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OPEC WOULD MISS TRUMP, WARY OF STRAINS UNDER BIDEN

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IRAQ'S ANCIENT 'PALM CLIMBERS' STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

His Majesty receives credentials of ambassadors



His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik received separately at Al Barakah Palace on Sunday morning credentials of a number of ambassadors of the sisterly and friendly countries accredited to the Sultanate. During the side meetings with His Majesty the Sultan, the ambassadors conveyed greetings of the leaders of their respective countries along with their best wishes of good health, happiness and long life to His Majesty the Sultan and the Omani people continuous progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of His Majesty. Meanwhile, His Majesty the Sultan welcomed the ambassadors, expressing his thanks for their leaders' greetings and best wishes.

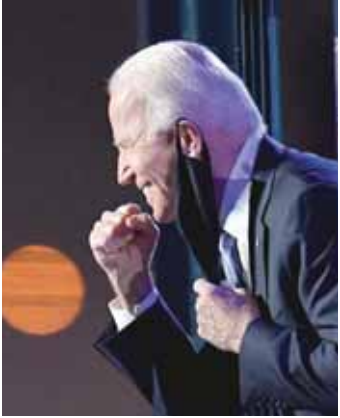
DETAILS ON P2



Joe Biden begins transition as Trump refuses to concede

HM congratulates Biden on victory

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to President-elect Joe Biden of the United States. His Majesty expressed his sincere congratulations to Biden for gaining confidence of the US people who elected him as president for the next presidential term. His Majesty wished him success in leading the friendly American people towards further progress and welfare, and the relations between the two friendly countries and peoples further progress and growth. — ONA



WASHINGTON: US President-elect Joe Biden began the transfer of power on Sunday that Americans hope will turn the page on four years of divisiveness as his defeated rival Donald Trump refused to concede and continued to cast doubt on the election results.

As congratulations poured in from world leaders and supporters

nursed hangovers after a day of raucous celebrations, the 77-year-old Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, 56, launched a transition website, BuildBackBetter.com, and a Twitter feed, @Transition46.

It lists four priorities for a Biden-Harris administration: COVID-19, economic recovery, racial equity and climate change.

“The team being assembled will meet these challenges on Day One,” it said in a reference to January 20, 2021, when Biden will be sworn in as the 46th President of the United States. Biden, who turns 78 on November 20, is the oldest person ever elected to the White House. Harris, the junior senator from California, is the first woman and first Black person to be elected vice president. SEE ALSO P8

INSIDE

SUU KYI FORECAST TO TRIUMPH IN VIRUS-HIT MYANMAR POLL

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PALESTINIANS INDICATE END TO BOYCOTT OF US

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Ban on use of animals in bullfights, circus

VINOD NAIR @vinot_nair

The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources issued a ministerial decision on Sunday related to new regulations on animal welfare.

The use of animals in circus and bullfights will be considered a violation. The ministry shall issue decisions related to the welfare of animals, which include imposing penalties for neglect, malnutrition, or abandonment of pets without providing food and water, cruelty during the period of preparing animals for slaughtering in slaughterhouses.

Other violations include deploying animals for work or for racing without regard for their

age or health conditions; giving animals growth-stimulating drugs, or any food or non-feed additives not authorised by the ministry; and exposing them to harm or death through negligence in the storage of toxins, disinfectants, industrial detergents or any other chemicals.

Improper transporting of animals by mixing different species, not providing food, water or good ventilation during transportation, lifting or pulling animals that are unable to stand, abuse, getting rid of sick animals in a merciless way are also banned.

The owner of the animal must ensure qualified and sufficient labour to take care of animals.

PATEK PHILIPPE

GENEVE

BEGIN YOUR OWN TRADITION

YOU NEVER ACTUALLY OWN A PATEK PHILIPPE.

YOU MERELY LOOK AFTER IT FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.

ANNUAL CALENDAR CHRONOGRAPH REF. 5905R

Patek Philippe Boutique

at

القرم

Al-Qurum

MUSCAT - 22009991

PRAYER TIMINGS

MUSCAT: Max 29°C | Min 22°C | SALALAH: Max 29°C | Min 19°C | NIZWA: Max 30°C | Min 20°C

PRAYER TIMINGS

SUNRISE: 06:17 | FAJR: 05:00 | DHUHR: 11:56 | ASR: 15:06 | MAGHRIB: 17:29 | ISHA: 18:41

HM receives ambassadors' credentials



MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik received separately at Al Barakah Palace on Sunday morning credentials of a number of ambassadors of the sisterly and friendly countries accredited to the Sultanate.

His Majesty received credentials of the following ambassadors. Dr Kim Chang Kyu, extraordinary and plenipotentiary Ambassador of President Moon Jae-in of the Republic of Korea, accredited to the Sultanate.

Christian Brunmayr, extraordinary and plenipotentiary Ambassador of President Alexander Van der Bellen of the Republic of Austria, accredited to the Sultanate.

Mohammed Yarqi, extraordinary and plenipotentiary Ambassador of President Abdelmajid Tebboune of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, accredited to the Sultanate.

Imelda Macapundag Panolong, extraordinary and plenipotentiary

Ambassador of President Rodrigo Duterte of the Republic of the Philippines, accredited to the Sultanate.

Maria Luisa, extraordinary and plenipotentiary Ambassador of King Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain, accredited to the Sultanate.

Ali Najafi-Khoshroudi, extraordinary and plenipotentiary Ambassador of President Dr Hassan Rouhani of the Islamic Republic of Iran, accredited to the Sultanate.

Andreas Nikolaides, extraordinary and plenipotentiary Ambassador of President Nicos Anastasiades of the Republic of Cyprus, accredited to the Sultanate.

Mohammed Arzan Jawhan, extraordinary and plenipotentiary Ambassador of President Joko Widodo of the Republic of Indonesia, accredited to the Sultanate.

Amjad Jamil al Quhaiwi, extraordinary and plenipotentiary Ambassador of King Abdallah II of

the Kingdom of Jordan, accredited to the Sultanate.

During the side meetings with His Majesty the Sultan, the ambassadors conveyed greetings of the leaders of their respective countries along with their best wishes of good health, happiness and long life to His Majesty the Sultan and the Omani people continuous progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of His Majesty. They also expressed their great honour and utmost delight to present their credentials before His Majesty the Sultan. They affirmed to exert their sincere efforts to promote relations of their countries with the Sultanate in various domains in a manner that serves the joint interests of the Omani people and their respective countries' peoples.

