

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Tuesday issued four Royal Decrees. Royal Decree No 51/2022 amending some provisions of the Notary Public Law. After presenting the same before the Council of Oman, Article (1) states that the amendments attached to the aforementioned Notary Public Law shall be applied. Article (2) cancels all that contradicts the attached amendments or contravenes their provisions. Article (3) says that the Decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced the day following its date of publishing. **DETAILS ON P5**



HIS MAJESTY AND EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT HOLD BILATERAL MEETING

LEADERS REVIEW HISTORICAL TIES

LEADERS REVIEW HISTORICAL TIES BINDING TWO COUNTRIES

TALKS HELD IN SPIRIT OF KINSHIP AND HARMONY

FOCUS ON PROMOTING THEM TOWARDS BROADER HORIZONS

MUTUAL DESIRE TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION REITERATED



KEENNESS TO BOOST VOLUME OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION

JOINT INVESTMENT FUND TO INVEST IN FEASIBLE PROJECTS

OMANI-EGYPTIAN BUSINESS COUNCIL'S ROLE HAILED

DEPARTMENTS TOLD TO EXPLORE INVESTMENT AVENUES

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt, held a bilateral meeting at the Al Alam Palace on Tuesday morning.

The two leaders reviewed the historical relations binding the two countries and means of promoting them towards broader horizons in a manner that serves joint interests and realises aspirations of the two countries' peoples.

This was stated on Tuesday in a joint statement on the occasion of the visit of the Egyptian President to the Sultanate of Oman.

The text of the joint statement says: "Stemming from the ancient fraternal relations and firm cooperation between the Sultanate of Oman and the Arab Republic of Egypt, and in response to the gracious invitation from His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, President Abdel Fattah el Sisi

Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance (Head of the Mission of Honour), Sayyid Dr Sultan bin Yarub al Busaidy, Adviser at the Private Office and Abdullah bin Nasser al Rahbi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Arab Republic of Egypt and its Permanent Delegate to the Arab League.

Meanwhile, it was attended from the Egyptian side by Sameh Shoukry, Foreign Minister, Dr Hala El Said, Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Major General Abbas Kamel, Chief of the Intelligence Service, Khalid Radi, Ambassador of the Arab Republic

of Egypt to the Sultanate of Oman and Ambassador Bassam Radi, Spokesman of the Presidency.

LUNCHEON

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik hosted a private luncheon at Al Alam Palace guesthouse on Tuesday in honour of President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt, on the occasion of his visit to the Sultanate of Oman.

The luncheon was attended by some ministers and several members of the official delegation accompanying the Egyptian President.

Then, His Majesty the Sultan bade the Egyptian President farewell, wishing him a safe return to his country. His Majesty also wished the Arab Republic of Egypt further progress and prosperity.

On his turn, President Sisi expressed his utmost thanks for the warm welcome that was accorded to him and his delegation during the visit, wishing His Majesty the Sultan continuous good health, happiness and long life.

The Egyptian President also wished the Omani people further progress and growth under the wise leadership of His Majesty the Sultan. — **ONA**

Oman, Egypt to study setting up of joint investment fund

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt reaffirmed their keenness in augmenting the volume of economic cooperation between the two countries. The two leaders also instructed studying the establishment of a joint investment fund between the two countries to invest in feasible projects in diverse vital sectors.



The two leaders instructed studying the establishment of a joint investment fund to invest in feasible projects in diverse sectors

JOINT STATEMENT

of the Arab Republic of Egypt paid an official 2-day visit to the Sultanate of Oman along with a high-level delegation. His Majesty the Sultan and the Egyptian President held official talks in the spirit of kinship and harmony.

"The two leaders reiterated their mutual firm desire to strengthen bilateral cooperation relations towards

broader horizons in all spheres and levels in a manner that serves the mutual benefit of the two countries and their brotherly peoples.

"The two leaders lauded the continuous cooperation and coordination maintained in political, diplomatic, economic and cultural fields. They also affirmed their support for everything that serves the pillars of security, stability and peace in the region and the world at large and boosts the welfare and growth of the two countries' peoples.

"The two leaders also expressed their keenness in upgrading economic cooperation and developing all aspects of bilateral relations. In this regard, the two leaders underlined the role played by the joint committee and the Omani-Egyptian Business Council in developing areas of bilateral cooperation". **DETAILS ON P4**

PRESIDENT SISI LEAVES AFTER VISIT



President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt, left on Tuesday afternoon after an official two-day visit to the Sultanate of Oman. The Egyptian President was seen off at the Royal Airport by HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs and others. The visit explored various areas that serve the joint interests and meet the aspirations of their peoples. **DETAILS ON P4**



Leaders seek to broaden horizons of relations



His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq held an official session of talks with President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt at Al Alam Palace on Tuesday. The session reviewed the march of the distinguished relations binding Oman and Egypt. It also explored areas of bilateral cooperation and ways of elevating them towards broader horizons to realise the aspirations of the Omani and Egyptian peoples.



HM hosts private luncheon in honour of President Sisi

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq hosted a private luncheon at Al Alam Palace guesthouse on Tuesday in honour of President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt on the

occasion of his visit to the Sultanate of Oman. The luncheon was attended by some ministers and several members of the official delegation accompanying the

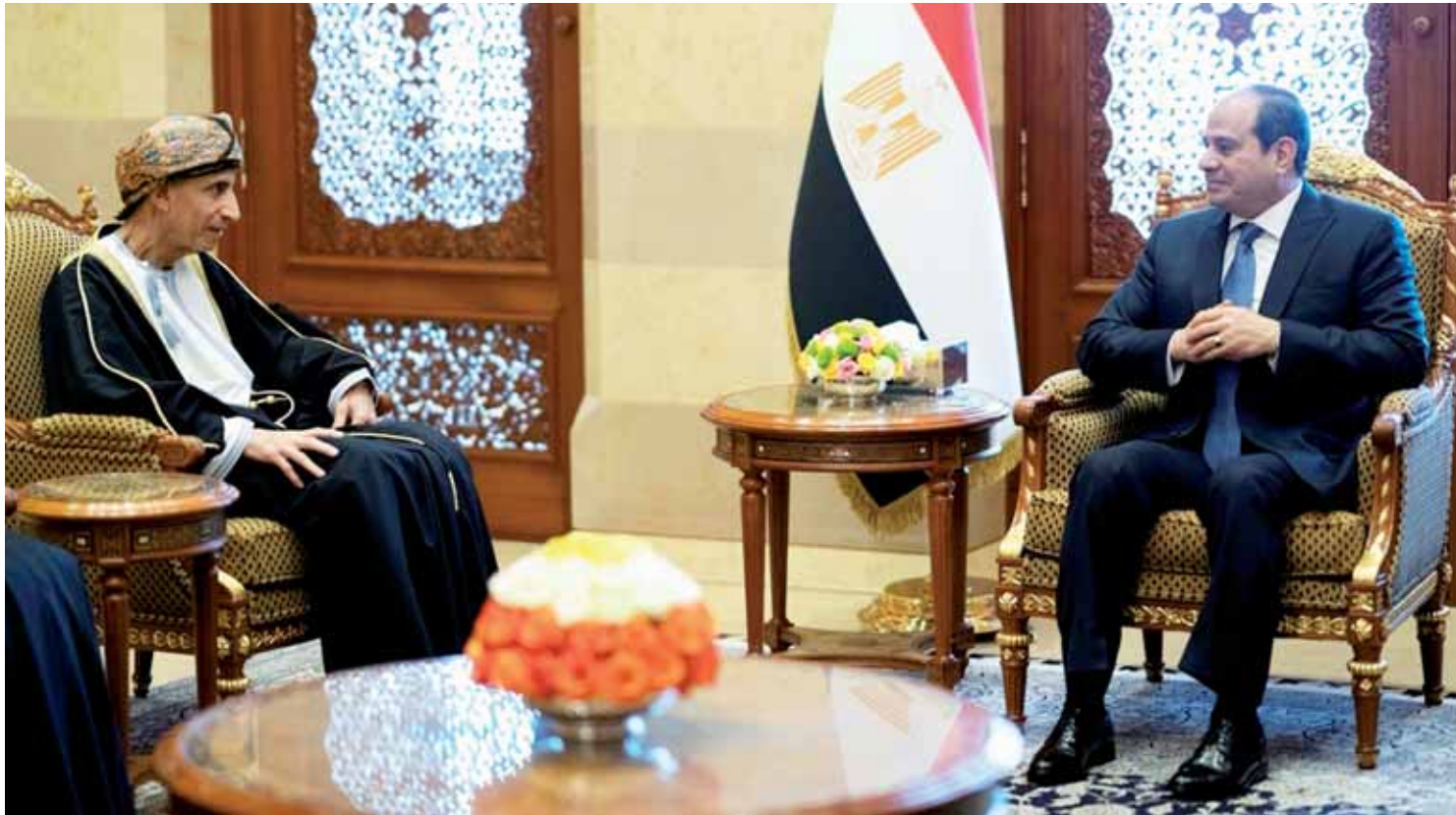
Egyptian President. Then, His Majesty the Sultan bade the Egyptian President farewell, wishing him a safe return to his country. His Majesty also wished the Arab Republic of Egypt further progress and

prosperity. On his turn, President el Sisi expressed his utmost thanks for the warm welcome that was accorded to him and his delegation during the visit, wishing His Majesty the

Sultan continuous good health, happiness and a long life. The Egyptian President also wished the Omani people further progress and growth under the wise leadership of His Majesty the Sultan. — ONA



Follow us on facebook:
omanobserver



Fahd, President Sisi review ties

MUSCAT: President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt received in his residence at Al Alam Palace guesthouse on Tuesday His Highness Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmood al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers.

The meeting explored areas of cooperation between the two countries and means of promoting them in various areas. It also reviewed the distinguished relations

and historical ties binding the two countries and peoples. It also discussed regional and international issues of mutual interest.

The meeting was attended from the Omani side by Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance (Head of the Mission of Honour), Dr Said bin Mohammed al Saqri, Minister of Economy, Abdullah bin Nasser al Rahbi, Ambassador

of Oman to Egypt and its Permanent Delegate to the Arab League.

It was attended from the Egyptian side by Sameh Shoukry, Foreign Minister, Dr Hala El Said, Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Major General Abbas Kamel, Chief of the Intelligence Service, Khalid Radi, Ambassador of Egypt to Oman, and Ambassador Bassam Radi, Spokesman of the Presidency. — **ONA**

Oman, Egypt sign MoUs, pacts and cooperation programmes



MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman and the Arab Republic of Egypt signed at Al Alam Palace on Tuesday six Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), two agreements, three executive programmes and letters of cooperation in various fields.

The pacts come within the context of the official visit of President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Sultanate of Oman.

The following are the pacts:

- ♦ MoU between the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion and the Egyptian Competition Authority on cooperation in promoting competition and combating monopolistic practices.
- ♦ MoU between the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion and the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones in Egypt in the field of investment promotion.
- ♦ MoU between the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion and the Egyptian Export Promotion Center on exports development.
- ♦ MoU between the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates and the Egyptian Industrial Development Authority in the field of establishing and managing industrial estates.
- ♦ MoU between Oman's Environment Authority and the Egyptian Ministry of Environment in the field of environment protection.
- ♦ Initial MoU on mutual recognition

of the marine qualification certificates for navigators and shift works issued by the Sultanate of Oman and the Arab Republic of Egypt.

- ♦ Initial cooperation agreement in the field of maritime transport and ports.
 - ♦ Cooperation agreement between Sultan Qaboos University and the Egyptian National Research Institute of Astronomy and Geophysics.
 - ♦ Executive programme for cooperation in the field of youth and sports between the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and the Egyptian Ministry of Youth and Sports for the years (2023-2025).
 - ♦ Executive programme for technical cooperation in the fields of labour and training for 2022.
 - ♦ Executive programme for cooperation in the field of higher education, research and innovation for the years (2022-2024).
- The pacts were signed on behalf of Oman's government by Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, while they were signed on behalf of the Egyptian government by Sameh Shoukry, Foreign Minister.

The Egyptian Foreign Minister affirmed to Oman News Agency (ONA) that these pacts would boost cooperation between Oman and Egypt, pointing out that they also represent an addition for the distinguished relations between the two countries.

On his turn, Sayyid Badr said that these pacts complement a set of previous

Oman and Egypt reaffirmed the advanced relations between the two countries and underscored the importance of enhancing them in economic, investment, tourism and science fields. They also exchanged views on various regional and international matters of common interest

agreements signed between Oman and Egypt, adding that there will be more cooperation between the two sides, particularly in the economic areas.

He affirmed to ONA that the two countries look forward to augment the volume of trade and investment exchange through the Omani-Egyptian Joint Action Committee and other departments concerned. This drive, said Sayyid Badr, reflects the approach of the two leaderships to enhance all that serve interests of their countries and peoples.

ENHANCED RELATIONS

Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, and his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukry also held a meeting at Al Alam Palace on Tuesday.

The two sides reaffirmed the advanced relations between Oman and Egypt and underscored the importance of enhancing them in economic, investment, tourism and science fields. They also exchanged views on various regional and international matters of common interest. They stressed the importance of resolving conflicts through peaceful means and dialogue.

The meeting was attended by Abdullah bin Nasser al Rahbi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Arab Republic of Egypt, Khalid Radi, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Sultanate of Oman, and Khalid bin Hashel al Muselhi, Head of the Minister's Office Department. — **ONA**

HIS MAJESTY INVITED TO ATTEND COP 27

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq has received a written message from President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt, inviting His Majesty to attend the 27th session of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 27) scheduled to be held in Sharm el Sheikh in November 2022. The message was received by Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, during his meeting with Sameh Shoukry, Egyptian Foreign Minister. — **ONA**

Omani investors offered incentives

MUSCAT: President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt met at Al Alam Palace guesthouse in Muscat on Tuesday Omani businessmen and businesswomen. The meeting aimed at promoting business and investment relations between the two countries. The meeting came within the framework of the official, current visit paid by the Egyptian President to the Sultanate of Oman.

The Egyptian President affirmed his country's preparedness to offer all incentives for Omani investors wishing to invest in various economic fields. He also underlined the crucial role carried out by the private sector in the two countries.

Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, gave a speech saying that the visit represents a sincere desire to build up a growing partnership in strategic economic sectors and enhance efforts of investment and commercial exchange in a manner that reflects the comparative and competitive advantages enjoyed by



the two countries.

On her turn, Dr Hala El Said, Minister of Planning and Economic Development, underscored in her speech the importance of cooperation and entering into investment partnerships to achieve joint interests for the good of the two countries.

The meeting saw a presentation by the Egyptian side highlighting investment opportunities in the Arab Republic of Egypt, its legal procedures governing these opportunities in various economic fields. — **ONA**



Beaconhouse
is hiring:

We are looking for the following positions

1. Accountant

Qualification & Experience:

- Must have a Bachelor's degree in accountancy
- Must have at least 4 years experience of working in accounts and experience working in an educational institute is preferable.
- A high level of English language, both speaking and writing are essential.

2. Kindergarten Manager

Qualification & Experience:

- Must have a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education
- Must have working experience with children aged 0-6 years.
- Five years of managerial experience with proven leadership skills are required.
- A high level of proficiency in English (written and spoken) is also required.

Letters of application and CVs are to be sent to the following address by Thursday 14th July.

Omani nationals can apply ONLY.

Email: careers@beaconhouse-qrm.edu.om

Shortlisted candidates only will be contacted.



Resolve to bolster economic cooperation

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt reaffirmed their keenness on augmenting the volume of economic cooperation between the two countries. The two leaders also instructed studying the establishment of a joint investment fund between the two countries to invest in feasible projects in diverse vital sectors.

This was stated on Tuesday in a joint statement on the occasion of the visit of the Egyptian President to the Sultanate of Oman. The text of the joint statement reads as follows:

“Stemming from the ancient fraternal relations and firm cooperation between the Sultanate of Oman and the Arab Republic of Egypt, and in response to the gracious invitation from His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt paid an official visit to the Sultanate of Oman along with a high-level delegation for a period of two days, on Monday and Tuesday 27-28 Dhul Qa’ada 1443 AH, corresponding to 27-28 June, 2022.

His Majesty the Sultan and the Egyptian President held official talks in the spirit of kinship and harmony. The two leaders reiterated their mutual firm desire to strengthen bilateral cooperation relations towards broader horizons in all spheres and levels in a manner that serves the mutual benefit of the two countries and their brotherly peoples.

The two leaders lauded the continuous cooperation and coordination maintained in political, diplomatic, economic and



cultural fields. They also affirmed their support for everything that serves the pillars of security, stability and peace in the region and the world at large and boosts the welfare and growth of the two countries’ peoples.

The two leaders also expressed their keenness in upgrading economic cooperation between the two countries and developing all aspects of bilateral relations. In this regard, the two leaders underlined the role played by the joint

committee and the Omani-Egyptian Business Council in developing areas of bilateral cooperation.

