



MONDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2021
www.muscatdaily.com
Email: muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om
To subscribe, call toll free no: 80076000

29°C/19°C

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK IN THE MIDDLE EAST
GO TO **PAGE 13** FEATURES

Exhibitions, conferences sector reels under pandemic stress

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The exhibitions and conferences sector is in deep financial crisis, according to event organisers and management companies in the sultanate.

Such businesses have suffered owing to the announcements suspending these events. Since the outbreak of the pandemic in the sultanate in early 2020, the government has set varying precautionary measures, including restricting gatherings of all kinds, in order to limit the spread of the virus.

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Juma Mubarak al Araiimi, chairman of the Board of Directors of Al Shaam for Organizing Exhibition and Festivals, said, "There have been many challenges faced by the exhibitions and conferences sector in the last three years. Now there is competition between countries, too, following government support extended to event management companies."

Araiimi, however, claimed such companies in the sultanate "suffer from a lack of government support and high rental prices at Oman Convention and



Exhibition Centre which has led to the closure of many exhibition organising companies. COVID-19 has added to the woes, leading to heavy losses that are still continuing".

He noted that the sector needs to be developed through investments in modern technologies and the establishment of a government body dedicated to such business events. "It must provide advice to exhibition companies. We hope the Supreme Committee sets a specific timeframe - say June or September - to reopen activities such as exhibitions and events to

The culture of online exhibitions isn't developed. It needs more awareness before it is widely accepted

KHADIJAH AL BATASHI

help companies operating in the sector to prepare for business," Araiimi said.

According to Reema al Sajwani, owner and chairman of

Reema Integrated Projects, the sector has faced numerous challenges for a whole year due to the pandemic. "We lost a lot of money due to the closure and continue to suffer. We are paying rent for office space and salaries to employees, but have no income or support from the government. Activities in our sector are still suspended. This could lead to the closure of our company," Reema informed.

To stay afloat, her company tried organising online exhibitions and initiatives for small and medium enterprises. "But there is no alternative to offline events

when it comes to SMEs. We hope the government grants permission to hold exhibitions and events to companies that adhere to the Supreme Committee decisions and not to those that violate its safety measures," Reema said.

Like other businesses in the sector, East Coast Company too notched up huge losses due to the suspension of activities. In these circumstances, its managing director Khadijah Mubarak al Batashi predicts several companies operating in the sector will shut down.

Khadijah sees low-interest or interest-free loans granted to SMEs operating in the sector as the only way out for these businesses to continue.

"We launched an online platform called Souq al Ruwwad Exhibition to promote Omani products and encourage the culture of entrepreneurship, besides creating trade relations and facilitating exchange of experiences between participants. But it doesn't work. The culture of online exhibitions isn't developed. It needs more awareness before it is widely accepted," Khadijah said.

Continued on Page 03



Avoid travel unless necessary: MoH

Our Correspondent
Muscat

As the COVID-19 pandemic rages on across the world, the Ministry of Health (MoH) has urged citizens and residents to avoid travel outside the country.

In a statement, MoH said, "The Ministry of Health calls on citizens and residents not to travel unless absolutely necessary, especially to countries where the epidemic is widespread."

On Sunday, MoH announced 868 new cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) recorded over three days, taking the total to 139,362. Three deaths and 569 recoveries were reported in this period.

"The number of recoveries has increased to 130,653, while the number of deaths has reached 1,552," an MoH statement said,

adding that the rate of recovery now stands at 94 per cent.

As of Sunday, a total of 163 patients were admitted in health institutions, including 56 in intensive care units.

Following the increase in infection cases, social media was abuzz with rumours of a lockdown and the suspension of offline classes. Rebutting the rumours, the Government Communication Centre (GCC) stated, "What is being circulated about the existence of decisions issued by the Supreme Committee related to the closure of the Governorate of Muscat and the suspension of studies in educational institutions is not true."

MoH called upon all who arrive in Oman to adhere to isolation procedures while advising social distancing to help curb the spread of the virus.

#MAISARAHWORLD

#Win_easily
with Maisarah Prize Account Scheme
Over 4900 winners and still counting!

TOTAL WEEKLY PRIZES OMR 171,600 1 WINNERS PER BRANCH	TOTAL MONTHLY PRIZES OMR 343,200 1 WINNERS PER BRANCH PRIZES FOR CUSTOMERS OF PRIORITY BANKING, AFFLUENT BANKING, STANDARD BANKING AND CHILDREN	TOTAL MID-YEAR PRIZES OMR 16,000 PRIZES FOR CUSTOMERS OF PRIORITY BANKING, AFFLUENT BANKING, STANDARD BANKING AND CHILDREN
TOTAL NATIONAL DAY PRIZES OMR 55,000 1 WINNERS PER BRANCH	TOTAL PRIZES FOR LADIES OMR 11,000 1 WINNER PER BRANCH	TOTAL MEGA PRIZES OMR 112,000 PRIZES FOR CUSTOMERS OF PRIORITY BANKING, AFFLUENT BANKING, STANDARD BANKING AND CHILDREN

Open a Maisarah Prize Account today!

Customer is entitled to the draw of the Prize Account when an average balance of OMR 100 is available for one week for weekly draws and for a month for other draws. Anticipated profit rate of up to 2.5% p.a. subject to the weightages applicable for each month. Based on the Islamic concept of Mudarabah, this account is Shari'a compliant. The prizes will be given from the shareholders' funds. The scheme is valid from 1 January to 31 December 2021. OMR 52,800 prize amount and 198 prizes have been allocated for the new branches expected to be opened during the year, or they will be distributed through special draws on special events announced during the year 2021. Over 4900 winners is the total number of winners in the Prize Account scheme since 2016. Terms and conditions apply.

For more information, visit: <http://bit.ly/PrizeAccountEn>

f /MaisarahOman @MaisarahIslamic @MaisarahIslamic

2477 57 77 | www.maisarah-oman.com

*The Mega Prize of OMR 100,000 for 1 winner is part of the total Mega Prizes of OMR 112,000.



making life easy

ميسره
MAISARAH
Prize Account Scheme

CONDOLENCES



The Ramesh Khimji Group of Companies
deeply mourn the sad demise of our patriarch,

Kanaksi Gokaldas Khimji

We offer our sincere condolences to the bereaved family and may God
give them strength to bear this great loss.

May his Soul Rest in Peace



www.rameshkhimjigroup.com

seera.com

Fact-finding mission to fire site; PACDA calls for caution

Our Correspondent
Muscat

A high-level delegation on Sunday visited the Wadi Kabir Industrial Area where a huge fire gutted a large number of cars and garages on Thursday. It was decided to prepare a comprehensive report on the cause of fire and the damages caused.

The delegation included H E Ahmed bin Hilal al Busaidi, Wali of Muttrah and Chairman of the Municipal Affairs Committee, Eng Redha bin Jumah al Saleh, chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry (OCCI), and members of the Shura Council.

They witnessed the damage caused by the fire and discussed development of the area.

'It was agreed to prepare a comprehensive report to know the causes of the fire and the challenges it posed to business owners and owners of industrial facilities. A study will be done to address the regulations that must be followed in the future in industrial zones, which could contribute to protecting the facilities from risks and disasters,' OCCI stated.

The delegation also agreed on the importance of finding appropriate solutions to protect the industrial areas in cooperation with the competent authorities.



(Supplied photo)

tion with the competent authorities.

PACDA cautions

As a result of three fires recorded in Muscat in the last few days, the Public Authority for Civil Defence and Ambulances (PACDA) has cautioned the general public.

Following Thursday's fire in Wadi Kabir, on Friday, two other fire incidents were reported in Muscat.

An advertising billboard mounted on a pedestrian bridge at Al Khuwayr caught fire. The

other incident was of a fire in a restaurant in Al Khoudh in the wilayat of Seeb. No injuries were reported in the two incidents.

An official at PACDA stated that if preventive measures are not taken on time, such fires can cause extensive damage to property.

Talking about reasons for fire-related incidents, the official said, "Sub-standard wiring and keeping electrical appliances on for long hours lead to short circuits and fire. Irregular maintenance of electrical appliances and engaging unqualified technicians to re-

pair them can also lead to fire incidents."

Listing measures to prevent fires, he said, "We urge people not to touch electrical appliances with wet hands and avail the services of qualified staff to repair them. One should always use quality electrical equipment."

The official said that electrical appliances should be switched off immediately after use and serviced regularly. Smoke detectors in buildings too are recommended. People must adhere to the periodic maintenance of fire alarm systems, he said.

Oman is key partner for region's security: US official

Muscat - Gen Kenneth McKenzie, Commander of the United States Central Command, lauded efforts of the sultanate's government under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to upgrade the military sector.

In an interview with Oman News Agency (ONA), the US military official affirmed that the sultanate is a strategically important partner for his country to maintain regional security.

He explained that the Oman-US relationship is one of the oldest as it goes back hundreds of years, and reaffirmed his country's keenness to promote it in various areas.



He added that during his visit, he toured Khasab Air Base and Musandam Naval Base, in addition to meeting a number of de-

fence officials in the sultanate to discuss military topics of common concern. ONA

Restoration work of historical mosque in North Sharqiyah completed

Our Correspondent
Muscat

As part of its efforts to restore ancient architectural monuments, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism has completed restoration work of the Al Aouina Mosque in Wadi Bani Khalid in North Sharqiyah. The project took nearly two years for completion.

A statement issued by the ministry said, 'Specialists in the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism have restored the mosque. The work included several elements such as the architectural design which was redone in a manner consistent with the original landmark. Some parts were restored and the collapsed parts were rebuilt with traditional materials, in-



(Supplied photo)

cluding the main facilities such as the Q'uran school, ablution places and toilets.'

The ministry confirmed that an identical copy of the original mihrab was also made after the original piece was transferred to the National Museum under the

directions of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, when he was a minister.

It is being displayed in the museum as a unique historical archaeological icon indicating the high skill of Omani artists in carving mihrabs.

Muscat airport awarded 4-star safety rating by Skytrax for its COVID-19 measures

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In recognition of its efforts to provide travellers the best safety and health standards during this period of the global pandemic and cautious measures, Muscat International Airport has been certified with the 4-star COVID-19 Airport Safety Rating following the global audit conducted by the international rating agency Skytrax.

The audit, carried out by a specialised team of Skytrax, eval-

uates international airports' safety protocols, primarily the effectiveness and consistency of safety and hygiene measures implemented by airports to protect customers and staff from COVID-19. These measures include cleaning and disinfection procedures through all stages of travel at the airport, for both departures and arrivals.

At the end of this exercise, Muscat International Airport achieved a 4-star airport safety rating. This achievement is a new milestone added to Oman Air-

ports record of success, demonstrating its commitment to provide the best safety services to travellers as it strives to implement the highest levels of health and safety at its airports, in line with national efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Muscat International Airport recently became the first airport in the Middle East to achieve the Airports Council International Airport Health Accreditation, based on a programme designed to assist airports by assessing new health measures and proce-

dures introduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Saud bin Nasser al Hubaishi, Oman Airports' deputy CEO, said, "We are pleased by this new achievement for Muscat International Airport, which is a testament to the airport's ongoing efforts and commitment to COVID-19 protocols that help achieve a healthy and safe travel experience at the airport. It also demonstrates our continued commitment to take appropriate steps to reduce the risk of exposure at our airports."

Exhibitions sector under stress

Continued from Page 01

The Exhibitions and Conferences Committee of Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry (OCCI) held its first meeting of 2021 on February 15. The meeting discussed the issue of financial compensation, and committee members urged Oman Development Bank to provide companies with reasonable guarantees to mitigate the effects that the exhibition and conference organisers faced due to the pandemic.

The committee demanded exemptions in government fees, rents and tax, in addition to discounts from the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre when activities resume. The committee suggested the exhibitions sector be included in ODB and Raffd Fund for loans to SMEs to help these companies to get financial compensation.

Eng Redha bin Jumah al Saleh, chairman of Board of Directors of OCCI, tweeted, "The exhibitions and conferences sector is a significant element of economic diversification, and plays an important role in the development and enhancement of national income. It achieves the goals of sustainable economic development. We'll support the sector according to the available investment opportunities."

CONDOLENCES

The Management & Staff of
Badr Al Samaa Group of Hospitals
deeply mourn the sudden and sad demise of



Kanaksi Gokaldas Khimji
on 18th February 2021.

We pray Almighty to give his family the strength to bear this great loss.

May His Soul Rest in Peace.



مجموعة مستشفيات ومستوصفات بدر السماا

BADR AL SAMAA

GROUP OF HOSPITALS AND POLYCLINICS

More Than Healthcare... Human Care

Oman | UAE | Bahrain | Kuwait

www.badralsamaahospitals.com | wecare@badralsamaahospitals.com

HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES

We deeply mourn the sudden and sad demise of



SHRI. KANAKSI GOKALDAS KHIMJI

on 18th February 2021

"We pray and ask The Almighty to give his family the strength to bear this great loss."

May his soul rest in peace



بنك برودا

Bank of Baroda

India's international Bank

NOW ON WHATSAPP

Share your comment in not more than 50 words along with your full name, profession and front facing photo before next Sunday, 10am, via WhatsApp

Send us on
WhatsApp
71509370

YOUR SAY

RENT REDUCTION - LITTLE CONSOLATION

With thousands of flats unoccupied, have you negotiated with your landlord to reduce your rent? Was your negotiation successful?

Naif al Balushi
Private sector employee

We have seen a new reality, which is leniency on the part of landlords who are negotiating with their tenants not to move out to other properties. Many landlords are now approachable for a discount. It is a good time for tenants and I know many of them have been successful in negotiating good deals.



Supriya Gokul Jain
Marketing executive

Yes, rents are reducing but some landlords don't budge. They know tenants won't shift in the middle of a pandemic, so they don't negotiate. It appears that landlords aren't bothered about letting out their flats and prefer keeping it empty. Half the apartments in the building I live in are empty, but there's no 'To rent' board on it.



Mohan Anandan
Banking sector employee

Tenants do not wish to venture out of their comfort zones, but in many of the known cases where landlords were approached for a discount, tenants did not get the desired reductions. A specific instruction from authorities to reduce the rent at a certain percentage would do good for the ones who are skeptical of approaching landlords.



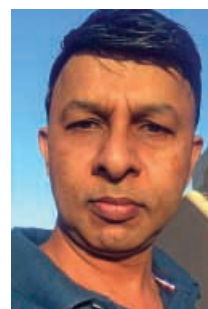
Govind Arjan
Media, communications and PR professional

I am lucky to have an understanding landlord who not only waived rent but also reduced it at the peak of the pandemic when times were tough. The new reality will be 'accommodating' landlords seeing more of their properties being occupied, while the unrelenting ones will have a long wait for tenants.