His Majesty the Sultan welcomed the ambassadors, expressing his thanks for their leaders' greetings and best wishes. His Majesty affirmed to them that



they would receive all support from His Majesty, the Government and the Omani people to facilitate carrying out their duties.

The credentials' presentation ceremony was attended by the Minister of Interior, the Foreign Minister, the Head of the Royal

Protocols, the Commander of the Royal Guard of Oman and the Military Aides to His Majesty the Sultan. — ONA

HM greetings to Cambodia

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to King Norodom Sihamoni of Cambodia on his country's National Day. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan

expressed his sincere greetings and best wishes of good health and happiness to King Sihamoni and the friendly people of Cambodia further progress and prosperity. — ONA

Majlis Ash'shura to reconvene on Sunday

MUSCAT: In implementation of the Royal order issued by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to open the second annual session of the Council of Oman, Majlis Ash'shura will begin its second annual session of the ninth term 2019-2023 on Sunday November 15.

Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohammed al Nadabi, Secretary-General of Majlis Ash'shura, extended his utmost congratulations to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on the occasion of the 50th National Day, praying for many returns of the occasion while His Majesty enjoys good health and the Sultanate bounties and flourishing.

Al Nadabi said that Majlis Ash'shura will continue to practise its legislative and oversight roles in accordance to the Basic Statute of the State in integration with the executive authority in order to effectively carry out its roles.

He added that the council has completed its preparations for the second annual session according to the procedures set forth by the council's internal bylaw, affirming that the session will be attended the media.

After the opening of the session, the four substitute members will take oath and a deputy chairman of the council will be elected, Al Nadabi added. — ONA

12-year-old girl drowns in wadi

MUSCAT: A 12-year-old girl was found dead by rescue teams of the Public Authority for Civil Defence and Ambulance in North Al Batinah Governorate. Rescue teams launched a search

and rescue operation after receiving a report of two missing children in Wadi Al Hawasnah in the Wilayat of Al Khabourah. The search is under way for the second child.

Fourth edition of Oman: My Beautiful Country released

MUSCAT: Under the auspices of His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham bin Tarik al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, the Bait Al Zubair Museum on Sunday celebrated the release of the 4th and improved edition of Mohammed bin Al Zubair's book "Oman: My Beautiful Country". The first edition of the book was published in 2002.

HH Sayyid Theyazin was briefed on the contents of the Bait al Zubair Museum, which includes various antiquities, collectibles and images from all the governorates of the Sultanate and some countries of the world.

Then, he inaugurated the book's website, which can be easily accessed on the Internet.

The book was published in five languages: Arabic, English, German, French and Russian.

It consists of 10 illustrated chapters under the titles: Muscat, Architecture, the Sea and the Beaches,



the Desert, the Oases, the Nature, the Mountains and Wadis, Khareef, Culture and People.

The author, Mohammed bin al Zubair, documented in the book a large group of the most important Omani monuments that abound in all the wilayats of the Sultanate, to make this book a valuable addition to the Omani Library in the field of photographic documentation.

— ONA

INVITATION TO TENDER



Sohar Aluminium LLC (SA), PO Box 80, PC- 327, Sohar, Sultanate of Oman hereby invites qualified Suppliers/Contractors for the following tender:

Tender No. :	RFP 20/021
Tender Title :	Provision of Local Metal Transportation Services
Scope :	SA are pioneer and only primary aluminium producers in Oman. SA regularly exports primary aluminium in ingot and sow form to UAE. The vendor shall provide Full Truck Load (FTL) transport of finished primary metal in form of ingot / SOW bundles Ex Sohar to UAE per 40' Flatbed trailers

Kindly send your email and company profile to: tender@sohar-aluminium.com
For list of active tenders visit: <https://www.sohar-aluminium.com/en/content/tender-listing>

VOICES

Innovation need of the hour

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
[@lakshmioman](#)



The need is not just more spending on research and development but targeted and effective spending by the government, private sector, and universities or in collaboration is a must to promote innovation

DR KHALFAN
AL BARWANI

As the nation celebrates 50 years of Oman's modern renaissance, the focus is on economic freedom and innovation.

According to Dr Khalfan al Barwani, Vice-President for Investments and Monetary Operations, Central Bank of Oman, elements that guarantee economic freedom include the right of any individual to have control over his or her possessions as well as his or her labour.

The need of the hour is, of course, innovation. But here more than anything else what is important is the ecosystem for innovation.

Dr Khalfan, who had also been a member of The Research Council's Supervisory Committee for Innovation, explained, "A country requires an effective ecosystem that provides platforms for innovators to succeed. In this ecosystem schools and universities have a role to play through their curriculum to promote critical thinking and ability to take calculated risks based on informed decisions.

The need is not just more spending on research and development but targeted and effective spending by the government, private sector, and universities or in collaboration is a must to promote innovation.

Effective property rights of innovators are critical. Other

critical components for an effective ecosystem include sources of funding for innovators such as venture capitalists and angel investors as well as effective support for start-ups through business incubators.

An example of innovation in the financial sector, according to him, would be for instance how to serve existing customers with as little cost to the banks or to customers as possible, or for that matters how to reach potential customers who live in remotest areas using technologies or providing relevant products in efficient manners.

"It is important to state that one of the key prerequisites for a vibrant and innovative financial sector is competition among financial institutions. Competition, to a large extent, works as an incentive to innovate either by finding ways to reduce operating costs or reach a broader customer base," he pointed out.

Why do most innovators find it difficult to sustain? "There is a lack of ability to find funding for innovative ideas or products. Other reasons are lack of appetite to take risks, failure to understand market needs by innovators as well as inability to market their products or ideas effectively.