His Majesty the Sultan and the Egyptian President instructed all departments concerned to explore investment opportunities between the two countries in various fields, particularly energy, renewable energy, industry, health, pharmaceuticals, real estate development, tourism, petrochemicals, converting industries and information

technology for the mutual benefit of both sides. The move comes in light of the lucrative opportunities enjoyed by the two countries in a bid to develop economic relations, boost investments and strike partnerships, as well as augmenting the trade volume and the constructive role of the private sector to achieve integration between the two countries.

To this end, the two leaders instructed the consideration of establishing a joint investment

fund between the two countries to invest in feasible projects in diverse vital sectors.

The two leaders also exchanged views on various issues of mutual interest at the regional and international arenas. They also underscored the importance of dialogue, resolving disputes through peaceful means and coordinating the stances of the two countries in a manner that serves their interests and contributes to bolstering regional and

international cooperation based on the international law, principles of justice, fairness, respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of others. His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik congratulated the Arab Republic of Egypt on the occasion of Egypt winning to host the 27th edition of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP-27), which will be held in November 2022 in Sharm el Sheikh.

GENEROUS HOSPITALITY

President Abdel Fattah el Sisi expressed his appreciation to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and the Omani government and people for their warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to him and his accompanying delegation.

The Egyptian President wished the Sultanate of Oman further progress and prosperity. He also extended an invitation to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to visit the Arab Republic of Egypt. The invitation was welcomed by His Majesty.

A number of agreements and memoranda of understanding were signed during the visit of President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Sultanate of Oman in various fields, namely in protecting and promoting investments, exports development, environment protection and establishing and managing industrial estates, as well as cooperation in the fields of youth and sports, labour and training and higher education.

This statement was issued in Muscat on 28 Dhul Qa’ada 1443 AH corresponding to 28 June, 2022.” — ONA

Egyptian President leaves after two-day official visit



MUSCAT: President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt left here on Tuesday afternoon after an official two-day visit to the Sultanate of Oman.

The Egyptian President was seen off at the Royal Airport by His Highness Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal al Busaidy, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, Gen Sultan bin Mohammed

al Numani, Minister of the Royal Office, Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal al Busaidy, Minister of Interior, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance (Head of the Mission of Honour), Abdullah bin Nasser al Rahbi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Arab Republic of Egypt, and its Permanent Delegate to the Arab League, Khalid Radi, Ambassador of Egypt to Oman, and members of the Mission

of Honour, as well as members of the Egyptian Embassy in Muscat.

The President was accompanied during his visit by an official delegation comprising Sameh Shoukry, Foreign Minister, Major General Staff Ahmed Mohammed Ali, Chief of the President’s Office, Dr Hala El Said, Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Major General Abbas Kamel, Chief of the Intelligence Service, Major General Mohsen

Abdel Nabi, Director of the President’s Office, Major General Staff Mustafa Shawkat, Commander of the Republican Guard Forces, and Khalid Radi, Ambassador of Egypt to Oman.

The visit explored various areas that serve the joint interests and meet aspirations of their peoples. It also discussed a range of topics of concern to the two sides in light of the regional and international developments. — ONA



HIS MAJESTY ISSUES FOUR ROYAL DECREES

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Tuesday issued 4 Royal Decrees reading as follows:

Royal Decree No 51/2022 amending some provisions of the Notary Public Law.

After presenting the same before the Council of Oman

Article (1) states that the amendments attached to the aforementioned Notary Public Law shall be applied.

Article (2) cancels all that contradicts the attached amendments or contravenes their provisions.

Article (3) says that the decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced the day

following its date of publishing.

Royal Decree No 52/2022 amending some provisions of the Records and Archives Law.

After presenting the same before the Council of Oman

Article (1) states that the amendments attached to the aforementioned Records and Archives Law shall be applied.

Article (2) cancels all that contradicts the attached amendments or contravenes their provisions.

Article (3) says that the decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced the day following its date of publishing.

Royal Decree No 53/2022 on the Public Authority for Special

Economic Zones and Free Zones and the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates.

Article (1) states that the affiliation of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates shall be transferred to the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones.

Article (2) stipulates that the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones shall undertake the specialisations of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates pertaining to outlining the general policy, regulation, control, supervision, and unifying services and incentives offered to investors.

Article (3) says that the Public

Establishment for Industrial Estates shall undertake the specialisations linked to the operation of industrial estates.

Article (4) replaces the phrase “Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion” wherever it might occur in laws and Royal decrees pertaining to the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates with the phrase “Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones”.

Article (5) the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones shall issue the decisions necessary to implement provisions of this decree.

Article (6) cancels all that contradicts this decree or contravenes its provisions.

Article (7) says that this decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from its date of issue.

Royal Decree No 54/2022 establishing National Natural Park Reserve in Governorate of Musandam.

Article (1) states that a sanctuary under the name “National Natural Park Reserve in Governorate of Musandam” shall be established and that it shall be accorded the zone whose demarcations are indicated in the annex and diagram attached to this decree.

Article (2) stipulates that the

Chairman of the Environment Authority, after approval of the Governor of Musandam, shall issue the regulations and decisions necessary for the implementation of this decree. The regulations and decisions shall include the method of management for this national reserve, formalities for entry to the sanctuary, the prescribed fees, the duration of stay therein, the activities allowed to be practiced or prohibited there and the appropriate administrative penalties against each case of violation.

Article (3) says that the decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced the day following its date of publishing.

— ONA

Royal Decree embodies Musandam’s environmental diversity: EA

MUSCAT: The Royal Decree issued on Tuesday on the establishment of the National Natural Park Reserve in Governorate of Musandam comes as an embodiment of the rich geographical diversity, natural environment and tourism potentials that are peculiar to the Governorate of Musandam.

In a statement, the Environment Authority valued the issuance of the Royal Decree, affirming that it will soon start working to put it into effect in coordination with the relevant authorities and will strive to ensure optimal management of

the reserve by issuing the rules for managing it in accordance to the dimensions and borders stipulated by the Royal Decree.

A survey conducted by the Environment Authority in cooperation with the Office of Musandam Governor indicated that the natural reserve will have a total area of 1149.40 sq km and it comprises nine offshore islands as well as shallow coasts and shoals situated away from the coasts and bays. These are pristine islands of great national and regional significance. The islands are also



hare, hedgehog, lynx, mountain fox, red fox and wildcat and many reptiles such as lizards and snakes.

The preliminary field survey of wild plants in the reserve indicated the presence of more than 200 species of perennial, annual and seasonal plants some of which are classified as rare and threatened with extinction.

The marine islands in Musandam Governorate include varying vegetation cover with characteristics of coral reef groups and marine plants.

The islands are separate from the mainland and there are no wild mammals on the protected islands except for rodents.

Seabirds are predominant on the islands where the presence of thousands of them turns these islands into wonderful scenery especially in Umm Al Tair island. Sea snakes are sometimes sighted away from the shore and few green turtles and porcupines nest in the sandy beaches of the islands.

— ONA



Tender Announcement

The Internal Tender committee of **Ministry of Social Development** hereby **re-announces the following tender :-**

Tender No.	Tender Subject	Grade	Last date for obtainment of tender document	Last date for tender submission	Tender Document Price (non-refundable)
30/2022	Construction of villa at Al Amrat	Companies specialized in the field of building contracting and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the first degree	Monday 18-7-2022 02:00 PM	Sunday 7-8-2022 10:00 AM	R.O. 25/=
31/2022	Construction of villa at As Seeb	Companies specialized in the field of building contracting and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the first degree	Monday 18-7-2022 02:00 PM	Sunday 7-8-2022 10:00 AM	R.O. 25/=
32/2022	Construction of villa at Al Amrat	Companies specialized in the field of building contracting and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the first degree	Monday 18-7-2022 02:00 PM	Sunday 7-8-2022 10:00 AM	R.O. 25/=
33/2022	Construction of villa at Al Amrat	Companies specialized in the field of building contracting and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the first degree	Monday 18-7-2022 02:00 PM	Sunday 7-8-2022 10:00 AM	R.O. 25/=
34/2022	Construction of villa at Al Amrat	Companies specialized in the field of building contracting and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the first degree	Monday 18-7-2022 02:00 PM	Sunday 7-8-2022 10:00 AM	R.O. 25/=

❖ Specialized Companies, registered with the **Tender Board** may obtain the Tender documents at the Tender Board e-tendering digital portal link (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>). On Wednesday 29/6/2022.

❖ Tender shall be submitted in compliance with the technical specifications and terms along with a local bank warranty at (1%) of the tender value, valid ninety (90) days from the date of e-submission.

❖ For Inquiry, please contact though the e-tendering website (reg@tenderboard.gov.om) tel. (**24402200**).

“ The lowest or any other tender shall not be binding to the Ministry “

www.mosd.gov.om

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AUCTION

Rural Areas Electricity Company (S.A.O.C) hereby announces auction as mentioned in the following table:

Auction No.	Material for Sale	Last Date of Buying	Preview Date	Last date of Submission
01/2022	Selling of Electrical Scrap Materials at Rural Areas Electricity Company Power Stations - Al-Wusta Governorate	13/07/2022	To Be Determined	31/07/2022

In accordance with the following conditions:

1- Interested and Specialized Companies in scrap activities and have official registration with Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion may obtain the auction documents from Procurement & Contracts Department, against non-refundable payment of RO. 100/- (Rial Omani One Hundred Only) for each set of documents. The fees of the auction shall be deposit on Tanweer account 0423010783090041 – Bank Muscat and for more information please contact via email address i.e. tender.purchase@tanweer.nama.om , or call us on phone number: 24250824.

2- Offers should be submitted in sealed envelopes addressed to the Chairman of Minor Tender Committee, Rural Areas Electricity Company (S.A.O.C), marked with the auction number and subject. Other marks or reference whatsoever should be printed on the envelope. The identity of the bidder should not be revealed and should be submitted before 1:00 P.M. on the assigned date for submission of the auction.

3- The buyer must pay the complete amount of his offer within **Two Weeks** of such notification by deposit or certified cheque.

4- The buyer must transfer all the material and clean the location within **Two Months** from the date of client notification for taking the materials. If the buyer does not transfer the materials purchased within the specified period, the same will be confiscated by the company. Such confiscated materials will be released to the buyer upon payment of demurrage charges to be calculated by the Seller.

5- Rural Areas Electricity Company has the right to accept or reject any offer without giving reasons.

6- Preview of the material to be determined later during the formal working hours.

For more information please call: 80077787



Tanweer
P.O Box 1166, P.C. 133, A'seeb, Sultanate of Oman
Tel: +968 24250800, Fax: +968 24250892
info@tanweer.nama.om | www.tanweer.om





Delegated by HM, EA chief for Lisbon UN Ocean meet

MUSCAT: Delegated by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Dr Abdullah bin Ali al Amri, Chairman of Environment Authority (EA), will take part in the 2022 UN Ocean Conference being held in Lisbon in Portugal. The conference is organised by the United Nations (UN) and will continue until July 1, 2022. It discusses the implementation of

the 14th goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (life under water), which is part of the 2030 Sustainable Development Plan and within a set of 17 transformational goals that stresses the need to preserve the world's oceans, seas and marine resources and their sustainable use. The 14th goal focuses on issues such as oceans, reducing marine



pollution, protecting marine and coastal ecosystems, minimising acid, eliminating illegal and over-fishing, increasing investment in scientific knowledge and marine technology, and respecting the international law that calls for the safe and sustainable use of the ocean and its resources. The conference also discusses strengthening efforts to create

and manage solutions to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The conference will also promote sustainable solutions for green technology and innovative uses of marine resources. The solutions also include addressing threats to the health of the ocean environment, economy and governance. — ONA

IRANIAN DELEGATION VISITS MSC



MUSCAT: A delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran visited the Maritime Security Centre (MSC) on Tuesday. The delegation was greeted upon their arrival at the centre by the Deputy Head of the MSC. The guests were briefed on the centre's tactical roles and tasks in managing and leading search, rescue and environment preservation operations. They also toured the centre's facilities and viewed its latest equipment and technologies used in carrying out its national duties. — ONA

HM condolences King of Jordan

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein, of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, on the victims of a gas explosion incident in Port of Aqaba. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere

sympathies to King Abdullah II, families of the victims and the people of Jordan, praying to Allah the Almighty to rest the deceased souls in peace in paradise and grant their families patience and fortitude to bear the loss, and wishing the injured a speedy recovery. — ONA



Omani Haj Mission geared to assist pilgrims

AFRAH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, JUNE 28

The Omani Haj Mission has geared up for Omani pilgrims this year by the distribution of tasks and delegation of work among officials and staff members. The pilgrims are returning to Haj this year after exceptional two years. Millions of pilgrims were deprived of Haj due to the Covid-19 pandemic for two years as the pilgrimage was limited only to a limited number of citizens and residents of Saudi Arabia. The number of pilgrims from the Sultanate of Oman this year reached 8,338, including 200 expatriate residents, while the number of companies handling Haj has reached 96. During its presence in Mecca and Madina, the Omani Haj Mission will serve the Omani



pilgrims with all possible assistance in the holy land. The mission comprises delegations on Fatwa and Religious Guidance, Administrative and Financial Delegation, Supervision of Haj Companies, Medical Delegation, State Financial

and Administrative Oversight Authority, Royal Oman Police, and Media and Scout delegation. Abdul Aziz bin Masoud al Ghafri, Deputy Head of the Omani Haj Mission, said, "During the meeting of the heads of the mission at its headquarters

in Mecca, the members of the mission's delegations began fieldwork to determine the readiness of the Mina and Arafat camps to receive pilgrims from Oman." He stressed the importance of everyone's cooperation in following the laws regulating the pilgrimage this season and fulfilling the requirements approved by the Sultanate of Oman and Saudi Arabia for Omani pilgrims in the holy land. The Ministry of Health has announced some instructions for the pilgrims to follow, including maintaining personal hygiene and following the instructions to protect from the risk of infection from diseases, especially respiratory ones and advised to keep the place of residence clean with continuous ventilation and proper disposal of food waste.

NDC Commandant receives French officer

MUSCAT: Maj Gen Hamid bin Ahmed Sakron, Commandant of the National Defence College (NDC), received at the NDC in Bait Al Falaj on Tuesday Rear Admiral Jacques Fayard, Joint Commander of the French Forces in the Indian Ocean. The two sides discussed several matters of common interest that serve academic and training spheres. The meeting was attended by Brigadier Nasser bin Rashid al Kalbani, Deputy Commandant of the NDC, Brigadier Abdullah bin Hamad al Harthy, Director-General of Studies and Academic Affairs at

the Academy for Strategic and Defence Studies, some senior officers and the Military Attaché at the French Embassy in Muscat. Vice Admiral Abdullah bin Khamis al Raeesi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF), also received in his office at Muaskar Al Murtafaa Rear Admiral Jacques Fayard, Joint Commander of the French Forces in the Indian Ocean. The two sides exchanged views and discussed several military matters of common interest. The meeting was attended by the Military Attaché at the French Embassy in Muscat. — ONA

CONDOLENCE

THE CHAIRMAN & MANAGEMENT TEAM OF
MUSCAT ELECTRONICS GROUP

OFFER THEIR HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES
TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY
ON THE SAD DEMISE OF

Mr. PALLONJI SHAPOORJI MISTRY

Founding Chairman
Oman Shapoorji Construction Company LLC

May the departed soul rest in eternal peace



مسقط للإلكترونيات ش.م.م
Muscat Electronics LLC

Rupee falls to record low against Omani rial

SAMUEL KUTTY
@samkutyv

The Indian rupee fell to a fresh record low versus the US dollar on Tuesday. According to local money exchanges, the rupee touched 204.10 against one Omani rial as the Indian benchmark was trading at a record low of 78.597 per US dollar in the intra day trade on Tuesday. Following the dollar strength, the Pakistan rupee fetched 530 while the Bangladeshi taka received 242 against one Omani rial. "It's imminent that the rupee will cross the 79 mark per US dollar," said Lijo John, General Manager, Modern Exchange. He told the Observer that the aggressive rate hikes by the Federal Reserve caused the dollar to strengthen globally. The rupee has depreciated more than five per cent versus the US dollar so far in 2022 as higher US interest rates, the surge in oil prices and record overseas investment outflows from equities have hurt the domestic currency. Citing other reasons for the rupees' fall, Amit Talukder, General Manager, Global Money Exchange, said that traders in India exited short dollar positions, and importers rushed to cover their positions. "The rupee and Indian equities were under pressure today by the uptick in crude oil prices amid persistent supply issues," he said. In the absence of any major data points, markets are seeking cues from Brent (around \$116 barrel) and Dollar Index (around 103.71), moving up on expectations of further Western sanctions on Russian oil supplies and supply disruptions in Libya, Amit said. The Reserve Bank of India has intervened heavily in the foreign exchange market since the Ukraine war broke out in February to curb excessive volatility in the rupee. However, the rupee continued its downward trend. The weakness in the rupee's value against the US dollar will be automatically reflected in its exchange rate with the Omani rial as it is pegged to the dollar. According to Lijo, the rupee's all-time plunge offers non-resident Indians a better remittance rate against the Omani rial. "It will likely continue the downward trend and may hit 80 against the dollar in the near future as further US Fed rate hikes are expected in July and September," he said, adding, "It's salary time, and Indians in Oman can fetch more money on their remittances."



omanobserver.com/podcast

world

OMANDAILYOBSERVER

WEDNESDAY | JUNE 29 | 2022

7

In brief

■ LONDON



SCOTTISH GOVT SEEKS INDEPENDENCE VOTE IN 2023

Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said that the Scottish parliament would publish an independence referendum bill with a planned date for a vote on secession to take place on October 19, 2023. Sturgeon said she would be writing to British Prime Minister Boris Johnson for permission to hold a consultative referendum, saying it was vital the vote was legal. Voters in Scotland, which has a population of around 5.5 million, rejected independence in 2014. But Scotland's semi-autonomous government says Britain's departure from the EU, means the question must be put to a second vote.

