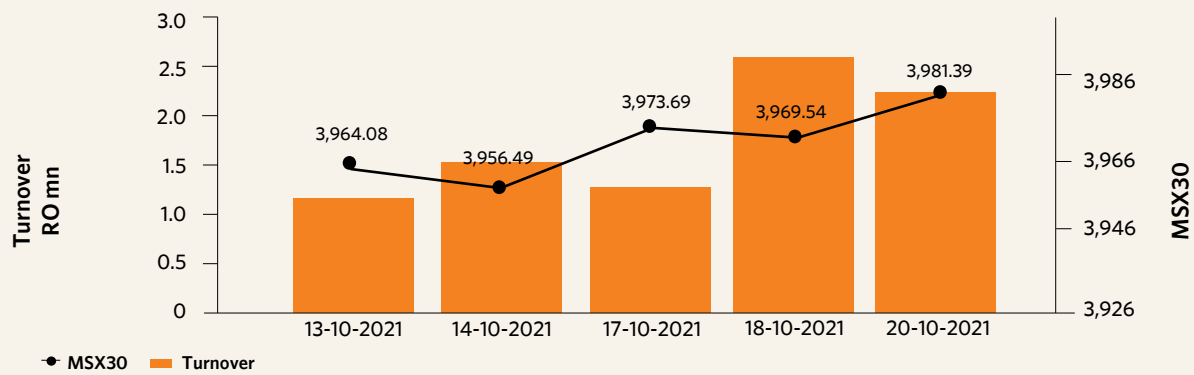
by 0.11 per cent at 565.43 points. Market breadth remained negative as eight companies closed up, while ten companies closed down. The rest 23

traded stocks closed flat for the day.

Top gainers were Construction Materials Industries (6.25 per cent), Oman Qatar Insurance (4.06 per cent), Gal-far Engineering & Contracting Company (2.56 per cent) and Sohar International Bank (2.2 per cent).

Top losers were Al Anwar Ceramic Tiles (-2.77 per cent), Oman United Insurance (-1.82 per cent), Taageer Finance (-1.33 per cent), Al Sharqiya Investment Holding Co (-1.05 per cent).

MSX INDEX AND TURNOVER OF FIVE TRADING DAYS



Middle East airlines will require 3,000 new planes by 2040: Boeing

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Leading global aerospace company Boeing said on Wednesday that airlines in the Middle East will require 3,000 new airplanes valued at US\$700bn and aftermarket services such as maintenance and repair worth US\$740bn, with the region positioned to capitalise on the recovery of regional and international travel and cargo demand.

Boeing provided the estimate in its 2021 Commercial Market Outlook (CMO), a forecast of 20-year demand for commercial airplanes and services.

Middle East passenger traffic and the region's commercial fleet are projected to more than double over the 20-year forecast period, according to the CMO. More than two-thirds of airplane deliveries to the Middle East will accommodate growth, while one-third of deliveries will replace older airplanes with more fuel-efficient models such as the 737 Max, 787 Dreamliner and 777X.

"The Middle East region's role as a global connecting hub continues to be important for developing markets to and from



Southeast Asia, China and Africa," said Randy Heisey, Boeing managing director of Commercial Marketing for the Middle East.

"The region has been a leader in restoring confident passenger travel through multi-faceted initiatives that aid international travel recovery," Heisey said.

Air freight represents an ongoing area of opportunity for Middle East airlines, with the freighter fleet projected to nearly double from 80 airplanes in 2019 to 150 by 2040.

Notably, air cargo traffic flown by Middle East carriers has increased since 2020 by nearly 20 per cent, with two of the world's top-five cargo carriers based in

the region.

To accommodate increased passenger and cargo traffic, Middle East airlines are predicted to grow their fleets to 3,530 jets by 2040, according to Boeing.

It said the region will continue to see robust wide-body demand, with 1,570 deliveries supporting a growing network of international routes. The current single-aisle fleet of 660 airplanes is forecast to nearly triple to 1,750 jets.

Boeing's 2021 Pilot and Technician Outlook forecasts that the region is estimated to require 223,000 new aviation personnel by 2040, including 54,000 pilots, 51,000 technicians and 91,000 cabin crew members.

Egypt, Greece, Cyprus sign energy deal

Athens, Greece - Greece, Cyprus and Egypt on Tuesday signed an electricity agreement that could include Egyptian solar power and potentially supply power to other European countries.

The protocol was signed during a meeting between Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and the presidents of Egypt, Abdel Fattah al Sisi, and Cyprus, Nicos Anastasiades, in Athens.

The deal concerns the 'inter-connection' of the neighbours



(L-R): Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades, Greece's Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al Sisi shake hands ahead of a trilateral meeting in Athens on Tuesday (AFP)

and transfer of electricity to their respective networks, Mitsotakis said.

"As energy sources diversify, Egypt can become a supplier of electric power, which will be mainly produced by the sun, and Greece will become a distribution station for Europe," Mitsotakis added.

Sisi said the agreement aims to 'reinforce energy cooperation'.
AFP

UK inflation dips to 3.1% in September

London, UK - British annual inflation cooled slightly in September, official data showed on Wednesday, remaining close to a nine-year peak that still risks a UK interest rate rise next month.

The annual inflation rate fell to 3.1 per cent from 3.2 per cent in August, which was the highest level since early 2012, according to the Office for National Statistics.

Despite the headline figure easing, analysts still expect the Bank of England to next month raise its main interest rate from a record-low level of 0.1 per cent.

"As the dip... still left inflation above the 3 per cent rate the Bank of England (BoE) forecast back in August, it's unlikely to significantly reduce expectations that the BoE will raise interest rates before the end of the year," said Paul Dales, chief UK economist at Capital Economics.

AFP



SULTANATE OF OMAN
MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH
MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH, Muscat, hereby give notice
of tenders for the following projects

Tender No.	Project Category	Location	Fees R.O	Grade In Tender Board Registration
21/2021	Services	Cleaning Services To Entire Campus And Facilities To Ministry's Various Buildings At Muscat Governorate For The Period Of 1st January 2022 To 31st December 2022	25/- OMR	Excellent Grade
22/2021	Services	Maintenance Of Landscaping Works To Ministry's Campuses In Muscat Governorate For The Period Of 1st January 2022 To 31st December 2022	25/- OMR	First Grade
23/2021	Electromechanical and Telecommunications Contracting and Maintenance	Maintenance & Operation Of Electro-Mechanical And Air-Conditioning Units To Ministry's Various Buildings In Muscat Governorate For The Period 1st January 2022 To 31st December 2022	25/- OMR	First Grade

Companies, which are registered with the Tender Board and engaged in same category with experience in and same Grade as noted above, can obtain the Tender Documents at the Tender Board E-tendering digital portal link (<http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) until 06/11/2021.

The last date of tender submission on above E-tendering site at 10:00am 29/11/2021

A Tender Bond equivalent to 1% of the tender sum issued from a registered bank, in the prescribed form, in Sultanate of Oman and valid for 90 days should enclosed with the tender.

Any tender without the bond will be reject and the tender committee is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender received.

INTERNAL TENDER COMMITTEE OF MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH

Any participants have doubt in adopting e-tendering can contact over the phone **24402200** or through email etenderhd@ita.gov.om





Less noise. More music.



Launching the new limited edition sand-stone Bose QuietComfort® Earbuds

Better sound begins with better silence. That's why QuietComfort® Earbuds come with the world's most effective noise cancelling and high-fidelity audio, plus StayHear™ Max tips for extra comfort. Get it now in the new sand-stone color, available for a limited time only.



Bose Showroom at Gurum City Centre
Tel: 24470497 / 92311039



CELEBRATE

WORLD PASTA DAY with

OCTOBER 25th 2021



Sale & Marketed by



CATERING SOLUTIONS TRADING LLC





ABA staff and students rally for cyclone relief

Students and staff of ABA Oman International School rallied together over the past two weeks to collect a truckload of relief material for those affected by tropical cyclone Shaheen which struck some parts of Oman on October 3.







Fajer Al Akhzami



Said al Aufi

Bank Muscat celebrates graduation of ACCA Affiliates

Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate has announced that the first batch of Omani youth supported by the Bank have become ACCA-affiliates with excellent results in their qualifying examinations.

In line with the objective of developing national human resources, the Bank had partnered with Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) in 2018 under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour to provide scholarships for a group of Bachelor's degree holders to complete the internationally-recognised Chartered Certified Accountant course from the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), a press release said.

In addition to the ACCA scholarship, Bank Muscat has offered the graduates job opportunities across its various departments. The ACCA candidates have already achieved remarkable progress and milestones towards attaining the goals of this first of its kind initiative by the Bank to develop Omani youth.

Speaking about this important achievement, Said Salim al Aufi, group deputy general manager - Human Resources, Bank Muscat, said, "Comprehensive and continuous development of Omani youth is key to achieving the goals of the landmark Oman Vision 2040 and the Renewed Renaissance of the sultanate. Aligned to its pioneering role in sustainable development, Bank Muscat has always given top priority to the development of Oman's human resources.

"In 2018, Bank Muscat embarked on a journey partnering with Petroleum Development Oman to provide new opportunities for talented Omani youth to gain an internationally-recognised ACCA qualification. The success of the first 3 young achievers from that path-breaking programme is a great encouragement to the strategy of promoting banking excellence and professionalism in the Sultanate."

Aufi thanked ACCA and education specialists Kaplan for their resolute efforts to successfully continue the programme online, overcoming all challenges brought about by the global pandemic. He congratulated Fajer al Akhzami, Jumana al Qassabi and Nusaiba al Manji for their success in not only becoming ACCA Affiliates, but also for surpassing important academic benchmarks in their long journey to get there.

Fajer al Akhzami, who scored the top marks in Advanced Performance Management in the region, and is currently working in Corporate Banking, said, "We are grateful to Bank Muscat for providing us with this excellent opportunity to build our capacity and skills. Completing this programme will help us advance in our professional careers and help towards building a large pool of talented Omani youth, who will contribute to the future growth and development of the sultanate."

Virtual symposium on Artificial Intelligence concludes

The Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) Virtual Symposium on Artificial Intelligence—Towards a Resilient and Efficient Energy Industry, which began yesterday with oil and gas industry leaders from around the world sharing their insights, concluded successfully.

Hosted by Saudi Aramco, this two-day symposium provided a platform for industry professionals to discuss the various capabilities and potential applications of AI as one of the main enablers for digital transformation, a press release said.

The event commenced with opening remarks by the symposium chairman, Abdulaziz al Suwayan, assistant to vice president, Petroleum Engineering and Development, Saudi Aramco, who said, "Our industry is well-established with data infrastructure containing over 100 years of information. The power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) unleashes unlimited opportunities for harnessing knowledge, driving decision-making, and revealing unexploited resources. This symposium aims to support our industry to get ahead of the curve and reap the benefits of applying AI".

Nabil al Nuaim, vice president, Digital Transformation, Saudi Aramco, commented on the role of AI in today's world, saying, "It is often said that data is the new oil, the most important resource of the 21st century. At Saudi Aramco, we could not agree more. Data and AI are central to our digital transformation strategy, and we have invested and continue to invest heavily in the latest digital applications.

"The AI technologies are already allowing us to manage our industry in a sustainable way and has the potential to reinvent our industry, allowing us to discover more, recover more, while leading the way to keep our environment cleaner."

The 2022 SPE president, Kamel Ben-Naceur, CEO, Nomadia Energy Consulting, said, "Artificial Intelligence is every-where—we also see it in all cycles of the commercialisation chain and going to the production, to the transportation, to the refining chain - all is part of the artificial intelligence. I see a lot of dynamism and I think with putting together our efforts and organizing this type of symposium, we should be better prepared in the future for the extraordinary growth of artificial intelligence applications."

The Executive Plenary Session focused on the role of AI in digital transformation.