"If you fail the first time, learn from your mistakes and try again by avoiding these mistakes and more importantly keep the passion," said Dr Khalfan al Barwani.

al madina
LOGISTICS
المدينة
اللوغستية

Invitation to Pre-qualification

Al Madina Logistics is developing a new logistics hub near Sohar Port. Interested contractors and suppliers may apply for pre-qualification for the following services:

- Floor(super flat FM1 & FM2)
- Cold Chambers Panels
- Racking Systems
- MHE (VNA & Reach Truck)
- Cooling System(AC, Chiller, Freezers
- Docks Levelers
- Weighbridges
- Ice making machines
- CCTV & Security Systems
- Gate Systems
- Solar System

Submission of Documents:

Fully completed pre-qualification packages with all technical and commercial details of companies must be clearly marked with the words:
"Al Madina Logistics – Sohar Project."
The packages must be submitted via emails to:
Attn.: GM Business Development and Dry Ports
Email: tenders@almadinalogistics.com

Last Day of Submission:
25th November 2020

www.almadinalogistics.com

مدائن
madayn

Tender Announcement

The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) announces the following Tender:

Tender Number	Tender Name	Last date of buying	Date of submission	Type of work	Register Degree	Fee (R.O)
10/2020/PEIE/HQ-10	DESIGN AND BUILD FOR THE INTERIOR PARTITIONS, DECORATION AND ASSOCIATED WORKS FOR SAMAIL INDUSTRIAL CITY ADMINISTRATION AREA	22-11-2020	20-12-2020	Construction and Maintenance	First and Second	150

Interested Companies registered with Tender Board may obtain the Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document. Tenders should be submitted on line on given website. The Tenderer should enclose scan copy of Bank Guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of 1% of the Tender value validity for (90) days, and addressed to The Chairman of Tender Committee mentioned in above tenders.

1. Tender Inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the TENDER Inquiry must be online at eTendering System.

2. eTendering System Inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the eTendering System technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number: etenderhd@ita.gov.om and +968 24166670, 24166409 Note: Bid Submission will be online only.

No Document can be accepted as Manual except Original Tender Bond. Scan Copy of Tender Bond needs to be attached in system and original needs to be deposited before Bid Opening.

Madayn is not bound to accept the lowest or any other Offer and has the right to cancel these tenders and the tenderers have no right to claim for any compensations.

madayn.om

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Blessed with heritage, biodiversity

Al Kamil W'al Wafi



STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 8

Located in the South Al Sharqiyah Governorate, Al Kamil W'al Wafi is bordered by the wilayats of Wadi Bani Khalid and Sur in the north and west, and the Wilayat of Jaalan Bani Bu Hassan in the south. It has two main towns which are Al Kamil and Al Wafi.

The wilayat has beautiful sandy hills and golden dunes plains and nature reserves, most notably Al Saleel and Hasina Reserves, a series of high mountains surround it from the north and east, as well as the large and beautiful pools in the villages of Seeq, Sabt and Tahwa.

The wilayat's emblem consists of two towers and a tree; the two towers represent the vital and significant role played by inhabitants to protect the city and village, while the Al Sidr tree represents the meeting place where people gathered to exchange ideas and opinions.

The wilayat is reputed for its archaeological mosques and fortresses, amongst is Al Jame' which is situated in Al Wafi and Al Sharia' in Al Kamil.

Archaeological tombs and muddy houses exist as well in the wilayat.

Apparently, camel and horse breeding are important pursuits that also contribute a great deal to the local economy. Wadi Al Batha, situated in the west of the



wilayat, is where much of these traditional activities are based. The Bedouins train thoroughbred Arabian camels on these wind-blown plains, and test their prowess at races staged quite close to training grounds. Hasinah is another well-known camel-breeding centre, lying in the shadow of the enchanting Wahiba Sands. This atmospheric Bedu village, dotted by scores of ghaf trees, is within easy reach of Al Kamil W'al Wafi. A visitor can explore the picturesque environs of this traditional village which, despite

the surrounding aridity, enjoys a year-round supply of fresh water thanks to wells drilled in the area. The people of the wilayat are engaged in textile, dagger and sword making, carpentry, pottery and livestock breeding. Al Kamil W'al Wafi is blessed with abundant water resources, believed to be replenished by subterranean streams and aquifers fed by the region's most famous wadi — Wadi Bani Khalid. A network of aflaj, which tap these sources, nurtures many date palm and fruit orchards located

mainly in the south of the wilayat. Falaj al Kamil and Falaj al Wafi are among the eight important aflaj coursing through various parts in the wilayat. The government has paid attention to important services required by the wilayat's people. Schools spread across the wilayat in addition to government services and centres that are committed to provide essential services to the people. The most notable tourist attraction in the wilayat is Al Saleel Natural Reserve. It is located in Wilayat Al Kamil



W'al Wafi in Al Sharqiyah South Governorate, and lies 57 kilometres from Wilayat of Sur. It extends over an area of 220 square kilometres, and is predominantly covered by forests of acacia trees. It is home to a number of rare species of animals and birds such as the Arabian gazelle, the wild cat (Al Senmar), the red fox, and the Egyptian eagle. In January this year, a 191 km long expressway between Bidbid and Al Kamil W'al Wafi was opened for traffic. It is also Oman's first tunnel road project. Each tunnel consists

of two separate carriages of three lanes in each direction with a speed limit of 90 km per hour inside the tunnel. Designed in accordance with the highest international specifications and standards, the road includes two tunnels with a total length of 2.1 km. The first tunnel is located in the village of Nadab in Samayil with a length of 650m, while the second tunnel is situated amidst the mountain ranges of Al Aqq with a length of 1,450m. Outside the tunnel, the speed limit is up to 120 km per hour.



Suu Kyi forecast to triumph in virus-hit Myanmar poll

YANGON: Vote counting started in Myanmar as polls closed on Sunday in an election that is expected to return to power the government of Aung San Suu Kyi, who remains a hero at home in spite of a reputation abroad shattered by the Rohingya crisis.

The election is just the second since the Southeast Asian nation emerged from nearly half a century of junta rule in 2011.

Five years ago, Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) won a landslide victory but was forced by the constitution into an uneasy power-sharing agreement with the still-mighty military.

This time, the civilian leader — in a bid to maintain an absolute majority — has implored citizens to overcome their coronavirus fears to turn out and cast their ballots.

Millions turned out early to line up outside polling stations before the sun had even risen, while others waited for hours in the heat to enter temples, shopping centres and offices to cast their ballots.

In Mandalay — Myanmar's second-largest city and a hotspot for infections — people crowded into a polling station outside the city's ancient palace.

"I have my concerns" about the lack of social distancing, schoolteacher Hnin Wut Yee, 23, said. "We're all watching each other with suspicion."