— AFP

■ MUMBAI



14 DEAD IN INDIA BUILDING COLLAPSE

At least 14 people were killed after monsoon rains caused a four-storey building to collapse in Indian megacity Mumbai, authorities said. City officials said the structure, located next to a slum in a central city district, collapsed just before midnight on Monday, trapping more than 20 residents. By afternoon 13 people had been rescued but emergency workers retrieved 14 bodies from the rubble. "Search and rescue operations are continuing", a spokesperson for the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) said. Six of those killed in the incident were between 18 and 21 years old, authorities said. — AFP

■ COLOMBO



SRI LANKA OPENS OIL MARKET TO FOREIGN COMPANIES

Cash-strapped Sri Lanka announced it was opening its oil market to foreign competition, a day after chronic fuel shortages forced a nationwide halt to petrol and diesel sales. The island is suffering an economic crisis because it cannot afford to import essentials, including enough oil and gas to meet energy needs. Lengthy blackouts are now a feature of daily life, while motorists have been forced to wait in day-long queues for scarce supplies of petrol. A rationing system has been in effect but on Monday night the government banned fuel sales for two weeks. — AFP

Chlorine gas leak kills 13 in Jordan port

AQABA: Thirteen people were killed, including at least four Asian migrants, when toxic chlorine gas escaped on the dockside in the Jordanian Red Sea port of Aqaba, officials said.

More than 250 people were injured in the accident on Monday, of whom about 100 remained in hospital, according to the latest updates.

Most were being treated for the effects of breathing chlorine gas, a common cleaning agent that also has a range of other industrial uses and can be employed as a chemical weapons agent.

"All of the injured are suffering from similar symptoms, shortness of breath, a heavy cough and vertigo", said Dr Rouba Aaamawi of the Islamic Hospital in Aqaba which was treating 70 people, some on respirators.

Assadallah al Jazi, a 25-year-old fertiliser company employee, was among those hurt. "We didn't hear any explosion. We just smelt something noxious and saw the yellow smoke, then there were people choking", he said.

The port began returning to normal on Tuesday, with all docks due to reopen except for Dock Four, where further safety checks were to be carried out, said Interior Minister Mazen al Faraya. "The situation in Aqaba is now under control", Prime Minister Bisher al Khasawneh said after visiting the port late Monday. The chlorine escaped when the cable snapped on a crane loading a tank of liquefied gas onto a ship, sending it crashing to the ground on the dockside.

The force of the fall punctured



CCTV footage shows a storage tank containing chlorine gas crashing into a ship after falling from a winch in Aqaba, Jordan. — AFP



Jordanian Prime Minister Bisher al Khasawneh visits the site of a toxic gas explosion in the Red Sea port of Aqaba. — AFP

the pressurised container, enveloping the freighter Forest 6 in a shroud of the bright yellow gas, closed circuit TV images from the port showed.

The fallen white tank, punctured

and stained yellow from where the gas burst out, came to rest on the dock directly beside the Forest 6 vessel. Ship-tracking websites say the deck cargo ship was built only this year and sails under a Hong

The chlorine escaped when the cable snapped on a crane loading a tank of liquefied gas onto a ship, sending it crashing to the ground

Kong flag.

On Tuesday, civil defence forces were seen inspecting the scene of the spill, some dressed in hazmat suits.

The director of the port's grain silos, Imad Tarawneh, said they would remain closed for two days while health inspectors checked

there had been no contamination of stocks. He said there would be no impact on port traffic as there were currently no grain carriers in dock.

"The silos are built of concrete and are hermetically sealed but, despite that, all necessary precautions are being taken and all loading and unloading operations have been halted", he said.

The head of the Aqaba Company for Ports Operation and Management, Khaled Maayta, said the grain silos were just 600 metres from the site of Monday's spill.

Aqaba Health Director Jamal Obeidat said hospitals around the city were full and "cannot receive more cases". "The injured people are in medium to critical condition", he added. — AFP

About 50 migrants dead in Texas truck tragedy

SAN ANTONIO: US police on Tuesday were investigating the grim discovery of about 50 bodies in and around a trailer truck abandoned in sweltering heat near the Texas city of San Antonio, with victims identified as from Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras.

The shocking finding was one of the worst disasters involving migrants in the United States in recent years — and came five years after a similar deadly incident in the same Texas city, a few hours from the Mexican border.

The White House — facing intense pressure over its immigration policies — called the tragedy "absolutely horrific and heartbreaking", and said President Joe Biden, flying to a Nato summit in Madrid, has been briefed on the incident.

San Antonio Fire Chief Charles Hood told reporters that at least 46 victims had died and 16 people had been transported to the hospital alive and conscious — 12 adults and four children.

Early Tuesday, Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said the toll had reached 50, mostly from Latin American nations including Mexico. "It's a tremendous misfortune... so far there are 50 dead: 22 from Mexico, seven from Guatemala, two from Honduras and 19 still without information about their nationality", the Mexican leader said at a morning press conference. US officials said three people were in custody over the incident.

Hood, the fire chief, said

The White House called the tragedy 'absolutely horrific and heartbreaking' while Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador termed it as a 'tremendous misfortune...'

survivors had suffered heat stroke and heat exhaustion, and that there were no signs of water in the truck. "It was a refrigerated tractor-trailer but there was no visible working A/C unit on that rig", Hood said.

San Antonio, which lies about 250 kilometers from the border, is a major transit route for people smugglers. It has also been gripped by a record-breaking heat

wave, and temperatures in the area hit 103 degrees Fahrenheit on Monday. The US Customs and Border Protection Agency Director, Chris Magnus said he was "horrified" at the deaths near San Antonio.

"This speaks to the desperation of migrants who would put their lives in the hands of callous human smugglers who show no regard for human life", he added on Twitter.

According to San Antonio police chief William McManus, authorities were first alerted by an emergency call at about 5:50 pm local time.

"A worker who works in one of the buildings up here behind me heard a cry for help", he told reporters.

"(He) came out to investigate, found a trailer with the doors partially open, opened them up to take a look, and found a number of deceased individuals inside."

— AFP



Christine and Michael Ybarra at the scene where people were found dead inside a trailer truck in San Antonio. — Reuters



Britain's PM Boris Johnson, Japan's PM Fumio Kishida, US President Joe Biden, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, European Council President Charles Michel, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Italy's PM Mario Draghi, Canada's PM Justin Trudeau and France's President Emmanuel Macron attend the last working session of the G7 Summit at Elmau Castle. — AFP

G7 ends with message of unity on Ukraine

ELMAU: The leaders of the G7 group of wealthy nations concluded a summit in Germany on Tuesday during which they were able to project a message of unity in the face of Russia's war on Ukraine, but which critics say failed to deliver in key areas.

In a final summit declaration, the leaders of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States agreed to support Ukraine and its war effort "as long as necessary", reduce dependence on Russian energy and ramp up punitive measures against Moscow.

"The G7 stand closely and unwaveringly by the side of Ukraine", German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said as he concluded the summit, which was hosted by Germany at the alpine Schloss Elmau resort.

"We will continue to drive up the economic and political

costs of this war for President (Vladimir) Putin and his regime — for this, it is important to stand together", he added.

French President Emmanuel Macron said that Russia "cannot and should not win" the war in Ukraine and described a deadly missile attack on a shopping mall in a central Ukrainian city on Monday as "a new war crime".

The seven leading economies pledged \$29.5 billion to ensure basic services for Ukrainians and agreed to organise a conference to organise post-war reconstruction, while the US yielded to Kiev's urgent call for an air defence system to protect its cities.

They announced a ban on imports of Russian gold, which US President Joe Biden said would impose "unprecedented costs on Putin to deny him the revenue he needs to fund his war against Ukraine." — dpa

Rooted in past, focused on future



Ali Al Matani
ali.matani2@gmail.com

The Oman-Egypt relations are deep-rooted in history. Frankincense was the first Omani luxury product to be exported to Egypt for performance of rituals in the ancient Pharaonic temples. Bilateral relations between the two countries remained exemplary, ideal and distinguished in all the times and every era.

There are indications that it will remain intact in future as per the will of the leaders of the two countries and aspirations of the people. These strong relations are based on the principle of mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs of each other. They support each other in regional and international forums to achieve a common objective of peace and stability in the two countries.

The bilateral relations have weathered war and peace. It was

the firm, clear and courageous position of the Sultanate of Oman in 1979 when it refused to sever relations with Cairo after it had signed the Camp David Accord. When Arabs started restoring their relations with Egypt later, it was time that proved that the position taken by Oman was correct. The headquarters of the Arab League was brought back to Cairo from Tunisia where it was shifted following the agreement.

When the Sultanate of Oman took that position, many were surprised because it appeared strange. Muscat saw that Egypt was the pinnacle of the Arab struggle. The late Sultan Qaboos had rightly said that Egypt cannot be isolated and would not die because of its own position. The history is also witness to the martyrdom of the Omani ambassador in Cairo,

STRONG RELATIONS ARE BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF MUTUAL RESPECT AND NON-INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF EACH OTHER. THEY SUPPORT EACH OTHER IN REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FORUMS TO ACHIEVE A COMMON OBJECTIVE OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE TWO COUNTRIES

Lieutenant Colonel Khalfan bin Nasser al Ghamari in when Egyptian president Anwar Sadat was assassinated during the celebrations of the anniversary of the victory of October 6, 1981.

The bilateral relations continued with the same momentum and overcame

upheavals that swept the world and the Middle East. This is due to the clear understanding of each other and permanent coordination on all Arab issues across all levels.

The stability in the relations of the two countries is seen as a example for the ties, which are expected between any two Arab nations. Cairo and Muscat have also presented a model worthy of respect in maintaining the charters and covenants of bilateral relations.

In fact, there was a strong impetus in the relations between Oman and Egypt during the last 50 years. There were military, defence, cultural, social and economic ties, which particularly multiplied over these years. It brought the two countries closer and made them develop spirit of cohesion, solidarity and

coordination as required by two brotherly nations.

Over the past 40 years, Muscat and Cairo have used their energy to unite the Arabs and to achieve bilateral and collective cooperation among the nations of the Middle East and North Africa. The officials and emissaries from the two capitals frequently visited each to maintain maximum level of understanding and jointly deal with any unfortunate incident that takes place in the region. Arab-Israeli conflict, the first and second Gulf wars, Yemen war and other such issues have occupied the attention of both Oman and Egypt over these years. The formation the Arab League was the result of the efforts of the leaderships of the two countries. We hope that these relations will continue with the same momentum in future.

Life in the abyss, a spectacular and fragile struggle for survival

AMELIE BOTTOLLIER-DEPOIS

Cloaked in darkness and mystery, the creatures of the deep oceans exist in a world of unlikely profusion, surviving on scant food and under pressure that would crush human lungs.

This extremely hostile environment, which will come under the spotlight at a major United Nations oceans summit in Lisbon this week, has caused its inhabitants to develop a prodigious array of alien characteristics and idiosyncratic survival techniques.

A vast assortment of animals populate the sunless depths, from the colossal squid, which wrapped its tentacles around the imaginations of sailors and storytellers, to beings with huge cloudy eyes, or whose bodies are as transparent as glass.

And the angler fish, with its devilish looks illuminated by a built-in headlamp, showing that the deep dark is alive with lights.

Until the middle of the 19th century, scientists believed that life was impossible beyond a few hundred metres.

“They imagined that there was nothing, because of the absence of light, the pressure, the cold, and the lack of food”, Nadine Le Bris, a professor at Sorbonne University, said.

Between 200 and 1,000 metres, the light fades until it vanishes completely and with it plants; at 2,000 metres the pressure is 200 times that of the atmosphere. From the abyssal plains to the cavernous trenches plunging deeper than Everest is high, aquatic existence continues in spectacular diversity.

“When people think of the deep sea they often think of the seafloor”, said Karen Osborn of the Smithsonian’s Natural History Museum.

“But all that water in between is full of incredible animals. There is a ton of life.” These open water inhabitants face a formidable challenge: They have nowhere to hide. “There’s no seaweed to hide in, no caves or mud to dig into”, said Osborn.

“There are predators coming at them from below, from above, from all around.”

One tactic is to become invisible. Some creatures are red, making them difficult to distinguish in an environment where red light no longer filters through.

Others render themselves transparent. Take the transparent gossamer worm, which ranges in size from a few millimetres to around a metre long and shimmies through the water by fluttering its frilly limbs. “They look like a fern frond”, said Osborn.

— AFP

Global food crisis tests western resolve to retain Russia sanctions



Alan Rappeport

The writer is a journalist at ‘NYT’

In Yemen, the price of bread surged 35 per cent the week Russia attacked Ukraine. Wheat mills lacking grain in Lebanon have halted operations in recent months, forcing bakeries to shutter. And in Kenya, cooking oil is scarce.

As the United States and Europe contemplate their next rounds of sanctions to starve Russia of the revenue that is funding its war, there is growing concern that the fallout is fueling an alarming hunger problem around the world that will not easily be reversed.

Policy makers have been scrambling to cobble together plans to open up supply chains and provide food financing to developing countries, but the combination of rising energy costs and constrained exports from Russia and Ukraine is threatening some of the most vulnerable populations around the world.

President Vladimir Putin of Russia has embraced and exacerbated the crisis, blocking exports of food and grain from the region and using the shortages as leverage to get Western sanctions rolled back.

Top officials from the United States and Europe have so far rebuffed such offers while also debating how to extend sanctions without widening the collateral damage.

The region’s critical role in the food supply chain has meant a cascading effect, sending global food prices soaring. Much of the world’s grains and fertiliser flow from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. Russia and Ukraine combined export about 30 per cent of the world’s wheat and 75 per cent of its sunflower oil.

Cutting off those supplies, along with the uncertainty about the duration and scope of Western sanctions, has prompted other governments to block exports as nations try to stockpile goods.

President Joe Biden said this month that he is working on a plan to build temporary silos on the borders of Ukraine and Poland so grain that Russia is blocking from moving through the Black Sea can be transported by rail to



A grain warehouse near Lviv, Ukraine.

NEARLY HALF OF THE PEOPLE IN LOW-INCOME COUNTRIES ARE FACING FOOD SHORTAGES, WHICH OFTEN LEAD TO SOCIAL UNREST

Europe and beyond.

“I’m working closely with our European partners to get 20 million tonnes of grains locked in Ukraine out onto the market to help bring down food prices”, Biden said at an AFL-CIO convention. “But it’s taking time.”

In its latest Global Economic Prospects report, the World Bank said that nearly half of the people in low-income countries are facing food shortages, which often lead to social unrest.

“There’s a severe risk of malnutrition and deepening hunger and even of famine in some areas”, David Malpass, President of the World Bank, said as he warned of global stagflation in early June.

People in emerging economies often spend the bulk of their daily budgets on food, and those expenses are climbing. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,

food prices in May were up by nearly 30 per cent from a year ago, pushed higher by rising cereal and meat prices.

Soaring fertiliser prices, driven by sanctions on Russia and Belarus, along with high global energy prices, are broadening the scope of food shortages by making it more expensive to produce and transport food around the world.

“Without fertilisers, shortages will spread from corn and wheat to all staple crops, including rice, with a devastating impact on billions of people in Asia and South America, too”, said António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The price increases are prompting new waves of protectionism. Countries such as Indonesia, India and Malaysia have restricted exports of cooking oil, wheat and chicken to insulate their domestic markets. About 20 nations have some kind of export control to limit the effect of high food prices, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

The problem is particularly vexing because much of the food crisis can be attributed to Russian sabotage.

“It’s the war that is causing this to happen”, Paschal Donohoe, Ireland’s finance minister, said in an interview. “But policymakers in Europe, in America, within the G-7 are very aware of the risks that, in particular, the developing world could face with regard to food security later on in the year.”— *New York Times*

Will the ‘Climate Club’ do equally good to all countries?



Samuel Kutty
@samkuttyvp
The writer is a journalist and author

Now a “Climate Club” for nations that want to battle global warming! The move by the G7 economies is expected to see tougher actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from rising more than 1.5 Celsius. Member countries, provided they agree on the conditions, which will be finalised only by the end of this year, are expected to harmonise their measures in such a way that they are comparable and avoid members imposing climate-related tariffs on each other’s imports.

The move was championed by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz amid criticism that the G7 leaders have not made any concrete promises on global warming at a summit dominated by discussion of securing energy supplies during a global crunch caused by the war in Ukraine. The Club, once it starts functioning, can accelerate climate action in significant ways. However, the question is if the “climate club” is limited to the G7 countries, will it do equally good to other countries!