Global Business Services signs bilateral trade pact

M/s Global Business Services, a well-known organisation undertaking contracts related to Oil & Gas, Roads & Infrastructure, Civil & Mechanical, Fabrication & Projects related to Power, Water, Steel, Desalination Plants, Aluminum Smelter, Refineries, Fertilisers, Petrochemicals, signed a bilateral trade Agreement with M/s Gulf Solutions Europe which was held on October 13 at City Seasons Hotel in Muscat.

This Ceremony was presided by H E Eng Redha Bin Juma Ali al Saleh - chairman of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, H E Sheikh Abdullah Salim al Junaibi - Member of the Majlis A'Shura Council Representative of Wilayat of Manah, H E K K Ahsan Wagan - Ambassador of Pakistan in Oman, Zsolt Pakozdy - Commercial & Economic counsellor - Hungarian Embassy in Oman, Miklos Ruzich - chairman of Gulf Solutions Europe and Sheikh Khamis Salim al Junaibi - chairman of M/s Global Business Services, along with other key personnel of the company. MOUs worth USD450mn related to Tourism and Trading between European Union Countries and Oman, and for Projects related to Oil & Gas and Construction was signed. This will pave the way for socio economic developments and Foreign Direct Investments in Oman in future.

Khamis Salim al Junaibi a young Omani Entrepreneur, said these projects and investments will not only add value to the country but also boost up the economy and provide multiple job opportunities to the youth in Oman.



Investcorp launches insurance solutions business

Investcorp, a leading global provider and manager of alternative investment products, has launched the Investcorp Insurance Solutions platform, the firm's newly formed business that will focus on providing investment management services to meet the unique investment needs of insurers.

Investcorp has hired Todd Fonner as Chief Investment Officer, who has over 28 years of experience in the insurance and asset management industries, having held a variety of roles across functions including investments, treasury, enterprise risk, underwriting and strategy. Most recently, he served as Senior Managing Director, CIO North America, Blackstone Insurance Solutions until 2020.

"The formation of Investcorp Insurance Solutions is a milestone for us and aligns with our strategy of continuing to expand our suite of offerings to meet the evolving needs of our clients," said Mohammed al Ardhi, executive chairman of Investcorp. "Our deep experience and knowledge across a broad range of alternative asset classes and strategies makes us an ideal partner to insurers who are increasingly allocating to private investments as an important source of alpha in today's environment."

Rishi Kapoor, Co-CEO of Investcorp, added, "I am excited to welcome Todd to Investcorp and believe the deep experience he brings within the insurance and asset management industries will be critical to our success in building out this new business.

"This is yet another testament to Investcorp's commitment to uncovering opportunities with secular tailwinds and putting the right teams behind them to build and grow the platform as we continue to find ways to better serve our clients."



Abdullah al Balushi

'5G provides sound business opportunities with enhanced mobility in Oman'

Abdullah al Balushi, country manager of Ericsson Oman, has predicted that commercial consumer-based 5G networks are already live across Oman and the next wave of 5G expansion will allow businesses of all types to reap the benefits of enhanced mobility, flexibility, reliability, and security.

"As advanced Information and Communications Technology (ICT) markets, such as Oman, increase their demand for new use cases powered by enhanced mobile broadband capabilities through the power of 5G, Ericsson projects that 5G mobile subscriptions in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) will exceed 62mn by the end of 2026. Representing about 73% of total mobile subscriptions, this will make the GCC the region with the second highest 5G penetration," he said.

One of the first 5G applications addressing consumers will be enhanced mobile broadband, primarily with new services and experiences. Also, 5G will introduce opportunities that will allow operators to adopt new business models, and develop new services, applications, and new revenue streams. These new 5G applications and services are expected to have a profound impact on consumers, businesses, and industry digitalisation, he predicted.

Thanks to 5G, every mobile user will experience high-quality broadband services in terms of both upload and download capabilities. Consumers will get a faster, more stable, more secure connection - along with new services and experiences. Sensors embedded in roads, railways, airfields, and vehicles will communicate with each other through the 5G network.

"As part of our commitment towards the Omani Government and supporting Oman Vision 2040 we are working closely with different government authorities to promote the technological innovation solutions as an enabler to drive growth of advanced use cases in Oman as the region prepares for a post-pandemic world," he said adding, that 5G technology will expand all business opportunities.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds offers festive gold coins

In a run up to the festive season, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one among the largest jewellery re-tailers globally with a strong retail network of over 260 outlets spread across 10 countries, has announced attractive in-store offers to lure customers. The latest campaign from the brand gives customers the opportunity to get guaranteed gold coins on purchase of gold and diamond jewellery.

As part of the festive season, Malabar Gold & Diamonds has also unveiled its Festive Jewellery collection, featuring the most eye-catching and unique trends in gold and diamond jewellery, bound to captivate jewellery lovers at the best price. An exclusive jewellery collection in the name of 'Artistry Edition' has also been launched; exquisite designs in diamonds, studded with precious stones including rubies, sapphires, pearls etc. giving a splendid look for special occasions. These pieces are intricately crafted by master artisans and are rare designs that can be treasured as a family heirloom and will be available at selected stores of Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

Through the latest offer announced by Malabar Gold & Diamonds, customers can get guaranteed gold coins on purchase of gold or diamond jewellery from October 21 to November 2.

The next 6 months are all



about festivities and celebrations. With the ease of restrictions and tourists returning, we have started experiencing a significant transformation in the market. And now with the festive season soon approaching, we are expecting an increase in footfall across our stores in the coming weeks as well. It is to add more value to our customers' shopping experience that we have created this campaign, wherein they can get the best designs at the best prices, while getting guaranteed gold coins, said Shamlal Ahamed, Managing Director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

He added, on Dhanteras day, all their stores will have extended working hours, to ensure that

customers get to safeguard their beliefs and purchase their favourite jewellery.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds also gives customers the opportunity to avail the gold rate protection offer, designed in such a way that they are protected from any increase in gold rate and if the rate reduces during purchase, they get the lower rate. They can just pay 10% of the value as advance and get gold rate protection until November 2. So, customers do not have to worry about the volatility of the gold price. To ease the payment process, the brand has also enabled an online payment option through their APP, which can be downloaded via App store.

Ahlibank's call centre advances 'Ahli Connect' banking services

In line with its initiatives to develop safe and seamless solutions for its customers, ahlibank has announced the launch of 'Ahli Connect', a 24/7 service centre aimed at enhancing the experience of the bank's customers, and providing them with advanced banking services based on latest practices and technologies.

On the occasion of the launch, Ruqaiya al Lawati, Head of Change Management at ahlibank, said, "Ahli Connect reflects the bank's interest in ensuring that the needs of its customers are constantly, professionally and quickly met. We understand the need for innovative solutions that adopt the latest technologies and practices to help meet the individual needs of our customers, and add value to the services provided to them."

The new 'Ahli Connect' receives customers' calls and responds to their enquiries through a dedicated team that is responsible for dealing with their various banking needs professionally. The team is highly qualified to keep up with customer service standards in a competitive environment. The team also has the ability to deal with difficulties that customers may face, using advanced methods and modern technologies that enhance business efficiency and contribute to managing customer expectations and service in a distinct way.

Ahli Connect offers a range of services that facilitates cus-



tomers with on-call access to their account with the bank. For customers with more than one ahlibank account, Ahli Connect enables them to request that all accounts at the bank be linked to one automated Debit Card, making it easier to access all data via this card, so they can conduct their banking transactions faster and easier. Customers can also request additional loan to an existing loan using Ahli Connect.

The services provided at the Ahli Connect include updating personal data associated with

the ID card and passport, change of customer's registered contact number, email and residence address. In addition, customers can request an increase of withdrawal limit using their debit card, and activate the credit and debit cards. They can also enquire about the balance order and apply for a chequebook.

ahlibank is committed to enhance customer satisfaction with a comprehensive suite of services, and use of modern technology and innovative solutions across all its branches in Oman. In line with its vision

of being vibrant and an innovative centre of banking, the bank offers top-class retail, commercial, investment banking solutions and is well-known for its customer-centricity. The bank provides customers with convenient access to high-quality products and services through its presence at strategic locations throughout the sultanate. Additionally, the digitisation of procedures and the highly focused team offers a range of advisors and specialist services which are commensurate with the various customers' requirements.



Mazoon Dairy celebrates 2nd anniversary

Mazoon Dairy celebrated its 2nd anniversary, which falls on October 20. The company's first products were launched in the sultanate's markets on October 19, 2019.

Mazoon is distinguished by its Omani identity and the quality of its products, which have achieved widespread acceptance from all segments of soci-

ety. The number of its outputs currently has reached 160 products of various types, sizes, and flavours, with a production capacity of 400,000 litres per day, a press release said.

At that time, the company had started marketing fresh milk and yogurts in the governorates of Muscat and North Al Batinah, followed by the rest of the sul-

tanate's governorates within the first 100 days of its launch.

Ahmed bin Mohammed al Ghafri, chief support officer, expressed his pride on this occasion, praising the strenuous efforts made by employees from various departments of the company from its inception, to the advanced levels it reached in its operations, spread in the mar-

kets and its diversification of products.

He added, "Mazoon Dairy has reinforced its position in the sultanate's markets by covering all the governorates. It has also started exporting its products to a number of markets in the neighbouring countries, gaining confidence of the local community in the quality of its products."

As regards social responsibility, the CSO confirmed that the company pays great attention to society in all its segments by implementing several social responsibility initiatives in various fields such as education, development, training, and rehabilitation, in addition to empowering a number of Omani entrepreneurs through partnerships.

Water supply in Dakhliyah, South Batinah to be affected on Oct 25

The Oman Water and Wastewater Company (OWWSC) will carry out reinforcement and improvement works in Barka, Al Khoudh and Sumail pumping stations, and the main water transmission lines in Al Dakhliyah and South Al Batinah Governorates on October 25 morning. These works come in line with the endless plans and efforts to enhance the services provided to the customers and beneficiaries to accommodate the increasing demand for water in the next stage and to ensure sustainability in the service.

The water supply service is expected to be affected for a period of 48 hours in all the wilayats of Al Dakhliyah Governorate, and the wilayats of Wadi al Maawwal and Nakhl in the South Al Batinah Governorate, a press release said.

Regarding the company preparation and readiness for this shutdown, Eng Abdullah bin Ahmed al Arafati, senior operations manager - Water, said that



Eng Abdullah bin Ahmed al Arafati

the reinforcement in the network aims to meet the demand of drinking water. He explained that when the company approved the networks expansion; it decided at the same time to implement a number of improvements and maintenance works simultaneously to enhance the performance of the network. He confirmed that the shutdown process is planned by the company and work execution will be according to the approved plan.

In the affected wilayats, citizens and residents are requested to fill their tanks and to continue to rationalise their water consumption to ensure that the water supply is not affected.



Budget Rent a Car adds Renault vehicles to fleet

Entering into a partnership with Renault Oman, Oman's leading car rental company Budget Rent a Car recently added a wide range of Renault models to its fleet. Among the popular models inducted include Renault Duster, Symbol and Koleos.

A spokesperson for Renault Oman said, "We are delighted to supply Renault models to Budget Rent a Car's fleet. Renault cars have been very popular with the customers of the car rental agency. The models continue to be the most preferred choice for

corporate entities, rent-a-car fleets as well as families. Packed with top-notch technology and innovation, Renault vehicles offer performance, significant power, fuel efficiency."

Budget rent a car has been operational in Oman since 1981 and was the first international car rental company to start operations in Oman. Budget Oman is the only car rental agency in the country that offers a wide range of top branded cars for its valuable customers. "Renault vehicles are well known for their

revolutionary French designs, technologies and affordability which suits our customer profile" said Fahad al Balushi, Fleet Manager for Budget Rent a Car.

Renault brand's celebrated model, the aspirational SUV Duster, is about strength, functionality, and safety. Consisting of a powerful engine, an attractive modern design, a comfortable and spacious cabin, Renault Duster is available as 1.6ltr 2WD and 2ltr 4WD or the Urban and Sports variants.

NBO offers easy repayment loans, payment holidays

National Bank of Oman (NBO) is offering low interest loans for customers transferring their salaries, in addition to a 'payment holiday', delaying personal loan instalments till next year, according to a press release.