Saji Uthuppan
Lecturer

Though many flats are vacant, very few landlords have reduced rent. In order for it to be a feasible business proposition for both parties, landlords have to think of reducing rents. I hope all landlords consider requests for rent renegotiations in these times of austerity.



Jayatee Choudhury
Student

Our landlord reduced the rent even before any negotiation. Due to the reasonable rent and regular maintenance, all the apartments in our building are occupied, which is rare in the present market scenario.



Vandana Anoop
Civil engineer

Yes, we did negotiate and it was successful. There are times when the market, jobs and the economy slow down. At such times, it should definitely reflect on living standards; prices of basic necessities and commodities should be accordingly reduced.



Vipin Kumar Garg
Bank chief executive

Yes, we have negotiated with our landlord and got a ten per cent reduction in rent. These days, if a landlord refuses to reduce rent, many options can be found in the same area.



Jay Prakash
Private sector employee

With the drop in number of tenants due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its related knock-on effects, I have negotiated a reduction in rent with my landlord. He accepted my proposal, but it's only a marginal reduction.



NEXT ON YOUR SAY

With rising incidence of fires, is it time to rethink about using unsafe electrical equipment? How can we prevent such fires?

The views stated here are those of the respondents and not endorsed by Muscat Daily. If you feel strongly about the issues discussed here, you can email your comments to muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om. Log on to our Facebook page or tweet us your comments on the issue

oman OASIS sifr
BALANCED DRINKING WATER SODIUM FREE DRINKING WATER

WINTER OFFER

Get 1 Raffle Coupon for every RO 20 spent.

BUY & WIN EXCITING PRIZES

- 15 RO 20 CARAT 1 GMS GOLD COIN
- 3 RO 20 APPLE (IPAD)
- 90 RO 20 10 OMAN OASIS 5 GALLON WATER COUPONS
- 45 RO 20 LULU GIFT VOUCHERS WORTH RO 10
- 60 RO 20 TROLLEY BAG
- 15 RO 20 MI FIT BIT WATCH
- 30 RO 20 AL MAHA PETROL VOUCHERS WORTH RO 10

To win, register your raffle coupon number at www.omanoasis.com/season2020

Offer valid from 25th November 2020 to 24th February 2021. Total of 3 raffle draws will be held at Oasis Water Company, Azabla. Draw Dates: 26th December 2020, 26th January 2021 and 25th February 2021. Winners will be informed directly. Oasis Water Company employees are not eligible to participate in this promotion. Gifts shown are for illustrative purpose only. Actual may vary.

Oasis Water Co. LLC, P.O. Box 87, Rusayl 124, Sultanate of Oman. www.omanoasis.com

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

Winner of His Majesty's Cup Award in 2012 & 2013 for Best Five Factories

C.R. No.: 136545/2 MM No.: 46302/2020

OMAN CRICKET CLUB (OCC)

Invitation to attend the General Body Meeting of the Club for the years 2020 & 2021.

The Board of Management of the Oman Cricket Club (OCC) wish to inform that Annual General Meeting of the Club for the years 2020 & 2021 scheduled on 28th February 2021 is postponed and now it will be held on Tuesday 30th March 2021 at Al Falaj Hotel, commencing at 7:00 pm. All Members wishing to attend this meeting and whose membership may have expired are requested to proceed with renewal of the membership with effect from the date of this announcement. The last date for renewal of membership is Wednesday 24th March 2021 before 5:00 pm.

As per Article No. 29 of the Statute of the Sports Clubs No.124/2008, the meeting will be considered valid in the presence of an absolute majority of members of the club who are entitled to attend (half + one). If the required number of members are unavailable at 7:30 pm the meeting could be postponed to another date within 15 days from the date of the first meeting, or be held on the same day at 8:00 pm.

The second meeting held on the same day will be considered valid in the presence of (quarter) of working members. Agenda will be available at OCC office before 7 days of scheduled meeting.

Secretary of the Club
Chairman of the Board of Directors

Send your comments to muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om

be'ah launches awareness campaign on dangers of unsafe disposal of masks

Muscat - The Oman Environmental Services Holding Company (be'ah) has launched an awareness campaign to reduce random disposal of used masks in public places.

The campaign was launched in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization office in the sultanate with the aim of highlighting the health risks of this practice that negatively affects human life and health, and wild and marine life too.

Dr Jan Jabbar, representative of WHO in the sultanate, explained the importance of adhering to the preventive measures and procedures and following the instructions and guidelines established for protection from COVID-19. In this context, the organisation has developed a global and comprehensive guidance document on the use of masks and the best practices to dispose them in a



safe manner.

Jassim al Wahaibi, head of the Healthcare Waste Department at be'ah, said, "There is an increasing concern about polluted single-use masks, which pose a threat to public health and negatively affect wild and marine life when disposed in the wrong way. We are happy with this cooperation to tackle this global phenomenon, which could lead to the transmission of infection in the community."

The United Nations Trade

Authority (UNCTAD) estimated global sales of masks at US\$166bn by the end of 2020, compared to about US\$800mn in 2019. According to a report issued by OceansAsia, 1.56bn masks ended up in the oceans resulting in between 4,680 and 6,240 metric tonnes of plastic.

Single-use contaminated masks contain many viruses, and cleaning workers are among the first victims who face the risk of infection, in addition to their environmental effects.

oman OASIS sifr
SODIUM FREE DRINKING WATER

Sodium Free Drinking Water

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

C.R. No.: 136545/2

OIFC, Gulf Investment Services merger receives CMA nod

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman Investment and Finance Company (OIFC) on Sunday announced that it has received the approval of the Capital Market Authority (CMA) for its merger with Gulf Investment Services Holding Company.

The proposed merger between OIFC (the merging company) and Gulf Investment Services (the merged company) under which Gulf Investment Services will merge into OIFC, as per the Commercial Companies Law, was approved by the shareholders of both companies on December 29, 2020.

Earlier in December, OIFC and Gulf Investment Services announced the completion of the



due diligence reports on the proposed merger and their respective boards of directors had recommended to the shareholders to approve the merger plan. 'We wish to advise our share-

holders that we have received OIFC's revised commercial registration, which the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion has approved on February 17, 2021 and after

the expiry of the statutory period for creditors to submit their objections on the merger as no objection was raised.

'We have also received the approval of the CMA on the prospectus of the merger with Gulf Investment Services,' OIFC said in a disclosure submitted to the Muscat Securities Market on Sunday.

OIFC added that Muscat Depository and Clearance Company will distribute to the shareholders of Gulf Investment Services the considerations determined by the extraordinary general meeting of shareholders, as per the applicable rules and regulations.

OIFC and Gulf Investment Services both are listed on the Muscat Securities Market.

Oman attracts RO1.6bn worth of FDI in first 9 months of 2020 despite virus

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Despite the global economic recession triggered by the coronavirus pandemic last year, Oman received RO1.644bn worth of foreign direct investment (FDI) during the first nine months of 2020.

According to an Oman News Agency report, total FDI in the sultanate at the end of the third quarter of 2020 increased to RO15.658bn compared to RO14.017bn in the same period of 2019, an year-on-year in-

crease of 11.7 per cent.

In terms of investment volume, the UK ranked first with its RO7.92bn worth of total FDI in Oman as of the end of third quarter of 2020, up from RO7.264bn a year ago. The United States was the second biggest investor in Oman with FDI worth RO1.847bn as of the third quarter of 2020 compared to RO1.716bn for the corresponding period of the previous year.

Foreign investment from the UAE to Oman reached RO1.267bn in 2020 compared to RO1.173bn recorded in the third

quarter of 2019. Kuwait came at fourth place with RO933.2mn in FDI in the third quarter of 2020. Qatar's investments in the sultanate totaled RO410.6mn in the third quarter of last year, rising from RO350.4mn in the same period of the previous year.

China's FDI in Oman reached to RO848.9mn as of the end of third quarter of 2020, up from RO75mn for the same period in 2019.

The FDI volume from the Netherlands increased to RO337.4mn, while investments from India came at RO318.3mn,

increasing from RO321.3mn in 2019.

The largest share of total FDI in Oman went into the oil and gas sector (around RO10.06bn), followed by the manufacturing sector which saw total foreign investment worth RO1.55bn as of the third quarter of 2019.

In the financial sector, Oman received RO1.47bn in investment till the end of the third quarter of 2020. Real estate activities received total investment of RO1.14bn as of the third quarter of last year, up from RO763.8mn for the same period of 2019.

MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No.(6 /2021)

Companies specialized in the field and registered with **Tender Board**, may obtain tenders documents for the website through the following link: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) against non-refundable fees as mentioned below starting from the date of this announcement and 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/21/008	10/2021/HQ-7))	Construction of Internal Road and Parking's at (Al Wataya) (E- Tender)	Rial 25	20/03/2021	01/04/2021	First
PRE/21/004	1/2021/HQ-1)) (Re Call)	Removal and Relaying of Road Markings at Filling Stations Accesses Along Muscat Expressway (E – Tender) (Re Call)	Rial 25	20/03/2021	01/04/2021	First

Tender Conditions :-

- Bidders shall submit their offers electronically accompanied with an electronic copy of abond 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 Intrnal 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 (+96824166670).

Send your comments to muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om

CONDOLENCES



With profound sorrow and deep sadness GHM Hotels’ management and employees express their deepest and heartfelt condolences to the entire Khimji family on the sad demise of
Mr Kanaksi Gokaldas Khimji.

May his soul rest in peace.

Tommy Lai
GHM CEO

GHM A STYLE TO REMEMBER

C O M M E N T A R Y

VAT: Corporates should prepare well in advance

Value-Added Tax (VAT) implementation date is nearing and there are many queries arising from business houses which need to be addressed.

We know that the Executive Regulation is awaited and most of the doubts will get clarified once the regulation is announced. However, we also understand that the businesses cannot wait for the regulation and need to take a step forward for VAT implementation in a timely manner.

Here are some of the questions raised from businesses and the suggested replies on how to deal with the VAT implementation challenges.

Will the goods exempted from cus-

toms duties also be exempted from VAT?

The article 47 of the VAT law has mentioned the categories of the supplies subject to exemption. Any goods and services which are exempted from customs duties will be subject to VAT if not exempted vide article 47.

Will there be relief for bad debts written off?

VAT registered entities will be able to reduce their output tax liability by the amount of VAT that relates to the bad debt which has been written off. The regulations will include the conditions and limitations concerning the use of this relief. The businesses should have relevant documents to support the bad

debts written off.

Will VAT apply to advances received?
VAT registered entity has to collect and pay VAT on advance received by



AASTHA RANGAN

The writer is director, tax advisory services at Crowe Oman

issuing the tax invoice for the same. Later the advance can be adjusted in next invoice by giving reference to the advance tax invoice number.

As per the Oman VAT law, VAT triggers at the earliest of the payment (including advances), date of delivery of goods or services or date of issuance of the invoice.

In case when goods are supplies before April 16, 2021 and the delivery notes supporting the same are available, then VAT does not arise even though the invoices are raised or payments are made on and after April 16, 2021.

The Executive Regulation is supposed to provide transitional rules for dealing with such transactions, especially related to continuous contracts.

Will there be a VAT on deposits?

For the purpose of VAT, deposits need to be classified as refundable and non-refundable deposits.

VAT would be payable only on the non-refundable security deposit and not on the refundable one. Now if the refundable deposit gets forfeited at a

later stage due to noncompliance with the agreement or conditions attached, then the VAT would be payable on the forfeited amount.

There are several areas where reference of Executive Regulation is required. Once the same is announced, appropriate VAT treatment will be known. However, we advise corporates to take necessary advice and consultation in order to prepare well in advance.

(Reader questions can be directed to davis.kallukaran@apexmedia.co.om)

The views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of Muscat Daily or Apex Media Publication

Energy giant BP announces employee share award plan

London, UK - British energy major BP has unveiled plans to hand all employees a stake in the company, which is seeking to revive its fortunes after a virus-ravaged 2020.

Chief executive Bernard Looney, who is overseeing a transition away from crude oil and toward greener energy, revealed the share award scheme in a memo.

"Whether you are a barista in New Zealand, a drilling engineer in Azerbaijan, a pump clerk in South Africa or an analyst in India - over 60,000 people in 66 different countries will receive a share in BP's future," wrote Looney in the memo obtained by AFP.

"Why? Because ultimately - you are the people who will make



our strategy work - and we want you to have the chance to benefit from all of your work."

Under the plan, which is the first of its kind in BP's history, all staff will be entitled to a one-off payment of shares or options to purchase the stock at a later date.

The news comes after BP re-

vealed earlier this month that it plunged into a huge US\$20.3bn net loss last year as coronavirus ravaged global energy demand.

BP also launched plans last year to axe about 10,000 jobs or 15 per cent of its global workforce under a cost-cutting drive that ends in 2021.

AFP

MSM inches up; volumes down

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The benchmark index of the Muscat Securities Market (MSM) was marginally up by 0.01 per cent to close at 3,565.96 points on Sunday.

Trading activity deteriorated from the previous session as turnover declined 3.02 per cent to RO1.6mn and volumes fell 13.94 per cent to 8.72mn shares.

While Financial index rose 0.06 per cent, Industrial and Services indices fell 0.28 per cent and 0.11 per cent, respectively. The MSM Shariah index closed up by 0.49 per cent at 539.29 points.

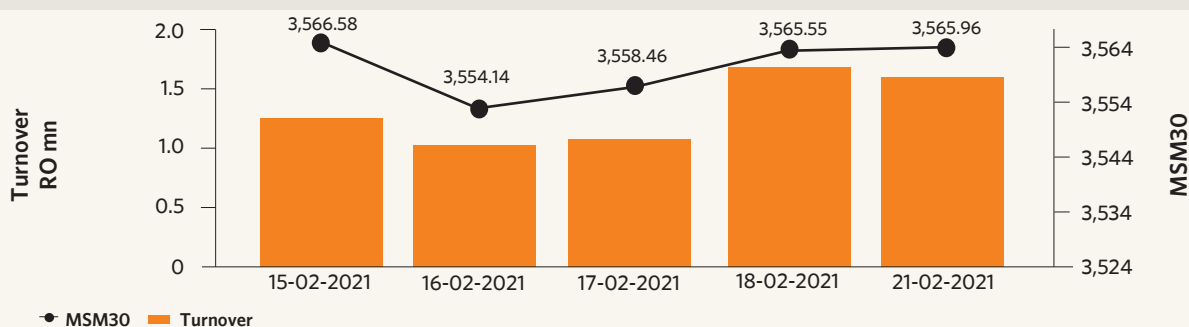
Market breadth remained negative as seven companies closed up, while 12 companies closed down. The rest 17 traded stocks closed flat for the day.