Not only that, all G7 members may not support the plans. On the other hand, countries, which bear the brunt of climate change, must be included in the framework. As Ekkehard Forberg, climate expert at World Vision said, “A global climate club can be an effective tool if all stakeholders talk to each other at eye level”.

NOT ONLY THAT, ALL G7 MEMBERS MAY NOT SUPPORT THE PLANS. ON THE OTHER HAND, COUNTRIES, WHICH BEAR THE BRUNT OF CLIMATE CHANGE, MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE FRAMEWORK

“Instead, however, industrialised countries are focusing on the expansion of gas production in Africa — the completely wrong path. “If they really still want to achieve the climate goals, they must financially support poorer countries in the expansion of renewable energies,” explains Forberg. However, Scholz while outlining the vision of an ‘international climate club’, said in August 2021 said it must be “for everyone who is moving forward with ambitious climate goals. This open, collaborative club will set joint minimum standards, drive climate action that is internationally coordinated and ensure that climate action makes a country more competitive at the international level.”

The G7, therefore, should ensure that the proposed climate club will hold a core commitment to reform investment treaties and Investor-State Dispute Settlement, which are a key part of the legal architecture that underpins the global economy.

When it comes to the countries in the Gulf, climate change policies and responses have evolved since the adoption of the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. The six countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council have worked to address the problem of climate change in varying degrees of depth and breadth, reflecting the diversity of their political economies and broader policy priorities. The Sultanate of Oman is one of the most vulnerable countries in the Middle East to the adverse impacts of climate change and has a heightened degree of awareness and concern about global warming.

Climate change-related threats to the Sultanate of Oman have increased in recent years, evidenced by changes in the number, duration, and intensity of tropical cyclones. Oman has already formulated a national strategy to support a gradual transition to a low carbon economy through an audacious goal of generating a significant portion of electricity from renewable sources by 2030. The deployment of renewable energy and the deepening of energy efficiency actions are rooted in Oman Vision 2040.

As energy consumption is a leading cause of rising greenhouse gas emissions over the coming years, the country has initiated in 2016 a series of fiscal improvements to enhance energy conservation and to promote the culture of the energy-saving by liberalising the prices of petroleum products and phasing out gradually the subsidies on water and electricity over five years (2021-2025). It has already stepped up its efforts in advancing its expertise and methodologies to better manage the climate change risks over the past five years. The adaptation efforts are underway, and the status of adaptation planning is still at a nascent stage.

Through its recently developed Climate Change Strategy, national stakeholders have begun to identify climate-resilient opportunities within a set of key vulnerable sectors, namely water resources, marine biodiversity, and fisheries; agriculture; urban areas, tourism and infrastructure; and public health.



Reawakening the Nato



Ana Palacio
The author is a former minister of foreign affairs of Spain and former senior vice president and general counsel of the World Bank Group, is a visiting lecturer at Georgetown University

Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg has repeatedly hailed Nato as the “most successful Alliance in history.” But, at their upcoming summit in Madrid, Nato heads of state and government will face serious challenges, from America’s weariness with Europe’s tendency to “trade away” geopolitical differences to tensions over Turkey’s efforts to block Finland and Sweden’s membership bids. Will transactional politics taint this summit – and Nato’s future?

To say that Russia’s war on Ukraine has upended European security and shaken Nato from its stupor is to state the obvious. The relative certainty that defined the world order over the last few decades has given way to great-power conflict and the spectre of nuclear annihilation.

Finland and Sweden’s applications for Nato membership represent not only a break from their own traditions of neutrality, but also the end of the post-Cold War era.

Nato’s priorities for the next decade, to be embodied in its next Strategic Concept — set to be adopted at this month’s gathering — are supposed to reflect this new reality.

For example, it is expected to mention China for the first time. In another first, all of Nato’s Pacific partners (Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and South Korea) will attend the summit, as will Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

This is in line with calls — made, for example, by the United Kingdom — to create a more “global Nato” that boosts security in the Indo-Pacific region.

But can Nato’s newfound ambition withstand what increasingly looks like a protracted war of attrition in Ukraine, with the energy-market mayhem and economic turmoil it has engendered? Russia President Vladimir Putin is betting that the answer is “no,” and it might not be a bad bet. Despite bold early announcements by Nato allies, including promises of major defence-spending

NO SINGLE SUMMIT CAN RESOLVE NATO’S DEFICIENCIES AND MEET ITS LOFTY GOALS, FROM REAFFIRMING SHARED VALUES TO ENHANCING RESILIENCE, ESPECIALLY WITH A CONVENTIONAL CONFLICT RAGING ON ITS EASTERN DOORSTEP. BUT THE MADRID SUMMIT CAN – AND MUST – LAY THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A MORE UNITED, ROBUST, AND REVITALISED ALLIANCE

increases by many European countries, political fissures along the usual fault lines have already emerged.

French diplomatic activism and German dithering have become increasingly intolerable to the United States, which is determined not to allow a repeat of the debacle involving Nord Stream 2, the gas pipeline (now suspended) that left Germany dependent on Russian supplies.

Meanwhile, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan remains staunchly opposed to consider the membership bids of Finland and Sweden, owing to their history of hosting members of Kurdish groups that Turkey considers terrorists, including the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), which the US and the European Union also have classified as a terrorist organisation.

To be sure, this is far from the first controversy Turkey has generated within Nato; just last year, Turkey, defying the US, agreed to purchase more S-400 missiles from Russia.

But, as former Nato Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen put it in an unusually candid interview, Erdoğan’s stonewalling on Nato expansion — motivated in no small part by the desire to extract concessions from the US — can be resolved.

Turkey’s intransigence is thus unlikely to derail the summit.

But a decision on Finland and Sweden’s applications should be made soon; history shows — not least in Ukraine — that ambiguity over Nato membership can be worse than a flat-out rejection.

More broadly, Alliance members must not allow grandstanding and political horse-trading to take precedence over addressing the real challenges Nato faces, including streamlining a tangled command structure, adjusting its defence and deterrence posture, and resolving military shortfalls and operational challenges.

Crucially, Nato must upgrade its tools to reflect the changing nature of warfare, which now is shaped as much by cyberattacks and — as the Ukraine war clearly shows — by disinformation as by guns and tanks.

The first steps towards meeting these imperatives must be made in Madrid.

Of course, no single summit or text could resolve Nato’s deficiencies and meet its lofty goals, from reaffirming shared values to enhancing resilience, especially with a conventional conflict raging on its eastern doorstep.

But the Madrid summit can — and must — cement Nato’s unity and lay the foundations for a more robust and revitalised Alliance.

As Nato’s main engine, the US has a crucial role to play in delivering this outcome. But European countries must also do their part, mustering the unity, vision, and will to develop its hard-power capabilities.

We must do this not in the name of the dream of strategic autonomy, but to enhance Nato’s capabilities and clout. While Europeans are understandably wary of another “America First” leader — whether Donald Trump or an acolyte — coming to power in the US, the fact remains that it is in Europe’s self-interest to help the US reclaim its leading role on the world stage.

Nato has been on life support for years, and reviving it will be no easy feat.

But the Alliance’s faculties remain very much intact, and with a concerted effort, it can be truly worthy of Stoltenberg’s praise.

While rivals like China might still call it a remnant of the Cold War, they will still think twice — or more often — before challenging it.

If Nato leaders fail, however, the West would be put at a serious strategic disadvantage.

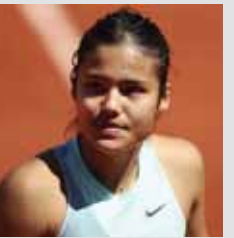
©Project Syndicate, 2021

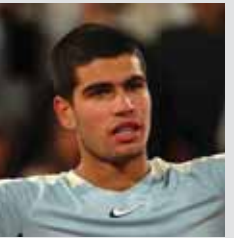
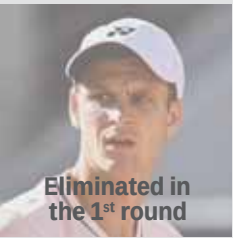


At the upcoming summit in Madrid, Nato leaders will face serious challenges.



Covid-hit Berrettini pulls out of Wimbledon as Swiatek extends streak

Wimbledon 2022 seeds: women's top 10					June 27 - July 10				
1	2	3	4	5					
Iga Swiatek Country: Poland	Anett Kontaveit Estonia	Ons Jabeur Tunisia	Paula Badosa Spain	Maria Sakkari Greece					
WTA rank 1	3	2	4	5					
									
Age 21	26	27	24	26					
6	7	8	9	10					
Karolina Pliskova Czech Republic	Danielle Collins United States	Jessica Pegula United States	Garbine Muguruza Spain	Emma Raducanu Britain					
Rank 7	8	9	10	11					
									
30	28	28	28	19					
Source: Wimbledon/WTA					AFP				

Wimbledon 2022 seeds: men's top 10					June 27 - July 10				
1	2	3	4	5					
Novak Djokovic Country: Serbia	Rafael Nadal Spain	Casper Ruud Norway	Stefanos Tsitsipas Greece	Carlos Alcaraz Spain					
ATP rank 3	4	6	5	7					
									
Age 35	36	23	23	19					
6	7	8	9	10					
Felix Auger-Aliassime Canada	Hubert Hurkacz Poland	Matteo Berrettini Italy	Cameron Norrie Britain	Jannik Sinner Italy					
Rank 9	10	11	12	13					
									
21	25	26	26	20					
Source: Wimbledon/ATP					AFP				

LONDON: Title contender Matteo Berrettini was forced to pull out of Wimbledon on Tuesday after testing positive for coronavirus as women's top seed Iga Swiatek extended her winning streak to 36 matches.

Elsewhere on day two of the Championships, Serena Williams prepared to return to singles tennis after a year away and Rafael Nadal was due to begin his quest to win the third leg of a potential calendar Grand Slam.

The early action at the All England Club on Tuesday was overshadowed by the announcement from Berrettini — last year's runner-up — that he was out of the event.

"I am heartbroken to announce that I need to withdraw from @wimbledon due to a positive COVID-19 test result," the 26-year-old Italian wrote on Instagram.

Berrettini was widely regarded as one of the biggest threats to defending champion Novak Djokovic at Wimbledon, having captured back-to-back grass-court titles in Stuttgart and Queen's.

He is the second man to withdraw from Wimbledon with Covid in two days after 2017 runner-up Marin Cilic of Croatia also tested positive.

"I have no words to describe the extreme disappointment I feel," Berrettini, seeded eighth, said in his statement. "The dream is over for this year, but I will be back stronger."

The Italian was a potential semifinal opponent for two-time champion Nadal.

His place in the Wimbledon first round will be taken by Sweden's Elias Ymer, a lucky loser from qualifying.

Wimbledon has returned to normal this year after the tournament was cancelled due to Covid in 2020 and last year was played in front of reduced crowds.

The All England Club said in a statement that protocols remained in place to minimise the risk of



Poland's Iga Swiatek reacts during her first round match against Croatia's Jana Fett. — Reuters

infection.

"We are following UK guidance around assessment and isolation of any potential infectious disease," the statement said.

"Our player medical team also continue to wear face masks for any consultation."

Poland's world number one Swiatek coasted into the second round with a routine 6-0, 6-3 against Croatian qualifier Jana Fett.

The French Open champion, who has won her past six tournaments, said she was relishing the atmosphere at the grass-court tournament.

"I feel I have only played 12 weeks of my life on grass but the whole atmosphere and tradition is pumping me up and just looking forward to the next matches," she said.

Also in the women's draw, fourth seed Paula Badosa of Spain beat American Louisa Chirico for the loss of just three games.

SERENA RETURNS

Seven-time champion Williams faces unseeded Harmony Tan of France in her first singles match since an injury forced her to pull

out of her first-round match last year.

Williams, 40, won the last of her Wimbledon singles titles six years ago but reached the final in 2018 and 2019.

The American, who was given a wildcard for this year's tournament, is stuck on 23 Grand Slam singles wins -- agonisingly one short of Margaret Court's all-time record.

Nadal is halfway to winning all four majors in 2022 after following up his Australian Open triumph by winning his 14th French Open title.

No man has won all the Grand

Slams in a single year since Ron Laver in 1969, with Djokovic falling just short last year when he lost in the final of the US Open.

The Spaniard's win at Roland Garros earlier this month took him to 22 Grand Slam singles titles — two clear of Djokovic and Roger Federer.

Nadal won the most recent of his two Wimbledon titles in 2010, having captured his first with an epic triumph over Federer two years earlier.

There was a question mark over his durability for the two weeks

at Wimbledon having played the entire French Open with his troublesome left foot anaesthetised.

The 36-year-old second seed has since undergone a course of radiofrequency stimulation, a treatment aimed at reducing nerve pain in his foot.

"I can walk normal most of the days, almost every single day," said Nadal, who faces Argentina's Francisco Cerundolo in his opening match on Centre Court.

"When I wake up, I don't have this pain that I was having for the last year and a half" — AFP



Rustaq pool to shape national swimmers for future assignments

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, JUNE 28

The national swimming team began closed domestic camp at Al Rustaq Sports Complex for the forthcoming assignments. The underway preparatory gathering at South Al Batinah Governorate is part of Oman Swimming Association's future plan towards "Road to Paris 2024" programme. Omani swimmers will take part in many Arabian, Asian and international events including Arabian Swimming Championship which will be held

in Algeria in the following month. Islamic Solidarity Games will be the following assignment for the team and it will take place during August. The swimming team will participate at Open Water Championship in Tashkent in Uzbekistan in September. Oman's head coach team, Mohammed Moez al Khairi, opted 14 swimmers for the camp namely: Ayman al Qasmi, Mohammad Awlad Thani, Nasser al Kindi, Adam al Raisi, Shihab al Battashi, Hilal al Mashari, Ibrahim al Wahaibi, Ali al Hasani, Mashal al Kulaibi, Hamed al

Hasani, Khalil al Hasani, Moadh al Shibani, Mohammed al Wahaibi and Shihab al Battashi. The warm-up camp will feature comprehensive training sessions under watchful eyes of the coach Mohammed Moez al Khairi and his assistant Ayman al Kulaibi. The Rustaq camp will witness several training sessions during morning and evening timing including fitness practices and tactical training sessions. The latest participation for the national swimming team was at GCC Games in Kuwait which ended in May. Five medals was

claimed by Oman's swimmers including two silver and three bronze medals. The silver medal was captured by Olympic swimmer Issa al Adawi in Men's 800 and 400 Freestyle category. The youngster swimmer Issa al Adawi bagged another bronze medal in Men's 200 Freestyle besides two more bronze medals in 4X100 freestyle relay and 4X200 freestyle relay. Oman's talented swimmer Nasser al Kindi took part at the FINA World Swimming Championship in Budapest city which ended recently.

MORGAN SAYS IT'S 'RIGHT TIME TO GO'

LONDON: England's World Cup-winning captain Eoin Morgan retired from international cricket with immediate effect on Tuesday, saying now was the "right time" to stand down.

Morgan led England to victory at the 2019 World Cup — their first major global 50-overs title — and took them to the top of the one-day and Twenty20 rankings.

But the 35-year-old batsman has been struggling with form and fitness issues this year.

Dublin-born Morgan was twice out for nought during the recent ODI series in the Netherlands and withdrew from the third game with a groin issue.

Morgan is England's all-time leading run-scorer in ODI and T20 cricket with 6,957 and 2,458 runs respectively.

His tally of 225 ODI appearances and 115 in T20Is are also England records.

But Morgan, who will continue his domestic career, had made just two fifties from his past 28 international innings across the two white-ball formats, a dip that helped convince him to retire.

"After careful deliberation and consideration, I am here (Lord's) to announce my retirement from international cricket with immediate effect," said Morgan in an ECB statement.

"To call time on what has been without doubt the most enjoyable and rewarding chapter of my career hasn't been an easy decision.

"But I believe now is the right time to do so, both for me, personally, and for both England white-ball sides I have led to this point."

Morgan, who thanked his family and his team-mates for their support, added: "I am hugely proud of what I have achieved as a player and captain, but the things I will cherish and remember the most are the memories I made with some of the greatest people I know along the way."

Morgan began his international career with his native Ireland in 2006 but switched his allegiance to England in 2009.

He is the only England player to have won both limited-overs World Cups, having helped Paul Collingwood's side triumph in the 2010 T20 version in the Caribbean.

- "The best leader I've ever



England's Eoin Morgan during the press conference to announce his retirement from international cricket. — Reuters

seen' -

Rob Key, the managing director of England men's cricket, added: "It will be wrong to think Eoin's legacy was just winning the World Cup in 2019; it is far greater than that.

"As with all great players and leaders, he has changed the way the game has been played, and he has changed the way an entire generation and generations to come will play this form of the

Morga led England to victory at the 2019 World Cup -- their first major global 50-overs title -- and took them to the top of the one-day and Twenty20 rankings

OHA youth hockey competition draw held

WALEED AL JAHWARI
MUSCAT, JUNE 28

The draw for the youth hockey competition for 2022 was held on Tuesday at the Oman Hockey Association headquarters, in the presence of Dr Marwan bin Juma al Jumaa, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Association, number of association members and representatives of the participating clubs.

The competition will be held from July 16-26.