Rates start at just 4.45 per cent per annum for customers taking a loan for a maximum of three years, and 4.99 per cent for those taking a loan for a longer duration. Along with a host of other benefits, customers who take a housing or personal loan when they transfer their salary to NBO will also be automatically entered into the Al Kanz Salary Transfer draw, giving them a chance to win RO500 every month.

Maha al Raisi, head of products at NBO, said, "Our loans are not only designed to support our customers to plan and manage their finances but to make their entire banking experience more enjoyable and more valuable. Whether looking for their dream home or financing a wedding, customers are assured that we



are there to help them every step of the way. With our unique offering, customers can enjoy the payment holiday and start repaying their personal loan instalments only next year."

NBO's personal and housing loans are part of the bank's commitment to delivering hassle-free, competitive financial solutions tailored to meet customers needs. Processed quickly and efficiently, the bank also provides borrowers a host of benefits including flexible payment terms, additional financing, and much more. Loan rates may vary depending on salary, employer and loan duration.

Attacks kill 27 in Damascus and Syrian rebel stronghold



A charred Syrian army bus (top) that was targeted with explosive devices in the Syrian capital Damascus on Wednesday; Children (right) walk past debris at the site of shelling in the Syrian town of Ariha in the rebel-held northwestern Syrian Idlib province on Wednesday (AFP)

Damascus, Syria - A rare bombing of an army bus in Damascus and shelling moments later of a town in rebel-held northwestern Syria killed at least 27 people on Wednesday in the deadliest flareup in months.

Two bombs planted on an army bus in central Damascus were detonated early in the morning, killing 14 people in the worst such attack in the capital in four years, the state news agency SANA reported.

There was no immediate claim for the bombing but moments later shelling by government forces killed 13 people in Idlib province, an area controlled by groups that have claimed such attacks in the past.

'A terrorist bombing using two explosive devices targeted a passing bus' at a key bridge in the capital, the news agency said, reporting that at least three people had also been wounded.

Images released by SANA showed first responders searching the charred carcass of the bus and what the news agency said was a bomb squad defusing a third device planted in the same area.

A military source quoted by the news agency said the bombs were detonated as the bus passed near the Hafez al-Assad bridge, close to the national museum in the heart of the capital.

"We hadn't seen violence of that type in a long time," a fruit vendor who gave his name as Salman told AFP at the scene.

"We thought we were done with such attacks. I hope this will be the last bombing," he said.

Damascus had been largely spared such violence in recent years, especially since troops and allied fighters retook the last significant rebel bastion near the capital in 2018.

The attack is the deadliest in

the capital since a bombing claimed by the Islamic State group targeted the Justice Palace in March 2017, killing at least 30 people.

Around an hour after the Damascus attack, shelling by the Syrian army struck the rebel-held town of Ariha, in the northwestern region of Idlib.

Idlib carnage

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the rockets struck a busy area at the time children were heading to school.

Three children were among 13 people killed, the Britain-based war monitor said.

It was the highest civilian toll since a March 2020 truce deal brokered by Turkey and Russia effectively put fighting in Idlib on standby, according to the Observatory.

"At 8am (0500 GMT) we woke up to the bombardment.

The children were terrified and were screaming," said Bilal Trissi, a father of two who lives nearby.

"We didn't know what to do or where to go and we didn't see anything because of all the dust around us," he said.

"They bombed us in our neighbourhood and in the market. There are children who died and people who lost their limbs... We don't know why, what are we guilty of?"

The Damascus bombing will challenge the government's assertion that the decade-old war is over and stability guaranteed for reconstruction efforts and investment projects to begin in earnest.

The government of President Bashar Assad has been striving to claw itself out of international isolation and had been making inroads in recent months.

In another incident on Wednesday, six members of a pro-government fighters were killed in an arms depot blast in the central Syrian province of Hama, the Observatory said.

Seven other members of the National Defence Forces were wounded in the explosion, the cause of which remains unclear, the monitor added.

AFP

Ex-German soldiers arrested over Yemen paramilitary bid

Berlin, Germany - Police on Wednesday arrested two former German soldiers accused of trying to form a 'terrorist' paramilitary group to fight in Yemen's civil war, prosecutors said.

The two men had taken steps to 'create a paramilitary unit of 100 to 150 men' composed of former police officers and soldiers, the Karlsruhe federal prosecutor's office said in southwestern Germany.

The two men had taken steps to 'create a paramilitary unit of 100 to 150 men' composed of former police officers and soldiers

FEDERAL PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

Named as Arend-Adolf G and Achim A, both German citizens, the pair are accused of starting to plan their 'terrorist organisation' in early 2021.

Arend-Adolf G, who was responsible for recruitment, had already contacted at least seven people in the hope of bringing them on board 'to intervene in the civil war in Yemen', the prosecutors said.

Both suspects were 'aware that the unit they were to command would inevitably have to carry out acts of killing during their mission' and also expected civilians to be killed and injured, the prosecutors said.

They had been hoping to secure funds from Saudi Arabia for the project and were intending to pay members a monthly wage of €40,000 each.

The pair were arrested by special forces on Wednesday morning in the southwestern district of Breisgau-Hochschwarzwald and in Munich, prosecutors said. The suspects' flats were searched in Munich and in the district of Calw, and further properties were also searched in Baden-Wuerttemberg and Bavaria.

Far-right networks

The German government has been worried for years about some soldiers going rogue, especially those connected to far-right groups.

In early October, the army suspended soldiers in its ceremonial guard over suspicion of sexual aggression and sympathy with the far-right.

The elite KSK commando force was partially dissolved in 2020 after munitions were stolen and members were seen performing a Hitler salute at a party.

A Saudi-led coalition has for years been fighting against so-called Houthi rebels in Yemen, who are in turn supported by Iran.

The two suspects had wanted their unit to help bring peace in Yemen by pushing for negotiations between the Houthi rebels and the Yemeni government, according to prosecutors.

Achim A is accused of contacting representatives of the Saudi Arabian government and trying to arrange a meeting, but the government did not respond.

A Saudi-led coalition has for years been fighting against so-called Houthi rebels in Yemen, who are in turn supported by Iran.

The two suspects had wanted their unit to help bring peace in Yemen by pushing for negotiations between the Houthi rebels and the Yemeni government, according to prosecutors.

AFP

Ethiopia conducts another 'heavy' airstrike on Tigray capital Mekele

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - Ethiopia's military launched a new airstrike on the Tigrayan capital Mekele on Wednesday, the second round of bombardments this week against Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) targets in the city.

The raids mark a sharp escalation in the near year-long conflict in northern Ethiopia pitting government forces and their allies against the TPLF, Tigray's once dominant ruling party.

The government said the latest strike on Mekele was aimed at weapons caches.

"It targeted at the facilities that TPLF have turned into arms construction and repair armaments sites," Legesse Tulu, head of the Government Communication Service, told AFP.

It was not immediately known if there were any casualties from the strike, which the TPLF said hit a residential area.

"It was heavy and the jet was so close," one local resident told AFP, adding that it had destroyed an industrial site.

"It has burned the whole compound. We don't know the casualties but now the whole company is burned to ash."

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government, barely two weeks into its new term, appears to be pressing a new offensive against the TPLF, which dominated na-



This file photo shows a damaged tank on a road north of Mekele, the capital of Tigray (AFP)

The airstrike targeted at the facilities that Tigray People's Liberation Front have turned into arms construction and repair armaments sites

LEGESSE TULU

tional politics for almost three decades before he took power in 2018.

The conflict has already killed untold numbers of people and triggered a deep humanitarian crisis, with the United Nations saying up to 2mn people have been displaced and hundreds of thousands plunged into famine-like conditions.

Tigray, a region of 5mn peo-

ple, remains under a de facto blockade, with the warring parties each accusing the other of hindering the delivery of desperately needed aid.

TPLF spokesman Getachew Reda said Wednesday's bombing raid had targeted a residential area of Mekele 'causing injury to civilians and harm to property'.

"Abiy's reaction to his losses in the ongoing fighting is to tar-

get civilians hundreds of kms away from the battlefield," he said on Twitter.

Legesse, the government spokesman, said the site had been 'appropriated by the TPLF as a heavy weapons storage, manufacturing and repair site' and accused the TPLF of using ordinary people as human shields. "We confirm and assure these surgical operations have not any intended harm to civilians," he said.

On Monday, Ethiopia's air force carried out two aerial assaults on Mekele, the city held by the TPLF since it was recaptured from government forces in June.

AFP

Tehran short film festival opens, with shot at Oscars for first time

Tehran, Iran - Tehran's International Short Film Festival opened this week, for the first time as an Oscar-qualifying event, giving winning entries a shot at an Academy Award.

The festival jury has members from the Islamic republic as well as Italy, Japan, France and Austria.

The festival, now in its 38th edition and running until Sunday, earned qualification this year as a gateway to Hollywood's annual awards showcase.

The event 'was added as a qualifying festival in the Short Films categories this year', the US Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences confirmed.

"And it is the only current qualifying festival in Iran."

The designation came despite high tensions between Washington and Tehran, which have had no diplomatic relations since 1979, before the festival began.

This year's showcase also coincides with efforts to resume negotiations on reviving Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with the United States and other world powers, with the goal of ending a punishing sanctions regime.

"I am both happy and proud of the qualification of our festival," the event's president Sadegh Moussavi said.

"It's a big success of cultural diplomacy," he said with a smile.

"We think that culture and art



An Iranian arrives for the opening day of the 38th Tehran International Short Film Festival in the capital Tehran on Tuesday (AFP)

can have a status more prestigious than politics."

Tehran's festival has been a springboard for the big names of Iranian cinema, including Asghar Farhadi, a two-time Oscar winner, Bahman Ghobadi and Reza Mirkarimi, said festival spokesman Mansour Jahani.

Moussavi said Tehran's application to the Academy was initially rejected because its entrants are not required to pay fees.

"We replied that our country was under sanctions and therefore it is impossible for those who want to present their films to pay registration fees," he said.

Tehran is the only short film

festival without such fees among about 130 in the world which are Oscar eligible, Moussavi said.

Following recognition by the Academy, this year's festival competition received more than 6,400 entries from 128 countries - 2,000 more than last year.

Five Iranian films and 58 from abroad were selected for the grand prize and the winner will be presented to the Academy for possible Oscar nomination.

The selections upset some young Iranian directors whose films were not accepted, and led to accusations of censorship, including from film-maker Farnoush Samadi.

AFP

Floods, landslides kill 116 in India and Nepal

Dehradun, India - The death toll from days of flooding and landslides in India and Nepal crossed 100 on Wednesday, including several families swept away or crushed in their homes by avalanches of mud and rocks.

Experts say that they were victims of ever-more unpredictable and extreme weather across South Asia in recent years caused by climate change.

In Uttarakhand in northern India, officials said 46 people had died in recent days with 11 missing.

At least 30 were killed in seven separate incidents in Uttarakhand's Nainital region early on Tuesday, after cloudbursts - an ultra-intense deluge of rain - triggered landslides and destroyed several structures.

Five of the dead were from a single family whose house was buried by a massive landslide, local official Pradeep Jain said.

Authorities ordered the closure of schools and banned all religious and tourist activities in the state.

Television footage and social media videos showed residents wading through knee-deep water near Nainital lake, a tourist hotspot, and the Ganges bursting its banks in Rishikesh.

The floods almost swept away an elephant near the Corbett Tiger Reserve - home to 164 of the big cats and 600 elephants - but in a video that went



Commuters stand on a flooded highway due to the overflowing river Kosi after heavy rains lashed parts on northern India, near Rampur in Uttar Pradesh state on Wednesday (AFP)

Mukteshwar area in Uttarakhand reported 340.8mm rainfall in the 24 hours until Tuesday morning, the most since the weather station was set up there in 1897

Uttarakhand reported 178.4mm rain in the first 18 days of October - almost 500 per cent

more than the average, the *Hindustan Times* reported citing Indian Meteorological Department data. And the state's Mukteshwar area reported 340.8mm rainfall in the 24 hours until Tuesday morning, the most since the weather station was set up there in 1897, the newspaper said.