Top gainers were Sharqiyah Desalination (3.7 per cent), Raysut Cement (3.33 per cent), Al Jazeera Services (3.23 per cent) and Oman United Insurance (2.6 per cent).

Top losers were Oman Cables Industry (-4.19 per cent), Phoenix Power (-4.08 per cent), SMN Power (-3.08 per cent) and Oman Investment & Finance Co (-2.41 per cent).

MSM INDEX AND TURNOVER OF FIVE TRADING DAYS



Battle of the bases: Dubai and Riyadh forge ahead for corporate showdown

Dubai, UAE - Modern infrastructure and a business-friendly attitude have made Dubai the regional base of choice for international companies, but Riyadh's remarkable rise has woken a long-sleeping heavyweight competitor.

The wealthy Gulf emirate has made opening businesses as easy as ordering a meal, in a region choking with bureaucracy, helping it attract around 140 headquarters in three decades, far more than any other Middle East city.

While Dubai's business environment flourished, Riyadh, the capital of the biggest Arab economy, floundered thanks to ultra-conservative policies, security threats and corruption.

The young Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman sought to end all that when he came to power in 2017, and now the city surrounded by sand dunes is enjoying a relative boom, drawing new businesses from restaurants to tech startups.

"Our target is to have Riyadh become one of the top-ten largest city economies in the world," the 35 year old de facto leader said in January.

But despite the big salary packages and contracts that are drawing expats and foreign firms to Riyadh, the city's lack of attractions, a no-alcohol policy and other disincentives has slowed



the shift.

Saudi officials have said the kingdom accounts for less than 5 per cent of the region's HQs - even though it's the biggest Arab economy and offers the 'lion's share' of business and contracts.

To change the status quo, Saudi last week heaped pressure on foreign companies to move their Middle East headquarters to the kingdom, saying it will stop signing contracts with firms with hubs in other countries from 2024.

The surprise move is a direct challenge to Dubai and threatens a heated open race between Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates - neighbours, allies and competitors.

"I do not think this is the intention, but it is how it works out in practice, as Dubai tends to be the default location for international

companies' regional HQs," said Steffen Hertog, associate professor at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Boiling competition

Under Prince Mohammed, Saudi adopted a series of once unimaginable social changes and abolished some of its draconian laws.

Riyadh, a city of 7.5mn once seen as a bastion for ultra-conservative policies, opened its doors for entertainment and investment, the religious police were sidelined and anti-corruption campaigns embarked on.

The new-look capital has drawn many hoping to cash in on multi-billion-dollar projects like the futuristic NEOM megacity planned for the kingdom's Red Sea coast.

Saudi entrepreneur Haya Akhdar and her husband Ugo

Baudez, a French national, launched their Dubai-based consultancy specialising in luxury brands in 2017.

For the young couple, now is the right time to open a new office in Riyadh, but like many they will keep one foot in each city.

"We have witnessed the growth of the market and the shift of many brands' attention to KSA, specifically in Riyadh... We need to be close to our clients in both important markets," Baudez said.

The UAE has responded quickly to the new competitive mood. The country of 1mn citizens and 9mn expats lifted a ban on unmarried couples living together, loosened restrictions on alcohol, offered long-term residency, and struck a normalisation deal with Israel to harness the power of the two major economies.

To stay competitive with Saudi Arabia, a powerhouse with a youthful market of 34mn, the UAE has to 'accelerate some reforms that are still unthinkable for Saudi Arabia', said Ryan Bohl, a Middle East analyst at risk consulting firm Stratfor.

"Riyadh and Jeddah remain light years behind Dubai and even Abu Dhabi in terms of social liberalism, housing, schooling and entertainment venues," said Bohl.

AFP

شركة صناعة مواد البناء (ش.م.ع.ع)
Construction Materials Industries (S.A.O.G)

P.O. Box: 1791, Ruwi, Postal Code 112, Sultanate of Oman, Tel: 26752247/26752287, Fax: 26750867

Announcing the invitation to attend the annual ordinary general meeting

The Board of Directors **Construction Materials Industries SAOG** has the honor to invite the honorable shareholders to attend the annual ordinary general meeting of the company, which is scheduled to be held at exactly 3:00 pm on Monday 08/03/2021, via the electronic platform for the general assembly's held You can access it through the website of the Muscat Clearing and Depository Company (www.mcd.gov.om). In the event that the quorum is not completed for the assembly, a second annual ordinary general assembly will be held at exactly 3:00 pm on Sunday 14/03/2021 to discuss the following agenda: -

- 1- Study and approve the report of the Board of Directors on the company's activities and its financial position for the fiscal year ending 31/12/2020.
- 2- Study and approve the report on the organization and management of the company (Governance Report) for the fiscal year ending 31/12/2020.
- 3- Study the auditor's report and approve the balance sheet and profit and loss account for the fiscal year ending 31/12/2020.
- 4- Ratification of the allowance for attending the sessions of the Board of Directors and the subsidiary committees that were received by the members of the Board of Directors for the fiscal year ending 31/12/2020, and determining the amount of the allowance for the fiscal year that will end on 31/12/2021 (according to the annex).
- 5- Informing the assembly about the donations that were disbursed to support community services during the fiscal year ending on 31/12/2020 (according to the annex).
- 6- Study a proposal to allocate an amount of 5,000 Omani riyals to support community services during the fiscal year that will end on 31/12/2021 and approve it.
- 7 - Electing new board members for the company from both shareholders and non-shareholders, and everyone who wishes to nominate himself must fill out the form prepared for this purpose and deliver it to the company, at least five (5) days before the date of the assembly, no later than the end of working day Tuesday corresponding to 02 March 2021, and the candidate must fulfill the requirements for membership of the company's board of directors.
- 8- Approval of the standards for measuring the performance of the Board of Directors for the fiscal year ending on 31/12/2021 (according to the annex).
- 9- An independent body shall be appointed to measure the performance of the Board of Directors for the fiscal year ending on 31/12/2021 and determine its fees.
- 10- Appointing an auditor for the fiscal year that will end on 31/12/2021, and determining their fees. In accordance with the company's articles of association and the regulations for holding general assembly's using modern technology issued by the authority, we would like to draw your attention to the following:
 - (A) The legal person has the exclusive right to authorize a natural person to attend the general assembly meeting and vote on his behalf through technical means, provided that this natural person has an investor number in the Muscat Clearing and Depository Company.
 - (B) Voting on any of the items on the agenda begins with a period not exceeding three days prior to the date of the assembly and until the end of the voting process on the day of the meeting, and in the event that the shareholder's balance is changed by an increase or decrease, the voting process will be canceled, he must re-vote again. On the day of the assembly meeting.

If you have any inquiries, please contact Mr. Ahmed Odeh at 26752287.

Chairman Board of Directors

Independent Auditor

Legal Adviser

ACCA students supported by Bank Muscat continue to excel



Fajer al Akhzami

Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the sultanate, has announced that the Omani youth supported by the bank in completing the Chartered Certified Accountant course by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) are continuing to make good progress in their course.

Earlier the bank had joined hands with Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) to provide scholarships for a number of bachelor's degree holders to complete this internationally-



Nusaiba al Manji

recognised accountancy course. The ACCA course prepares entry and mid-level professionals to work in any aspect of finance or management. The Omani youth in the programme have shown great enthusiasm and passion for their studies and in developing their skills, which will contribute to the better qualification and skills enhancement of human resources in the banking and financial sector in the sultanate. The participants supported by the bank have achieved remarkable results with



Aisha al Moosa

many of them ranking among the highest globally and the GCC region. Fajer Ahmed Salim al Akhzami, who scored high marks in different subjects, said, "The ACCA programme is one of the most important courses in finance and accounting. Bank Muscat is supporting so many students to complete this course and helping us acquire specialised skills and knowledge. We are grateful to the bank for getting this excellent opportunity and hope that we will be able to



Zulekha al Kiyumi

gain this well recognised certification with the highest grades possible." Zulekha Shamis al Kiyumi, another achiever from the programme, said, "Bank Muscat has always accorded top priority for human resources development and I am grateful for this support from the bank to do my ACCA certification. Through my ACCA studies, I have been able to gain a lot valuable insights and skills. I am confident that this certification will be of great help in my career, and for the development

of Omani human resources in the country."

Nusaiba Yaqoob al Manji, who achieved excellent results in the programme, said, "Through the ACCA programme, Bank Muscat has helped us to enhance our knowledge in accounting and finance. This will positively improve our professional performance as we have learnt many examples, rules and regulations as well as procedures in finance and accountancy. The experience of continuing our studies on modern banking and finance through an online platform has been a wonderful experience and we promise to exert more efforts to graduate with the best results."

Aisha Moosa Abdul Rahman al Moosa said, "The training programme is running in an excellent manner despite all the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been a unique and enjoyable learning experience. I am grateful to Bank Muscat for organising this training."



Muscat Chapter of ICAI wins award

The Muscat Chapter of the Institute of the Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) won the Best Overseas Chapter Award in category II for 2021.

The Muscat Chapter of ICAI has won the Best Chapter Award for the sixth time in a row, out of 64 overseas ICAI chapters global network. ICAI is the world's second largest professional accounting body that has been set up by a legislation of Indian Parliament. The Muscat Chapter has been established by a specific approval of the Indian Council of Ministers under an MoU signed between College of Banking and Financial Studies (CBFS) and ICAI.

CA N Ramananda Prabhu, chairman, attended the 71st annual award function of ICAI held in New Delhi to receive the award. "We are delighted to have got this recognition. The Muscat Chapter of ICAI was chosen for this honour based on the quality of its professional events and its exemplary contribution to knowledge sharing initiatives for finance professionals of all nationalities in Oman and Omani national's capacity building initiatives. We dedicate this

award to our Chapter members," said CA Prabhu.

CA Sanil Varghese, vice chairman, added, "We are thankful to CBFS for hosting the Muscat Chapter of ICAI, which enables us to make our contribution to the evolution and further development of the accounting and auditing profession in Sultanate of Oman. We have also launched ICAI'S digital learning hub access to CBFS, as part of knowledge sharing with the Omani finance and accounts professionals. Our chapter events are open to Omani professionals and we welcome more and more Omani finance professionals to attend our programme."

Anis Lawati, acting dean, College of Banking and Financial Studies, said, "It is my pleasure to congratulate the Muscat Chapter ICAI on behalf of CBFS for winning the Best Chapter Award. This is an outstanding achievement and great source of pride to all of us at CBFS. I would like to thank and appreciate the hard work, commitment and dedication of the managing committee and all members of Muscat Chapter ICAI."

Oman Oasis announces winners of its contest

Recognised as the nation's leading water brand in the sultanate, Oman Oasis complements its high-quality bottled water with exciting offers for its customers. It recently announced the winners of 'Buy and Win' contest for its 5 gallon bottled water winter offer.

With a total of three rounds, it had rewarded 172 people with exciting prizes in the first two



rounds. The key prizes included fifteen 22 carats 4gm gold coins and three Apple iPads. The first

and second rounds of the draw which took place on December 28 and January 26 respectively saw a total of 12 winners of key prizes.

Ten winners walked away with gold coins while two others won Apple iPads. The gold coin winners in the first round were BT Rajan, Prabu Muthazhagan, Sinu Siddique, Abdul Salam and Balamurugan, while the second

round had Pritam Das, Faisal Hamed, Swaminathan Vilapakam SS, Minesh, and Lakshmi Prasad walking away with the prize. In addition to the gold coins, Ibrahim Khamis and Suleiman Hammoud al Salmi were the two lucky Apple iPad winners from the first two draws.

Increasing the chance to win for everyone, along with the key prizes, the winter offer also in-

cluded a total of 90 RO10 Oman Oasis or SIFR 5 Gallon Water Coupons, 45 Lulu gift vouchers worth RO10; 60 trolley bags, 15 Mi Fit Bit watches, and 30 Al Maha petrol vouchers worth RO10. With the third and final round of the draw slated to take place on February 25, Oman Oasis's 5 Gallon Winter Offer is set to declare 86 more winners.

CONDOLENCES

The Founders, Management and Staff of
Hotel Management Company International SAOG (CHEDI)
deeply mourn the sudden and sad demise of



Kanaksi Gokaldas Khimji
on 18th February 2021.

"We pray and ask Almighty to give his family the strength to bear this great loss."

May his soul rest in peace



Now you can be bold, different with MG HS

Derived from MG’s hugely impressive concept X-Motion, the MG HS sets the adrenaline racing, with its intuitive arrangement tailored to provide a truly rewarding drive. What’s more is that the HS is now available under the brand’s fantabulous new ‘save with MG’ offer, with prices starting from just RO7,799.

Mohsin Hani al Bahrani, CEO of Mohsin Haider Darwish’s ACERE division, who are the distributors of the MG brand in Oman, averred, “The all-new 2021 HS is the most radical re-think of the iconic nameplate yet. Not only is it forward-looking in its technology, it delivers a driving experience that is spell-binding. Thereby enhancing the appeal of the HS badge while answering an increasing need for futuristic motoring. We are confident the model will carry the legacy of the HS nameplate even further.”

From the iconic MG badge found front with the star rider grille, right the way through to the rear combination tail lights, every inch of the new MG HS is



as eye-catching and impressive as can be.

This is a muscular and athletic SUV in every sense of the word, with the slick craftsmanship and impressive proportions ensuring you are driving a model that has

been carefully designed and lovingly detailed.

It comes equipped with two-tone LED headlights - embedded with nine crystal LEDs - for exceptional visibility, LED Daytime Running Light and sequential tail

lights, 18 inch alloy wheels, red sports brake disc calipers, electric folding door mirrors, power tailgate and much more. The result is an attractive but capable model that conveys a sense of constant motion and reassur-

ance out on the road.

In terms of technology, MG HS features a 12.3-inch virtual instrument panel - the largest in the segment - you will be able to access key performance data in a contemporary presentation.

Not only that, but this instrument panel interacts with the 10.1-inch colour touchscreen that is the hub of activity.

Featuring with a high-performance dual-core processor, this fast and responsive system connects effortlessly to your smartphone with Apple Carplay and Android Auto, GPS, Navigation and much more to provide access to all the necessary infotainment measures you demand.

Further technology features include a premium Audio system and an innovative MG Trophy Dream Air Quality Management System which purifies the air of the vehicle in just three minutes, further adding to the comfortable environment.

The sporty looks and luxurious comfort aren’t the only appealing measures to be found in the new MG HS. Powered by a responsive 2.0lt High Efficiency Turbo En-

gine, the MG HS is capable of producing a thrilling 231PS and maximum torque of 360 Nm.

Available in Front Wheel Drive on the comfort trim and an Intelligent All Wheel Drive (AWD) system on the luxury trim, the model provides a top speed of 210km/h and combines with a six-speed dual clutch transmission gearbox for seamless transitions through the gears.