The draw saw some modifications with the withdrawal of the Dhofar and Sohar clubs, and the seven participating teams in the competition were divided into two groups.

The first group included Nizwa, Ahli Sidab, Bausher and Salalah,



while the second group included Al Seeb, Al Nasr and Al Bashaer.

The competition system is the first and second from each group will qualify for the second round.

The clubs play the Super League to determine the top two teams who will play the final match, while the third and fourth placed team play the third place play-off match. With regard to the rest of



the clubs that were eliminated from the group league, the clubs will play matches to determine the fifth, sixth and seventh positions, in a league system of one round.

Dr Khamis bin Salem al Rahbi, Secretary-General of the Oman Hockey Association, indicated that all matches of the competition will be held in Muscat, due to the withdrawal of the Sohar and

Dhofar clubs.

He indicated that there are financial rewards for the participating clubs, as he confirmed that the first place will receive RO 1,000, the second place will receive RO 750, while the third will receive RO 500, in addition to an amount of RO 50 for each of the best player, best goalkeeper and best scorer.

■ ENDURANCE RACE TO BE LAUNCHED FOR SALALAH TOURISM FESTIVAL



An endurance race of 40 km and 80 km will be launched in Salalah on the beach of Khor Al Dhariz, organised by the Oman Equestrian Federation in cooperation with the Dhofar Equestrian Committee and the General Directorate of Culture, Sports and Youth in Dhofar, as part of the tourism activity for the Salalah Tourism Festival 2022, which will be held during July.



BAIRSTOW BLITZ SEALS ENGLAND ROUT OF NEW ZEALAND

LEEDS, UK: Jonny Bairstow led England to a whitewash of Test world champions New Zealand with a stunning fifty on his Headingley home ground on Monday.

Bairstow made a blistering 71 not out, England's second quickest Test fifty of all time, to follow a stunning 162 that helped revive the hosts from a first-innings collapse to 55-6.

Former captain Joe Root, largely reduced to the role of a spectator by Bairstow, was 86 not out after sharing a partnership of 111 with his Yorkshire team-mate, having started the day unbeaten on 55

England, chasing a target of 296 for victory, finished on 296-3 to complete a 3-0 series clean sweep in their first campaign under new captain Ben Stokes and red-ball coach Brendon McCullum, a former New Zealand captain.

Rain washed out the morning

session to leave England, 183-2 overnight, with a nominal 78 overs in which to score the remaining 113 runs they needed for victory.

But they took just 15.2 overs, scoring at a rapid rate of 7.43 an over, with Bairstow sealing victory in storybook style with a six off spinner Michael Bracewell.

Ollie Pope 81 not out overnight, fell to the fifth ball of the day when bowled by a Tim Southee off-cutter to end a sparkling stand of 134 with Root.

Any hope New Zealand had that Pope's exit would be the spark for another astonishing come from behind Test win at Headingley to set alongside England's Ashes 'miracles' of 1981 and 2019 did not last, long however, with 17 runs coming from Monday's second over.

England player of the series Root, now back on top of the Test batting rankings, cut Trent Boult's

second delivery on Monday for four and followed that up next ball with a punched boundary.

- Brilliant Bairstow - New batsman Bairstow had shared an England record seventh-wicket stand of 241 with Jamie Overton (97 on Test debut, in the first innings after making a remarkable

Bairstow made a blistering 71 not out, England's second quickest Test fifty of all time, to follow a stunning 162 that helped revive the hosts from a first-innings collapse to 55-6

136 during England's victorious run chase in the second Test, got off the mark on Monday with a boundary off Boult and next ball guided him for another four.

Bairstow then 'picked' a slower ball from Southee as he disdainfully drove the Black Caps spearhead for six.

He was equally severe on Bracewell, preferred to frontline spinner Ajaz Patel, sweeping the off-break bowler's opening ball of the day before driving him for a towering six.

Bairstow then completed England's second-fastest fifty when he drove Southee for a sixth four in 30 balls faced.

Only outstanding all-rounder Ian Botham, with a 28-ball half-century against India at Delhi in 1981, had made a quicker Test fifty for England.

New Zealand made 326 in their second innings, with Tom Blundell

top-scoring with 88 not out and Daryl Mitchell making 56 as the pair shared their fourth century partnership this series.

Mitchell finished the series with a record total of 538 runs, the most scored by an overseas batsman in a campaign of three or fewer Tests in England, including three

SCOREBOARD

New Zealand first Innings: ----- 329
England first Innings: ----- 360
New Zealand second Innings: ----- 326
England second Innings: (0/n: 183-2)
A Lees (run out)-----9
Z Crawley c Williamson b Bracewell-----25
O Pope b Southee-----82
J Root (not out)-----86
J Bairstow (not out)-----71
Extras (B-13, LB-8, NB-2) ----- 23
Total (For 3 wkts, 54.2 overs)----- 296
Fall of wickets: 1-17, 2-51, 3-185
Bowling: Boult 12-2-65-0; Southee 19-5-68-1; Bracewell 15-2-0-109-1; Wagner 8-2-33-0

hundreds, at a huge average of 107.60.

But after he was dismissed on Sunday, player of the match Jack Leach mopped up the tail on his way to 5-66 for a match return of 10-166 — the first time the left-arm spinner had taken 10 wickets in a Test.

A year ago, England did not attempt to chase a target of 273 in a first Test draw with New Zealand at Lord's during a two-match series they lost 1-0.

But they have become a transformed team under Stokes and McCullum, with England chasing down stiff targets of 277 and 299 earlier in the series while recording five-wicket wins at both Lord's and Trent Bridge.

England will not have long to rest on their laurels, however, with the Covid-delayed final Test of last year's series against India starting at Edgbaston on Friday. — **AFP**

Australia brace for trial by spin against Sri Lanka

COLOMBO: Australia can expect a trial by spin when Pat Cummins and his men lock horns with Sri Lanka in a two-test series in Galle beginning on Wednesday.

The picturesque stadium, fringed on two sides by the Indian Ocean and adjacent to a 16th century Dutch-built fort, is where Sri Lankan spin stalwarts Muttiah Muralitharan and Rangana Herath routinely beguiled the touring batsmen.

Led by man-of-the-series Herath in 2016, Sri Lanka's spinners claimed 54 of the 58 wickets on their way to a 3-0 rout of Steve Smith's team when Australia last visited.

Australia's triumph in Pakistan earlier this year suggests they

know what it takes to succeed in Asia, but their vulnerability against left-arm spin means the world's top-ranked test team cannot take anything for granted.

Their batters average 21.36 against left-arm orthodox spin since 2016, the lowest of any test teams except for minnows Ireland and Afghanistan.

Opener David Warner is still looking for his first test hundred against Sri Lanka while Smith has managed only one century in his last 18 tests.

A lot will depend on how they perform against the left-arm spin of Lasith Embuldeniya and Praveen Jayawickrama.

Glenn Maxwell, known for his spin proficiency, could make his

first test appearance in five years should a hamstrung Travis Head sit the match out.

With the left-arm spin duo of Ashton Agar (side strain) and Jon Holland (finger) nursing injuries, Mitchell Swepson will join Nathan Lyon in Australia's spin attack.

"It's always exciting having a leggie in the side," Cummins told reporters on Tuesday.

"Especially as a captain, it feels like a real luxury to throw him the ball and see him go about it."

The onus was on Australia's middle order to dominate the Sri Lankan spinners, he said.

"Whether it's Alex (Carey) in the middle, Travis, (Cameron) Greeny or Maxy, absolutely

they've got the licence to do it their way."

For Sri Lanka, the batters need to put enough runs on the board to complement their bowlers, and skipper Dimuth Karunaratne - their most consistent batter - must lead by example.

Angelo Mathews, Kusal Mendis and Dinesh Chandimal must also come good with the bat if they are to snatch the Warner-Muralitharan trophy.

The teams will observe a moment's silence before the first test gets underway in memory of Australian spin great Shane Warne, who died in March. Warne had helped rebuild the stadium after the devastating December 2004 tsunami. — **Reuters**



Australia's Mitchell Swepson takes part in a practice session at the Galle International Cricket Stadium in Galle. — **AFP**



Interest rate up to **2.5%**

Get Higher Returns with
HIGH-YIELD SAVINGS ACCOUNT

For more information

BankDhofar

the best bank for you

Oman, Italy explore cooperation to support mining growth

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 28

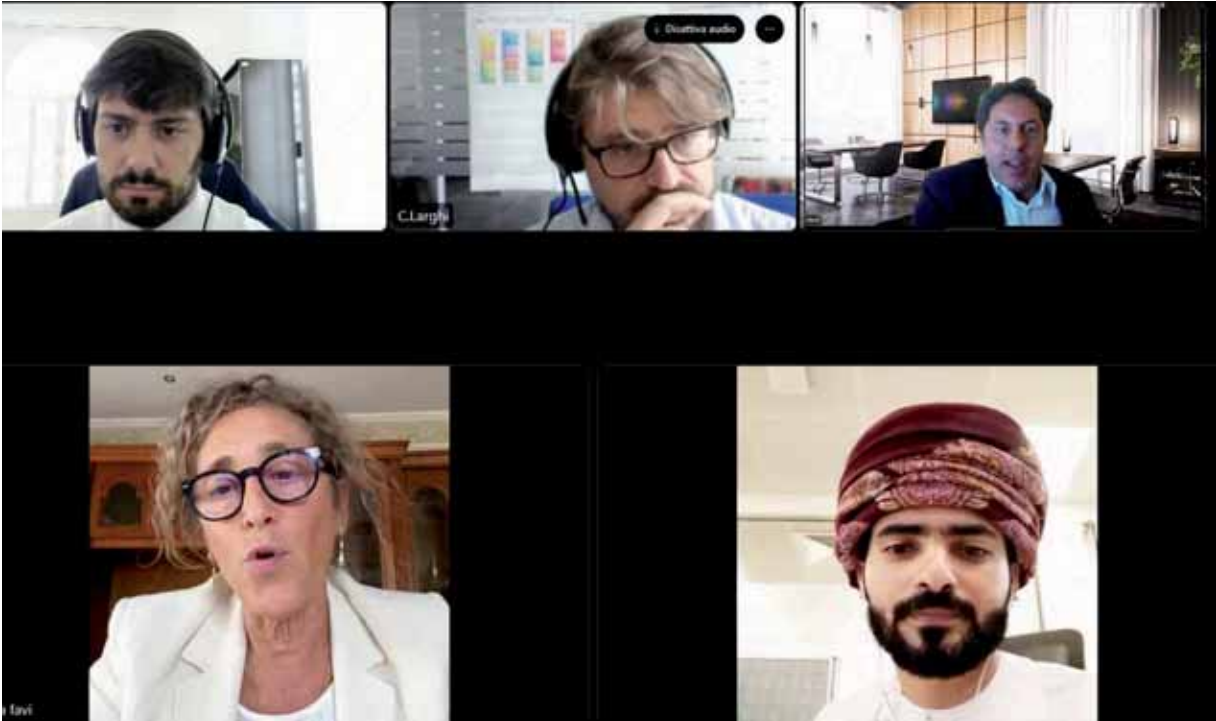
The Embassy of Italy, in cooperation with the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, promoted a roundtable with prominent geologists from Italy and the Sultanate of Oman to identify ways to broaden the scientific, academic and training collaboration in the geological field to support the expansion of the mining sector in Oman in line with the goals of Oman Vision 2040.

Panelists included key figures from the Geological Society of Oman, the Italian Geological Society, the Italian National Council of Geologists as well as several Italian and Omani universities - including GUtech, Sultan Qaboos University, University of Bologna and University of Siena - and oil companies such as ENI.

The discussion highlighted all the research that has been already done by Italian geologists in the Sultanate of Oman over the years, both through research in the field and academic collaboration.

“The great potential of mining sector in Oman requires strong research and exploration capabilities and Italy is keen to share its long tradition of geological studies and to cooperate with an enthusiastic group of Omani scholars to set the framework for a solid and promising mining sector in Oman,” said Ambassador of Italy Federica Favi while opening the meeting.

“Thanks to the excellent work done by ENI, Italian geological research in the Oman has been so far mostly focused on the oil



and gas reservoirs. University cooperation and professional training are essential to go further to make sure that the mining industry can flourish in the Sultanate of Oman and many job opportunities for young Omani geologists can arise from this new sector,” she added.

Both the President of the Geological Society of Oman, Husam al Rawahi, and the Italian Geological Society board member, David Iacopini, shared the view that creating synergies between

the respective geological societies and associations can support scientific research and mutually increase professional skills.

Several representatives from the academia also underlined how promoting synergies with the existing research, training and scholarship programmes from both countries would also support future collaborations.

The Sultanate of Oman is home to an outstanding array of geological phenomena, many of which are world class. Over the

years both local and international geologists have devoted studies to the Sultanate of Oman.

Still, the rich diversity of the landscape offers many research opportunities. Italy has a long tradition of geological studies, dating back to the 19th century and taking its roots in the diverse landscape of Italian territory, ranging from dolomite in the Alps to active volcanoes in Sicily.

Current studies are focusing also on the connections with environmental protection, sustainable mining, heritage conservation, tourism of geological heritage, which are areas of mutual interest for both Italy and Oman. Broader scientific cooperation can stimulate further explorations and the exploitation of untapped resources, thus progressing in the Sultanate of Oman’s economic diversification process.

Development of Barka 5 IWP kicks off



JOMAR MENDOZA
@JmObserver

A major seawater desalination project in Barka in South Al Batinah Governorate has kicked off, officials said on Monday. The project is overseen by GS Inima, a wholly owned subsidiary of South Korean based global construction heavyweight GS Engineering & Construction (GS E&C).

GS Engineering & Construction has signed financing documents for GS Inima’s project to build a Barka 5 Independent Water Plant in Oman, a deal reached with Oman Power & Water Procurement Co in 2020, the company said.

Of the \$130 million that will be needed for building the plant, GS E&C will be procuring 70 per cent of the expenses from the Export-Import Bank of Korea, and 30 per cent from KEB Hana Bank, the company said.

The Barka 5 Independent Water Plant (IWP) project involves building a seawater desalination facility that can desalinate 100,000 cubic metres of water per day.

The project is a build-

THE PROJECT IS A BUILD-OWN-OPERATE PROJECT, WHICH MEANS GS INIMA WILL RUN THE PLANT, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO START OPERATIONS IN 2024, FOR 20 YEARS, ALONG WITH FINANCING AND CONSTRUCTION. THE FIRM IS EXPECTED TO RAKE IN SOME \$545 MILLION IN REVENUE.

own-operate project, which means GS Inima will run the plant, which is expected to start operations in 2024, for 20 years, along with financing and construction. The firm is expected to rake in some \$545 million in revenue.

“The full-fledged Oman Barka project will serve as an opportunity to expand our technology not only in the Middle East but also in Asian markets. The water treatment project is GS E&C’s future growth engine and representative eco-friendly project, and will solidify our status as a global leader in this field,” said an official from GS Engineering & Construction.

GS E&C acquired Spanish water treatment company Inima in 2011 and rebranded as GS Inima.

Wizz Air increases flight frequencies to Oman

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 28

Wizz Air Abu Dhabi, the ultra-low-fare national airline of the UAE, has announced additional flights from Abu Dhabi to capitalise on the increasing demand for travel.

Providing hassle-free, affordable travel for tourists and residents in both the UAE and throughout the region, flight capacities are being extended to both Bahrain and Muscat, Oman to operate daily from July 3.

The airline will also be operating to Santorini, Greece three times a week in July on Monday, Thursday and Friday.

New RO 30m hotel project set to open in Salalah

QASIM AL MAASHANI
SALALAH, JUNE 28

The Tulip Inn Majan Salalah – the newest addition to Dhofar Governorate’s expanding portfolio of luxury properties – is set to formally open its doors on July 1, 2022.

Located on Samharam Street in the heart of the Salalah commercial district, the property’s opening ahead of the popular khareef holiday season is optimally timed to take advantage of the significant rush of holidaymakers who will be thronging this subtropical holiday destination from around the Sultanate of Oman and the wider Gulf and Middle East region.

Considering that the current khareef is the first after a two-year suspension owing to the pandemic, Dhofar Governorate is expected to pull in larger than usual number of visitors this season.

The superbly furnished hotel, strategically located within distance of Salalah’s prominent landmarks, has been built with



an investment of around RO 30 million. The owners are Muscat Overseas Group of Companies, although the property will be

managed by the well-known international hospitality chain Tulip Inn. The latter chain currently oversees an expanding portfolio of

hotels in the Sultanate of Oman.

The imposing hotel offers a total of 205 spacious rooms and suites catering to a diverse mix of individual business visitors as well as families. Kitchenettes are standard in all suites.

Public facilities include two swimming pools for adults and one for children, in addition to a spa, separate gyms for men and women, and a kids’ club. Complementing an all-day restaurant on the lobby level are a café, juice bar and lobby lounge.

As a business centre in its own right, Tulip Inn Majan Salalah also features a spacious conference hall that can seat up to 100 guests in different configurations. In addition, there is a three stylish boardrooms and a party hall as well. In remarks to the Observer, Mark Abboud, General Manager, said the property has been designed and equipped to offer an “amazing guest experience”.