The Indian Meteorological Department forecast a 'significant

reduction' in rainfall in the state from Wednesday.

Deadly landslides

In Nepal, 31 were reported dead after days of heavy rains across the country.

Disaster management official Humkala Pandey said that 43 others were still missing.

"It's still raining in many

places... The death toll could go up further," she added.

In the eastern district of Dhankuta, a landslide buried a house overnight, killing six people including three children.

Swelling rivers flooded homes in several districts, damaging roads and bridges and reportedly destroying crops.

Landslides are a regular dan-

ger in the Himalayan region, but experts say they are becoming more common as rains become increasingly erratic and glaciers melt.

In February, a ferocious flash flood hurtled down a remote valley in Uttarakhand, killing around 200 people. At least 5,700 people perished there in 2013.

Heavy rain in Kerala

In Kerala state in southern India, the death toll reached 39 on Wednesday.

The coastal state has been battered by heavy rain since Friday and thousands have been moved to safer locations. More than 200 homes were destroyed and almost 1,400 damaged.

Kerala has also seen an increase in natural disasters, including in 2018 when nearly 500 people perished in the worst flooding in a century.

After a brief respite, forecasters are warning of more heavy rain in the coming days with alerts issued in several places in Kerala. Those killed over the weekend included six members of the same family after a landslide buried their house.

Shutters on at least three dams across the state were opened on Tuesday including Idukki, one of Asia's biggest, though State Electricity Board chairman B Ashok said, "There was no need to panic."

AFP

Russia recognises Taliban 'efforts' to stabilise Afghanistan in Moscow talks

Moscow, Russia - Russia on Wednesday recognised Taliban efforts to try and stabilise the situation in Afghanistan but expressed concern that 'terrorist' groups threatened the stability of the entire region.

Russia is hosting the Taliban for talks as the Kremlin seeks to assert its influence on Central Asia and push for action against Islamic State fighters which it says have massed in the perennially volatile country.

The talks are one of the Taliban's most high-profile international meetings since seizing power in mid-August.

"A new administration is in power now," Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told officials from ten countries including China and Pakistan. "We note their efforts to stabilise the military and political situation and set up work of the state apparatus."

But Russia's top diplomat also said that 'numerous terrorist groups' including Islamic State extremists and Al Qaeda have been seeking to exploit a security vacuum in the country and raise



Members of the Taliban delegation, including deputy prime minister Abdul Salam Hanafi (second from left), attend an international conference on Afghanistan in the Russian capital of Moscow on Wednesday (AFP)

their profile. Lavrov expressed regret that US officials did not take part in the talks.

He urged the international community to mobilise and provide Kabul with "effective" aid to prevent a humanitarian crisis and a further refugee exodus.

The talks come after Russian President Vladimir Putin warned last week that IS fighters were

gathering in Afghanistan to spread discord in former Soviet republics flanking Russia.

The Taliban delegation is headed by deputy prime minister Abdul Salam Hanafi, a senior figure in the new Afghan leadership who led talks with the European Union and the United States last week. Those followed talks in Ankara between the Taliban and

Turkish officials.

Brussels has pledged €1bn to avert a humanitarian crisis after the headline group's takeover.

Moscow has reached out to the Taliban and hosted its representatives in Moscow several times in recent years, even though the Taliban is a designated terrorist organisation in Russia.

IS, drug concerns

Putin and senior Russian officials have been voicing a slew of security-related concerns since the Taliban wrested control of Afghanistan and foreign troops pulled out after nearly 20 years.

The Russian president cautioned last week that some 2,000 fighters loyal to the Islamic State group had converged in northern Afghanistan, adding that their leaders planned to send them into neighbouring Central Asian countries disguised as refugees.

After the Taliban's takeover, Russia ran military drills alongside ex-Soviet countries neighbouring Afghanistan.

Lavrov has warned that drug trafficking from Afghanistan had reached 'unprecedented' levels, a concern echoed by the Kremlin during meetings with other Central Asia countries and China.

Despite reaching out to the Taliban, Putin and Russian officials have in recent weeks made clear Moscow is not moving towards formal recognition of the Islamist regime.

AFP



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken speaks during an event at the US Embassy in the Ecuadorian capital Quito on Tuesday (AFP)

Blinken promises US shift from military focus in Latin America

Quito, Ecuador - The United States has focused too much on security over other assistance in Latin America, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Wednesday, as he vowed a concerted push to encourage democracy.

Amid a rise both of authoritarians and populists in Latin America, Blinken is visiting Ecuador and Colombia as President Joe Biden seeks to champion stable democracies.

Both nations receive US security training and are led by conservatives who have taken controversial measures, with Colombian forces this year killing dozens of anti-government protesters and Ecuador on Tuesday announcing a state of emergency just as Blinken visited.

"Our record on improving civilian security in the region's democracies has been mixed," Blinken was to say in a speech on Wednesday in the Ecuadorian capital Quito.

"That's because too often, we tried to fix this problem by relying too much on training and equipping security forces, and too little on other tools in our kit," he was to say.

"And we focused too much on addressing the symptoms of organised crime, like homicides and drug trafficking, and too little on the root causes. We're working to correct that imbalance."

Among US initiatives that go beyond security, Blinken pointed to the Biden administration's

We've often put more energy into strengthening civil and political rights than we have into strengthening people's economic and social rights

ANTHONY BLINKEN

greater push on fighting corruption, including denying visas to officials involved in graft.

Blinken said the United States, alongside its frequent calls for elections, would also be more attentive to economic concerns such as improving labor standards, health care and education.

"This should be obvious, but the reality is that we've often put more energy into strengthening civil and political rights - such as free and fair elections, the rule of law, freedom of speech and assembly - than we have into strengthening people's economic and social rights."

The Biden administration, largely following the lead of former president Donald Trump, has ramped up pressure on leftist autocratic leaders in Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela, where President Nicolas Maduro has suspended dialogue with the US-backed opposition.

AFP

Queen Elizabeth II 'advised to rest' on medical grounds

London, UK - Queen Elizabeth II has cancelled a planned trip to Northern Ireland on medical grounds, Buckingham Palace said on Wednesday.

Royal officials said in a statement that the 95 year old monarch 'has reluctantly accepted medical advice to rest for the next few days'.

Britain's domestic Press Association news agency said the decision was understood not to be related to coronavirus and that she was resting at Windsor Castle, west of London.

She was also expected to attend events at the upcoming UN climate change summit in Glasgow next month, it added.

The Queen - Britain's longest-serving monarch - moved to Windsor in March last year as the coronavirus outbreak took hold.

The decision was made to self-isolate because of the increased risk of infection due to her age, although she has since been vaccinated.

She has resumed public engagements since the funeral of her late husband, Prince Philip, after his death aged 99 in April, either alone or accompanied by other senior royals.

On Tuesday, she hosted a reception at Windsor for international business leaders attending a government invest-



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II at an event in south west England (AFP)

ment summit and received two ambassadors by videolink.

It was also revealed that she had turned down an award celebrating the achievements of

The Oldie Magazine, it reported on Tuesday.

The latest palace statement will inevitably raise fears for her health, even though she appeared in good spirits at Tuesday's events.

She was seen for the first time at a major public event using a walking stick, although royal officials said it was not linked to any health condition.

'Her Majesty is in good spirits and is disappointed that she will no longer be able to visit Northern Ireland, where she had been due to undertake a series of engagements [on Thursday and Friday]', the palace said.

AFP

older people, assessing that she did not fit the criteria.

"Her Majesty believes you are as old as you feel," her assistant private secretary replied to

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

UK health leaders call for curbs as infections rise

London, UK - Healthcare leaders urged the British government on Wednesday to reinstate some coronavirus restrictions to ease pressures on hospitals because of spiralling case numbers.

But ministers remain opposed to reintroducing any curbs, arguing the situation is still far better than earlier this year and the country is learning to 'live with the virus'.

A total of 223 deaths from COVID-19 were registered on Tuesday - the highest 24-hour toll since March - while there is mounting concern at daily case rates.

The country is averaging more than 40,000 new cases a day for the first time since the summer, and the number of patients admitted to hospital is increasing.

Matthew Taylor, head of the NHS Confederation representing the state-run health service in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, said hospitals were feeling severe pressure and action was needed as the busier winter period approaches.

"We've got a very particular problem over this winter, and we need to act," he told Sky News.

Taylor said health leaders report the worsening COVID-19 situation means they are missing key targets in areas such as waits in emergency departments, ambulance response times and treatment backlogs.

"Is it better to act early and take measures which don't stop the economy working - but I recognise they are inconvenient



Protesters walk with coffins from Parliament Square to Downing Street during a protest organised by the group Global Justice Now, against the UK's blocking of a waiver for the patent of the COVID-19 vaccine, in central London on October 12 (AFP)

Canada makes vaccines mandatory in House of Commons

Montreal, Canada - Canadian parliamentarians will need to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to serve in the House of Commons starting in late November, Speaker Anthony Rota said on Tuesday night.

"Effective Monday, November 22, 2021, individuals must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to be allowed within the House of Commons Precinct," he said.

The new requirement will apply to members of the House and their staff, but also to office workers, journalists, contractors and consultants.

The directive comes about a month after an election campaign in which mandatory vaccinations were hotly debated.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who announced last week that his Cabinet will be unveiled on October 26 and

that Parliament will reconvene on November 22, had spoken out in favour of a vaccine mandate for Liberal candidates.

Other political parties have followed suit, but Conservative Party leader Erin O'Toole has not made vaccination a criterion for candidate selection and refuses to say how many candidates are vaccinated. In the September 20 election, his party won 119 of the 338 seats

in the House of Commons.

Rota's statement said that people who cannot receive the vaccine for medical reasons will have the option of submitting a 'recent negative COVID-19 rapid antigen test result'.

In addition, the Canadian Parliament remains closed to visitors, and the requirement to wear a mask has been extended until January 2022.

AFP



President of Brazil faces charges over poor response

Brasilia, Brazil - A Brazilian senate committee on Wednesday recommended that President Jair Bolsonaro face at least ten charges, including crimes against humanity, over his handling of the pandemic, according to a report published in local media.

Following six months of hearings, with emotional witness statements and chilling revelations, the committee of inquiry requested charges against around 60 people, including five ministers or ex-ministers, and three of Bolsonaro's sons.

Bolsonaro has repeatedly played down the seriousness of the virus, calling it a 'little flu' at one point, promoting treatments that scientists said were ineffective, railing against lockdown measures to slow the spread and speaking out against vaccinations.

Renan Calheiros, the lead author of the report, will ask that Bolsonaro be charged with 'intentional' crimes including 'quackery' and 'crimes against humanity'.

AFP

Gates Foundation invests \$120mn for pill access

Washington, US - The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on Wednesday announced an investment of up to US\$120mn in an effort to speed up low-income countries' access to a new anti-COVID-19 drug.

The treatment, a pill called molnupiravir developed by US lab Merck, reduces the risk of hospitalisation by half in COVID-19 patients who take it in their first few days of infection, the firm has said, and could be even more effective at preventing deaths from the virus.

The money from the Gates Foundation would be used to encourage the production of generic forms of the drug by other companies, especially in India, to which Merck has already granted such licenses.

"This commitment builds on the foundation's ongoing efforts... to increase access to COVID-19 vaccines, treatments and tests by supporting R&D, regulatory work, at-risk manufacturing and product delivery,"



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II greets Bill Gates (right) during a reception to mark the Global Investment Summit on Tuesday (AFP)

the foundation said in a statement on Wednesday.

The drug, which as a tablet is easier to administer than other existing intravenous treatment options, could offer another important pandemic-fighting opportunity for countries that are still struggling to access enough vaccines for their populations.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is currently reviewing the medication for approval in the United States.

Merck has predicted it will be able to produce enough doses to make 10mn courses of treatment by the end of the year.