Khin Nyo, 65, was one of the



People wearing face shields, face masks and rubber gloves to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus wait to vote during the elections at a polling station in Yangon on Sunday. — AFP

last to vote in a Yangon polling station that stayed open especially for the stragglers.

"I waited until others had voted as I didn't want to vote in the rush," she said.

Voters across the country wore compulsory face masks at polling stations, but social distancing rules were not followed everywhere with crowds bunched together in some lines.

Coronavirus cases have spiralled upwards in recent months, sending swathes of the country into lockdown and

The election is just the second since the Southeast Asian nation emerged from nearly half a century of junta rule in 2011

largely forcing campaigns online, where hate speech between rival factions has flourished.

Suu Kyi refused to postpone the polls, however — a decision that could see "serious public

health ramifications", warned the International Crisis Group watchdog.

'APARTHEID ELECTION'
UN chief Antonio Guterres on Friday called for a "peaceful, orderly and credible" election, although doubts about the vote's credibility have already overshadowed the poll.

Virtually all the 600,000 Rohingya Muslims remaining in the country — half of whom are of voting age — are stripped of citizenship and rights, including their chance to vote. — AFP

Police use water cannon on protesters in Bangkok

BANGKOK: Thai police on Sunday fired water cannon on pro-democracy protesters who were trying to march to the royal palace to deliver demands for reform to the unassailable monarchy.

Student-led rallies have rocked the kingdom since July, with protesters calling for the removal of Premier Prayut Chan-O-Cha — a former army chief who came into power through a 2014 coup — and a rewrite to the military-scripted constitution.

The boldest in the leaderless movement have also demanded reforms to the monarchy — a once-taboo issue — sending shockwaves through Thailand's arch-royalist establishment.

On Sunday, some 5,000 protesters attempted to march from Bangkok's historic Democracy Monument to the Grand Palace to deliver letters to King Maha Vajiralongkorn, as the police warned them to stop.

As the marchers got closer, police fired water cannon at them. The protesters reacted

angrily, shouting: "Why did you use the water cannons against us?"

Authorities had warned earlier in the day that protesters were banned from breaching a 150-metre radius around the palace, and some 9,000 officials were deployed.

Sunday's confrontation was the second time police used water cannon against protesters.

Last month, a peaceful rally in downtown Bangkok saw protesters blasted with chemical-laced water as police bore down — images that shocked many in Thailand.

Before the march to the Grand Palace on Sunday, the rally at the Democracy Monument was peaceful with protesters chanting "Prayut, get out" and holding up a three-finger salute — a symbol of the movement.

They also threw flowers into a makeshift cardboard coffin carrying a life-sized mannequin with Prayut's face. Some scrawled messages on it, including "go to hell". — AFP



Police use water cannons on pro-democracy protesters to disperse them during an anti-government demonstration in Bangkok on Sunday. — AFP

■ PROUD MOMENT FOR THE COUNTRY

India hails Kamala Harris as history-making VP-elect

THULASENDRAPURAM: Residents set off firecrackers in the ancestral home of Kamala Harris on Sunday as India celebrated the vice president-elect's victory in the US election, as others hailed her achievement as historic and a "proud moment" for the country.

Harris — daughter of breast cancer specialist Shyamala Gopalan from the southern Indian city of Chennai — paid tribute to her late mother, who "believed so deeply in an America where a moment like this is possible" in a national address with president-elect Joe Biden on Saturday.

At Thulasendrapuram village in Tamil Nadu state, once home to Harris' maternal grandfather P V Gopalan, celebrations broke out

with locals lighting firecrackers, praying at its main temple and waving posters bearing the 56-year-old's face.

Women in the village made a rangoli — a colourful work of folk art drawn on the ground — with the words: "Congratulations to Kamala Harris."

"It is a matter of pride for the entire womenfolk," housewife Arul Mozhi Sudhakar said.

Harris' uncle, academic Balachandran Gopalan, said he always knew she would be successful.

"I am relieved, because I knew she's going to win, and I told her yesterday... my tension is now gone away," he told WION TV in the capital New Delhi.



Residents offer prayers for Kamala Harris at a temple in her ancestral village of Thulasendrapuram in Tamil Nadu on Sunday. — AFP

Gopalan said on Friday that Harris' family in India would fly to the United States to attend her

inauguration. "We were together as a family when she was sworn in as a

senator. And we will all be together now during her swearing-in as vice president of the US. It's a big moment for us," he said.

In Delhi, people cheered the Harris family's Indian origins. Yash Iyer, 25, said "it's a proud moment for us too as Indians since she traces her roots here".

"Kamala Harris being the US VP is a monumental accomplishment not only for the US and Indians but for women across the globe," Smitashree Mishra, who works in international health and development in the capital, said.

"What I take away from this victory is a ray of hope, hope to stand strong in a society that constantly judges you on archaic

notions of gender, race and ethnicity... I am proud as a woman to see another woman represent our perspective in the politics of the world's most powerful country."

Early Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Biden on his White House victory and called Harris a source of "immense pride".

"Your success is pathbreaking, and a matter of immense pride not just for your chitti, but also for all Indian-Americans," Modi wrote.

"Chitti" is a Tamil term of endearment for the younger sisters of one's mother, which Harris used in her acceptance of the Democratic nomination for vice president. — AFP

SRINAGAR

Four soldiers, 3 militants killed in gun battle

Four Indian army soldiers and three militants were killed in Kashmir on Sunday, an Indian Defence Ministry spokesperson said, in the bloodiest gun battle in the region since April this year.

An army patrol noticed suspicious movement along the LOC in the early hours of Sunday, Defence Ministry spokesman Colonel Rajesh Kalia said.

"Army troops were rushed to the area and militant movement was tracked by surveillance devices. A heavy gun battle fol-



lowed in which three militants were killed," he said. Four army soldiers were killed in the gun-battle, he said. This is the highest number of army casualties along the Line of Control in Kashmir since April this year.

MANILA

Philippines to back China for World Court seat

The Philippines' foreign minister ordered the country's mission to the United Nations on Sunday to vote for China's candidate to fill one of the five seats at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that will become vacant next year. "You are instructed to cast the Philippine vote for the Chinese candidate to the international court of justice. That is your only clear instruction," Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin said on Twitter without elaborating.