The result is a level of performance that will set the heart racing and get the adrenaline flowing. The MG HS is equipped with Eco, Normal, Comfort and Sports mode for your convenient driving style.

To add an extra punch, the MG HS luxury trim is equipped with a super sport response system that releases maximum torque for best acceleration.

When it comes to safety, you can be assured of MG HS with a 5 Star Euro NCAP safety standards.

Comparing to its aggressive and dynamic styling the MG HS is built with a high tensile grade steel cage body. Safety measures such Side and Curtain Airbags, Cruise Control, Engine Start-Stop, Auto Hold, Hill-Start Assist Control and an Electric Parking Brake, Blind Spot Detection, Rear parking sensors and Rear-View Camera are all fitted, enabling you to take the road effortless and with confidence. With plenty of reassurance guaranteed, you can rest assured that the new MG HS has you covered with a 6 years/200,000km Manufacturer’s warranty.

MG Motor Oman has an e-commerce platform to help enhance its customers’ purchase experience from the comfort and safety of their home.

The platform <https://mg-om.com/buy-online/> allows customers to select vehicles from the available stock, to reserve vehicles, to conduct online payments and to schedule home delivery of cars.

Additionally, customers can also book home test drives. To arrange a test drive, or, if you require more details, please visit an MG Motor showroom, or call 71557334; wherein an experienced team of sales consultants will assist you.



Al Anwar Ceramic Tiles. CO. SAOG

P.O. Box No 143, Al Harthy Complex, Pcode 118, Sultanate of Oman
Tel No: 00968 24649093, 24649095, Fax: 00968 24649097
Email: ceramics@omantel.net.om, www.alshams.org

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Dear Shareholders,

It is my privilege to present to you the company's operating report for the year 2020

Overview of operations and financial performance

2020 has been a good year for your company. During the year, we registered a gross revenue of RO 23.4 M and a Net Profit of RO 4.34 M. Revenue increased by 18% and profit by 114% compared with the previous year.

During the year we produced 14.7 million sq. meters of tiles. Our emphasis on continuous improvement programs, effective global sourcing, employing appropriate technologies and optimum levels of automation has helped us to reduce down time, process losses and costs while enhancing throughput and yield. Our competitive cost position continues to be a source of strength in relation to our regional peers.

The GCC has commenced the imposition of the antidumping duty on imports of tiles from China and India. This will present us with more opportunities for growth.

I am pleased to state that we continue to be the market leaders in our home market in Oman. We continue to perform well in all the GCC Markets.

Future Outlook

The board of directors, have approved a plan to expand the manufacturing capacity of the company from the existing capacity of around 16 million sq. meters per annum to around 23 million sq. meters per annum.

This addition of 7 million sq. meters will be in 2 phases. The first phase which will add about 3.5 million sq. meters per annum has commenced and is expected to be completed in the last quarter of 2021, to be followed by the second phase. The investment is also intended to significantly enhance the product portfolio of the company. This investment will be funded entirely from internal accruals.

The company's strategy has been clear and consistent over the years. Our strategic intent is to emerge as the lowest cost producer of ceramic tiles in the region, by employing appropriate technologies and lean manufacturing systems driven by a committed and competent team of people.

We recognize that our strength and vitality are our people. Their proper selection, training, motivation and reward are basic to our continuing growth and success.

Dividends

The Board of Directors have recommended a cash dividend of 13.5 Baizas per share. This is subject to approval at the Shareholders Annual General Body Meeting scheduled on 23rd March, 2021.

Corporate Governance

I am pleased to report that your company has adhered to all the regulations covering Corporate Governance in Oman. We remain committed and aspire to becoming model corporate citizens.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Al Anwar Ceramics is committed to its Corporate Social Responsibilities. Our CSR activities include assistance to selected community developmental activities, assistance to building of schools, mosques and support for local sports and cultural activities.

Conclusion

We continue to look to the future with optimism and excitement. On behalf of the Directors, I wish to thank the company's management and all our staff for their professionalism and commitment. **They remain our greatest asset.**

We are grateful to the government of Oman for their support and encouragement.

We are confident that Oman will continue to grow and prosper under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and we hope to play our part in this.

Hussain Ali Habib Sajwani
Chairman

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income (Audited) for the year ended 31 December 2020

	Year ended 31 December 2020 RO	Year ended 31 December 2019 RO
Income		
Revenue	23,396,383	19,853,148
Cost of revenue	(14,914,779)	(13,657,124)
Gross profit	8,481,604	6,196,024
Other income	31,627	71,296
	8,513,231	6,267,320
Expenses		
Salaries and other employee related costs	(1,644,370)	(1,621,163)
General and administrative expenses	(374,094)	(434,289)
Selling and distribution expenses	(2,499,210)	(2,357,589)
	(4,517,674)	(4,413,041)
Profit from operations for the year	3,995,557	1,854,279
Net gains from investments at fair value through profit or loss	782,625	-
Finance income	363,166	558,264
Finance costs	(32,026)	(35,192)
Net profit before tax for the year	5,109,322	2,377,351
Taxation	(766,552)	(352,485)
Net profit after tax for the year	4,342,770	2,024,866
Other comprehensive income:		
Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss:		
Changes in fair value through other comprehensive income investments	(107,793)	449,116
Deferred tax credit / (charge) on fair value through other comprehensive income investments	16,169	(67,367)
Other comprehensive (loss) / income for the year	(91,624)	381,749
Total comprehensive income for the year	4,251,146	2,406,615
Basic earnings per share (RO)	0.015	0.007

Statement of financial position (Audited) as at 31 December 2020

	31 December 2020 RO	31 December 2019 RO
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	13,392,335	14,352,670
Right-of-use asset	528,882	600,694
Fair value through other comprehensive income investments	2,167,089	2,228,707
Total non-current assets	16,088,306	17,182,071
Current assets		
Fair value through profit or loss investments	7,321,004	-
Debt instruments at amortised cost	10,299,989	11,019,390
Inventories	3,555,424	4,661,428
Trade and other receivables	8,022,770	8,339,499
Cash and cash equivalents	789,280	1,480,732
Total current assets	29,988,467	25,501,049
Total assets	46,076,773	42,683,120
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		
Capital and reserves		
Share capital	29,621,368	29,621,368
Legal reserve	7,100,236	6,665,959
Retained earnings	4,184,083	2,052,872
Equity investment reserve	(714,396)	(622,772)
Total capital and reserves	40,191,291	37,717,427
Non-current liabilities		
Non-current portion of lease liabilities	461,931	490,476
Employees' benefit liabilities	869,818	768,488
Deferred tax liability	326,198	399,110
Total non-current liabilities	1,657,947	1,658,074
Current liabilities		
Current portion of lease liabilities	92,597	124,624
Trade and other payables	3,310,847	2,768,153
Income tax payable	824,091	414,842
Total current liabilities	4,227,535	3,307,619
Total liabilities	5,885,482	4,965,693
Total equity and liabilities	46,076,773	42,683,120
Net assets per share (RO)	0.136	0.127

Grand Millennium Muscat celebrates Teachers’ Day

Grand Millennium Muscat, a five-star luxury hotel situated at the heart of Muscat City, take the opportunity to celebrate Teachers’ Day in Oman by offering amazing discounts which are valid till the end of the month.

Grand Millennium has created an offer exclusively for teachers – a 25 per cent discount on rooms and suites from its best available rates, 20 per cent discount on selected food & beverage offers (Afternoon tea and Sky View Lounge menu), valid till February 28. Teachers may also get a chance to take advantage and



enjoy a 30 per cent discount across Zanta Spa Health Club Membership and Spa treatments,

valid from February 21 to 28.

“Grand Millennium Muscat would like to applaud teachers for their role in society and their commitment to fostering a nurturing learning environment for our children. We would like to acknowledge their dedication and hard work by offering them exclusive discounts,” said Luca Medda, cluster general manager, Grand Millennium Muscat, and Millennium Executive Apartments Muscat. For reservations, dial +968 2230 2330 or email reservations.gmm@millenniumhotels.com

Dhofar Poultry chicken present at Gulfood 2021

Oman’s favourite fresh and frozen chicken brand, Dhofar Poultry Company, has announced its participation in the Gulfood 2021, the world's largest annual food, beverage and trade exhibition, being held in Dubai, UAE, from February 21-25.

Celebrating 25 years of its existence, Dhofar Poultry has carved a niche for itself in the market, constantly innovating to suit the varying demands of a dynamic consumer base. Today, the brand boasts of an extensive portfolio of fresh and frozen chicken products while maintaining the same level of quality, taste and hygiene standards, that its customers have been familiar with over the years.

With its state-of-the-art processing facility and farms in Salalah, Dhofar Poultry is a leading supplier of superior quality natural chicken in Oman, and other GCC countries.

The company now plans to enter into newer markets, with an enhanced and diversified portfolio of products.

The brand will be present at stand No R-G32, Sheikh Rashid Hall, Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre, with representation of senior officials and team members from the company.

Commenting on the partic-



ipation and confirming his personal presence at Gulfoods 2021, Salim bin Taman al Maashani, CEO of Dhofar Poultry Company, said, “With the growing demand for superior quality, slaughtered-by-hand as per Islamic Sharia’a and naturally-fed chicken in markets such as the UAE, Bahrain and Qatar, Dhofar Poultry has put in intensive measures to customise products and packages to suit varying customer needs.

“Our recent entry into UAE marks a new phase of expansion for the company, and we are committed to invest and grow not only in Oman but other GCC markets as well, through well-established categories such as fresh and frozen whole chicken, chicken parts and value-added products.”

Oman’s home-grown chicken brand has successfully

established its presence in the organised market in this sector with over 100 products across various segments including fresh products from whole and sliced chicken with different weights and types, in addition to products of additional value.

The brand enjoys leadership in products such as Chicken Lollipop, and Chicken feet in Oman. The popularity of the brand has grown so much over the years that the brand now sells its products at leading hypermarkets like Lulu in UAE and Mega Mart Qatar.

Poultry farming is considered a vital economic activity that contributes towards achieving food security in the Sultanate of Oman.

Dhofar Poultry Company’s growing figures and expanding market share over two decades have proved its success.

Iran says talks with nuke watchdog chief fruitful

Tehran, Iran - Iran said on Sunday it had held 'fruitful discussions' with UN nuclear watchdog chief Rafael Grossi in Tehran, ahead of a deadline when it is set to restrict the agency's inspections unless the United States lifts painful sanctions.

Grossi's visit comes amid stepped-up efforts between US President Joe Biden's administration, European powers and Iran to salvage the 2015 nuclear deal that has been on the brink of collapse since Donald Trump withdrew from it.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, before meeting Grossi, signalled that the Islamic republic wants to avoid an 'impasse', but also warned it could step further away from its commitments if Washington does not lift the sanctions.

Grossi, head of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), arrived in Tehran late on Saturday and met with the head of the Iran Atomic Energy Organisation, Ali Akbar Salehi.

'Iran and the IAEA held fruitful discussions based on mutual respect, the result of which will be released this evening,' Tehran's Ambassador to the UN agency Kazem Gharibabadi wrote on Twitter.

Grossi, who also met with Zarif later on Sunday, was due to hold a press conference when he returns to Vienna in the evening.

Iran's parliament months ago demanded that, if the US does



This image grab shows the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran chief Ali Akbar Salehi (left) and AEOI spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi (centre) with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi (right), in the capital Tehran on Sunday (AFP)

not lift sanctions by this Sunday, Iran suspend some IAEA inspections from Tuesday.

But Iran has stressed it will not cease working with the IAEA or expel its inspectors.

'Remedial measures'

Zarif told Iran's Press TV on Sunday he would talk to Grossi about implementing Iran's law while making sure 'not to create an impasse, so that he carries out the obligations to show that Iran's

nuclear programme remains peaceful'.

Late on Saturday, Iran's deputy foreign minister Abbas Araghchi said, "The IAEA's inspection capability will be reduced by about 20-30 per cent after the implementation of the parliament's law."

Iran has notified the UN body it will suspend 'voluntary transparency measures' - notably inspection visits to non-nuclear sites, including military sites sus-

pected of nuclear-related activity - if the US fails to lift the sanctions Trump reimposed in 2018.

Zarif said the law mandates the government to 'not provide the tapes' of cameras at sites to the IAEA, adding that technical details would be discussed in Tehran.

"We are not violating the JCPOA, we are implementing remedial measures foreseen in the JCPOA itself," Zarif insisted, referring to the nuclear deal,

known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

"Once everybody implements their part and their obligations, then there will be talks, and those talks will not be about changing or adding to the agreement."

Biden has committed to rejoin talks on Tehran's nuclear programme, in a shift away from Trump's policy of 'maximum pressure' towards the Islamic republic.

AFP



This file photo shows then US Vice President Joe Biden (left) with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Istanbul in 2014 (AFP)

Turkey's Erdogan for 'win-win' ties with US

Ankara, Turkey - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Saturday that he wants to forge a 'win-win' relationship with the United States, to end years of fractious ties between the NATO allies.

The Turkish leader stressed that 'the common interests of Turkey and the United States outweigh the differences'. In a video statement on Twitter, Erdogan said, 'we hope to reinforce our cooperation with the new American administration on a win-win basis'.

Turkey had greeted the election of US President Joe Biden with some suspicion, fearing a hardening of the American stance towards Turkey on several issues.

The new US administration swiftly rebuked Turkey, urging the release of prominent civil society leader Osman Kavala and criticising homophobic rhetoric in a crackdown on student demonstrators.

Those statements were in line with Biden's vow to put a new priority on the promotion of democracy, but the United States and Turkey have plenty

of other disputes likely to exacerbate tensions.

Erdogan defiantly bought Russia's advanced S-400 missile system, brushing aside warnings that it was jeopardising its role in the NATO alliance, leading the then US President Donald Trump to impose sanctions on the Turkish defence industry.

And a New York court will in May start a trial of Turkey's state-run Halkbank over allegedly evading sanctions on Iran, potentially inflicting a heavy economic blow on Turkey.

On Monday, Turkey accused the United States of supporting 'terrorists' and summoned its ambassador after Washington declined to immediately back Ankara's claim that Kurdish militants had executed 13 Turkish nationals in Iraq.

Washington sought to defuse the diplomatic row by saying later on Monday that it accepted Ankara's claim that PKK Kurdish 'terrorists' had executed the 13 Turks in Iraq.

AFP

United Airlines plane suffers engine failure, scatters debris over city

Denver, US - A United Airlines plane suffered a fiery engine failure on Saturday shortly after taking off from Denver for Hawaii, dropping massive debris on a residential area before a safe emergency landing, officials said.

A video shot from inside the aircraft - which had 231 passengers and ten crew onboard - showed the right engine ablaze and wobbling on the wing of the Boeing 777-200, its cover entirely missing as the aircraft flew over a barren landscape. There were no injuries on the plane or on the ground, authorities said.