But the rollout risks following the same trajectory as the anti-COVID-19 vaccines, going almost entirely to rich countries first, with low-income countries left scrambling.

"The global supply was bought up in wealthier countries," Trevor Mundel, president of the Global Health Division at the Gates Foundation, said.

AFP

Putin orders restrictions as Russia deaths soar

Moscow, Russia - Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday ordered a nationwide week-long paid holiday to curb COVID-19 infections in Europe's worst affected country and urged Russians to show 'responsibility' and get vaccinated.

Putin approved a government plan to declare a non-working week across the country from October 30 as Russia registered a record 1,028 coronavirus deaths in a single day.

"The main aim is to protect the lives and health of our citizens," the 69 year old Kremlin chief said during a televised meeting.

He said the severity of the outbreak in Russia was linked to the country's vaccination rates that are 'unfortunately' low.

Infection rates have soared in recent weeks amid a stalled vaccination campaign, with only 35 per cent of the country fully inoculated despite several widely available vaccines including Sputnik V.

Putin said he was surprised by how many Russians were refusing the vaccine, even among his 'close friends'.

"It's strange. People with a good education, scientific degrees... I just don't understand what is happening."

Putin has made numerous pleas for Russians to get COVID-19 jabs, and on Wednesday once again called on people to get immunised.

"Please, show responsibility," he said.

On Wednesday, the country



Medics attend COVID-19 patients in the Sklifosovsky emergency hospital in the Russian capital Moscow on Wednesday (AFP)

recorded over 34,000 new virus cases and a total of 226,353 fatalities - the highest death toll on the European continent.

Russian authorities have been accused of vastly downplaying the scale of the pandemic, and Putin told regional authorities not to under-report the number of virus cases, calling it 'dangerous'.

Putin has introduced paid holidays during coronavirus peaks before, most recently in May. The new non-working week will coincide with national school holidays.

Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said the new restrictions were tough but necessary.

"Recently, we have been losing more than a thousand of our citizens a day. These are terrible figures," she said. She asked Russians not to travel between regions so as not to 'worsen' the situation.

The Russian leader insists that the country has handled the pandemic better than most countries, but even top officials have recently voiced concern.

Pyotr Tolstoy, deputy chairman of parliament's lower house, said at the weekend that the authorities had 'completely lost' an information campaign on COVID-19. "There is no trust in people to go and vaccinate themselves, it is a fact," he said.

The holidays were announced a day after Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin ordered the capital's first coronavirus restrictions since the summer.

He told unvaccinated over-60s in Moscow to work from home and extended mandatory vaccinations for service workers. Those restrictions take effect next Monday and are set to last until the end of February.

Sobyanin also told employers to move 30 per cent of their staff to home working.

AFP

US Supreme Court rejects attempt to block vaccine rule

Washington, US - A US Supreme Court justice on Tuesday rejected a request by health workers in Maine to block a statewide vaccine mandate, while their wider legal challenge against the measure proceeds.

All healthcare workers in the state will have to be fully vaccinated under the mandate, which comes into force on October 29.

Several unnamed health workers and

one health provider insist the decree violates their constitutional right to freedom of religion, citing conscientious objections to the vaccine.

They brought the case against Maine Governor Janet Mills and other officials, and have asked the courts to put a preliminary block on the mandate while their case is heard.

On Tuesday, Justice Stephen Breyer - who responds to emergency applications

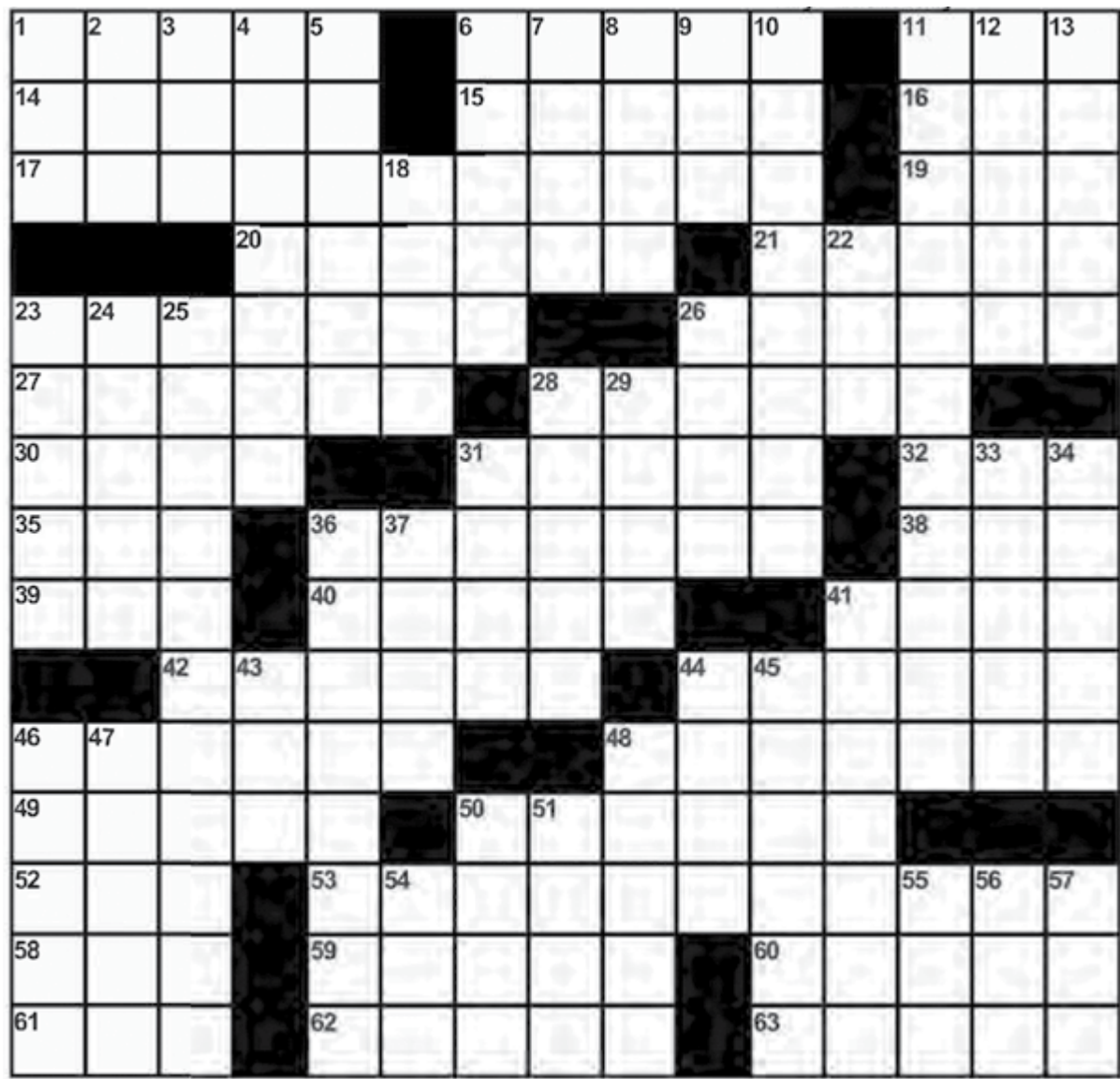
from Maine - denied their petition for a preliminary injunction, which had already been rejected by a district court.

He said they were free to apply again, 'after the Court of Appeals issues a decision on the merits of the appeal'.

Later on Tuesday, the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit affirmed the lower court's refusal to block the requirement.

AFP

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1) Oahu welcome
6) Toned down, as a trumpet
11) Amigo
14) Band of schemers
15) Give a formal speech
16) Bit of financial planning (Abbr.)
17) Symbol of deep concentration
19) Quick, small drink
20) Something to blow if angry
21) There are five great ones
23) Strikes with revulsion
26) Zombie, once
27) Address of affection
28) Greg's sitcom mate
30) Elevator inventor
31) Fishing net
32) CBS alternative
35) Compete in a race
36) Having spots of color, as a horse
IN VISIBLE INK
38) One-many link
39) Broad-antlered creature

40) T.S. or George of literature
41) Arab sailing vessel
42) "Actually ..."
44) Pluck eyebrow hairs
46) Muscle Beach spectators
48) Shaved, as sheep
49) Very, musically
50) Virgil epic
52) Devoured
53) Good thing to desert
58) Word teamed with "neither"
59) Carried piggy-back
60) "Ho!" precursor
61) Ending for "sit" or "write"
62) Material for a dry cleaner
63) Penned up, as sows
E. Parker
8 9 10 12 13

DOWN

1) Be in a film
2) Well, _-di-dah ..."
3) Geisha's belt
4) Large airport buildings
5) Acid-neutralizing base
6) Cloister inhabitants

7) Encourage strongly
8) Diplomatic trait
9) Airport info, initially
10) Disapproved of strongly
11) Film with Inspector Clouseau (with "The")
12) Astrological ram
13) Pass by, as time
18) Galapagos unit
22) Get battle-ready
23) Have affection for
24) Flower part
25) Some prescriptions
26) Sugar source
28) Bus or railroad terminal
29) Sword handle
31) _ and Span (cleaner brand)
33) Staggering order?
34) Frightened into submission
36) Does a freezer chore
37) Expression of sorrow
41) Absolutely resolute
43) Gross less expenses
44) Now's partner
45) Considers care-

fully
46) Citizen of Muscat
47) Mounted
48) Nasty, as a remark
50) Kick into the pot
51) _ out a living (stretched a budget)
54) Debt acknowledgement
55) Cut-and-dried grass
56) It may be added to impress?
57) _ XING (street sign)

NOTE PAD

L	O	G	I	A		A	H	E	A	D		D	A	M
O	V	E	N	S		B	O	N	G	O		O	D	E
W	A	L	K	S		T	H	E	D	O	G		G	U
						J	U	R	O	R	S		T	A
B	O	R	E	R						B	E	F	I	T
B	O	O	T	E		B	E	R	E	T	S			
E	G	G	S			G	O	T	A	T		C	I	D
Y	U	P		E	Y	E	W	A	S	H		U	S	E
S	E	A		V	A	N	E	S		B	I	L	E	
		D	E	A	R	E	R			D	A	R	T	E
A	D	D	E			L	E	G	I	S	T	S		
B	E	L	L	E		S	T	A	M	E	N			
A	M	I		S	L	E	E	P	I	N	G	D	O	G
S	U	N		C	O	M	A	S		D	I	A	N	A
E	R	G		E	X	I	L	E		A	N	D	E	S

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Geniuses of all stripes look to their dreams for guidance and inspiration, and so should you. If there's some complex conundrum weighing on your mind, now is the time to plumb the depths of your subconscious for a simple answer. You may want to keep a pen and paper by your side to write down any midnight inspirations. That big brain of yours is never really inactive!

LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

Giving up on your dreams is not an option for you, especially right now. No matter what has befallen you recently, it doesn't mean that your goals and ambitions are moot. It actually signifies that your path has a few unexpected twists and turns up ahead. No matter what, hang onto those high hopes, because they haven't been dashed, they're just waiting in the wings.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Someone close to you may be needs to spill some secrets, but they're for your ears and eyes only. No matter how tempting it is to call your best friend and spill, you need to beat down the temptation. Your reliability is an important asset, of course, and you know better than most that what goes around comes around. They've confided in you and only you for a reason.

TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

Why does it seem so much easier for you to believe that something bad can happen, but so much more difficult to trust in your good fortune? That's the big question you're facing right now. You've got great potential, but in order to really see it through, you need to believe not only that you have it, but that the universe needs to see you shine.

VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Pounding away at a problem like a jackhammer tearing up an old inner-city street might not help and, in fact, could make things worse. The noise, the risk, the cost - it's too much! Your dynamic personality doesn't take well to just sitting there letting things happen, but that's exactly what you need to do in this situation. Why not let the cosmos do its job and work things out?

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Communication goes far beyond mere words, you know. There are innumerable other ways to get across what's in your heart, if that's what you really want. If you give yourself enough time and space, you can think of a few new means of communication that bear your unique style. Try them out now on your nearest and dearest, the universe is pushing you to try new things.

GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

Big changes have been percolating up through various aspects of your life lately. Right now, the question is whether you're going to drink it all up straight, or try to add a little karmic cream and sugar to make it all go down easily. Your energy is calling out for the second option, so draw on your friends, your family and anyone else in your immediate circle and get their help.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

It's far too easy for you to criticize the way you look, but it accomplishes nothing and the criticisms you voice probably aren't true, anyway. Try to stop seeing flaws that aren't there and grasp only what's real, but not quite as tangible as what you see in the mirror. Check your finer spiritual qualities and your physical qualities will soon line up with them.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

You need to go off the beaten track every now and then, and you've got plenty of chances for discovering delightful tangents right now. Try not to get too far from the main road, however there are certain places you have to stop and rest and some particular routes that require little deviation, no matter how charming some of the roadside attractions are.

CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

Keep a close watch on your heart and its shenanigans. It's as valuable as it is capricious, and it doesn't appreciate rough handling. If you're thinking of leaping into something on an impulse or just because it seems like a good idea, why not ask the thing you're risking how it feels about the whole enterprise? Quiet down and check in with your heart about what to do next.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Your creativity should never be confined. It should come into play in every single aspect of your life. Make sure that you give your imagination space to grow: Be playful, open and free. If necessary, get yourself to a playground and play on the swings. The feeling as you're soaring through the air is exactly what your imagination needs to break your current locks.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Gift yourself with anything you want today. It's easy to get caught up in a cycle of doing, doing, doing for others, and forget what it's like to just live in the moment. Call up some friends you haven't seen in ages and insist on a frivolous, free-for-all somewhere silly and fun. Alternatively, head outside and play in the rain wearing a silly hat. You need to have fun.

Answers: 1.D 2.C 3.C

KIDS COLOURING

BOGGLER

Y	E	E	E
E	I	R	D
F	I	S	J
B	D	A	M

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

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

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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

GENE SUMMIT

DNA

DILEMMAS

Takeda, a global research driven pharmaceutical company recently hosted the GENE Summit to address the diagnostic gap and treatment of rare genetic diseases in the Middle East. With the endorsement of the Oman Society for Genetic Medicine and a focus on Gaucher, Hunter and Fabry diseases, the event brought together genetics experts to discuss regional management of rare genetic diseases. Dr Khalid Said Salim al Thihli, founding member at the Omani Society for Genetic Medicine and Biochemical Geneticist at Sultan Qaboos University Hospital, throws light on the Oman context

Hubert Vaz

What factors could be responsible for the high prevalence of genetic disease in the region, especially in Oman?

Genetic disorders are not limited to cultures, geographical regions or ethnic groups, and most genetic conditions are pan-ethnic in distribution. However, some genetic conditions are relatively more common in some cultures or regions than in others. Consanguineous marriage, highly practiced in the Arab world including Oman, increases the chance of mating between individuals simultaneously carrying rare ge-

netic variants and hence the chance of having a child/children affected with autosomal recessive conditions that are otherwise rarely encountered. A man carrying one genetic change (mutation) in one of the two gene copies he receives from his parents will not have the manifestations of a recessively inherited genetic condition, but he has a 25% chance of having a child affected with this condition if he marries a woman carrying a mutation in the same gene. Given how rare these mutations are in the general population, and the number of genes we have (~20000), the chance of partners both carrying a rare mutation in the same gene is arguably very low. Consanguineous marriage is one way for this to happen more frequently, but the chance becomes significantly higher also in a specific population if a rare mutation in a specific gene becomes relatively more common in a geographical region when inherited from a common ancestor. It is also important to highlight that attention to diagnostic and preventative strategies of genetic conditions in Oman and the region has been relatively recent, and hence there is apparent clustering of diagnosis of these conditions over a relatively short period of time given the improved diagnostic capability with the implementation of preventative strategies lagging behind.

How would you describe the situation in Oman with regard to genetic disease over the past few decades? Oman has been going through milestones in relation to delivery of clinical genetics services in Oman. This could be felt in the structure, organisation, and technical and clinical expertise providing care for patients and families affected with genetic disorders in Oman. The Ge-

netic and Developmental Medicine Clinic at Sultan Qaboos University Hospital and the National Genetic Center presently provide care to a large number of families affected or at risk of being affected with genetic disorders. Collaboratively, both centers have contributed significantly to improved diagnostic outcomes, organised multidisciplinary care and mitigation of the tremendous effects of a number of genetic conditions at the individual, family and society levels. Genetic counselling services, prenatal diagnosis, pre-implantation genetic diagnosis and carrier screening have all witnessed improving effective utilisation with resultant notable prevention of some serious and devastating genetic conditions. The stigma related to genetic disorder as an obstacle to effective genetic health services is slowly becoming less prominent over time. Oman will also hopefully soon embark into expansion of newborn screening, a milestone that has long been awaited.

Can you specify the symptoms of Gaucher, Hunter and Fabry diseases?

Gaucher, Hunter and Fabry diseases are all disorders that result from defective function of enzymes in a small organelle in the cell

called the lysosome. Patients with Gaucher disease usually present with progressively increasing fullness of the abdomen due to significantly enlarged spleen and liver. The enlarged spleen is accompanied with low platelets, low haemoglobin and low white cell counts. Some patients have bone pain, including severe painful bone crises. Patients with a subtype of the disease may develop squint, seizures and balance trouble. Hunter disease is a lysosomal storage disease that is X-linked and it typically affects boys. A boy with is condition usually present with recurrent ear infections, snoring, enlarged tonsils and adenoids, and sometimes deafness. Boys may present with irritability and pain secondary to the storage material causing carpal tunnel syndrome. Some of them are noted to have heart murmurs secondary to involvement of the heart valves. Boys face change over time to become coarse with thick skin and they also develop stiff hand joints or may have a large head.

Fabry disease is also an X-linked condition, where typically boys tend to be more severely affected. However, females with Fabry disease can also have severe manifestations of the disease. In early childhood affected patients may have non-specific recurrent abdomi-

nal pain that may go undiagnosed. Purple coloured skin lesions maybe noticed if a child is carefully examined. If the patients go untreated, they are at risk of renal failure/end stage kidney disease.

Will early diagnosis and access to enzyme and genetic testing enhance treatment outcomes?

One common feature with most lysosomal storage disorders is that they tend to be progressive over time, with disease complications becoming more prominent as storage materials continue to accumulate over time leading to progressive and sometimes irreversible damage to various organs. This entails that the earlier the diagnosis is established and the earlier treatment is initiated the better are the anticipated therapeutic outcomes. Early access to diagnostic investigations including enzymology and genetic testing is key to improved therapeutic outcomes.

Can education at different levels play any role in curbing the incidence of genetic disorders?

One of the main obstacles to reducing the incidence of genetic disorders is lack of awareness of the existence and impact of these disorders coupled with misconceptions and inadequate utilisation of effective preventative strategies. Overcoming these obstacles through public education at multiple levels is a good starting point towards empowering the society to take an active part in the overall campaign of reducing the incidence of genetic disorders.

What are the standard treatment approaches that can support patient survival?

From a therapeutic standpoint, genetic disorders are generally classified into those with existing etiology-specific therapies and those without an existing etiology-specific therapy available. Treatment of genetic disorders take different forms depending on the nature of the etiology. These may include enzyme replacement therapy, substrate reduction therapy, RNA-based therapy, and gene therapy. Patients affected with genetic disorders without existing etiology-specific therapy could still benefit from supportive therapies that could mitigate the impact of these disorders.

Is there adequate research on this matter to support initiatives by the ministry of health?

There are different institution-based research efforts that are directed largely towards characterisation of various

genetic disorders, assessing the burden of various genetic disorders at the population level, and piloting preventative efforts through clinic-based initiatives. There are collaborative efforts between the Genetic and Developmental Medicine Clinic at Sultan Qaboos University and the National Genetic Center to drive research in relation to genetic disorders in Oman. There are certainly many gaps in clinical and basic science research in Oman that could be reduced with optimised usage of existing infrastructure.

Your opinion on compiling data in this regard

Generating reliable, systematic and comprehensive clinical and genomic databases is an important asset that could not only improve genome-based diagnostic outcomes but also help plan and prioritise research needs in the field of genetics while supporting strategic national projects for improved genetic health.

Liverpool battle to win; PSG's Messi nets twice



Liverpool's Mohamed Salah celebrates after scoring against Atletico Madrid in Madrid on Tuesday



PSG's Lionel Messi (C) celebrates after scoring against RB Leipzig in Paris on Tuesday (AFP)

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Paris, France - Liverpool survived an Atletico Madrid fightback to win 3-2 and Lionel Messi scored twice as Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) came from behind to beat RB Leipzig by the same score on a breathless night of Champions League action on Tuesday.

In other games, Karim Benzema netted for Real Madrid as the 13-time European champions thrashed Shakhtar Donetsk 5-0 in Ukraine.

Much of the night's drama happened at the Wanda Metropolitano in the Spanish capital where Mohamed Salah scored another impressive goal, twisting away from a string of Atletico defenders before his shot deflected in off James Milner to open the scoring.

Naby Keita doubled Liverpool's lead with a stunning volley but Atletico hit back with French international Antoine

Griezmann scoring twice to fire up the home crowd.

Just as Atletico seemed to have the upper hand, Griezmann was given a straight red card for a high boot in the face of Roberto Firmino. A pulsating game was decided from the penalty spot in the 78th minute as Salah sent Jan Oblak the wrong way after Mario Hermoso pushed Diogo Jota.

The Egyptian's 31st Champions League goal makes him the club's top scorer in the competition, overtaking Steven Gerrard.

In a dramatic finish, Atletico were denied a penalty when the referee studied the VAR and decided Jota had not fouled Jose Maria Gimenez.

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp told *BT Sport*, "We played a really solid second half in a tough game with intense football from both teams."

"We got the penalty, then there was a red card and

COLLATED RESULTS

GROUP A

Club Brugge 1 (Vanaken 81)
Manchester City 5 (Cancelo 30, Mahrez 43-pen, 84, Walker 53, Palmer 67)

PSG 3 (Mbappe 9, Messi 67, 74-pen) **RB Leipzig 2** (Andre Silva 28, Mukiele 57)

GROUP B

Atletico Madrid 2 (Griezmann

20, 34) **Liverpool 3** (Salah 8, 78-pen, Keita 13)

Porto 1 (Diaz (65)) **AC Milan 0**

GROUP C

Ajax 4 (Reus 11-og, Blind 25, Antony 57, Haller 72)
Borussia Dortmund 0

Besiktas 1 (Larin 24) **Sporting Lisbon 4** (Coates 15, 27,

Sarabia 44-pen, Paulinho 89)

GROUP D

Shakhtar Donetsk 0
Real Madrid 5 (Kryvtsov 37-og, Vinicius Júnior 51, 56, Rodrygo 64, Benzema 90+1)

Inter Milan 3 (Dzeko 34, Vidal 58, de Vrij 67)
Sheriff Tiraspol 1 (Thill 52)

A first-half own goal from Serhiy Kryvtsov put Real Madrid on their way before Vinicius Junior scored two superb goals and set up Rodrygo for the fourth before Benzema completed the job.

Sheriff Tiraspol's fairytale run of results in the competition ended with a 3-1 defeat at Inter Milan.

Goals from Edin Dzeko, Arturo Vidal and Stefan de Vrij sealed the win over the side from Moldova but Sheriff remain top of Group D despite having the same number of points as Real.

Borussia Dortmund and Erling Braut Haaland had an off night as they were beaten 4-0 by Ajax at the Amsterdam Arena.

Former West Ham striker Sebastien Haller scored his sixth Champions League goal in three games as Ajax took an iron grip on Group C with a maximum nine points.

Dortmund are second on six points.