“We are the perfect match for any guest,” he noted.

Go places and make a mark in the powerful Ford Ranger Wildtrack



MUSCAT: The Ford Ranger Wildtrack is built to take on extreme tasks with ease. Engineered and designed to impress and make a mark, the Ford Ranger Wildtrack always shines bright making every journey absolutely thrilling. Just like the F-150, Built Ford Tough is engineered into every nut, bolt, panel and component that comprises the Ranger — and Ford dedicates an extraordinary amount of expertise to ensure the Ranger will stand the test of time.

From its backbone — the high-strength steel frame ladder chassis — to its tough steel body and versatile cargo box, Ranger's appetite for adventure is apparent.

The tough exterior design incorporates a high beltline, a raked grille and slanted windshield which give Ranger its athletic appearance and superb aerodynamics which helps cut wind noise and improve fuel economy.

Off-road, Ranger's short front and rear overhangs mean impressive approach and departure angles for tackling steep terrain, while its 23cm ground clearance allows it to clear obstacles easily.

Ranger is also able to navigate watery obstacles up to 800mm deep, allowing drivers to push through conditions that may stop its competitors in their tracks. The Ranger's 3.2-litre turbodiesel engine produces

196 hp and 470 Nm of torque.

With the likes of 800mm wading depth, complemented by its powerful engine choices, and six-speed auto transmission, Ranger can take you anywhere you need to go.

Ranger's off-road capabilities are further enhanced with features like Hill Descent Control which takes the stress out of the kind of precise driving required when tackling the technical challenges of tight and twisty mountain roads.

Ford's 4X4 Shift-On-The-Fly allows drivers to effortlessly switch between two-and four-wheel drive on the go, while an electronically controlled Locking Rear Differential gives drivers extra control and confidence on uneven terrain.

With room for five people inside, a maximum towing capacity of 3.5 tonnes and a cargo tray capable of carrying up to 1,425kg of gear, there's no need for passengers to pack light for the journey. Ranger has enough space for everyone and everything they need to unlock the great outdoors.

In Oman, Ford vehicles are brought to you by Arabian Car Marketing Co LLC. Please log on to www.fordoman.com, or www.facebook.com/FordOman or www.youtube.com/FordOmanChannel or www.instagram.com/ford_oman for the latest news, test drive requests and the latest press releases.

CEO Inspire Forum kicks off today

MUSCAT: Today (Wednesday), the CEO Inspire Forum, organised by Alizz Islamic Bank in collaboration with Oman Arab Bank, will be held at Rozna Restaurant with the participation of more than 200 CEOs from various entities and organisations operating in the Sultanate of Oman.

The Forum will discuss a number of issues such as the current challenges facing the economic sector, in addition to highlighting some local, regional and international experiences in addressing and overcoming any obstacles that the economy may have faced over the past two years due to the pandemic.

The forum will carry out a comprehensive assessment on how to enhance the roles of the private sector to be in line with the government perspectives in terms of job creation and contribution to the GDP in order to enhance liquidity, which in turn facilitates understanding of the current situation and developing a clear strategy based on facts, rather than assumptions.

Abdulaziz al Balushi, Group CEO of Ominvest and Tariq Qureishy, Founder and CEO of MAD Talks, will present insights



that cover several strategic topics on how to build a productive and diverse economy based on innovation, the integration of roles and equal opportunities, expanding businesses regionally and globally, as well as how to enhance the role played by the private sector in tandem with the global economy to achieve sustainable and comprehensive development and meet the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

Commenting on the forum, Abdulaziz al Balushi, Group CEO

at Ominvest said "We strongly believe in our purpose statement at Ominvest of "Transforming Businesses to Enrich Societies" and it is forums like this that give us and the private sector the opportunity to collectively contribute to advancing the economic sector in the Sultanate of Oman. I am delighted to share and receive insight from reputable CEOs across Oman and hope this forum can lead to making a positive change for the sector."

The forum aspires to develop

strategic resolutions that promote partnerships with various economic entities, and new investment opportunities in different fields that contribute to enhancing the Sultanate of Oman's GDP, as well as attracting direct foreign investments, particularly in light of the diverse facilities granted to investors, including a supportive environment for expanding the production base of various sectors and utilisation of modern technologies in various fields.

Today, the Sultanate of Oman gives priority to enhancing the efforts of the private sector and strengthening investment in high-value sectors with a view to promoting in In-Country Value regionally and internationally, in addition to creating job opportunities for skilled Omani youth with the participation of government organisations; aligning the labour market structure with global developments to incorporate future jobs increasing the percentage of skilled cadres in the workforce by the implementation of the principles of governance, improving performance and conducting assessments in order to enhance performance enablers.

BankDhofar signs agreement with Oman Oil to provide payment solutions

MUSCAT: BankDhofar and Oman Oil recently signed an agreement for payment solutions. The agreement was mutually signed by Dr Tariq Taha, Chief Retail Banking Officer, at BankDhofar and Ali Muqibal, GM International Retail from Oman Oil Marketing, with the presence of executive management team members.

As part of the agreement, BankDhofar will provide Oman Oil with innovative payment solutions, including Point of Sale (POS) terminals and a payment gateway for its mobile application.

Upon signing the agreement, Dr Tariq Taha, Chief Retail Banking Officer at BankDhofar, said: "We are proud to sign the agreement with Oman Oil to provide them with innovative



payment solutions, which will facilitate their business operations.

The agreement will positively reflect on the experience of the customers of Oman Oil, especially users of the Oman Oil mobile App and Basma card. At BankDhofar,

providing innovative products, services and solutions to our customers have always been our priority."

The POS terminals provided by BankDhofar will ensure highly secured and quick payments. On the other hand, BankDhofar's

payment gateway will enable customers to enjoy a better experience when it comes to purchasing or top-up Basma cards through Oman Oil mobile App.

BankDhofar is one of the best banks in the region, catering to customers' needs and requirements, and setting the standard for the best customer experience within the banking industry in the Sultanate of Oman through innovative products and creative solutions.

Following best international banking practices, provision of outstanding customer experience, in addition to its commitment to community development and contribution to the growth of the national economy, has placed BankDhofar at the top of the list of best banks in the region.

Meethaq Hafawa Visa Signature credit cardholders eligible to win 2 hospitality packages to FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022

MUSCAT: In line with its customer-centric vision and commitment to offering the best value proposition to its customers, Meethaq, the pioneer of Islamic banking in Oman from Bank Muscat, has announced that its Meethaq Hafawa Visa Signature Credit Cardholders can win 2 hospitality packages to FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, courtesy of Visa.

This exciting promotion is part of the run up to one of the biggest sporting spectacles on the planet and will be open till August 31, 2022. Two winners will be chosen by Meethaq, and each winner will receive a Hospitality Package for two to the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, courtesy of Visa.

The attractive package includes airline tickets, hotel accommodation with full board and match tickets. Winners will be chosen on the basis of their overall spends using Hafawa Visa Signature Credit Cards.

It must be noted that cardholders will earn one point for every RO 50 spent in Oman using their Visa credit card, while international spends will earn double the points compared to domestic transactions. Customers are also eligible to get 2 additional points if their monthly spend using the card is RO 500 or more.

The 2 customers who accumulate the maximum points will win the hospitality packages, courtesy of Visa. It must be



noted that ATM withdrawals and government transactions are not eligible to receive points to decide the winners.

Speaking about the exciting promotion, Sami Arfah Bait Rashid (pictured), Assistant General Manager — Meethaq Personal Banking, said: "Meethaq is delighted to offer football enthusiasts a great opportunity to win hospitality packages to FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, courtesy of Visa.

Launching this special campaign comes within Meethaq's customer-centric vision and strategy of offering the best features and benefits to our customers. We invite all our Hafawa Visa Signature Credit Cardholders to

participate enthusiastically in this once in a lifetime offer. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all our customers for their strong confidence in Meethaq Islamic Banking and its cutting-edge products and services."

The Hafawa Visa Signature Credit Card offers up to 52-days profit-free credit period and is accepted worldwide at more than 30 million locations. Cardholders are also provided coverage against accidental damage or loss and this coverage extends to goods purchased online.

In addition, Hafawa Visa Signature Credit cardholders have access to value-added benefits at over 900 luxury hotels around the world including automatic room

upgrades (subject to availability), free in-room Internet and Valet parking, complimentary continental breakfast, late checkouts, VIP Guest status and vouchers for free food and beverages.

It must be noted that every Meethaq product goes through the process of Shariah-compliance certification by the Shariah Supervisory Board and is created in line with the guidelines of the Central Bank of Oman.

For more details on Meethaq Hafawa Visa Signature Credit Cards, please go to <https://www.meethaq.om/en/meethaq-cards/Pages/Meethaq-Hafawa-Visa-Signature-Credit-Card.aspx> or call 24656666.



Integrated service station to be set up in Al Buraimi Industrial City



BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 28

Al Buraimi Industrial City, which is administered by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), has signed an investment contract with Murtafat Mahdha Trading for the establishment of an integrated service station for vehicles with an investment of around RO 500,000.

The contract was signed by Said bin Abdullah al Balushi, Director General of Al Buraimi Industrial City, and Rashid bin Salim al Kaabi, Project Manager.

The project, which will be located on the main road to Al Buraimi Industrial City, aims at offering a range of facilities and services to the investors, business owners and workforce

in Al Buraimi Industrial City in particular, and the population in Al Buraimi Governorate in general. This value-added project in the industrial city will play a role in generating job opportunities and attracting service projects.

Madayn is currently implementing a number of projects in Al Buraimi Industrial City, which include the infrastructure development project in phases 1 and 2 at a total cost of more than RO 5 million and a completion rate exceeding 30 per cent.

This project includes the implementation of sewage treatment plant with a capacity of 400m², road rehabilitation works, water supply distribution network, electrical works, and street lighting (85 lighting poles) for phase 2.

FAO, MAFWR initiative to promote sustainable food systems in Oman

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 28

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has recently launched an initiative to promote sustainable food systems, healthy diets and improved food and nutrition security in the Sultanate of Oman. This was undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources (MoAFWR) and Zubair Enterprises Development

Centre (Zubair EDC). The project aims at linking local production and supply of safe and nutritious foods with multiple interventions to also increase demand, by influencing consumer behaviour in such a way that it contributes to healthier diets. In addition, it also aimed to encourage government bodies, SMEs, their supporting organisations and investors to use the results of the analysis in their planning.

This will enhance the potential of these value chains to generate income and better nutritional outcomes at the national level. The initiative is aligned with the National Nutrition Strategy of Oman 2014-2050 and the Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy (SARDS) 2040.



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Nutrition-sensitive
value chain analysis
for carrot and papaya
in Al Batinah North,
Oman

سلطنة عمان
وزارة الزراعة والسمكية وموارد المياه

مركز الزبير
Zubair EDC
مركز تطوير المشاريع الصغيرة والمتوسطة

Under this, emphasis is given to the importance of an adequate intake of fruits and vegetables while decreasing the intake of energy-dense foods, as a main determinant of health as well as food security and nutrition.

The three entities conducted

an assessment of the Sultanate's Nutrition-Sensitive Value Chain (NSVC) in one of the main agricultural governorates in the Sultanate of Oman: Al Batinah North. The study focused on two commodities; papaya and carrots for their high beta-carotene

content.

These contain a precursor of vitamin A, which is lacking in the diets of the Omani population, according to the latest health nutrition survey conducted by the Ministry of Health in 2017.

The study also involved SMEs related to food and agriculture, farmer organisations, smallholders and other players along the aforementioned value chains. It shed light on the Sultanate's current landscape of challenges and opportunities in the supply and demand of carrots and papaya, as they relate to dietary and nutrition challenges.

The analysis produced recommended actions and various investment opportunities across the two value chains to improve the enabling environment to boost demand and supply, thereby leading to an increase in incomes for smallholders and family farms as well as for small SMEs in food processing and innovative start-ups.

Furthermore, this assessment contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through improved knowledge of the food system in the Sultanate of Oman and providing a variety of evidence-based intervention and investment opportunities along the value chain.

Al Mouj Muscat delivers substantial economic benefits for Oman

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 28

Al Mouj Muscat has delivered on its promise to contribute towards economic prosperity in the Sultanate of Oman and the unique partnership of Majid Al Futtaim, Omran and Tanmia has created a destination where investment and growth is driving diverse and lasting value for the country.

Since 2006 when it was established as the country's first Integrated Tourism Complex (ITC), Al Mouj Muscat has achieved outstanding asset growth of 777 per cent. Its total investment currently stands at \$3.5 billion, and the thriving community is actively contributing towards the aims of Oman Vision 2040.

As a joint venture, the impressive partnership behind Al Mouj Muscat has ensured that growth across retail, real estate and leisure aligns with Oman's long-term strategic vision. Alongside exceptional year-on-year growth,

Al Mouj has secured \$884 million in foreign direct investment (FDI) and has contributed



RO 11 million in tax revenues. It has also committed RO 4.34 million in corporate social responsibility expenditure, helping to boost local skills and employment prospects across multiple sectors including tourism, retail and construction.

In 2020 alone, Al Mouj Muscat achieved RO 76 million pre-tax profitability and contributed RO 46 million to the Sultanate's GDP.

Commenting on these figures Al Mouj Muscat's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Ahmed

al Massan (pictured) said: "We have achieved exceptional growth through a strategy that has yielded consistent and positive returns, and we have attracted significant foreign direct investment from around the globe.

"Oman is an investor-friendly country, and our focus remains on ensuring that Al Mouj Muscat is a superb location for investment, generating both growth and opportunities for people and enterprise."

Nasser al Sheibani, CEO of Al Mouj Muscat, adds: "The facts and figures included in the Impact Al Mouj campaign demonstrate the success of our partnership model, and the extent of the value creation achieved to date. We will continue to promote the growth of retail, real estate and infrastructure sectors through the sale of residences, our construction activities, and across hospitality, leisure, entertainment and retail assets.

Plus, we continue to innovate across products and services, all of which will add to the significant impact we deliver for people, for our community and for Oman."

Tatweer Duqm appoints new CEO

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 28

The Board of Directors of Oman Company for the Development of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Tatweer Duqm) announced the appointment of Eng Ali bin Moosa Malallah (pictured) as the new Chief Executive Officer.

Eng Ali has more than 27 years of experience in multiple industries that include integrated projects facilities management, real estate & investment, public transport & semiconductors. He spent nearly two decades of his career working in Europe, USA, Japan, Southeast Asia

and MENA.

He has held many leading positions in international operations, training, manufacturing, real estate, sales & marketing.

Tatweer Duqm was established to support and develop the work of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, to assist in the establishment and management of infrastructure facilities, and to attract investments through three main tasks: project management, facilities management and investment in potential economic opportunities.



Voltas wins key award at OER Manufacturing Excellence Summit

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 28

Voltas Oman Operations comprising Voltas Oman SPC and Lalbuksh Voltas Engineering Services & Trading LLC was named the Technical Facilities Management Company of the Year at the OER Manufacturing Excellence Summit held on Monday.

Voltas Leadership team comprising heads of various departments such as Business Development, Facilities Management, Irrigation and Landscaping, Contracts and

Human Resources received the award from Dr Saleh bin Said Masan, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry and Chairman of Madayn's Board of Directors at the Manufacturing Summit organised at Sheraton Hotel.

Voltas Oman Operations is currently executing a number of prestigious Technical Facility Management Contracts for marquee government clients such as Royal Court Affairs, Royal Gardens and Farms,



Sultan Qaboos Comprehensive Cancer Care & Research Centre (SQCCC&RC), Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, Mazoon Dairy, Royal Guards of Oman and prestigious private clients such as Lulu, Araimi Boulevard and Myriad.

Voltas also has excellent experience of maintaining RO Plants, Sewage Treatment Plants, Sewage Lifting Stations with multiple government clients such as Royal Oman Police, Royal Guards of Oman, Sultan's Special Forces, and other prestigious semi-government organisations such as PDO and Mazoon Dairy.

ECB vows to counter ‘undesirably high’ inflation

The European Central Bank will go “as far as necessary” to fight inflation that is set to remain “undesirably high” for “some time to come”, its president said.

Soaring inflation is “a great challenge,” ECB President Christine Lagarde said in a speech at the bank’s annual conference on monetary policy.

We will go as far as necessary to ensure that inflation stabilises at our two per cent target over the medium term,” Lagarde said.

Consumer prices rose at an 8.1-per cent pace in the euro zone in May, an all-time high for the currency club.

The surge has been driven higher by the Russian attack on Ukraine, and the ensuing rise in the cost of energy and food.

The present level of inflation in industrial and agricultural goods has “not been seen since the mid-1980s”, Lagarde said in the speech in the Portugese resort of Sintra.

The rise in the cost of energy was also “much higher than the individual spikes that occurred in the 1970s” during the oil shock, she said.

Inflation pressures are “intensifying and broadening”, Lagarde warned, while nominal wage growth has started to “pick up”.

At the same time, real wages are being “squeezed” by inflation, while economic turbulence is weighing on growth, Lagarde said.

But the central bank still expects the euro zone to swerve a recession and for growth rates to remain positive.