Four of the eight candidates contesting the five positions are incumbent judges whose nine-year terms are due to expire on February 5 next year. One of the four is Chinese Judge Xue Hanqin, who is also the vice president of the ICJ, also known as the World Court.

The ICJ, the highest United Nations court for inter-state disputes, is composed of 15 judges elected to nine-year terms of office by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council. Judges are eligible for re-election.

TOKYO

Japan formally proclaims Crown Prince

Japan formally proclaimed Crown Prince Akishino the first in line as heir to the throne on Sunday, the last of a series of ceremonies after his elder brother, Emperor Naruhito, became monarch last year following their father's abdication. The day-long ceremonies at the palace had been scheduled for April but were postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic and have been scaled back as infection keeps rising, although Japan has escaped the explosive outbreak



seen in many other countries. Under Japanese law, only males can inherit the throne, so Naruhito's only offspring, 18-year-old Princess Aiko, is ineligible.

Palestinians congratulate Biden, indicate end to boycott of US

RAMALLAH: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Sunday congratulated US President-elect Joe Biden in a statement that indicated he will drop his three-year political boycott of the White House. Abbas had ended all political dealings with President Donald Trump's administration after the US leader's 2017 decisions to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital and to move the US Embassy there.

"I congratulate President-elect Joe Biden on his victory as President of the United States of America for the coming period," Abbas said in a statement issued from his office in the West Bank city of Ramallah. "I look forward to working with the President-elect and his administration to strengthen the Palestinian-American relations and to achieve freedom, independence, justice and dignity for our people," the statement continued.

Trump's moves, which broke with decades of US policy, had delighted Israel but infuriated the Palestinians, who claim east Jerusalem as a future capital and considered Trump's backing for Israel as undermining their own goal of statehood. Abbas's boycott was popular among Palestinians, who celebrated Trump's defeat on Sunday on the streets. But, even as security contacts with Washington continued behind the scenes, the Palestinian leadership felt increasingly isolated, especially after Israel signed agreements with Gulf Arab states to normalise ties.

In the days before the election Abbas's inner circle met to discuss whether they should resume political contacts with the White House if Biden won, a Palestinian official said. Bassam Al-Salhe, a senior member of the Abbas-led Palestine Liberation Organization, said on Sunday the boycott was primarily linked to what he called "the hostile policy" of Trump's administration.

"When Biden announces that this is going to change — and he announced that during his election campaign — there will be no reason for the boycott," he said.



A Palestinian man reads the front page of Al Quds newspaper, headlined in Arabic "Joe Biden the new US President" in front of the Dome of the Rock in the Al Aqsa mosque compound on Sunday. — AFP

I congratulate President-elect Joe Biden on his victory as President of the United States of America for the coming period

MAHMOUD ABBAS
Palestinian President

BIDEN HOPES

Biden has said he would restore funding to the West Bank and Gaza that Trump had cut, including assistance delivered through the US Agency for International Development and UN agencies. He has also in the past opposed Israeli settlement construction in the occupied West Bank, and voiced support for a two-state solution to the conflict, a formula that would see a future state of

Palestine co-existing alongside Israel.

But he is not likely to reverse the Jerusalem and embassy decisions and Biden has welcomed Israel's rapprochements with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Sudan, even as Palestinians condemned those moves. Among the Palestinians hit hardest by Trump were refugees, following his 2018 decision to cut off all US funding — more than \$300 million annually — to UNRWA, the United Nations agency.

"Trump's losing is a gain for us, for the Palestinian people, because he had sold out the Palestinian cause," said Anwar Abu Amira, 38, a refugee in Gaza's Beach Camp.

"Since he took office until he lost, he has been trying to wipe out the Palestinian identity," Abu Amira said. Gaza political analyst Hani Habib said the Biden win would encourage Abbas to re-engage in negotiations with Israel, a move the international community has long called for. — Reuters

A chance for US to 'compensate for mistakes': Rouhani

TEHRAN: Iran's President Hassan Rouhani on Sunday said the next US administration has an opportunity to "compensate for its previous mistakes" following Joe Biden's victory in the presidential election.

"Now there is an opportunity for the future American administration to compensate for its previous mistakes and return to the path of adherence to international commitments," Rouhani said, in a statement on his official website.

US President Donald Trump has applied a "maximum pressure" policy and crippling sanctions against Iran since his 2018 withdrawal from a landmark nuclear agreement with Tehran.

The reimposed sanctions targeted

Iran's vital oil industry and banking ties, among other sectors.

This US "administration's harmful and wrong policy for the past three years was not only condemned by people all around the world, but was also opposed by the people of (the US) in the recent election," Rouhani said.

He added that the Iranian people's "heroic resistance against the imposed economic war" by the Trump administration "proved that America's maximum pressure policy is doomed to fail."

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on Tuesday that the US election result would have "no effect" on Tehran's policies towards Washington. — AFP



Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources

TENDERS NOTICE

The Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources announces the following Tenders:-

Tender no.	Description	Tender documents price (R.O)	Class	Last date for collection of documents	Last date for Submission of documents
548/2020-54	Designing, Developing and Implementation of Red Palm Weevil Data Collection Application	25/-	Specialized	Tuesday 10/11/2020	Tuesday 1/12/2020
552/2020/55	Routine Maintenance & Operation to 5 Flake Ice Machines At Whole Sale Fish Market for 2021	25/-	Excellent	Wednesday 11/11/2020	Sunday 22/11/2020

- Interested Companies registered with Tender Board (in the above mentioned Grade) may obtain Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document.
- The value of the document will be paid & submitted on line on given website.
- The Tenderer should enclose scan copy of Bank Guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman (as required in the tender), and addressed to the Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources.
- All correspondence pertaining to the tender inquiry must be online at e-tendering System.
- All correspondence pertaining to the e-tendering System technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number: +968 24166670 or etenderhd@ita.gov.om
- Note:** Bid Submission will be online only. Scan Copy of Tender Bond needs to be attached in system .