"I can honestly say I thought we were going to die at one point - because we started dropping altitude right after the explosion," passenger David Delucia told *The Denver Post*.

"I grabbed my wife's hand and said, 'We're done'."

Delucia said his stepdaughter tweeted the online video, which was shot by another passenger.

'Flight UA328 from Denver to Honolulu experienced an engine failure shortly after departure, returned safely to Denver and was met by emergency crews as a precaution,' United Airlines said in a statement.

'The majority of customers originally on UA328 are currently on their way to Honolulu on a new flight,' it added, saying those who did not wish to travel immediately had been provided with hotel accommodation.

'Mayday, mayday'

In a recording of the distress call obtained from the website LiveATC, which broadcasts air traffic communications, the pilot



These photos shows the plane's debris scattered in the neighbourhood of Broomfield, outside Denver on Saturday (AFP)

requested emergency permission to turn back to Denver.

"Three-twenty-eight, uh, heavy. We've experienced engine failure, need to turn. Mayday, mayday," he said, without obvious panic in his voice.

"Mayday, aircraft, uh, just experienced engine failure," he said, after the tower asked him to repeat himself. "Need a turn immediately."

Residents in the Denver sub-

urb of Broomfield found large pieces of the plane scattered around their community, including a giant circular piece of metal that landed in the yard of Kirby Klements. "It was a little overwhelming," he told CNN.

"It landed square on top of my truck and fell off," he said, reporting that a separate large piece of debris had put a 1.5m hole in a neighbour's roof.

AFP

CONDOLENCES

We deeply mourn the sudden and sad demise of



SHRI. KANAKSI GOKALDAS KHIMJI
on 18th February 2021

"We pray and ask the Almighty to give his family the strength to bear this great loss."

May his soul rest in peace

Ayman Trading & Cont. Co / Al Muzallah Trading & Cont. Co LLC /
Al Bariq Investment LLC-Prakash. I. Rajyaguru Bipin Dharamsey LLC / Dhofar Environmental Safety & Services Co LLC / Dolphin International Trading Co LLC Haridas Nensey & Co LLC / Milan Restaurant Muscat & Salalah / Mugatlal P. Pandya & Co LLC / Mehul Enterprises LLC (Salalah) / Muscat Pharmacy & Stores (Salalah) LLC / Al Farzah Trading co.LLC

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

UK expedites vaccine rollout as end of lockdown in sight

London, UK - The UK government on Sunday vowed to offer a first coronavirus vaccine dose to every adult by the end of July, as it readied to announce a gradual easing of its third lockdown in England.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who will outline the lockdown review in parliament on Monday, said the faster inoculation campaign would seek to offer a first dose to everyone aged over 50 by mid-April.

The previous targets in the world-first campaign were to inoculate over 50s by May, and all adults by September.

"We will now aim to offer a jab to every adult by the end of July, helping us protect the most vulnerable sooner, and take further steps to ease some of the restrictions," Johnson said, while stressing the exit would be 'cautious and phased'.

Britain, one of the hardest-hit countries in the world by the COVID-19 pandemic with more than 120,000 deaths, was also the first nation to begin a mass vaccination campaign, in December.

More than 17mn people have now received at least a first dose - one-third of the UK population. But with infection rates and hospitalisations soaring after an easing of restrictions over Christmas, the govern-



A doctor administers a AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccine dose to a patient at a vaccination centre in Sheffield, northern England, on Saturday (AFP)

ment imposed a third lockdown at the start of January, closing schools, non-essential businesses and hospitality venues across England.

Case numbers are falling again and early evidence suggests the vaccinations are helping to reduce serious illness, while political pressure is building on the government to return to normality.

'Last lockdown'

Johnson was meeting with senior ministers on Sunday to finalise his House of Commons statement, which is expected to endorse the reopening of English schools on March 8 - although teaching unions say allowing all pupils to return on the same day is 'reckless'.

Johnson is expected to lay out a gradual easing more

widely after March 8, including for outdoor activities. But the full reopening of retail and pubs, and attendance at sporting events, will be delayed until later.

"All of us understandably want to go back to normal, but it is right to be cautious," Health Secretary Matt Hancock told Sky News on Sunday, noting that nearly 20,000 people remain in hospital with COVID.

Keir Starmer, leader of the main opposition Labour party, said he disagreed with the teaching unions' opposition but urged the government to widen extra-hours access so that children can catch up ahead of summer exams.

"We all want this to be the last lockdown," he added on Sky News.

AFP



President John Magufuli on Friday appeared to admit the coronavirus was circulating in his country after months of denial

Fight COVID: WHO chief tells Tanzania

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania - The head of the World Health Organization on Sunday appealed to Tanzania to take 'robust action' against COVID-19 in the country, where the President has long played down the virus.

President John Magufuli has claimed coronavirus has been fended off by prayer in Tanzania, and refused to take tough measures to curb its spread.

But a recent spate of deaths attributed to pneumonia has struck both members of the public and government officials. And Magufuli on Friday appeared to admit the coronavirus was circulating in his country after months of denial.

WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said a number of Tanzanians travelling to neighbouring countries and beyond have tested positive for the coronavirus.

"This underscores the need for Tanzania to take robust action both to safeguard their own people and protect populations in these countries and beyond," he said.

Tedros said he had urged Tanzania in late January to take measures against the pandemic and to prepare for vaccinations.

"Since then I have spoken with several authorities in Tanzania but WHO is yet to receive any information regarding what measures Tanzania is taking to respond to the pandemic."

"This situation remains very concerning. I renew my call for Tanzania to start reporting COVID-19 cases and share data. I also call on Tanzania to implement the public health measures that we know work in breaking the chains of transmission, and to prepare for vaccination," Tedros said.

AFP

Locked-down public house becomes Ireland's first wildlife hospital

Navan, Ireland - A public house that closed its doors during lockdown is now serving a menagerie of very different clientele after transforming into Ireland's first wildlife hospital.

The Tara Na Ri public house in County Meath to the northwest of Dublin is now deserted, the blinds pulled down.

But the inn's outbuildings are a hive of activity.

In one, a member of staff bottle-feeds Liam, a two-week-old wild Irish goat who was found on a mountainside.

Three swans nest on straw in former stables, a skittish fox settles in a new enclosure, and a wide-eyed buzzard is being nursed back to health.

"We were very much accustomed to just one singular way

of living," said James McCarthy, whose family have owned the pub for more than a decade.

"When that's taken away you're just kind of left with a void. It takes some time before it starts getting replaced with other things that you never would have thought were possible before."

McCarthy has turned the outbuildings over to the government-backed agency Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland (WRI) and instead of pulling pints, now serves drive-through customers with takeaway coffees at the front of the pub.

The WRI facility, which opened on Friday, is the first animal hospital in Ireland capable of caring for animals of any species, size or medical needs.



A member of staff feeds a two week-old native wild Irish goat which was found on a mountainside, at Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland's new premises at Garlow Cross outside Navan in County Meath, on February 18 (AFP)

"We're bracing ourselves for 'orphan season' which is our busiest time of year," said animal manager Dan Donohoe, calming a flustered pigeon on an examination table. "We'll get lots of baby birds, baby foxes etcetera and they'll keep us busy for the next six months."

The closure of the Tara Na Ri in March 2020 was a heavy blow for the community.

The inn stands near a hill called the Tara with ancient burial mounds. Its name means Tara of the Kings.

But WRI education officer Aoife McPartlin said the pub's regulars had pitched in with enthusiasm.

"We embraced them, they embraced us," she said of locals, who volunteered to renovate

the outbuildings.

The project saw 'everybody mucking in' through long days and dreadful weather, she said.

"And as a result we can now open."

Ireland is currently in its third coronavirus lockdown, and more than 4,000 people have died from the infection.

The Republic navigated two previous waves of the virus with relatively low numbers of cases and deaths, but the situation turned dire after curbs were relaxed before Christmas.

In early January Ireland had the highest rate of infection per capita in the world and 45 per cent of total mortalities from the pandemic have occurred since the start of 2021.

AFP

UN condemns junta after 3 killed in Myanmar protest unrest

Yangon, Myanmar - A lethal attack on anti-coup protesters in Myanmar sparked fresh UN condemnation of the country's new military regime on Sunday, as mourners held a funeral for a young woman who has become a national symbol of resistance to the junta.

Authorities have gradually ratcheted up their tactics against a massive and largely peaceful civil disobedience campaign demanding the return of ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

Saturday marked the deadliest day so far in more than two weeks of nationwide street demonstrations after two people were killed when security forces fired upon a rally, while a third man was shot dead in Yangon overnight.

As dusk fell in downtown Yangon, Monywa and Myitkyina, there were singing and candle-light prayer ceremonies to pay tribute to the dead protesters.

United Nations Secretary

General Antonio Guterres condemned the use of 'deadly violence' against the crowd in Mandalay.

'The use of lethal force, intimidation & harassment against peaceful demonstrators is unacceptable,' Guterres wrote.

Security forces in the country's second-largest city had attempted to raid a shipyard and detain port staff on strike to protest against the army takeover.

Medical rescue workers said troops used live rounds and rubber bullets against a crowd of people who had started flinging rocks in an effort to stop the arrests.

"Two people were killed," said Hlaing Min Oo, the chief of a Mandalay-based volunteer emergency rescue team.

Another 30 were wounded, with half of the injuries from live rounds, he added.

A graphic video circulated on Facebook showing a teenaged



Protesters hold up the three finger salute next to lit candles during a demonstration, in Yangon on Sunday (AFP)

victim played on the ground and bleeding from his head as a bystander placed a hand on his chest to feel for a heartbeat.

State media made no mention of the deaths but blamed

demonstrators for the affray and said protest leaders had been detained.

'Some' protesters had been injured by security forces, the *Global New Light of Myanmar* re-

ported, along with three soldiers and eight police officers.

In a separate incident on Saturday, a 30 year old man was killed in Yangon while patrolling the neighbourhood as part of an

initiative to guard against nighttime arrests of activists.

Tin Htut Hein's sister-in-law said he had been shot dead by police. "His wife is now heartbroken," she said. "They have a four-year-old son."

Police claimed 20 people attacked a vehicle while officers tried to bring an injured man to hospital, the state-run broadcaster said, and reportedly fired warning shots to disperse the group.

Large crowds return

Large crowds had returned to the streets of Mandalay on Sunday, undeterred by the previous day's violence, with rallies also staged further south in Yangon.

In the capital Naypyidaw, a funeral service was held for a young protester who died Friday after being shot in the head at a rally.

Mya Thwate Thwate Khaing, who turned 20 almost two weeks ago as she lay uncon-

scious in a hospital bed, has since become a potent symbol of the campaign against military rule.

A large motorbike guard of honour accompanied her funeral procession, alongside vehicles adorned with floral wreaths and large photos of the grocery store worker.

Vigils in her honour have been held elsewhere in the country by protesters reciting the Metta Sutta, a Buddhist prayer urging protection from harm.

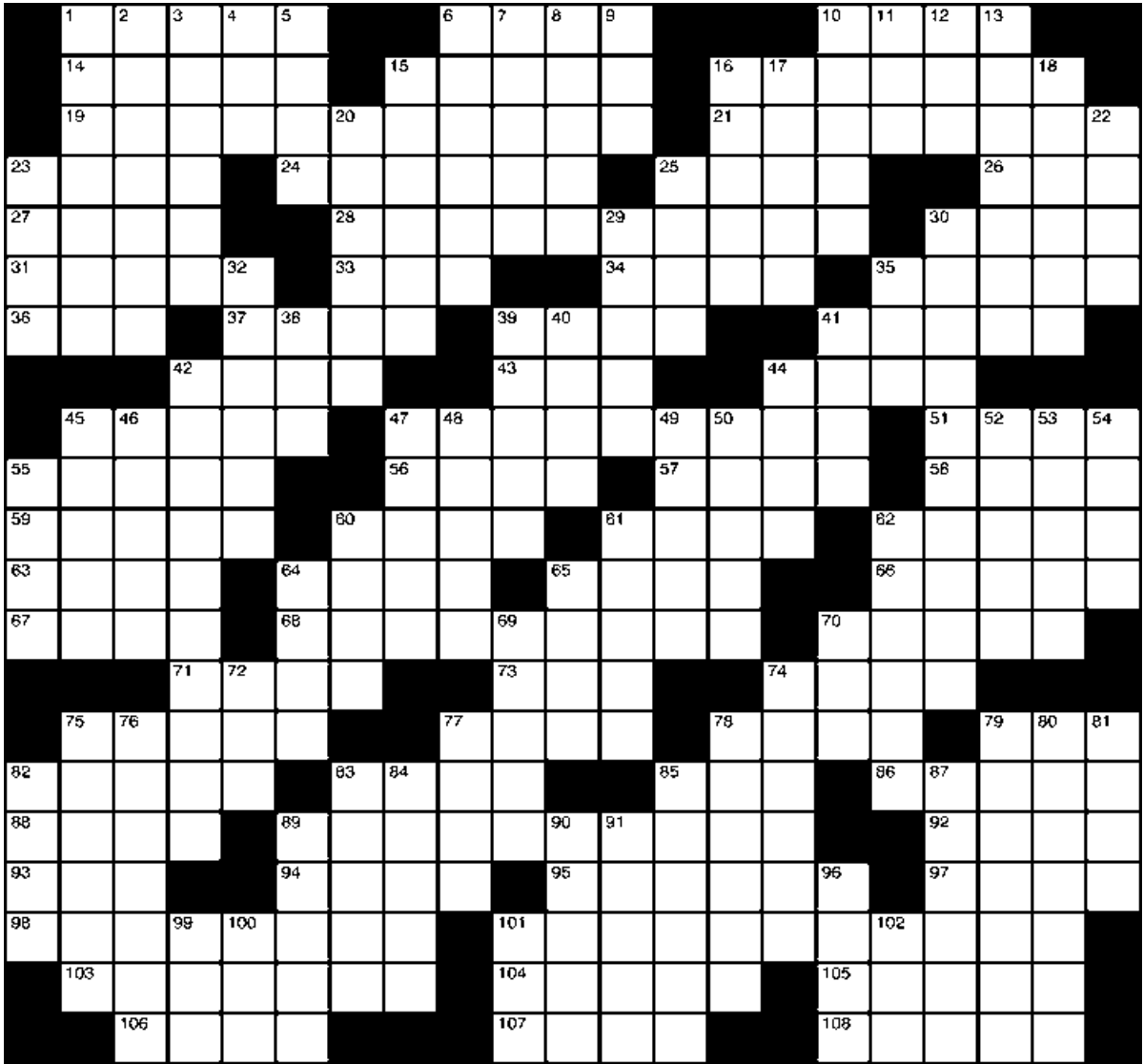
Much of Myanmar has been in uproar since troops detained Suu Kyi on February 1, with massive street demonstrations in major cities and isolated villages across the country.