At the ECB’s last meeting, policymakers under pressure to respond to inflation agreed to the bank’s first interest rate hike in over a decade. The quarter-point raise, set to take place at its next meeting on July 21, will raise rates from their historic lows.

These include a minus-0.5 rate which effectively charges banks to park their money with the bank overnight. Lagarde repeated the ECB’s conclusion that it could “move faster” to raise rates in future, if warranted by inflation. — AFP

We will go as far as necessary to ensure that inflation stabilises at our two per cent target over the medium term

CHRISTINE LAGARDE
ECB President



GASSED UP

A man queues for domestic gas in Quito, as two weeks of indigenous-led protests against the high cost of living in Ecuador has hit merchants and consumers with shortage of supplies. The demonstrations have crippled transportation, with roadblocks blocking the delivery all kind of supplies and dealing a blow to tourism. Shortages are already being reported in the capital, where prices have soared and irate workers and shop owners have launched counter-protests against the disruption of their lives and livelihoods. — AFP

Hiring spree to bolster banks in Europe



ANDY JALIL
andyjalil@aol.com

The writer is our foreign correspondent based in the UK.

GOLDMAN SACHS BOLSTERED ITS EU OPERATIONS BY 350 STAFF LAST YEAR, AS MAJOR INVESTMENT BANKS FACE INCREASING PRESSURE TO SHIFT STAFF TO THE CONTINENT FOLLOWING BREXIT.

A major review by the European Central Bank (ECB) slammed banks for not shifting enough resources to the EU in the wake of Brexit and will ask some to appoint new senior staff, change where they are located or change their group structures.

While billions in assets have shifted to the EU since Brexit, the extent of job moves out of the UK has been below expectations.

For more than a year, the ECB has been probing where banks’ resources are based – particularly around trading and risk-management – in what it has called a “desk-mapping exercise”.

In a blog post published last month, Andrea Enria, chair of the supervisory board of the ECB, said the review had found 70 per cent of the desks still implemented ‘back-to-back booking’ models.

Goldman Sachs bolstered its EU operations by 350 staff last year, as major investment banks face increasing pressure to shift staff to the continent following Brexit.

The US investment banking giant had 908 employees within Goldman Sachs Europe SE, the entity that houses its continental European business, at the end of 2021, as it continued to roll out its Brexit plans, according to accounts released last

month. That was an increase of 63 per cent on the previous year.

Goldman said the expansion was down to the “continued expansion of the bank’s activities across Europe in 2021 as part of GS Group’s Brexit strategy”.

The bank has been bolstering its team of dealmakers on the continent in locations including Spain, Italy and the Nordics as part of a Brexit strategy that involves having senior bankers in different locations across Europe.

It has also been hiring traders for its hub in Paris, where it has plans to add another 50 people over the next 18 months.

The bank spent nearly four times as much on compensation in the region last year, with pay costs spiralling from 114 million euros to 536 million euros. Goldman bolstered salaries and bonuses for its staff globally last year amid an unprecedented deal boom that has forced banks to dig deep in order to retain talent.

The compensation costs in Europe amount to an average payout of 590,000 euros. The bank has also been shifting assets to the continent over the period. At 55.1 billion euros at the end of last year, assets within its Europe SE entity were up 32.8 billion from a year earlier.

Among the banks involved in the hiring spree more recently is investment bank

Jefferies which has hired a senior Barclays dealmaker to bolster its coverage of the consumer and retail sectors in Europe.

The US investment bank, which has been expanding its roster of senior bankers in recent times, has hired Gabriel Lambert, who was latterly head of consumer and retail investment banking for Europe, the Middle East and Africa (Emea) at Barclays, according to people familiar with the matter.

Lambert’s hire is part of a broader build-out of Jefferies’ coverage of the consumer and retail sectors, and further recruits for the team are expected, the source added.

Jefferies has been building out the senior ranks of its European investment bank as it looks to challenge some of its larger rivals in the region. It has more than 220 managing directors in its Emea business – 80 in investment banking – an increase of 36pc in the past five years.

Most recently, it bolstered its coverage of the business services sector by hiring a senior Morgan Stanley dealmaker and took on Efe Kapanci from HSBC, into a senior role within its leveraged finance unit.

According to Jefferies executives, the bank viewed the consumer sector as an area for expansion this year, and it had plans to hire dealmakers in leveraged finance, France and Middle East.

How realistic are China’s semiconductor ambitions?



KEUN LEE

The author, Vice Chair of the National Economic Advisory Council for the President of South Korea, is Distinguished Professor of Economics at Seoul National University and the author of China’s Technological Leapfrogging and Economic Catch-up: A Schumpeterian Perspective (Oxford University Press, 2022).

When Joe Biden landed in South Korea last month — his first official trip to the country as US President — he headed straight for Samsung’s massive semiconductor factory outside Seoul. There, he met with South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol and Samsung Electronics Vice Chairman Lee Jae-yong, and praised the construction of a \$17 billion Samsung semiconductor factory in Texas.

The economic and strategic importance of semiconductors could not have been made any clearer.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, semiconductor supply disruptions forced a range of industries — from automobiles to consumer electronics — to slow or halt production. Reliable semiconductor supplies, it became clear, are vital to a country’s

economic resilience. For the United States and China, they are also central to a strategic competition in which leadership in cutting-edge industries plays a crucial role.

As it stands, the US has a bigger slice of the global semiconductor pie, owing to its strength in chip design and in the fables segment of the industry.

But the vast majority of chips are manufactured far from America’s shores, including at the Samsung factory in Chinese President Xi Jinping’s hometown of Xi’an. And China – the world’s biggest chip market – is investing heavily in the sector as part of its effort to boost indigenous innovation.

So, is the US set to lose its semiconductor edge? So far, China has struggled to catch up. First, the typical latecomer strategy — focused on building cheaper, low-end products — cannot be applied to semiconductors, because a more advanced “next-generation”

memory chip tends to cost the same or less than its predecessors. Less advanced chips are thus virtually worthless.

This is not to say that incumbents’ position is unassailable. After all, South Korean firms like Samsung managed to overtake more established Japanese companies like Toshiba in semiconductors.

The key is a “leapfrogging” strategy: developing more advanced versions of a technology before the incumbent can. Such a strategy requires that the development of a technology follows a relatively predictable path — in the case of chips, upgrading from a capacity of one kilobyte to 2K, then 4K, and so on — and that companies have access to technology from abroad.

South Korean companies like Samsung never made the lowest-capacity chips. Instead, they used equipment and facilities imported from Sharp in Japan, and circuit designs licensed from Micron

Technology in the US, to begin developing 64K chips immediately upon market entry.

Later, Samsung set up a research-and-development facility in California’s Silicon Valley, in order to develop designs for high-capacity (256K) chips ahead of Japanese firms.

Its use of the “stacking method” for increasing chip complexity – rather than the “trenching method” used by firms like Toshiba – helped to propel progress. But Samsung continues to rely on high-tech components, parts, and supplies from Japanese and other foreign sources, and on software from the US.

At a time when China’s access to foreign technologies and equipment is increasingly constrained, the country will have a hard time replicating this leapfrogging strategy. Semiconductors and other cutting-edge industries are dominated

by a very small number of firms. In some cases, just one or two companies can provide a particular input or piece of equipment.

These firms are concentrated largely in the US and Europe. One Dutch company, ASML, is the only producer of extreme ultraviolet (EUV) lithography machines, which are vital to the chip-making process, and US firms dominate software. This is not to say that China has no chance to develop an advanced — even world-leading — semiconductor industry.

While this will certainly not happen overnight, there are opportunities to boost China’s prospects. For starters, while the market for memory chips is uniform — lacking high- or low-end segments — the market for system chips (or Application Specific Integrated Circuit chips) is segmented according to application.

© Project Syndicate, 2022

WJ Towell Group Company

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

Muscat 9014 6672, 9679 0684
Sohar 9731 6218 Salalah 9429 9325
www.orbit-oman.com

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

أوربيت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

Classifieds

Ask For Free Demo

Cloud Computing Services

For Tally Sales, Services or Customization

Contact: Guruprasad +968 79248644, 98753781
Email: guru.prasad@asiasolutions.net
ASIA SOLUTIONS

https://www.asiasolutions.net

Tally
POWER OF SIMPLICITY

TALLY FOR **VAT**

TallyPrime

WEDNESDAY

JUNE 29, 2022

DHUL QAADA 29, 1443 AH

Husqvarna
FOREST & GARDEN TOOLS

POWERFUL. RELIABLE. TRUSTED BY EXPERTS.

OMAN'S BEST SELLING LANDSCAPE AND GARDEN TOOLS
Chainsaws| Hedge trimmer| Brush cutters| Lawnmowers| Blowers| Ride on mowers| Cultivators

CALL: 99631272 | EMAIL: gdsoman@gdsoman.com

Authorized Exclusive Distributors for Oman:
الشركة العامة لخدمات التنمية ش م م
GDS General Development Services L.L.C.

SIT. WANTED

CLIENT'S representative, projects' manager and senior architect. 15 years experience in Oman. 94860968.

MBA (F&O), B.com, Indian male 23 years. Good communication skills, working knowledge in computer and with Oman driving licence, seeks suitable placement.
Contact: 968 98570941. Email: jomisethomas4@gmail.com

INDIAN male graduate Executive Secretary/ Stenography/ Oman DL and Muscat experience available.
Contact: 79256679.

INDIAN female (M Tech Civil Structural Engineering) having 7 years experience as Quantity Surveyor cum Quality Control Engineer, looking for suitable position. Contact: 96154505.

GENERAL manager with 16+ years experience in Oman, MBA - BE, seeks suitable placement. Contact: 94008034.

PLANNING engineer, PMP. Indian male Civil Eng. Around 10 years experience in construction projects. Softwares: Primavera P6, MS Office, ERP, having Oman driving licence. Ready to join, email: engineerplanning@gmail.com
Call: 78002582.

SUDANESE female available in Muscat, 26 years old fluent in Arabic & English, has BSC with honour from University of Khartoum in medical laboratory science with 3 years of experience as a lab technician. Dataflow, prometric succeeded. Tel: 94155906

SIT VACANT

URGENT hiring for procurement officer. Leading Lab/ Industrial Chemical and Consumable distribution company in Oman. Required more than 2 years experience in same field Oman/ GCC suitable candidate can send their CV along with expecting salary to Recruitment74@gmail.com

SERVICES

AUTOCAD/REVIT ARCH MEP, part/ full- time. Contact WhatsApp: 79037728.

AL SUMRI AC maintenance. We are ready to repair and install all types of Air-Conditioner within Muscat Governorate. 94301888.

MIDAWA Trading & Cont Est. Plumbing, Paintin & Maintenance. 96191837.

Observer Classified Section

Mohammed al Rashdi: 99841230
m.alrahdhi86@yahoo.com

Ali al Maashari: 99639264
ali.almashari@omandaily.om

Saada al Rashdi 95919344

94501166
24649593
24649595

JOB SEEKING

General Manager (Constructions).
16 Years Oman Experienced. Projects Executed in ROP, MODES, Government and Private Sectors.
Contact No. : 91123511

Driving School

Special offers for those wishing to learn driving in (Aziba - Khwair Qurum - Ruwi Al Amirat)
Contact No: 99074072

FOR SALE

A 60 square metre Paint Shop, with an additional space of 160 sqm (Unutilized) for SALE in Mabellah, Suitable for Building Materials, Hardware and allied business.
Serious buyers may contact 92525406

مجمع السلامة الطبيه ديت
modern Al Saloma Polyclinic
DERMATOLOGY AND AESTHETICS
MEDICINE SPECIALIST

د. نورا بركات
DR. NORA BARAKAT MD, MS
DERMATOLOGY AND AESTHETICS
MEDICINE SPECIALIST

CONSULTATION AVAILABLE
SAT TO WED 10AM TO 6PM
THU 9AM TO 2PM

CONTACT US
+968 24451726 - +968 79235354
AL MABELLAH (NEAR TRAFFIC SIGNAL), SUDANATE OF OMAN
E-ALSAALAMA@GMAIL.COM

EMERGENCY NO
+968 94502100

Quality Comes First

Tower Cranes & Passenger Lifts:

- Sales and Rental Services
- Installation
- Maintenance Service
- Breakdown Service
- Spare Parts Supply
- Hoist & Lowering
- Support Fixation
- Dismantling

Steel Fabrication Works

NEW MANARA TECHNICAL SERVICES LLC
Mobile: +968 9853 1975, 9853 1970
E-mail: info@newmanara.com / newmanaratechnical@gmail.com
Website: www.newmanara.com

SKT سماء الخضراء للتجارة
SAMA AL KHADRA TRADING

SERVICES:

PIPING SYSTEMS VALVES
DRAINS INTERCEPTORS

Tel: 24501568, 24502479 • Fax: 24503566
Email: sales@samaalkhadra.com
Website: www.samaalkhadratradingco.com

Required Sales Executives

Hiring Sales Executive for a Freight Forwarding firm in Oman. The candidate should possess a good customer database and must be well versed with freight forwarding activities.
Please forward your CV's on **freighthr90@gmail.com**

VAT **REGISTRATION, RETURN FILING, TAX CONSULTANCY**
Contact: 9246 9602 / 9723 0025

Saham Ayurvedic Hospital
Al Kishda, Saham, Sohar

AYURVEDA AT ITS BEST!

Saham Ayurvedic Clinic
Bait Al Reem, Al Khuwair, Muscat

GCC'S FIRST IN-PATIENT AYURVEDIC HOSPITAL
AYURVEDA | REHABILITATION | PHYSIOTHERAPY | SPEECH THERAPY | YOGA

26721707 (HOSPITAL) 97000533 (HOSPITAL) WWW.SAHAMAYURHOSPITAL.COM
24403783 (CLINIC) 99230005 (CLINIC) INFO@SAHAMAYURHOSPITAL.COM

PEST CONTROL OMAN CO. L.L.C.

Supply of Pesticides, Gel (crocoraches), Public Health chemicals, Agriculture chemicals, Snake repellent, Rodent baits and other insect repellent from UK & USA

PROFESSIONALS in Pest Control Service, Bedbug Treatment, Rodent Treatment, Snake Treatment and Termite Treatment [Pre & Post Construction]

Tel: 24787606, 24787503
Direct Line: 24786077
GSM: 99382355, 99172309
pcomctom@omantel.net.om
P.O. Box 565, Al Wadi Al Kabir 117, Sultanate of Oman

التماني للشحن
AL NAMANI CARGO
DOOR TO DOOR AIR AND SEA CARGO WORLD WIDE

WORLD WIDE DOOR TO DOOR CARGO

INDIA • BANGLADESH
NEPAL • SRI LANKA • INDONESIA
PHILIPPINES • AFRICA • EUROPE
USA • ALL GCC

TOLL FREE NUMBER
80066766
www.alnamanicargo.com

FREE PICK UP 24/7
Branches: Ruwi, Hamriya, Ghala, Seeb, Barka, Suwailq, Sohar

RENT A CAR

Buttercup Rent A Car AMAZING OFFERS

- Rent a car for 10 days and get an extra free day.
- Rent for one month and get 5 days free.

All the cars are 2016 brand new special prices for public departments, companies and long-term contracts.
☎972494490.

LUXURIOUS Toyota bus 2016, air-conditioned, 30 passengers, offered for daily/monthly/annually, Muscat. Contact: 98080609, 96316269.

FOR RENT

FLATS FOR RENT: A large apartment in Darsait, 5 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, a hall and a balcony with sea view. Rent RO 350 per month. T: 99315986.

FLATS, 2BHK and 1 BHK in Mumtaz ☎99341138/ 90991079.

FLATS, 2BHK in Ghubra near Indian School. ☎99341138/ 90991079.

EXCELLENCE
Audit & Accounting Services

- Statutory Audit
- Internal Audit
- VAT Services
- Accounting & Taxation
- Personal Network
- Statements
- Feasibility Study

P.O. Box 1137, P.Code 130 Building No. 203, Way No 50 Badr Al Samaa Hospital Road Near Hurmuz Filling Station Al Khuwair, Sultanate of Oman
Tel/Fax: 24499091
Sohar Branch: GSM: 99724827
excellenceauditors@gmail.com • www.excellenceoman.com

FOR RENT

- 1, 2 & 3 BHK FLATS in Central Ruwi
- 2 BHK FLAT in Madinat Qaboos (Next To Brazilian Embassy)
Tel No.: 99643760 & 99346546
- SUBSTANTIAL VILLA** in Hay Al Shatti Near Grand Hyatt 3 Floors with 40 Rooms, 22 Bathrooms, which is suitable for Embassy/Clinic/School/Multi purpose Office/Residential Premises
Tel No.: 99643760 / 24704994

HAVE A PROPERTY FOR RENT?

Advertise with us.