TENDERS COMMITTEE
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources



SULTANATE OF OMAN MINISTRY OF HEALTH ANNOUNCEMENT

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

Tender Ref.	Description	Last date for Collection of tender Document	Closing Time/ Day/ Date	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
227/2020	Supply of Laboratory Items	12/November/ 2020	Before 08 am on Wednesday 02/ December/ 2020	Specialized Companies registered with Tender Board	R.O 25.000 Per set
228/2020	Supply & Installation of Medical Equipment for The Royal Hospital	12/November/ 2020	Before 08 am on Wednesday 09/December/ 2020	Specialized Companies registered with Tender Board	R.O 25.000 Per set
242/2020	Supply of Surgical Items	26/November/ 2020	Before 08 am on Wednesday 16/December/ 2020	Specialized Companies registered with Tender Board	R.O 25.000 Per set
243/2020	Supply and Installation of OCT Machine for Upgrading of Ophthalmology Services at Al Buraimi Hospital in Al Buraimi Governorate and Ibri Hospital in Al Dhahira Governorate	26/November /2020	Before 08 am on Wednesday 09/December/ 2020	Specialized Companies registered with Tender Board	R.O 25.000 Per set

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

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

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

Lebanon's Basil rejects US curbs as unjust

BEIRUT: Influential Lebanese politician Gebran Bassil said on Sunday that US sanctions against him were unjust, politically motivated and the result of his refusal to break ties with Hezbollah. The United States on Friday blacklisted Basil, the leader of Lebanon's biggest Christian political bloc and the son-in-law of President Michel Aoun, accusing him of corruption and ties to Hezbollah.

A target of Lebanese protests against a political elite accused of pillaging the state, Basil denied US accusations of corruption and said the issue did not arise in conversations with US officials when they demanded he sever ties with Hezbollah or face sanctions. — Reuters



Ministry of Tourism

Advertisement of Public Tenders

Tender No.	Tender Name	Tender Document's Fees (Non - Refundable)	Last Date for Collection of Tender Documents	Last Date for Bid Submission	Grade
8/2020	The Ministry-based Software Licence Renewal	RO 25	29/11/2020	9/12/2020	Excellent 1st
9/2020	Cleaning Services for the Ministry's Diwan General for the Year 2021	RO 25	29/11/2020	9/12/2020	Excellent

- Companies and firms specialized in the aforementioned works, registered with the Board of Tender in the aforesaid grade and interested in subscribing to the said tender may collect tender-related documents through the digital portal of the Tender Board via the following link (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>).
- Bids are submitted in line with the technical specifications and requirements and attached thereto a temporary bank bond issued by a local bank or a Sultanate-based international bank's branch at a sum not less than 1% of the bid's amount and valid for 90 days from the date of submitting it electronically. The original receipt of the temporary bond is to be submitted one day before the submission date at the Ministry's Tenders and Contracts Department, 2nd floor.
- The bid's price is to be inked in Omani currency both in letters and digits and the price list has to be dated, stamped and signed by the tenderer.
- The period for submitting the bids begins after the inquiry periods mentioned in the e-tendering system ends immediately and lasts till the last date for bid submission before 10:00 am.

Help and inquiries:

- For inquiries related to the tender, kindly communicate electronically through the e-tendering system (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)
- For inquiries related to the technical support of the etendering system, kindly communicate through etenderhd@ita.gov.om or call 24166670.

The Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest or any other tender.

www.omantourism.gov.om

For further details, kindly communicate through sotic@omantourism.gov.om or telephone nos. 22088085- 22088348



(From L) Husband of Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris, Douglas Emhoff, Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris, President-elect Joe Biden and wife Jill Biden salute the crowd after delivering remarks in Wilmington, Delaware, on Saturday. — AFP

CONGRATULATIONS POUR IN FOR BIDEN

TRUMP REFUSES TO CONCEDE AND PRESSES AHEAD WITH LEGAL FIGHTS AGAINST THE OUTCOME

WILMINGTON/WASHINGTON: President-elect Joe Biden declared it was “time to heal” a deeply divided America in his first speech after winning in a bitter election, even as President Donald Trump refused to concede and pressed ahead with legal fights against the outcome.

Biden’s victory on Saturday in Pennsylvania put him over the threshold of 270 Electoral College votes he needed to clinch the presidency, ending four days of nail-biting suspense and sending his supporters into the streets of major cities in celebration. “The people of this nation have spoken. They have delivered us a clear victory, a convincing victory,” Biden told honking and cheering supporters in a parking lot in his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware. The Democrat pledged that as president he will seek to unify the country and “marshal the forces of decency” to battle the COVID-19 pandemic, rebuild economic prosperity, secure healthcare for American families and root out systemic racism.

Without addressing his Republican rival, Biden spoke directly to the 70 million Americans who cast ballots in support of Trump, some of whom took to the streets on Saturday to demonstrate against the results. “For all those of you who voted for President Trump, I understand the disappointment

Joe Biden
Age 77
46th president of the United States

THE LONG ROAD

- ★ Has sought the presidency twice before, in 1988 and 2008
- ★ Oldest elected US president
- ★ Former vice president
- ★ Former senator

“I pledge to be a president who seeks not to divide but unify”

“This is the time to heal in America”

KEY PROPOSALS

- Covid-19: Free vaccine for everyone; national testing and tracing plan
- Build a “new American economy”. Raise federal minimum wage to \$15/hour
- Rejoin the Paris Climate Accord
- A roadmap to citizenship for nearly 11 million undocumented immigrants
- Restore “American leadership” in the world and rebuild alliances

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The 538 electors vote as instructed by their state. Biden has acquired a majority of the votes

Dec 14
ELECTORAL COLLEGE MEETS

Jan 20
PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

Kamala Harris
Age 56
NEXT VICE PRESIDENT

- ★ America’s first female and first black vice president
- ★ US senator for California
- ★ Seen as more progressive than Biden, personifies diversity

Source: AFP Photos/National Archives/Personal websites

tonight. I’ve lost a couple times myself. But now, let’s give each other a chance. It’s time to put away the harsh rhetoric, lower the temperature, see each other again, listen to each other again,” he said.

“This is the time to heal in America.” He also thanked Black

voters, saying that even at his campaign’s lowest moments, the African-American community had stood up for him. “They always have my back, and I’ll have yours,” he said. Biden was introduced by his running mate, US Senator Kamala Harris, who will

be the first woman, the first Black American and the first American of Asian descent to serve as vice-president, the country’s No 2 of-fice.