The United States, Britain and Canada have all responded with sanctions targeting Myanmar's top generals.

European Union foreign ministers will meet Monday to discuss their own measures against the regime.

AFP

DAILY CROSSWORD



©2020 Tribune Content Agency, LLC All rights reserved

ACROSS

- 1 Carved stone
- 6 Play part
- 10 Small monkey
- 14 Ready for action
- 15 Intellect
- 16 Medicinal
- 19 St. Lawrence
- River feature
- 21 Collared
- 23 Came down
- 24 Always: poetic
- 25 Singing group
- 26 __ Claire, WI
- 27 Character
- 28 Big city
- phenomenon
- 30 Concerning: abbr.
- 31 Support
- 33 Abyss
- 34 NFL member
- 35 Comes in second
- 36 Curve
- 37 Northern NC town
- 39 Err
- 41 Motorbike
- 42 Wife of Osiris
- 43 Drunkard
- 44 Utah's lily
- 45 Great __!
- 47 Singles

- 51 Russian mountains
- 55 CA/NV lake
- 56 See 47 Across
- 57 Grecian theaters
- 58 Columbus caravel
- 59 Dostoyevski
- novel, with The
- 60 Gumbo
- ingredient
- 61 Small, crested duck
- 62 Own
- 63 Ritzy auto
- 64 German boar
- 65 First Mets' home
- 66 Baseball Hall-of-Famer
- 67 Sesame
- 68 Sawbuck
- 70 Grayish blue
- 71 Farm measure
- 73 Crutch
- 74 Bronx cheers
- 75 Black tea
- 77 Ref's call
- 78 Brook
- 79 Comic Conway
- 82 Dice
- 83 Family group
- 85 Sigur __
- 86 City in Iraq

- 88 Food scraps
- 89 Whole
- 92 Greek poetry
- 93 Devoured
- 94 Negative votes
- 95 Rite
- 97 Schism
- 98 Makes notches
- 101 Moneybags
- 103 Farm machines
- 104 Martial arts Brian
- 105 Below
- 106 Graceful ruminant
- 107 This: Sp.
- 108 Studies

- 15 Arrived
- 16 Zenana
- 17 Great Lakes'
- Indians
- 18 Adjusted
- 20 Eyestalk
- 22 Club payment
- 23 Comic Johnson
- 25 Golf hazard
- 29 Hackneyed
- 30 1861 Parrott Rifle
- 32 6-line sonnet
- 35 Captain's journal
- 38 Morse code word
- 39 African lake (var.)
- 40 Supremes' Diana
- 41 Arizona town
- 42 Minnesota, Land of __
- 44 Irish __
- 45 __ Hawkins dance
- 46 Bell sound
- 47 Vexed
- 48 Pack mule
- 49 Round-tripper
- 50 Thoughts
- 52 Country singer
- LeAnn
- 53 Herb
- 54 Tardy

- 55 Pinball word
- 60 Hautboy
- 61 Tint
- 62 Colored ring
- 64 Old Ireland
- 65 Dieter's goal
- 69 Singer Frankie
- 70 John Paul's land
- 72 Romaine lettuce
- 74 Café
- 75 A Cambridge square
- 76 Joined
- 77 Military music
- 78 In love with
- 79 Pointed
- 80 Mangles
- 81 Ship part
- 82 Some constrictors
- 83 Dove, e.g.
- 84 Loamy deposit
- 85 Made over
- 87 Mexican city
- 89 Bury
- 90 Haley novel
- 91 Slav
- 96 Biting
- 99 "Norma __"
- 100 Copy
- 101 Danish fjord
- 102 Chemistry suffix

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Family needs are dominant today, so focus on kids, partner or the folks back home. Whatever you do, expect to get rewarded tenfold in the near future. No one expects you to be a saint. Using people a tiny bit here and a tiny bit there is really the norm. It's when you do more than that, that you acquire unsavoury labels. Be careful, you're getting close.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

You're feeling a quiet pride in your accomplishments, but you know well how hard others worked to help you get where you are. Give them the props they deserve. Your enthusiasm is infectious. So is your arrogance. Someone around you is working your nerves and it takes a while to realise where they picked up bad habits. You'll get a bird's eye view of how to make a better impression.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Your energy is wildly off base when compared with that of a good friend. You just have to deal with it. Sometimes you can't count on your social ties to really connect. The entire universe seems focused on money, but actually that's only the way it looks through your own eyes. You don't have to live in a cardboard box under a bridge to have a wildly different view of the world.



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

It's a good time to gather around a meal. It can be at home with family or out with colleagues, but you're at your best combining the social with the earthy. No one can knock you down and nothing can make you float on air, either. You have both feet planted firmly on the ground. So when you predict big numbers, you're not talking pie in the sky or impending doom.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Your family needs you, so reach out and offer whatever they need if it's within the realm of possibility. Sometimes people have a way of asking for more than can be given. Being the creative type makes being critical of others that much easier. You can take someone's ideas apart and put them back together again without blinking an eye.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Your discipline is legendary, so make sure that you're up to the task at hand. You know you have to deal with something big, so get up there and do it! If you didn't get a positive financial outcome, would you still be pursuing the task at hand? It's not very likely. That makes money your only real accomplishment. Ask yourself if that's really all you want to work hard to achieve.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

This is not a good time to shop or buy gifts. You're feeling really tight with money, and that's not exactly conducive to thoughtful purchasing. Put it off for a few days if possible. Is someone trying to confuse you or is it inadvertent? Either way, they're losing you. When you're not clear about the entire proposition, it goes without saying you should keep your wallet shut.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

Sometimes your emotional side gets to be a bit much, and today shows how rough that can be when you're not expecting it. A sudden outburst may provoke even more of the same, so try to rein it in. Old emotional issues are even harder to banish than old financial ones. When they're intertwined, it's easy to feel like you've got a ball and chain. Don't let yourself get depressed.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

You're not having an easy time of it, so make sure that you're getting help from friends and family as much as you can. You should end up with a new appreciation for your network. You're chafing against any kind of discipline today, even if it's all self imposed. Not the right attitude for getting things done, but also not an attitude to ignore. Don't fight the urge for a personal day.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

Your personal issues are dominant, which might make you feel a little guilty, but it shouldn't! You have every right to an inner life, and it helps others when you're feeling good about yourself. There's always something that needs your attention. You're starting to wonder if the money is worth this constant effort. It is, and it isn't. You'll see both sides of the coin by the end of the day.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Your intuitive powers are pushing past their previous limits, so get ready for a wild ride! Your hunches are solid gold, and you should be able to mystify people. Whether or not your boss is in a good mood is less important than whether the universe is. You get all smiles and glittery stars from the ultimate authority. You'll recognise them when you go over the numbers.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

You're having too much fun to recall why you should be bored or upset. Your personal energy just seems to counteract all those negative emotions. Enjoy it and try to share it! Are you willingly helping people or are they secretly siphoning off your energy? If it was money they were helping themselves to, you'd be up in arms. Make the same kind of fuss over your emotional stores.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. The term used to describe a sudden fall of a government, brought about by illegal force is called

- a. credit squeeze
- b. coup d'état
- c. deficit financing
- d. deflation

2. The term steeplechase is associated with which of the following sports?

- a. Boxing
- b. Chess
- c. Rowing
- d. Horse Racing

3. The total number of Judges of the International Court of Justice is

- a. 10
- b. 12
- c. 15
- d. 18

Answers: 1: b 2: d 3: c

KIDS COLOURING



DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

BOGGLER

E	L	T	I
T	B	I	S
H	E	S	R
E	E	D	B

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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

DAILY CROSSWORD ANSWERS (FEBRUARY 21)

ALEX	BALE	GALE	TESLA
CANDIE	ASTA	TILL	UNITOLD
THORP	POS	TIT	TO
DEL	TRES	SCOW	IGOR
LEVIN	SEWER	GARNER	
EXAM	INTHETEE	THOR	HEM
NITEL	SIEGE	AWAY	BENIE
ATGROSS	PUR	PROSE	DEANS
OUTS	ARNIEE	HELLOON	
PRIZEE	STEER	ENTISLE	
LYNKEE	GUTTER	SCOR	
ACTED	AGAIN	STH	GRAIN
HAHS	ALICE	ARINO	AXIEE
ONE	UND	OF	OTILA
PORTER	NOMOW	WESER	
TANKED	CHARLS	PLIBO	
DIACE	HUNT	POOD	BOLE
ONELIDA	ATID	AGGERS	ORAWN
STYLOON	LOO	ALONE	RAISED
EPHIAI	GIPP	GARDS	GYERS

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





STOPS ALONG SUR

A day-long trip to the coastal city of Sur, located just a two-hour drive from Muscat, can be the most fulfilling way of coming face to face with some fascinating spots en route which give a feel of Oman's breathtaking natural beauty.

The 200km stretch from Muscat to Sur provides an opportunity not just to explore intriguing ancient sites, but also to unwind, trek, and swim in popular wadis as well as explore the traditional lifestyle of people in fishing villages along the way. While the destination – Sur – has its own unique draws, the journey itself is much more than just a journey as one would end up with many interesting stops on the way.

The best way to visit Sur is to plan an overnight stay at Sur. So, one could begin the journey from Muscat early (around 6 am) and have many interesting stops at intervals, before winding up at Sur for a late evening visit to the Ras al Jinz Turtle Reserve. After the visit to the reserve, one could stay overnight at any hotel in Sur city and return the next day.

Here are some of the interesting halts:

Quriyat
The fishing village of Quriyat is a good halt to

visit the town's souk as well as the seaside to get glimpses of traditional Omani dhows which the region is famous for since days of yore. Quriyat also has an old fort.

Wadi Shab
One of the most popular wadis in Oman, Wadi Shab is located close to the town of Fins. In fact, Wadi Shab and Wadi Tiwi are a picnickers' paradise and is quite crowded on weekends and holidays. Wadi Tiwi is located a few kilometres south of Wadi Shab. Both wadis are popular for their pools of water as well as for the plunging canyons alongside.

Fins beach
Upon leaving Wadi Shab, a next stop could be Fins beach which is located quite close to the wadi. The immaculate stretch of sand and crystal clear waters are the main attraction here and, fortunately, you will not see too many revellers, so as maintaining a tranquil atmosphere.

Qalhat
If archaeological sites are of interest to you, then your next stop should be the village of Qalhat. Located around 20km from Wadi



Bimmah Sinkhole
Around 38km from Quriyat, on the Muscat – Sur road, the Bimmah Sinkhole is a popular stop for most visitors. This natural limestone crater has a cool pool of turquoise blue water all year round and many people love to take a quick dip amid their trip.

Tiwi, Qalhat was Oman's first capital city and it's port was hugely important in connecting Oman with the rest of the world. They say, a 14th century earthquake and subsequent occupation by the Portuguese has left this place in ruins. It is also home to the 13th century Bibi Maryam's Tomb, a UNESCO Heritage Site.

Sur
Aiyah, Sur's historical old town, is popular for its lighthouse and Al Aiyah Fort. There are other monuments like the 300 year old Sunaysilah Fort and Bilad Sur Castle which are also of tourist interest. Also, the Khor al Batah, a suspension bridge in Aiyah that connects two major suburbs of Sur on opposite ends of an estuary, helps in significantly cutting down travel time between the two. It is quite a sight at night to capture on lens.

Ras al Jinz
Once in Sur, reserve the evening for the reserve. Around 40km south along the coast lies the Ras Al Jinz Turtle Reserve which has a hotel, a museum and the turtle sanctuary. A visit to this reserve to watch nesting turtles late at night is the perfect way to end your trip to Sur.

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

أوربت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

- 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

SITUATION WANTED

Female ACCA qualified member, 4+ years work experience in Oman, driving licence, NOC available, looking to join a finance and accounts team. Contact 95785272

Looking for a driver Job in Muscat, has got 9 years experience. Contact 78944897

FOR SALE
Hitachi 8 Kg fully automatic

washing machine with 10 year motor warranty (bill will be provided) used by family of 2 members only so in good condition. Price RO65. Contact 91104880

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

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

GET YOUR LATEST NEWS UPDATES ON WhatsApp

SUBSCRIBE NOW

71509370

1. Save this number to your contact list
2. Send **"start"** to receive news updates

HISTORY AND NATURE

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

Best destinations to travel in the Middle East in 2021

The Middle East is endowed with some of the most enchanting tourist destinations that have been delighting tourists as well as casual visitors for decades on end. From places steeped in illustrious history to precincts bestowed with fascinating natural

beauty, most destinations have a mixed bag of modern attractions as well as old world charm to offer. Avid travellers say, one lifetime is not enough to discover and relish the cultural splendour of the Middle East. Joan Torres, popular travel blogger and author of 'Against the Compass', a well-established brand aimed at promoting emerg-

ing tourism destinations, has compiled a list of the 25 best places to travel in the Middle East in 2021. This list was drawn up after 3 years of living and traveling around the region, based on his own experience and opinion. From Eritrea to Sudan, Syria, and Pakistan, Joan Torres has been traveling to some of

the most off the beaten track destinations on Earth since 2014. His travel blog - Against the Compass - aims at helping and inspiring tourists to do the same, always in a responsible way, with no rush and in a safe manner. "These choices are based on their level of security, historical importance, and natural beauty. My objective is to show you not only

that the Middle East is a safe place to travel to, but I also want you to see the huge natural and cultural contrast between countries and the relevant role they have in our history," says Torres. Reproduced here are glimpses about 12 of Torres' top 25 (the remaining 13 will be featured in the next edition):



Amadiya – Home to the ‘Three Wise Men’

Country – Iraq

Located in the north of Iraqi Kurdistan, only 10km away from the Turkish border, Amadiya is a lovely, very photogenic village located on the flat top of a mountain, which has no less than 5,000 years of history. From the Assyrians to the Persians, as well as several Jewish and Christian communities, dozens of different civilisations and religions have left their footprint in this historical place. Furthermore, Amadiya is believed to be the home of the 'three wise men', who made a pilgrimage to Bethlehem to see Jesus Christ after his birth. Today, Amadiya is a Muslim Kurdish village, surrounded by the most striking mountain scenery, characteristic from northern Iraq and one the most beautiful places to travel in the Middle East.



Esfahan – Jaw-dropping Islamic architecture

Country – Iran

Esfahan is Iran's most amazing city and its mosques, composed of giant domes and mind-blowing ceilings with extravagant geometrical forms, are the most impressive buildings in the Middle East, without any doubt. Being one of the most historical cities in the region, Esfahan has always been home to a large community of scholars and prestigious intellectuals and its importance and influence in this part of the world was often compared to Athens and Rome. Today, as per Iranian standards, Esfahan is a surprisingly modern, clean and vibrant city where some of the most educated and brilliant people in the country live.