AFP

QUICK RUN

Real Madrid star Benzema on trial in sex tape case

Real Madrid star Karim Benzema went on trial in France on Wednesday accused of complicity in the attempted blackmail of former international teammate Mathieu Valbuena who said he felt 'in danger' in a case known as the 'sex tape affair'. Benzema, 33, is suspected of helping a group of alleged blackmailers approach Valbuena in 2015, in an attempt to extort money that rocked the French national side. The 33-year-old France striker did not attend the start of the proceedings in the Paris suburb of Versailles. His lawyer Antoine Vey said he could not be present for 'professional' reasons. Four other people are being tried alongside Benzema over an affair which saw the player cast out of the French team for five-and-a-half years before making a stunning comeback in this year's European Championship.

Bruce leaves Newcastle by 'mutual consent'

Steve Bruce has left his position as Newcastle manager by 'mutual consent', 13 days after a Saudi-led takeover at St James' Park, the English Premier League club announced on Wednesday.

"Newcastle United can confirm that Steve Bruce has left his position as head coach by mutual consent," said a club statement. "He leaves the Magpies after more than two years in charge, having steered the club to 13th and 12th-place finishes in the Premier League."

Bruce, 60, said he was grateful to have had the opportunity to manage the 'unique' club.

"I would like to thank my coaching team, the players and the support staff in particular for all their hard work," he said.

"There have been highs and lows, but they have given everything even in difficult moments and should be proud of their efforts."

Rapid chess tournament on Friday

A rapid chess tournament will be held at the Panorama Mall Oman in Muscat on October 22. The event will begin at 1.15pm and interested participants are to report by 12.45pm. Entries can be submitted to 71549460 on Whatsapp.

AFP

Pohang claim thriller to set up ACL final against Al Hilal



Action from the match between Pohang Steelers and Ulsan Hyundai during an all-Korean AFC Champions League semifinal on Wednesday

ASIAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Jeonju, South Korea - South Korea's Pohang Steelers will face Saudi giants Al Hilal in the AFC Asian Champions League (ACL) final after defeating title-holders Ulsan Hyundai 5-4 on penalties on Wednesday. The final is on November 23.

The two sides, rivals on South Korea's east coast, were locked at 1-1 after 120 tense minutes with Pohang equalising with just a minute left of normal time to force the extra period.

Skipper Kang Sang-woo was the hero for Pohang, holding his nerve to slam his winning penalty into the corner, before being

mobbed by his teammates.

Ulsan top the K League but it was mid-table Pohang who started better and hit the post in the opening quarter at Jeonju World Cup Stadium, where there was a sparse, socially distanced crowd.

The two sides conjured up only three shots on target between them in 45 minutes of cautious first-half football.

But the game came to life after that. Pohang goalkeeper Lee Jun had looked shaky throughout and it was his mistake that allowed Ulsan to score when he fumbled a routine stop into the path of Yun Il-lok.

The 2009 champions Pohang squandered three clear-cut chances in the space of ten frenetic minutes, but just when Ulsan looked like they had weathered the storm, their skipper Won Du-jae was red-carded in the 68th minute.

It was all Pohang after that and the pressure told in the 89th minute when their British-born Australian defender Alex Grant popped up with a looping header that went in off the post to force extra-time.

On Tuesday, Al Hilal defeated rivals Al Nassr 2-1 in a Riyadh derby, with Mali striker Moussa Marega and Saudi international

Salem al Dawsari scoring either side of the break. Al Hilal stayed on course for a second Champions League title in three years.

Al Hilal won their third Asian title in 2019 but were dramatically kicked out of the tournament last year after several members of their squad tested positive for COVID-19.

But the team known locally as 'Al Zaeem', or 'The Boss' seem to have successfully banished the memories of that fateful day from their minds with an impressive run this year as they moved within striking distance of another international trophy.

AFP

CLASSIFIEDS

WJ Towell Group Company

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

Muscat 9014 6672, 9679 0684
Sohar 9731 6218 | Salalah 9429 9325

www.orbit-oman.com

• Fleet of 2,000 vehicles
• Choose from a wide range of brands & models
• PDO, OXY and BP spec vehicles available
• Attractive rates for short-term & long-term lease

أوربت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

LOST PASSPORT

I, Carrie Ann, from Philippines lost my passport (passport number P6167670A). If found please contact ROP Auqad branch, Salalah or contact Sanu: 72246868 or Buthaina: 93976996

Send your request for **Birthday/Anniversary** wishes to wish@apexmedia.co.om with your resident card copy (It's free of cost)

وزارة التجارة والصناعة وترويج الاستثمار
دائرة الملكية الفكرية
إعلان

تعلن دائرة الملكية الفكرية عن طلب تسجيل العلامة التجارية المقبولة وفقاً لأحكام قانون (نظام) العلامات التجارية لدول مجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية الصادر بالمرسوم السلطاني رقم 33 / 2017

طلب تسجيل العلامة التجارية رقم : 97464
تاريخ تقديم الطلب: 6/9/2015
اسم طالب التسجيل : أسطورة حلة البد للتجارة
العنوان : ص.ب : 3351 ر.ب : 111
رقم الهاتف: 99811207، سلطنة عمان
المهنة: الصناعة والتجارة
فئات العلامة: (43)
البضائع/الخدمات : خدمات تقديم الطعام والشراب

بقعة العصائر Juice spot



QUOTE OF THE DAY

We've got a strong enough batting unit. Ultimately you want to be scoring the bulk of your runs from the top six

David Miller

South Africa most-capped T20I player, ahead of his team's T20 World Cup campaign



ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP 2021

SRI LANKA STORM INTO SUPER 12S



Sri Lanka's Wanindu Hasaranga (L) and Pathum Nissanka fist bump during their match against Ireland

Hasaranga, Nissanka shine in 70-run win over Ireland

Abu Dhabi, UAE - Wanindu Hasaranga and Pathum Nissanka hit half-centuries as Sri Lanka thrashed Ireland by 70 runs on Wednesday to reach the

Super 12 stage of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup. Hasaranga, who smashed 71, and Nissanka, who made 61, put on a key stand of 123 to guide Sri

Lanka to 171 for seven after being in trouble at eight for three in the first round match in Abu Dhabi.

Sri Lanka's bowling attack, led by spinner Maheesh Theekshana who returned figures of three for 17, dismissed Ireland for 101 in 18.3 overs despite a valiant 41 from skipper Andy Balbirnie.

Hasaranga stood out with his maiden T20I half-century and economical figures of one for 12 as Sri Lanka remained top of Group A with four points after their second successive win.

Put into bat, Sri Lanka lost three wickets for only eight in the second over before the pairing of Hasaranga and Nissanka set about the recovery.

Paul Stirling claimed the wicket of Kusal Perera for nought with the second ball of the innings and Josh Little took two in two the following over to remove Dinesh Chandimal and Avishka Fernando.

Hasaranga, an allrounder who bowls leg-spin, took the attack to the opposition with four straight boundaries of off-spinner Simi Singh to lay the foundation for Sri Lanka's challenging total.

He reached his fifty in 38 balls and kept up the charge to punish the Ireland bowlers, blasting a towering six before falling to Mark Adair.

Nissanka was equally efficient and also recorded his first fifty in the shortest international format as he hit six fours and one six in his 47-ball knock.

Little returned impressive figures of four for 23 - his T20 best - including Nissanka's wicket from his four overs of left-arm pace.

Adair claimed his 50th T20I

SCOREBOARD			
SRI LANKA			
P Nissanka	c Rock b Little	61	47
K Perera	c Delany b Stirling	0	1
D Chandimal	b Little	6	6
A Fernando	b Little	0	1
W Hasaranga	c Young		
	b Adair	71	47
B Rajapaksa	c Tector b Little	1	3
D Shanaka	not out	21	11
C Karunaratne	b Adair	2	3
D Chameera	not out	1	1
Extras:	(b 1, lb 5, w 2)	8	
TOTAL	171 for seven in 20 overs		
Fall of wickets:	1-1, 2-8, 3-8, 4-131, 5-143, 6-157, 7-160		
Bowling:	P Stirling 1-0-4-1, J Little 4-0-23-4, C Young 4-0-24-0, M Adair 4-0-35-2, S Singh 3-0-41-0, C Campher 4-0-38-0		
IRELAND			
P Stirling	c Kumara	7	(7)
K O'Brien	b Theekshana		
	c Theekshana		
	b Karunaratne	5	(3)
A Balbirnie	c Fernando b Kumara	41	(39)
G Delany	b de Silva	2	(4)
C Campher	b Theekshana	24	(28)
H Tector	c Perera b Kumara	3	(6)
N Rock	st Perera		
	b Theekshana	1	(3)
M Adair	run out	2	(3)
S Singh	not out	5	(9)
C Young	b Chameera	1	(6)
J Little	b Karunaratne	1	(3)
Extras:	(b 4, lb 3, w 2)	9	
TOTAL:	101 in 18.3 overs		
Fall of wickets:	1-8, 2-18, 3-32, 4-85, 5-88, 6-89, 7-92, 8-94, 9-98, 10-101		
Bowling:	C Karunaratne 3.3-0-27-2, D Chameera 3-0-16-1, M Theekshana 4-0-17-3, L Kumara 4-0-22-2, W Hasaranga 4-0-12-1		

wicket before Sri Lanka skipper Dasun Shanaka finished the innings with a six and a four in his unbeaten 21 off 11 balls.

AFP

T20 WORLD CUP WARM-UP GAMES

Van der Dussen ton stuns Pakistan; India, England triumph

Dubai, UAE - India, England, Afghanistan and South Africa all registered wins in the second set of warm-up games of the day ahead of the Super 12 stage of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 on Wednesday.

Russie van der Dussen hit a stunning unbeaten ton (101) off 51 deliveries as South Africa pulled off an extraordinary run chase to beat Pakistan as they scored 190 for four. Van der Dussen and David Miller slammed 22 off the final over to seal the win off the very last ball of the match. Earlier, Pakistan, asked to bat first in Abu Dhabi, scored 186 for six.

Afghanistan stifle West indies

Afghanistan won the toss and opted to bat in their warm-up fixture against the West Indies in Dubai. And the decision paid immediate dividends as the opening batters brought up the 50 partnership inside five overs, with a true display of hitting inside the powerplay as they ended with 189 for five.

And Afghanistan's amazing day continued with the ball as Mohammad Nabi bowled through his full allocation of overs straight up to register extraordinary figures of four overs, two maidens, three wickets for two runs as West Indies was restricted to 133 for five.

Second consecutive victory for India

India cruised to back-to-back wins in the warm-up games. All the Indian batters contributed to the eight-wicket win, with Rohit Sharma leading the way with a fantastic half-century (60) as they chased down Australia's 152 for five with 13 balls remaining. India spun a web around the Australian top-order before Steve Smith's half-century (57) and Marcus Stoinis' unbeaten 25-ball 41 propelled Australia to 152 for five. R Ashwin took two for eight while Ravindra Jadeja, Rahul Chahar and Bhuvneshwar Kumar claimed a wicket apiece.

England survive scare from New Zealand

New Zealand recovered from 103 for nine to take their game against England to the last over, but fell short by 13 runs in the end in Abu Dhabi. England scored 163 for six but then bowled out the Kiwis for 150 in 19.2 overs. Jos Buttler top-scored with 73 while Jonny Bairstow made 30.

(www.t20worldcup.com)

Wiese helps Namibia earn first points

Abu Dhabi, UAE - David Wiese bludgeoned an unbeaten 66 as Namibia stayed alive at the T20 World Cup on Wednesday with a six-wicket triumph over the Netherlands.

In a sweltering Abu Dhabi, where temperatures soared to 36 degrees, former South Africa international Wiese hit five sixes and four boundaries as Namibia chased down their target of 165 with six balls to spare. It was Namibia's first-ever win at the World Cup and kept alive their hopes of making the Super 12 stage. This was also their highest-successful chase in T20Is.

In their opening game on Monday, they had crashed to 96 all out and lost by seven wickets to 2014 champions Sri Lanka.

Defeat almost certainly means the Dutch, who lost their opener to Ireland, also by seven wickets, will be eliminated.

Even a win over Sri Lanka in their concluding Group A game on Friday may not be enough.