“What a testament it is to Joe’s character that he had the audacity to break one of the most sub-

stantial barriers that exists in our country, and select a woman as his vice-president,” Harris said.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations poured in from abroad, including from conservative British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, making it hard for Trump to push his repeated claims, without evidence, that the election was rigged against him. Trump, who was golfing when the major television networks projected his rival had won, immediately accused Biden of “rushing to falsely pose as the winner.” “This election is far from over,” he said in a statement.

The president has been unusually quiet on Twitter, not posting a message since Saturday afternoon. CNN reported that top adviser Jared Kushner, Trump’s son-in-law, has approached him about conceding the election.

Biden spokeswoman Kate Bedingfield told CNN on Saturday evening that there had been no contact between Biden and Trump. Trump has filed a raft of lawsuits to challenge the results, but elections officials in states across the country say there has been no evidence of significant fraud, and legal experts say Trump’s efforts are unlikely to suc-

ceed.

As the news of Biden’s win broke, cheers and applause were heard around Washington, with people emerging onto balconies, honking car horns and banging pots. Throngs of people streamed to the White House to rejoice outside a security fence as the sound of fireworks boomed in the distance. Trump supporters reacted with a mix of disappointment, suspicion and resignation, highlighting the difficult task that Biden faces winning over many Americans, especially in more rural areas, who believe Trump was the first president to govern with their interests at heart.

“It’s sickening and sad,” said Kayla Doyle, a 35-year-old Trump supporter and manager of the Gridiron Pub on Main Street in the small town of Mifflintown, Pennsylvania. “I think it’s rigged.”

Angry pro-Trump “Stop the Steal” demonstrators gathered at state capitol buildings in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Arizona. Protesters in Phoenix chanted “We want audits!” One speaker told the crowd: “We will win in court!” There were isolated instances of Trump and Biden supporters confronting each other, as occurred between two groups of about 100 each in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, but there were no immediate reports of the violence many had feared. — Reuters



People celebrate on Black Lives Matter plaza across from the White House in Washington, DC after Joe Biden was declared the winner of the 2020 presidential election. — AFP

Risk it to get a biscuit!

Life is a school with various rewarding experiences that we come across every single day. Challenges are lessons too; in fact, they are opportunities to make the most of them! However, what matters is just the way how we perceive things that happen or come around us. Our perception is what drives the attitudes and reactions in response to what we experience. Probably, you are what you think!

Making one's mind on something could be a challenge that frustrates some people. One might make a decision, which s/he would regret it afterwards for one reason or another! Of course, it is so frustrating and hard to feel that you made a wrong or disagreeable choice or judgement. Actually, it is most irritating when such decisions could be made on money or a job opportunity!

Disappointment could happen to all; it is just a very common experience that brings a frustrating feeling and thought. Regretting the decision or action made would never change anything, thus one should think of what shall do next. It is the moment to move on and think of the lessons learnt out of that particular experience. In such a scenario, one should remember



Abdulaziz Al Jahdhami
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MAKING ONE'S
MIND ON
SOMETHING
COULD BE A
CHALLENGE
THAT
FRUSTRATES
SOME PEOPLE

that to heal a wound, you need to stop touching it. Also, if one gets into a wrong story, then s/he should leave it.

Yes, it would be hard and intolerable experience; but with mistakes comes the lessons. We learn things from our reoccurring mistakes, so we can get things right the next time while taking a decision. Hence, never blame yourself for making undesirable decision for it could be the right one and you might realise that someday later. All what happens, it comes for your own good, but never regard it as a curse or a failure. Unfortunately, this is what some people do when they face the music of a problem or get into trouble!

The way you observe and look at things really counts to make a right decision on time. If your eyesight first hocks the positive side, then you will never think that you are lost. There is nothing called a dead end or unsolved problem! Think positively and believe in the possibility to get things fixed the way you like. Problems are only opportunities with thorns on them. Opportunities do not come with their values stamped upon them.

With every challenge we go through in life, there is a blessing in it. Case in a point, there are challenges from Allah to test our patience and believe in Him. He is always there with us as life gets

harder and complicated every now and then. Trust that Allah is bestowing people things for their own good on certain times, some of which come in unexpected moments.

Always remember life is an experience and everyday is an opportunity to make a new happy ending. Live the moment and have some faith and hope, which is the last to be ever lost in life. As Helen Keller, American lecturer and creative author, said: "Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence."

Every test in our life makes us bitter or better, every problem comes to break or make us. The choice is ours whether we become a victim or victor. Sometimes, you just need to be more positive and roll the dice to make things come the way you wish for!

In some circumstances, fate is the only justification we attribute to for what happens to us. True, it is fate that we always relate things to, but it depends on the way how we accept things. Our beliefs and confidence are behind our attitudes, perception of life and ultimately the decisions we make.

Do not look back; you are going forward and not backward. Never cry over the spilt milk; it may have been poisoned!

AGAINST THE ODDS

Trumpism will outlast Trump

JOSEPH TANFANI & TIM REID

As he closed his campaign with a series of boisterous rallies, President Donald Trump told his cheering crowds they would prove all the experts wrong again — just as they had when he improbably won the US presidency in 2016.

"A great red wave is coming", Trump said at an October 31 rally in Pennsylvania, predicting a surge of Republican support would carry him to re-election. "There's not a thing they can do about it."

Trump lost the White House, according to media outlets that called the tight race on Saturday morning for his Democratic opponent Joe Biden, the former vice president. And yet Trump clearly outperformed scores of polls that suggested he might lose in a landslide and proved his base of supporters was bigger and more loyal than many observers realised.

Democrats had hoped that voters would hand Trump a stark repudiation of his often chaotic first term and his divisive campaign. Instead, Trump has captured about 7.3 million more votes than he did in 2016, preliminary returns show.

Many Republican lawmakers who faced election stuck by Trump through an impeachment last year and, this year, his widely maligned handling of the pandemic and the civil

unrest over police killings of Black people. Some of those allies were rewarded with Senate victories that may allow the party to maintain a narrow majority. Republicans also gained five seats in the US House of Representatives,

“A great red wave is coming. There's not a thing they can do about it

DONALD TRUMP
US President

which is controlled by Democrats. The Republican party's strong showing, defying critics and pundits, came despite a massive fundraising advantage enjoyed by Democrats at the campaign's end and, according to polls, a sharp turn of support toward Democrats in America's suburbs.