Contact us on: 99639264

Observer

For Advertisements
Please Contact with our Team:

Head Office
Mohd Al Rashdi
99841230
m.alrahdhi86@yahoo.com

Salalah Office
Bakhit Al Shihri
92998577
bakhit.omandaily@gmail.com

Nizwa Office
Abdullah Al Abri
99429094
nizwaofc@omandaily.net.om

Suham Office
Musalam Al Saidi
99429192
sohardaily@outlook.com

Ali Al Maashari
99639264
wadiameeh@yahoo.com

YouTube Instagram Facebook Twitter
@omanobserver
www.omanobserver.om

#Living_with_COVID19



Young people getting enticed by traditional therapy method of cupping

After studying abroad and learning the different methodologies of traditional medicine, Fatheya al Harthi, along with her project partner Yousuf al Jardani, opened their traditional therapy centre in Ruwi. While they offer different services, it's the ancient practice of cupping that has started to grow in popularity among their young clients... **P20**

Indonesian designer's wheels behind leaders' bamboo bike bromance

AS INDONESIAN PRESIDENT Joko Widodo led Anthony Albanese around the lush gardens of a presidential palace south of Jakarta earlier this month, he presented the new Australian prime minister with an unusual gift: a bamboo bike.

The night before, designer Singgih Susilo Kartono learned it would be the Spedagi model he crafts in a small village on the island of Java that the leaders would ride side-by-side in a unique moment of bicycle diplomacy.

Prime Minister Albanese would tuck his trousers into his socks after the statesmen stripped off their jackets and ties and donned helmets, setting off on the light and environmentally friendly two-wheelers for the symbolic bike ride.

The 54-year-old designer said the diplomatic gesture was a "special, magical moment" for him after years spent working on the bike.

"It's not about the bike being bought by Jokowi, but the fact that it was used to welcome PM (Albanese)," he said.

When not arming world leaders with new bamboo wheels, Kartono is using his sustainable bike craftsmanship to bring jobs to locals and show Indonesian villagers how they can make use of the environment around them.

"I train youths here who lack skills. We have a system to train unskilled people until they can create quality products," he said.

The model, named after the Indonesian



words "sepeda" for bicycle and "pagi" for morning, is built by a team of 15 employees at a workshop in Kartono's village in Central Java, where he saddles up for his own bike ride every day.

Fast-growing bamboo stalks are cut by his team, coated with preservatives, dried, then laminated before being combined with other parts to assemble the sturdy bike frame.

Pound for pound, bamboo is as strong as steel when used in lightweight structures, studies have shown, with a high

tensile strength that makes it a worthy and environmentally friendly substitute.

A fully assembled Spedagi bamboo bike can take a week of intricate work, fetching up to 15 million rupiah (\$1,000), and some have been sold as far away as Japan, company co-founder Tri Wahyuni told.

FRIENDSHIP ON WHEELS

The green wheels used by the two leaders were built with more expensive parts, said Kartono, declining to disclose the

price of their rides.

Widodo, famous at home for gifting bikes to ordinary Indonesians, is a Spedagi fan and bought one personally from Kartono in 2015.

Albanese was similarly beaming about the bike, taking it back to Canberra and saying people would see him on the streets riding what might be "the only bamboo bike" in the Australian capital.

Both bicycles and bamboo — affordable and plentiful in Indonesia — are closely linked with the archipelago nation's lower classes, something that struck a chord with the two leaders from humble backgrounds.

But while the Kartono creation merged two symbols of Indonesian heritage, it is now tied to a blossoming bromance cultivated in the first weeks of Albanese's premiership.

"Every time I ride on the bike, I will remember the friendship with President Widodo," he said.

With his own creation now crossing the Pacific, Kartono said it was seeing bamboo bikes being made where the plant is rarely found — such as in northern Europe — that first motivated him to craft his design.

"When I dug deep into bicycle products online, I found that bamboo bicycles are made in countries that do not have bamboo. That served as a slap for me," said the entrepreneur.

"Bamboo is everywhere around my house." — **AFP**

READ

BELIEVE AND ACHIEVE

BY KULIN DESAI

This book will give you a practical and step-by-step guide on how to use these laws and change any self-limiting beliefs into positive ones.



ANIMAL AFFAIR

Beehives in southeast Australia were on lockdown on Monday, to prevent the spread of a potentially devastating parasite plague.

The Varroa Mite was detected at the Port of Newcastle, prompting authorities in New South Wales to throw up a strict biosecurity zone. — **AFP**



CHANGING WORLD

Fishermen sail their boat past a herd of buffaloes wading into the receding waters of Iraq's drought-stricken southern marshes of Chibayish in Dhi Qar province. Iraq's drought reflects a decline in the level of waterways due to the lack of rain and lower flows from upstream neighbouring countries Iran and Turkey. — **AFP**





find us on
TWITTER
Scan the QR Code or follow us on
www.twitter.com/omanobserver

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



khalidalmawali_
الجيل الأخضر (غمان)

Follow



FRUITS IN SEASON



image.om
Sinaw

Follow



DRESSING UP



theimagegrapher
Muttrah Market for Fish, Fruits &

Follow



TEA TIME

SHARE A SLICE OF YOUR LIFE

We select three photos daily for our Instagram Top Picks of the Day. The rules are simple. Follow us on Instagram. Upload your photos. Tag us and use **#OmanObserver** and **#BeAnObserver**.



AROUND THE WORLD

ENTERTAINMENT

Burundi drummers forced to dance to official beat



A TROUPE OF BAREFOOT musicians wearing the national colours of Burundi strike huge wooden royal drums with tremendous force, precision and unabashed joy.

Twirling and singing, a stick in each hand, the performers are the custodians of a centuries-old ritual recognised by Unesco, and one jealously guarded by the Burundian state.

Too jealously guarded, according to some. "We beat the drum because it's our life, because it's in our blood", said their leader Oscar Nshimirimana, his face dripping with sweat after a spirited performance in Gishora against a backdrop of rolling green hills.

"It was not only my father who beat the drum, but all my great-grandparents", the 43-year-old said.

Troupes hailing from Gishora — home of a royal palace and the heartland of this musical tradition — enjoy a lofty and celebrated status. Burundi's President Evariste Ndayishimiye graced one of their performances in January, causing a stir.

In the tiny landlocked nation of 12 million people, drumming troupes big and small perform at weddings, religious ceremonies and other celebrations — as well as competing against each other.

Across the globe, too, drummers in the Burundian diaspora are found on at least three continents.

"The ritual dance with the royal drum" is the jewel in the country's intangible heritage, declares a culture ministry document.

"The prodigious leaps, the pirouettes, the winks to the spectators... all this has always marked this dance, as the bearer of an uncommon tradition, in the whole of African and world percussion."

ASCENDED THE DRUM

The drumming tradition known locally as "ingoma" dates back to the 17th century, and honoured the eternal rule of the royal family at a time when Burundi was a monarchy.

Upon assuming the throne, a king was said to have "ascended the drum", which was considered the source of his power.

The most hallowed drums are even given names. Many have vanished through the ages but two — known as Ruciteme and Murimirwa — are enshrined in a traditional straw hut in Gishora.

For a long time, these drums could only be carved from the gigantic trunks of "umuvugaangoma", or "the tree that makes the drum talk".

In 2014, Unesco recognised the cultural value of the tradition, inscribing the ritual dance of the royal drum on its list of intangible world heritage.

Since then, the Burundian government — an authoritarian regime that emerged from an armed rebellion — has enforced strict rules around the practice.

In 2017, a long-forgotten edict banning women from playing the drums was reimposed, while dress codes for performers were mandated.

Troupes have since been required to formally register with the authorities, while those wishing to hire drummers for a private event need to apply for special permits costing \$250.

In Burundi, which is the poorest country in the world in terms of GDP per capita, this is no small imposition. Aimable Nkunzumwami, adviser to the culture minister, said the government had a duty to ensure "respect for the cultural identity" of the drum, especially since the Unesco listing.

"It is the government that (must) protect the Burundian drum. That is why it has regulated the practice", he told AFP.

In February, a troupe of drummers caused a scandal by playing at a festival in non-regulation black suits. The festival was stopped, and the troupe suspended for six months. — **AFP**

DISCOVERY

Forever young: Many cold-blooded creatures don't age, studies show



SCIENTISTS HAVE discovered the secret to eternal youth: Be born a turtle.

Two studies published in the journal 'Science' on Thursday revealed scant evidence of ageing among certain cold-blooded species, challenging a theory of evolution which holds that senescence, or gradual physical deterioration over time, is an inescapable fate.

Although there have been eye-catching individual reports — such as that of Jonathan the Seychelles tortoise who turns 190 this year — these were considered anecdotal and the issue had not been studied systematically, Penn State wildlife ecologist David Miller, a senior author of one of the papers, told.

Researchers have "done a lot more comparative, really comprehensive work with birds and animals in the wild", he said, "but a lot of what we knew about amphibians and reptiles were from a species here, a species there."

For their paper, Miller and colleagues collected data from long-term field studies comprising 107 populations of 77 species in the wild, including turtles, amphibians, snakes, crocodilians and tortoises.

These all used a technique called "mark-recapture" in which a certain number of individuals are caught and tagged, then researchers follow them over the years to see if they find them again, deriving mortality estimates based on probabilities. They also collected data on how many years the animals lived after achieving sexual maturity and used statistical methods to produce aging rates, as well as longevity — the age at which 95 per cent of the population is dead.

"We found examples of negli-

gible ageing," explained biologist and lead investigator Beth Reinke of Northeastern Illinois University.

Though they had expected this to be true of turtles, it was also found in one species of each of the cold-blooded groups, including in frogs and toads and crocodilians.

"Negligible ageing or senescence does not mean that they're immortal", she added. What it means is that there is a chance of dying, but it does not increase with age.

By contrast, among adult females in the US, the risk of dying in a year is about one in 2,500 at age 10, versus one in 24 at age 80.

The study was funded by the US National Institutes of Health which is interested in learning more about aging in ectotherms, or cold-blooded species and applying them to humans, who are warm blooded.

IT'S NOT METABOLISM

Scientists have long held ectotherms — because they require external temperatures to regulate their body temperatures and therefore have lower metabolisms — age more slowly than endotherms, which internally generate their own heat and have higher metabolisms.

This relationship holds true within mammals. For example mice have a far higher metabolic rate than humans and much shorter life expectancy.

Surprisingly, however, the new study found metabolic rate was not the major driver it was previously thought.

"Though there were ectotherms that age slower and live longer than endotherms, there were also ectotherms that age faster and live shorter lives", after controlling for factors

such as body size.

The study also threw up intriguing clues that could provide avenues for future research. For example, when the team looked directly at average temperatures of a species, as opposed to metabolic rate, they found that warmer reptiles age faster, while the opposite was true of amphibians.

One theory that did prove true: Those animals with protective physical traits, such as turtle shells, or chemical traits like the toxins certain frogs and salamanders can emit, lived longer and aged slower compared to those without.

"A shell is important for aging and what it does is it makes a turtle really hard to eat", said Miller.

"What that does is it allows animals to live longer and for evolution to work to reduce aging so that if they do avoid getting eaten, they still function well."

A second study by a team at the University of Southern Denmark and other institutions applied similar methods to 52 turtle and tortoise species in zoo populations, finding 75 per cent showed negligible ageing.

"If some species truly escape ageing, and mechanistic studies may reveal how they do it, human health and longevity could benefit", wrote scientists Steven Austad and Caleb Finch in a commentary about the studies.

They did note, however, that even if some species don't have increasing mortality over the years, they do exhibit infirmities linked to age.

Jonathan the tortoise "is now blind, has lost his olfactory sense, and must be fed by hand", they said, proving the ravages of time come for all. — **AFP**

A WINDOW INTO CONTEMPORARY OMANI LITERATURE



Dr Khalid Mohammed al Balushi
khalidalbalushi@hotmail.com

Our Sandals in the Sixties

THE FOLLOWING is my English translation of excerpts from "A Soldier from Oman: Memory's Nectar" by (ret.) Inspector-General Said bin Rashid al Kalbani

OUR SANDALS, BETWEEN AL QASHRA AND AL SHAMIYYA

In those days there were no shoes to sell. Necessity being the mother of invention, as the saying goes, people used local material to make shoes themselves. There was a type made from sheep's skin, known as qashra, and another made of sheep's hair, known as shamiyya, used when climbing mountains. Women also made their sandals by themselves.

When the car came to the Sultanate of Oman, it not only represented a dramatic shift in transportation, but it also introduced our country to types of shoes totally unknown to us, made as they were of car tyres. It seems that we benefited from cars more than their makers and promoters could have imagined. Perhaps we were pioneers in industries relying on recycling waste materials!

AL SHO' FOR CAMELS AND AL KHBAAT FOR SHEEP

We used to feed our camels for dinner with what we cut from the sho' tree, while during the daylight we let them graze in the open space. Our camels apparently appreciated the saying, "Who eats sho' shall not hunger or walk barefoot", for it was the case that just a single meal of sho' would suffice a camel for an entire day or even two days.

We also extracted from the sho' tree oil we used in treating some illnesses, such as stomach pain and neuritis. As regards khbaat, the leaves of the samar tree which flourished in particular during January and February, we harvested them with a long stick known as mihjaan. We fed with khbaat leaves our sheep and

goats, as, unlike camels, they couldn't reach the leaves themselves. The camels did have their own share, though.

MOTASHAWWIK

If we asked someone today what "motashawwik" meant he would definitely not know. He might think of a primitive person with a body covered in thorns* (a thorny man), as is the case with hedgehogs. Nothing could be far from this, for motashawwik refers to the man who dresses up in dishdasha**, mosor*** and carries a gun, a belt, a knife and a pot of kohl; as a result of which, he would look rather handsome and imposing. Men usually dressed up on occasions such as marriage ceremonies, Eid(l), shooting competitions or when visiting another town.

WEDDING CEREMONY IN THE MORNING

Wedding ceremony was usually held in the morning at about eight or nine O'clock. Strange as it might sound to people in other regions, this tradition still holds in Miskan. The groom would be motashawwik, dressed up, on the day of his wedding. All the guests would gather in a particular place and would be welcomed with all hospitality rituals. All sorts of meat would be served. Wedding in those days lasted for no longer than a single day. People would come in the following morning to greet and congratulate the groom. They would be given oil and a nice smelling local mixture used for decoration, which they would apply to their faces, beard, hands and feet.

*The word "shok" in Arabic means "thorn" (the translator).

**The national dress that the Omani man wears (the translator).

***The traditional turban that the Omani man wraps around his head (the translator).

Young people getting enticed by traditional therapy method of cupping

By Mai Al Abri

Traditional forms of health therapy can still be found in the Sultanate of Oman, and as of late, a growing segment of young people are rediscovering health treatments like cupping and using herbs – a more natural and holistic approach to treating health problems and diseases.

In the past, these traditional therapies are only practised by the elders who got the knowledge and methods from their ancestors. As the world evolves and more young people searching for better ways to get remedies for different ailments, they have realised that going back to the basics and traditions of their elders is a great way to go. They've also grown more vocal about the need of preserving these different practices.

While technology in treating ailments scientifically is also evolving, many patients still prefer to go with the traditional methods primarily, to avoid the use of medicines that contains chemical and many unnatural components and secondly, as the cost of traditional treatments is relatively low.

Fatheyah al Harthi, along with her project partner Yousuf al Jardani, initiated their most-awaited traditional medicine centre after a long process that included a tough time of studying abroad.

Fatheyah, a young woman, had a strong will to pursue this profession of traditional medicine since she was little. She travelled abroad to study traditional medicine and came back prepared to help other women who choose to go for this type of therapy.

Located in the heart of Ruwi, the centre offers multiple choices of herbal medicines, massage and cupping. Cupping though made this centre more famous as this therapy is growing popular among people recently.

"Cupping therapy might be trendy now, but it's not new. It dates back to ancient Egyptian, Chinese and Middle Eastern cultures", explains Fatheyah, adding that people get it for many purposes, including to

help with pain, inflammation, blood flow, relaxation and well-being, and as a type of deep-tissue massage.

Cupping is an ancient form of alternative medicine in which a therapist puts special cups on the skin for a few minutes to create suction.

"These cups are made of glass, bamboo or silicone. We use the one-use silicone cups more because it is safer for the client, but it depends on the type of cupping used", the therapist says.

There are many methods of cupping, including dry, wet and fire cupping. "During both types of cupping, the therapist puts a flammable substance such as alcohol, herbs, or paper in a cup and sets it on fire. As the fire goes out, they put the cup upside down on your skin", she explained.

Cupping therapy supporters believe that wet cupping removes harmful substances and toxins from the body to promote healing.

Jamal al Nabhani prefers to go for cupping when he feels pain or body fatigue. "I frequently go for this therapy, every three months and it feels good after some days as the pain eases and the body becomes lighter than before".

Fatheyah says that they provide this treatment for women also. "Many women struggle to find clinics that offer this treatment for ladies as it requires a lady therapist and not many are trained to practice the treatment. I went to study the profession abroad and now I am qualified to help my business partner in the clinic".

Al Jardani inherited the practice and learned it well from his father and ancestors as he used to watch them when he was a child. Later, he helped them before he joined the army and got busy for some years. After retirement, he thought of going back to the same.

Al Jardani says that cupping has many positive effects on the body that include promoting the skin's blood flow, changing the skin's biomechanical properties, increasing pain thresholds and improving local anaerobic (without oxygen) metabolism, reducing inflammation and boosting cellular immunity.

The Futooh centre for herbs and cupping is located opposite to Ruwi Grand Mosque. Reservation is required.