Wiese, the 36-year-old all-rounder who played for his native South Africa in the 2016 T20



David Wiese of Namibia plays a shot during his unbeaten knock of 66 against the Netherlands in Abu Dhabi

World Cup, set Namibia on their way with a half-century off 29 balls. He was well-supported by captain Gerhard Erasmus who contributed 32 off 22 balls with the pair putting on 93 for the fourth wicket.

In a desperate attempt to stem the barrage, Dutch skipper

Pieter Seelaar employed seven bowlers.

Earlier, opener Max O'Dowd made a second successive half century to lead Netherlands to 164-4 after being put into bat.

The New Zealand-born O'Dowd battled for virtually the entire innings, making 70 off 56

balls with one six and six boundaries.

He was eventually run out off the third ball of the final over after a knock which followed on from his 51 in his side's opening loss to Ireland.

Colin Ackermann also played a solid role with the bat as the

SCOREBOARD			
NETHERLANDS			
M O'Dowd	run out	70	(56)
S Myburgh	c Baard b Frylinck	17	(16)
R van der Merwe	c Scholtz b Wiese	6	(4)
C Ackermann	c Erasmus b Frylinck	35	(32)
S Edwards	not out	21	(11)
L van Beek	not out	2	(1)
Extras:	(b 1, lb 4, w 8)	13	
TOTAL	164 for four in 20 overs		
Fall of wickets:	1-42, 2-55, 3-137, 4-157		
Bowling:	B Scholtz 4-0-31-0, D Wiese 4-0-32-1, R Trumpelmann 4-0-32-0, J Frylinck 4-0-36-2, JJ Smit 4-0-28-0		
NAMIBIA			
S Baard	b Seelaar	19	(20)
Z Green	b Klaassen	15	(12)
C Williams	b Ackermann	11	(13)
G Erasmus	c Edwards		
	b van der Gugten	32	(22)
D Wiese	not out	66	(40)
JJ Smit	not out	14	(8)
Extras:	(b 2, lb 2, nb 1, w 4)	9	
TOTAL:	166 for four in 19 overs		
Fall of wickets:	1-34, 2-47, 3-52, 4-145		
Bowling:	F Klaassen 4-0-14-1, C Ackermann 3-0-32-1, L van Beek 4-0-39-0, T van der Gugten 3-0-32-1, R van der Merwe 2-0-22-0, P Seelaar 2-1-8-1, B de Leede 1-0-15-0		

South African hit 35 off 32 balls.

Scott Edwards added a quick-fire, unbeaten 21 from 11 balls to give the Dutch innings added extra impetus.

AFP

ONLY
PURE
WATER
AND
PERFECT
TASTE



ONLY
WHAT'S
ESSENTIAL



Every day, all day!





QUOTE OF THE DAY
I know Fabian [Allen] was really looking forward to playing in this World Cup, so it is very disappointing that he is forced to miss out
Roger Harper
West Indies' chief selector, after injured Allen was replaced by Akeal Hosein



ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP 2021

Oman need a win to make history

- Hosts take on Scotland in their final Group B First Round match today
- Three teams in close fight for the two spots in the Super 12 stage



Oman players celebrate a dismissal of a Bangladesh batter during their ICC Men's T20 World Cup First Round Group B game on Tuesday

Ashok Purohit
Muscat

History beckons hosts Oman on Thursday at the Oman Cricket Academy Ground as Duleep Mendis' men are a win away from writing a glorious chapter in the annals of the sultanate's sports.

With calculators ready to come out to determine the net run rate (NRR) as three teams - Bangladesh, Scotland and Oman - all in fray, the formula is clear cut for the hosts - get an outright win against Scotland on Thursday in their concluding ICC Men's T20 World Cup First Round Group B match - to make history by advancing to the Super 12 stage for the first time.

With two Super 12 spots up in grabs from the group, Thursday's matches provide different scenarios for the three teams with the fourth side, Papua New Guinea (PNG), out of the race.

Fancied Bangladesh, which bounced back after their opening day defeat at the hands of Scotland, with a win over Oman on Tuesday, take on PNG in the first match of the day.

And in the second match in



Oman fans are expected to turn up in large numbers for the match between the hosts and Scotland on Thursday

the evening, Oman meet current table toppers Scotland.

A win for Oman will take them to four points, and having won the opener against PNG by ten wickets, their NRR is enough for a berth in the Super 12.

A win for Scotland will take them to the next round but Oman will know their fate on the result of the game between Bangladesh and PNG. A win for Bangladesh, which is a likely result, will see them advance, but a PNG upset will get the NRR in play for Oman and Bangladesh.

Home support

On Tuesday, Oman supporters turned up in good numbers for

the match against Bangladesh along with the Bangla fans. With Thursday's match against Scotland a virtual knockout match, another encouraging crowd is expected. Another incentive for the teams who advance to Super 12 will be a direct entry into next year's T20 World Cup in Australia.

The hosts will hope that their top-order fires with Jatinder Singh in good knick after scores of unbeaten 73 against PNG and 40 against Bangladesh. The pace bowling attack, led by Bilal Khan and Kaleemullah, have been effective during the powerplay so far and their performances may hold the key against Scotland.

In the pre-match press conference on Wednesday, Oman's allrounder Aqib Ilyas hinted that the team may opt for a extra bowler, either a fast bowler or a leg-spinner, depending on the surface. If a pacer is included then in all probability Fayyaz Butt, who took a stunning return catch against Bangladesh may get the nod.

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Oman coach Duleep Mendis rued the missed catches against Bangladesh and admitted that 'cost us the match'. "On Thursday, the goal is clear - beat Scotland and we go through. We have a chance and I am hopeful," said the former Sri Lankan great.

TODAY'S MATCHES
FIRST ROUND: GROUP B



BANGLADESH VS PNG
Oman Cricket Academy Ground, 2pm



OMAN VS SCOTLAND
Oman Cricket Academy Ground, 6pm

T20 WORLD CUP					
FIRST ROUND GROUP A					
TEAM	M	W	L	PT	NRR
SL	2	2	0	4	3.165
IRE	2	1	1	2	-1.010
NAM	2	1	1	2	-1.163
NL	2	0	2	0	-1.240
FIRST ROUND GROUP B					
TEAM	M	W	L	PT	NRR
SCOT	2	2	0	4	0.575
OMAN	2	1	1	2	0.613
BAN	2	1	1	2	0.500
PNG	2	0	2	0	-1.867

GROUP B

Qualifying scenarios

Here is how the teams stack up going into their final group matches



Scotland

Played: 2, Points: 4, NRR: 0.575
Remaining match: vs Oman

A win will see Scotland top the table. If they lose and Bangladesh win, three teams will be on four points. Then, net run rates (NRRs) will come into play. Given how close Scotland, Oman and Bangladesh are on NRR, there isn't much leeway on that count: even if Scotland lose by just one run and Bangladesh win by a margin of three runs or more (with the team batting first scoring 150 in both games), then Oman and Bangladesh will go through.



Oman

Played: 2, Points: 2, NRR: 0.613
Remaining match: vs Scotland

A win by any margin will be enough for Oman to go through. If they lose, though, they can get through only courtesy a Bangladesh defeat at the hands of Papua New Guinea. If Oman lose by ten runs, Bangladesh need to lose by at least eight for Oman to stay ahead on NRR.



Bangladesh

Played: 2, Points: 2, NRR: 0.500
Remaining match: vs PNG

Bangladesh's last match is against winless PNG. If they win by three runs or more, they will qualify for sure, regardless of the result of the other game: if Scotland win then Oman will be knocked out, while if Oman win even by a run, then Scotland's NRR will be third in the group. If Oman win by ten runs, Bangladesh will need to win by 15 or more to top the group. If Bangladesh lose to PNG, they will have to hope that Oman lose to Scotland, and slip below Bangladesh on NRR. If Bangladesh lose by ten runs, for example, then Oman will have to lose by at least 13, for Bangladesh to move ahead on NRR.



Papua New Guinea

Played: 2, Points: 0, NRR: -1.867,
Remaining match: vs Bangladesh
PNG have lost both matches, and their NRR languishes at -1.867. To have any chance, they

need to beat Bangladesh by around 45 runs and hope that Oman lose to Scotland by a similar margin.

Cricinfo



A'SAFFA
BRINGS YOU
BROAST
IN 8 MINUTES



PRESENTING THE ALL NEW THAWAQ A'SAFFA



microwave

8 minutes



ready to eat

ذَوَّاق الصَّفَاء
THAWAQ A'SAFFA

HEAT • EAT • REPEAT

ALSO AVAILABLE: CHICKEN SHUWA OMANI • CHICKEN SHUWA SPICY

OFF DAYS ☀️ DESERVE OFF ROADS



GRAND CHEROKEE

**DISCOVER NEW MEMORIES
WITH THE JEEP® GRAND CHEROKEE**

**5 YEARS WARRANTY / ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE
3 YEARS / 60,000 KM SERVICE
FIRST YEAR INSURANCE* & REGISTRATION**

BOOK NOW

Vehicle image shown is for illustrative purposes only and accessories shown might not be part of the standard model.
©2021 FCA US LLC. All Rights Reserved. Jeep® is a registered trademark of FCA US LLC.

*Insurance apply on Selected models

Jeep
THERE'S ONLY ONE

Download the
Zubair Automotive App



TO DOWNLOAD
THE APP NOW
SCAN THIS QR CODE





HIGH STANDARDS. HIGHER PERFORMANCE.

ADVANCED PROTECTION

PASSENGER CAR ENGINE OILS



Go ahead and drive
We've got you covered.



KNOW MORE... [CLICK HERE](#)

Bahwan
International
Group



مجموعة
بـهـوان
العالمية

Suhail Bahwan
Automobiles LLC



TOLL FREE
800 50011



www.suhailbahwanautoparts.com



Lukoil-Oman

CELEBRATING
كارفور Carrefour
20 Years
ANNIVERSARY

امسح و اربح
SCRATCH & WIN

Scratch & WIN!

6000 CASH PRIZES

1000 جائزة نقدية
6000 CASH PRIZES

تسوق بقيمة ١٥ ريال و احصل كوبون امسح و اربح
Shop for 15 riyals and get a coupon Scratch and WIN

Russell Hobbs

2400W
Ceramic

SAVE **72.31%**
17 RIAL .700
4 RIAL .900

مكواه بخار [راسل هوبز]
Russell Hobbs steam iron 24840

SAMSUNG

RAM 6 GB
64 MP
128 GB MEMORY
6.5" SCREEN

هاتف ذكي [سامسونج]
Samsung smartphone SM A32

99 RIAL .000

HUAWEI

RAM 2 GB
8 MP
32 GB MEMORY
5.4" SCREEN

29 RIAL .900

Subscriber price
MyCLUB
سعر مشترك
ماي كلوب

27 RIAL .900

هاتف ذكي [هواوي]
Huawei smartphone Y5P

impex

4K UHD
SMART TV
HDMI
USB

50"

SAVE **33.35%**
149 RIAL .900
99 RIAL .900

تلفزيون ذكي [إمبيكس] ٥٠ بوصة
Impex UHD TV 50 Gloria

SAMSUNG

NEW
EXCLUSIVE

65"

UHD

4K UHD
SMART TV
LED
HDMIx3
USBx2

تلفزيون ذكي [سامسونج] ٦٥ بوصة
Samsung UHD UA65AU7000

SAVE **26.32%**
379 RIAL .900
279 RIAL .900

Hoover

7kg
1000 Rpm

SAVE **41.55%**
136 RIAL .700
79 RIAL .900

غسالة ملابس [هوفر]
Hoover front load washer HWM-V710W

Selection of these items are available in our Supermarket stores.

تتوفر مجموعة مختارة من هذه المنتجات في متاجر السوبر ماركت لدينا.



Get our weekly offers straight to your Whatsapp!

احصل على عروضنا الأسبوعية من خلال الواتساب الخاص بك!



امسح رمز الاستجابة السريعة للاشتراك
Scan the QR Code to subscribe

أو ارسل لنا واتس اب على or Whatsapp us at

71926574