Damascus – The Old City

Country – Syria

'Everything here is very old.' This is the first thing the hotel receptionist told me on the day I arrived in the city. Damascus is indeed one of the most ancient cities in the world – probably the oldest country capital – established in the second millennium BC, and capital of the Umayyad Caliphate from 661 to 750, one of the most important caliphates ever, extending from Spain to Iran. My favourite place in Damascus was Umayyad mosque, an outstanding mosque which passed from being a Jupiter Temple during the Roman era to a Christian basilica dedicated to John the Baptist, and then, one of the largest mosques in the world. Today, Damascus is a safe city and, fortunately, the Old City has remained like that during most of the war.



Baalbek – Giant Roman ruins

Country – Lebanon

Extending from Western Europe to North Africa and the Middle East, the Roman Empire was said to be the greatest empire that has ever existed. Today, most of its ruins, some of them in relatively good condition, are major tourist attractions that receive hundreds of visitors every day. Outside of Rome, the ruins of Baalbek are among the most impressive, not only due to their dimensions and good preservation but also because you are likely to have the ruins to yourself as, here, we are talking about Lebanon, one of the most 'off the beaten track' destinations in the region. Here, you can experience the greatest Roman ruins like nowhere else, hence one of the best places to travel in the Middle East.



Dhofar - Vast coastline, endowed with greenery

Country – Oman

Stretching from south Oman all the way to the Yemeni border, Dhofar's coastline may differ significantly from what you expect from an Omani beach. Vertiginous cliffs, turquoise-blue waters, and empty, epic beaches characterise the beaches of southern Oman, barely discovered by the average traveler, who tends to stick to the northern part of the country. If you are into wild, random camping, and road trips in the Middle East, it doesn't really get better than this. Yet, with its dramatically jaw-dropping coastline and unique tropical weather, Dhofar is not only an unmissable destination in Oman but, in my opinion, one of the most mind-blowing places to visit in the Middle East.



Al Balad - The colourful old city of Jeddah

Country – Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is filled with ancient and historical places, and one of the best examples is Al Balad, the old part of Jeddah, established 1,300 years ago as the gateway for Muslims on their way to the holy city of Mecca, mostly arriving by sea from Africa. Today a UNESCO World Heritage site, Al Balad is a lively area filled with colourful facades and, by far, the most beautiful old city from all the Gulf Monarchies.



Jerusalem – Holiest place for three monotheist religions

Country – Israel and Palestine

Today, Jerusalem is part of Israel but, if Palestine ever becomes an independent state, East Jerusalem, which is mostly inhabited by Arabs, is seen to be the capital of the country. Being one of the most important places for Christians, Muslims, and Jews, Jerusalem is a city that has perfectly combined tradition and history with a 21st-century city, meaning that you can stroll around the old city and its historical sites for days and, at the same time, enjoy the endless nightlife, food scene, and modernity of the new part of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is one of those cities that are worth spending several days in.



Golestan – Central Asia in the Middle East

Country – Iran

What if I tell you that, in a very remote part of Iran, bordering the Turkmenistan border, there is a region with an unexpectedly mystical landscape, home to a large Turkmen community who have more similarities to people from Kyrgyztan than other Iranians. This region is called Golestan province, one of the least visited provinces in Iran, whose main peculiarity is that most of its inhabitants are ethnically Turkmen, a central Asian ethnicity originally from Turkmenistan. From central Asian food, such as plov and kurtut, to the way they dress, the Mongolian features in people's faces and a very central Asian nomadic life, visible in their love for horses and the yurts they live in, Golestan is a different world from the rest of the Middle East.



Petra – One of the 7 wonders of the world

Country – Jordan

Even though this is likely the most touristic site in the region, it would be a sin not to consider one of the 7 wonders among one of the best places to visit in the Middle East. Petra was founded in the VI century BC by the Edomites but, it didn't prosper until the Nabateans (a group of nomadic Arabs) took over the place and built the city by carving it from the rock, making it become an important trading hub. The architecture of Petra leaves you breathless and, besides admiring the treasury and the monastery there, I recommend getting off the path, going hiking, and taking the trails less traveled.



Jizan - Green, rolling hills

Country – Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is a massive country and, as such, it has quite a few geographical areas, the most dramatically different being Jizan, a province bordering the country of Yemen. Asian-like terraced fields, greenery, and monkeys comprise the mountain villages of Jizan, miles away from Saudi Arabia stereotypes, plus the people there are culturally Yemeni, from the food they eat to the way they traditionally dress. Jizan can't be more off the beaten track.



Beirut – Most culturally diverse and liberal city

Country – Lebanon

Beirut, is the capital of Lebanon, a city that suffered one of the longest contemporary Civil Wars (25 years, ending in 1991). Today, Beirut brags about being one of the safest cities in the region. With unbelievable economic growth and the rapid rise of the middle class, Beirut is the most liberal and westernised city in the Middle East. I love Beirut because of its deep, rich and contrasting history. It's composed of dozens of districts that differ massively from each other: The hipster district of Gemmayzeh, Hezbollah areas like Bourj al-Barajneh, the student neighbourhood of Hamra, old Palestinian refugee camps, the Armenian district of Bourj Hammoud, several Christian areas and much, much more!



Erbil – Cosmopolitan Iraqi city

Country – Iraq

Not many cities in the world have as much history as Erbil has. With almost 30,000 years of history, according to historians, and, today a UNESCO World Heritage site, Erbil is the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan, a city with plenty of tradition, filled with plenty of ancient bazaars, epic cafés, and historical sites. Nevertheless, the awesomeness of Erbil doesn't end up here and, in fact, what may surprise you is that, as well as a classic Middle Eastern Muslim city, this is also a real pro-Western metropolis. It is also a regional business hub where a large expatriate community lives and, as a consequence, has some of the most awesome nightlife in the Middle East.

(Do follow: www.againstthecompass.com)

Messi scores but Barca held to draw by Cadiz

Madrid, Spain - Barcelona compounded their Champions League misery at the hands of Paris Saint-Germain by drawing on Sunday at home to Cadiz, who scored an 87th-minute penalty to snatch a 1-1 draw at Camp Nou.

Lionel Messi broke a Barcelona record by making his 506th La Liga appearance for the club and marked the milestone with a goal, his own spot-kick looking likely to secure a narrow win for his side.

But Barca failed to score a second despite a hatful of chances and Cadiz punished them with a late equaliser, Alex Fernandez converting from the spot after a wild swing from Clement Lenglet.

The draw means Ronald Koeman's side move only one point closer to Atletico Madrid in the table instead of three, after Atletico gave their rivals an opportunity by losing at home to Levante on Saturday.

Earlier on Saturday, Real Madrid came back within touching distance of the top after they beat Real Valladolid 1-0.

Atletico had the chance to stretch their lead to 11 points this week by winning back-to-back games against Levante but instead they followed a 1-1 draw on Wednesday with a surprise 0-2 loss, meaning a five-point advantage became only six.

Real Madrid cranked up the pressure again by edging to a win over struggling Valladolid, Casemiro's second-half header cutting the gap to just three points, albeit with Atletico still



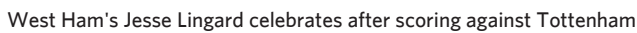
owning a game in hand. "It's not because Atletico lost. We believe we can win the league," said Casemiro. "There are still 42 points left, that's a lot of points."

second in the league this season and their first at the Wanda Metropolitano in any competition since Barca beat them there in December 2019. They have now gone seven league games

without a clean sheet, their longest run since Simeone became coach in 2011, and their hopes of tightening up will not be helped by an injury to Jose Gimenez, who hobbled off and

may not be fit to face Chelsea.

Saturday:
Valencia 2 Celta Vigo 0.
AFP



London, UK - Jose Mourinho's position as Tottenham manager is under further scrutiny after a damaging 1-2 defeat at West Ham on Sunday as Leicester moved into second by beating Aston Villa by the same score.

Spurs have now lost five of their last six league games to fall nine points off the pace in the battle for a top-four finish. They are now ninth in the table. Mourinho's men were undone at the London Stadium. Michail Antonio opened the scoring after

just five minutes before the rejuvenated Jesse Lingard smashed home the third goal of his loan spell from Manchester United two minutes into the second half. Spurs rallied after Lucas Moura's header pulled a goal back.

Leicester were 2-0 up inside 23 minutes as Harvey Barnes pounced after Emiliano Martinez saved from Jamie Vardy. Villa were handed a lifeline three minutes into the second half when Bertrand Traore swept home Matt Targett's cross.

their first win at Liverpool since 1999 as the troubled Premier League champions crashed to a 0-2 loss in the Merseyside derby on Saturday.

Richarlison's early opener and Gylfi Sigurdsson's late penalty gave the Toffees a first win on any ground over Liverpool in 24 attempts dating back to 2010.

After a run of 68 league games unbeaten at Anfield, injury-ravaged Liverpool have lost their last four on home turf

for the first time since 1923.

"I'm very pleased for the club and the supporters. I hope for sure that they are going to celebrate tonight," said Everton boss Carlo Ancelotti.

Liverpool have won just two of their last 11 league games to leave them in grave danger of missing out on Champions League football for the first time since Jurgen Klopp's first season in charge five years ago.



Berlin, Germany - Bundesliga leaders Bayern Munich crashed to a 1-2 defeat at Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday as the Club World Cup champions gave renewed hope to their title rivals, three days before their Champions League last-16 first leg at Lazio. Robert Lewandowski netted his 26th league goal of the season for Bayern, but Frankfurt deserved the win thanks to first-half goals by Japan midfielder Daichi Kamada and Amin Younes.

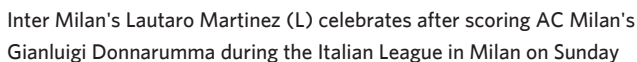
Fourth-placed Frankfurt are seven points behind Bayern and unbeaten in 11 Bundesliga matches. It was Bayern's third league defeat of the season. Their last, a 3-2 reverse at Borussia Moenchengladbach in January, was followed by a shock German Cup defeat at second-tier Holstein Kiel. It was only the sixth loss head coach Hansi Flick has suffered since taking charge in November 2019.



Sunday: Augsburg 1 Bayer
Leverkusen 1; **Saturday:**
Borussia Moenchengladbach 1
Mainz 2, Freiburg 0 Union Berlin
1, Cologne 0 VfB Stuttgart 1,
Schalke 0 Borussia
Dortmund 4.

Sunday: Rangers 4 Dundee United 1; **Saturday:** Aberdeen 1 Kilmarnock 0, Hibernian 2 Hamilton 0, St Mirren 1 Livingston 1, Motherwell 0 St Johnstone 3.

AFP

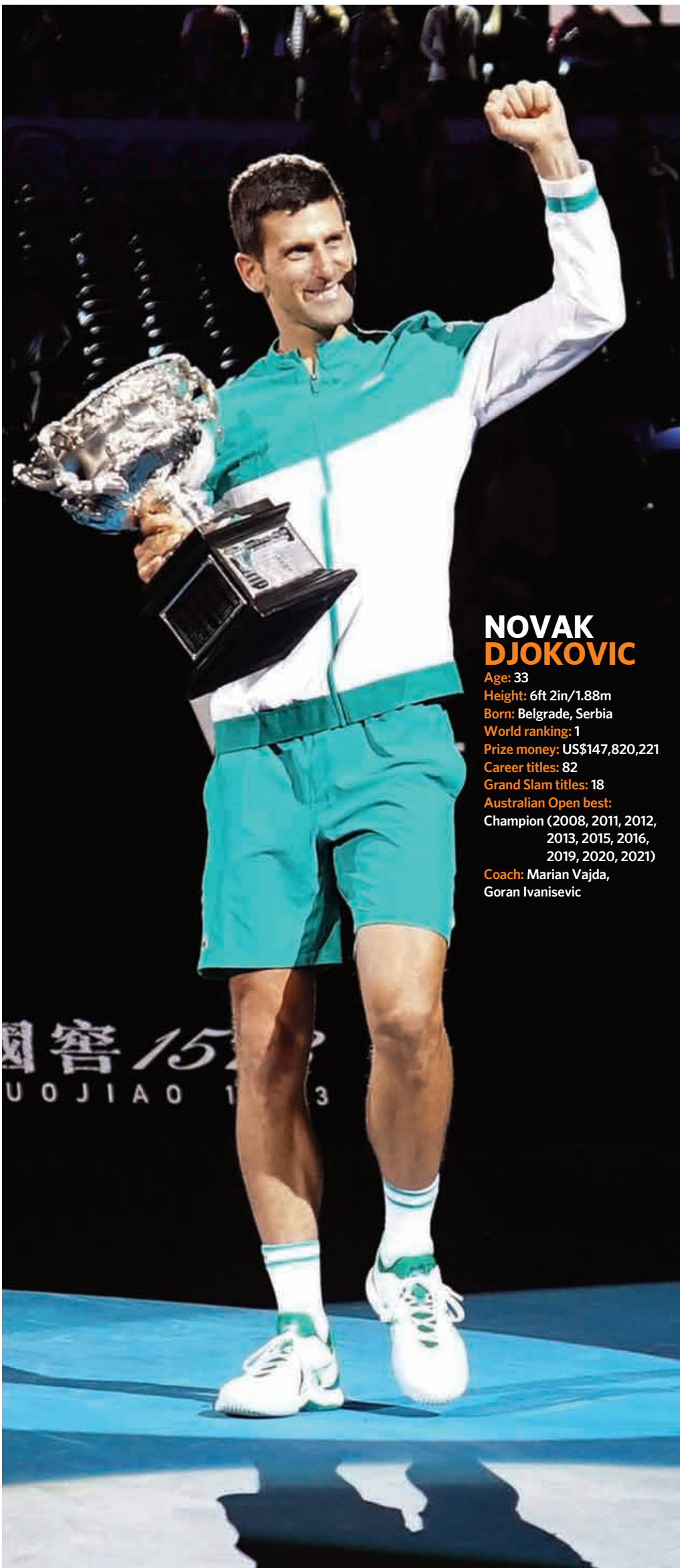


Milan, Italy - Inter Milan beat city rivals AC Milan 3-0 to extend their lead at the top of Serie A on Sunday as Lautaro Martinez scored a double, with Romelu Lukaku also on target. Martinez headed in on five minutes, before the Argentine added a second 12 minutes after the break, with Lukaku powering through for a third on 66 minutes against Zlatan Ibrahimovic's Milan.

Inter opened up a four-point lead over their second-placed opponents as Antonio Conte's side target a first league title since their unprecedented treble under Jose Mourinho in 2010.

Sunday: Parma 2 Udinese 2;
Saturday: Lazio 1 Sampdoria 0,
Genoa 2 Hellas Verona 2,
Sassuolo 1 Bologna 1.

AFP



NOVAK DJOKOVIC

Age: 33
Height: 6ft 2in/1.88m
Born: Belgrade, Serbia
World ranking: 1
Prize money: US\$147,820,221
Career titles: 82
Grand Slam titles: 18
Australian Open best: Champion (2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2020, 2021)
Coach: Marian Vajda, Goran Ivanisevic

NINE FINALS, NINE TITLES

World No 1 Djokovic outplays Medvedev in summit clash to continue his domination in Australian Open

Melbourne, Australia - Peerless world No 1 Novak Djokovic demolished Russia's Daniil Medvedev in straight sets to win his ninth Australian Open title and extend his record-breaking reign at Melbourne Park Sunday.

Djokovic overpowered the fourth seed 7-5, 6-2, 6-2 in front of 7,400 fans on Rod Laver Arena to end the Russian's unbeaten run at 20 matches.

In winning a third straight Australian Open for the second time, the Serb claimed his 18th Grand Slam title to move within two of Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal who have 20 each, while denying Medvedev his first.

Rarely has a player been so dominant at a single tournament with the Serb's record-extending ninth title moving him past Federer's eight at Wimbledon but still a long way behind the 13 Nadal has won at Roland Garros.

But it was a rollercoaster ride to get there, with Djokovic dropping five sets en route to the final and battling an abdominal injury that nearly forced him to pull out after the third round.

Despite admitting it was a gamble to keep playing, with a risk the injury could get worse and affect the rest of his season, the 33 year old chose to continue and it paid off. "Thanks to this court, the Rod Laver Arena, I love you each year more and more - the love affair keeps going," said a relieved Djokovic, while paying tribute to Medvedev.

"Daniil, a class act, great guy and great person," he said. "I really like him off the court ... but on court he's definitely one of the toughest players I have ever faced in my life. It's a matter of time till you hold a Grand Slam."

Djokovic's speech to the crowd came after Tennis Australia chair Jayne Hrdlicka was booed for mentioning the Covid vaccine and the Victorian

government. The unusual scenes came at the end of a tournament that was delayed three weeks over the coronavirus and had to bar fans for five days when state authorities ordered a snap lockdown.

'Today was not the day'

Medvedev, 25, is one of the smartest players on tour, keeping his opponents guessing with his flat and low groundstrokes, changing up the pace and angles, as he blends impenetrable defence with opportunistic offence. But the Serb, who held a 4-3 head-to-head record against

him but had lost three of the previous four, had his measure.

"It's never easy to find words when you have just lost the final of a Grand Slam," said Medvedev.

"But congrats Novak and his team. I mean, nine Grand Slams in Australia and 18 total is amazing and probably not the last one."

"I really wanted to make this match long and more entertaining, but today was not the day," he added.

In front of a pro-Djokovic crowd, Medvedev overcooked two forehands on his opening

service game then sent one into the net to hand the Serb the first break points, then a wild backhand saw him immediately on the back foot.

Djokovic consolidated with a serve to love before the Russian finally got off the mark with a wobbly hold for 1-3. But then a failed drop shot and net volley from the top seed allowed the Russian to break back.

Long rallies ensued and it went with serve until some brilliant groundstrokes from Djokovic earned three break points at 6-5. Medvedev saved two but not the third to lose the opening set.

Racquet smash

Undeterred, the tall, pencil-thin Russian kept coming and dialed up the pressure to break Djokovic's opening serve in set two, only for the Serb to immediately strike back.

Djokovic won three games in a row, despite the disruption of two fans being ejected in an apparent refugee protest, as he took control.

He raced to a 5-2 lead with Medvedev smashing his racquet in frustration as the set and the championship began slipping away.

Deflated, Medvedev dropped his opening serve in set three and never looked like finding a way back as Djokovic, in his 28th Grand Slam final compared to the Russian's second, drew on his experience to close out the match, dropping to the court in celebration.

The win reinforced Djokovic's status as world number one, where he will mark his 31st week when the new rankings come out on Monday, surpassing Federer's record of 310.

Medvedev will move to a career-high three in the rankings, behind Nadal.

AFP



Dodig-Polasek claim men's doubles crown

Melbourne, Australia - Ivan Dodig and Filip Polasek upset defending champions Joe Salisbury and Rajeev Ram to win the Australian Open men's doubles title Sunday - their first as a team.

The Croat-Slovak combination, seeded nine, proved too strong for the British-American fifth seeds, outlasting them 6-3, 6-4 on Rod Laver Arena.

"Amazing memories. This is our first Grand Slam as a team and we're having a lot of fun. I hope it continues," said Dodig. Their win deprived

Salisbury and Ram from becoming the first pair to successfully defend their crown at Melbourne Park since Bob and Mike Bryan won three in a row from 2009-11.

It also put an end to Ram's hopes of leaving Australia with two titles after he claimed the mixed doubles honours on Saturday alongside Barbora Krejickova.

While a breakthrough Grand Slam for Polasek, it was Dodig's second after he won Roland Garros in 2015 when teamed with Marcelo Melo.

AFP



'Big Three are cyborgs of tennis'

Melbourne, Australia - A flummoxed Daniil Medvedev said he was still looking for ways to short-circuit the Big Three 'cyborgs of tennis' after his heavy defeat by Novak Djokovic in the Australian Open final on Sunday.

The Russian came into the decider on a 20-match winning streak but he ran into a brick wall in the world No 1, who claimed his ninth Australian Open title and third in a row.

It left Medvedev, 25, a leading member of the next generation, wondering how to overcome Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer, who have 58 major titles between them.

"We're talking about some cyborgs of tennis, in a good way. They're just unbelievable," Medvedev said.

"I always say they're just better than other tennis players. I'm not shy to say this. It's just truth. In fact, in numbers and everything."

"That's why they have so many Slams," he added. "They're just really good."

Fourth-ranked Medvedev, who took Nadal to five sets in



Daniil Medvedev in action during the men's singles final match against Novak Djokovic on Sunday

the 2019 US Open final, hoped he was inching closer to a breakthrough.

"I think I got closer because I always say experience is the key for me," he said. "Next time if I play Novak ever here in the final, I for sure going to do some things on the court, maybe off the court also, differently."

But he said he had no chance

of matching the careers of Nadal, Federer or Djokovic, the 'king of Melbourne'.

"To win nine Australian Opens, I need to win every year until I'm 34," he said.

"I mean, I believe in myself, but I don't think I'm able to do it. Same with Rafa. I mean, 13 Roland Garros..."

"Today with Novak, I felt like

I wanted to mix up things, I wanted to try to do something different, but I felt like he took all the time from me," Medvedev added.

"We still played like two hours or something, not that fast match. For me it felt like 30 minutes and I was there holding the finalist trophy."

AFP

HITACHI

Surprisingly White!



- 16 Programs
- 90°C Tub Clean
- Baby Care / Rapid 15
- Timer / Stain Level
- Prewash / Extra Rinse
- Door Clean
- Tangle-Free Finish
- Auto Power Off
- Full Auto Restart



BD-70CE
7.0kg

BD-80CE
8.0kg



MUSCAT
97693496, 96742452
Available at
Major Hypermarkets & Electronics Retailers

C.R. No. 1009680

SALALAH
79011363

O'REILLY EDGES FAIZ FOR TITLE

Sayyid Abbas Trophy: Seven year old Yusuf al Rumhy makes his debut in a 36-hole tournament

Ashok Purohit
Muscat

The annual Sayyid Abbas Golf Championship is one of the most popular and prestigious tournaments at the Ghala Golf Club. Held in the memory of former club chairman, Late H H Sayyid Abbas bin Faisal, the tournament has over the years attracted the best domestic amateur golfers in the sultanate leading to an exciting battle for the top honours.

Held since 1979 at the Ghala Golf Club, Sayyid Abbas Trophy is one of the oldest tournaments and the 2021 edition witnessed a large field of 115 golfers.

After two days of competition in good playing conditions, James O'Reilly emerged the winner in the nett category with a score of 140, staving off a formidable challenge from former champion Faiz Mohammed Riaz, who finished just a stroke behind (141) to claim the runner-up honours.

Both, O'Reilly and Faiz, are regular members at the Ghala Golf Club and their time spent on their home course seemed to have given them the extra edge over the other rivals. Former national team golfer Hussain Dad al Balushi, of Ras al Hamra Golf Club, with a score of 142, was second runner-up.

O'Reilly shot a three under-par 69 on the opening day and then carded one under-par 71 on the next day while Faiz carded a one under-par on Friday and a 70 on the second day.

Faiz's total was enough to give him the gross category title but with each golfer allowed to take home only one award, Rashad al Harthy, who shot 143 (67 and 76), and was second best, took the gross division award.

Speaking after his win in gross division and finishing second in nett, Faiz Mohammed said, "I was not happy with my display in the previous tournament - The Kais Celebration. I was eager to make up for the disappointment and I am happy and relieved that I could perform at a high level amid a stiff competition. It was a tight finish as only one shot separated me and O'Reilly."

Another golfer who won the hearts of all was young Yusuf bin Azaan al Rumhy, the seven year old son of Oman's No 1 golfer Azaan. The grandson of H E Dr Mohammed al Rumhy, who himself is an avid golfer, Yusuf was making his debut in a 36-hole event and finished an



Faiz Mohammed Riaz tees off at the Ghala Golf Club during the second day of Sayyid Abbas Trophy on Saturday



Seven year old Yusuf bin Azaan al Rumhy tees off during the second day of the Sayyid Abbas Trophy at the Ghala Golf Club on Saturday



James O'Reilly (R) holds aloft the Sayyid Abbas Trophy as Abdulnasir al Raisi of Bank Muscat looks on



Rashad al Harthy, gross division winner



Hussain Dad al Balushi, second runner-up in nett division

overall creditable 20th with scores of 68 and 81, playing on different tees for juniors.

A proud Azaan, who did not have the best of his days at the event and shot 151 (73, 78), was thrilled at his son's achievement.

Azaan said, "It is a special day for me and my family. I am proud to see Yusuf complete his first 36-hole tournament and play so well. I thank my family and all well-wishers for supporting him. He is passionate about the sport and I hope to see him play for Oman and bring laurels for the country."

Azaan's brother, Hamed al Rumhy, also featured in the tournament and with the third generation player on the golf course, there is no denying that golf runs in the blood of Rumhys.

Jacky Franssen took the honours in the women's division with a nett of 155 (74, 81) while Diego Ojeda was winner in junior category with 137 nett (73, 64) and followed by Yusuf.

OTHER WINNERS:

NEAREST THE PIN:

James Acebedo
(No 2 hole), Mohammed
Khawar (No 15 hole).

LONGEST DRIVE:

Azaan al Rumhy
(No 7 hole), Yusuf al Rumhy
(No 16 hole).

Thanking Bank Muscat for their support, Faiz Mohammed, Ghala Golf Club board member, said, "We at Ghala Golf Club extend our gratitude and thanks to Bank Muscat for supporting the tournament. We believe that the success of such events and the recognition which the players receive from participation will serve as a source of encouragement to others to participate and expand their golfing skills."

Abdulnasir al Raisi, DGM, Premier Banking, Bank Muscat, gave away the awards.

@ashokmuscat

Ahmad's Oman Racing misses podium in final ALMS race

Our Correspondent
Muscat

ASIAN LE MANS SERIES

Excellent pace, top-class racecraft and an allround performance ensured Ahmad al Harthy and Oman Racing concluded the 2021 Asian Le Mans Series (ALMS) with a season-best fourth place GT Class finish and 16th overall at the Yas Marina circuit in Abu Dhabi, UAE, on Saturday.

Just like Friday's third-round, Ahmad and his teammates Tom Canning and Jonny Adam, were in contention for a dream podium result but missed out, after four hours of incredible action, by a mere 3.5 seconds.

Finishing among the top-four is certain to give Ahmad a boost ahead of the 2021 season as Oman Racing finished its maiden campaign in the ultra-competitive Asian Le Mans Series.

"We really tried to capitalise



Ahmad al Harthy drives his Aston Martin during the fourth round of ALMS in Abu Dhabi on Saturday

on everything possible and we knew everyone was on different strategies, P4 was the maximum we could get out of the car and we're happy with it," said Oman's No 1 driver.

Ahmad added, "It's great to

end the series with our strongest drives, both in Friday's race and the finale on Saturday.

"My stint was very encouraging again. I had a good amount of clean, uninterrupted racing, which was great for me and we

pushed as hard as we could. It's great for us to have been so very close to the podium in the final race and it's always an honour and pleasure for me to represent Oman in these big international championships. We look forward

to continuing to do that."

Starting the season finale from eighth on the GT class grid, Canning took the first stint of the race and maintained position early on before moving up into seventh

GT ahead of a Full Course Yellow period 80 minutes into the race. The young Briton then pitted shortly after to hand over the No 97 Aston Martin Vantage GT3 to Ahmad. Running fifth in

minutes to go. With just 90 minutes to run Ahmad was still inside the overall top-ten and well over 40 seconds clear of his closest class rival. Ahmad pitted with roughly one hour and 25 minutes left on the clock to hand over to Adam from the lead. Threading into the race seventh in GT, the Aston Martin factory driver rose to fourth with an hour remaining and was less than six seconds shy of the podium.

Adam entered the pits for the final time with ten minutes to go and rejoined in fifth but less than two seconds away from the podium battle. At the flag after four hours, Adam was just 3.5 seconds shy of the podium in the GT class.

Inception Racing team of Brendan Iribe, Olie Milroy and Ben Barnicoat in McLaren 720s GT3 won the class honours and JOTA duo of Sean Gelael and Tom Blomqvist in Oreca07-Gibson won the fourth round race.

place. Following couple of Safety Car incidents, teams took the opportunity to serve pit-stops during the lengthy second cautionary period and when all had shaken out, Canning was up into third in class and the outright top-ten.

Just after the end of the opening hour, action began and Canning climbed into second in

class when everything settled, Ahmad moved to fourth around 25 minutes into his stint and then moved into the podium placings a couple of laps later.

Driving faultlessly as the race reached the halfway point and dusk began to set-in, Ahmad was still third. Soon climbing into second in GT, Ahmad took the class lead with one hour and 45

It's always an honour and pleasure for me to represent Oman in these big international championships. We look forward to continuing to do that

AHMAD AL HARTHY



SUBARU

Confidence in Motion

**Buy with Confidence.
Drive with Confidence.**



FORESTER

2L • Boxer Engine • Symmetrical AWD

**Cash as Gift, Free 5 years/100,000 KMs Service
Registration, Insurance and Much More...**

For More Details Contact:

80050004



* Terms & Conditions apply. Please contact the showroom manager for the exact offer details.