The tight race came down to late-counted mail-in ballots in Georgia and Pennsylvania, which tipped the election to Biden. Trump, however, has not conceded. The incumbent, who received more votes than any Republican candidate in history, has sought to de-legitimise the outcome by claiming, without evidence, that he was cheated. There will likely be recounts in several states.

And Trump continues to wage legal fights to nullify the results. Still, Trump faces a formidable struggle to prevail in the Electoral College that decides US elections.

Each state is allotted electoral votes based on its population. In most states, the candidate that wins the popular vote takes all its electoral votes, no matter how close the margin of victory. In the popular vote nationally, Biden has so far racked up 4.1 million more votes than Trump.

The Trump campaign issued a statement on Saturday morning saying the election was "far from over. Joe Biden has not been certified as the winner of any states, let alone any of the highly contested states"

Trump tweeted: "I WON THIS ELECTION, BY A LOT!" Even as states count the last ballots, the results have dashed Democrats' hopes for the death of Trumpism. If Biden's victory is certified and the Republicans retain the Senate, the new president may be handcuffed in his efforts to push legislation and win confirmations of judges and administration officials. Whatever the future for Trump himself, Democrats and Republicans alike said they will have to reckon with the continuing appeal of his brash brand of populist politics. —Reuters

TURNING A NEW PAGE

Friends again? Europe looks to Biden to repair transatlantic ties

ALVISE ARMELLINI

All together now: In a fairly rare show of unity, European Union leaders gave a simultaneous welcome to US president-elect Joe Biden, perhaps belying an eagerness to turn the page on the Donald Trump era.

The outgoing US president made few friends across the pond as he labelled the European Union a "foe," cheered for Brexit and said he had a "big problem with Germany", the continent's largest economy.

On Saturday, EU Council President Charles Michel got in touch with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other European leaders "to communicate simultaneously" on Biden's victory, and agreed to react at "7 pm," a European Union official said.

In her message, Merkel said the "transatlantic friendship is irreplaceable if we are to meet the great challenges of this time", while Macron said Europe and the US "have a lot to do to overcome today's challenges. Let's work together!" Michel listed "COVID-19, multilateralism, climate change and international trade" as areas of future cooperation, while EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, spoke of a "great day for US and Europe," and of the need to "rebuild our partnership."

The wide consensus is that things can only get better. "The picture (of the current transatlantic relationship) is really disastrous, I don't know what else to call it", Nathalie Tocci, Director of the IAI think-tank in Rome and a special adviser to Borrell, said.

Trump ripped up EU-backed



A girl celebrates as media announced that Democratic nominee Joe Biden has won the 2020 US presidential election in Washington Square Park in Manhattan, New York City. — Reuters

EVEN IF HE WILL
BE A FAR EASIER
PARTNER THAN
TRUMP, EUROPEANS
SHOULD NOT
EXPECT A NEW
'GOLDEN ERA'
UNDER BIDEN

international agreements like the Paris climate accord and the Iran nuclear deal, pulled out of the Geneva-based World Health Organization in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, and called the Nato alliance into question. The outgoing US president also wrong-footed Europe by leaving arms control treaties with Russia and with unilateral steps in the Middle East, such as the pullout of US troops from Syria and the transfer of the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Biden — a former chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and two-term vice president under the Obama administration, with decades of foreign policy experience — is expected to be far more attuned to European sensitivities.

"The Biden foreign policy agenda will place the United States back at the head of the table, in a position to work with its allies and partners to mobilise collective action on global threats", the Democratic president-elect wrote in *Foreign Affairs* magazine. — dpa

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KANE PUTS SPURS ON TOP

WEST BROMWICH, United Kingdom: Harry Kane fired Tottenham to the top of the Premier League as the striker's late goal sealed a 1-0 win against struggling West Bromwich Albion on Sunday.

Jose Mourinho's side knocked Southampton out of first place thanks to Kane's dramatic intervention at the Hawthorns.

His 150th Premier League goal was perfectly timed after Tottenham had laboured to break down stubborn Albion.

Having scored his 200th Tottenham goal in all competitions against

Ludogorets on Thursday, Kane now has 13 goals this season.

Tottenham are one point clear at the top, but they would be passed later on Sunday by Leicester if they beat Wolves, or Liverpool if they win at Manchester City.

Mourinho started with Kane, Gareth Bale and Son Heung-min in his front three for the first time, and while the latter two were quiet, Kane was on hand to clinch Tottenham's third successive league victory.

Tottenham are now unbeaten in their last seven league games but were below their best for long periods against a

West Brom team still without a league win this term.

Mourinho has had a recent habit of making social media posts that take a swipe at his players when they under-perform, so it would have been no surprise if the Tottenham boss was thinking of another acerbic message until Kane came to the rescue.

Instead, Mourinho leapt to his feet on the touchline to celebrate a win that emphasised Tottenham's determined attitude.

West Brom had suffered a pre-match blow when Branislav Ivanovic and Matheus Pereira were ruled out after

both tested positive for the coronavirus.

DRAMATIC FINALE

Tottenham should have taken the lead with their first incisive attack.

Bale's pass picked out Tanguy Ndombele and he worked it towards the unmarked Son in the West Brom area.

But the South Korean took too long to get his shot away, eventually managing a weak effort that Semi Ajayi scrambled clear near the goal-line.

Karlan Grant wasted a good chance to give West Brom a shock lead when his close-range effort from Darnell Furlong's cross drifted wide.

Amid reports that Charlton boss

Lee Bowyer is being lined up as a replacement for Bilic, the Albion manager couldn't complain about his side's commitment.

They made it hard for Tottenham's vaunted front three to thrive and had enough invention to threaten occasionally themselves.

Kyle Bartley headed over from Filip Krovinovic's free-kick and Jake Livermore was just off-target with a rising drive.

It was only the second time this season Tottenham had managed just one shot in the first half of a Premier League game. — AFP

Chelsea new signings show worth in Sheffield thumping

ANDY JALIL
LONDON, NOV 8

There has been growing evidence that Chelsea's visit to the transfer market for this season has been paying off. There were major contributions from the new boys in their 4-1 win against Sheffield United. It delighted the manager, Frank Lampard who called it: "Our best performance of the season. Relationships on the pitch are getting better."

About, Moroccan, Hakim Ziyech, signed from Ajax, he said: Hakim has brought a different element. He has no fear to play the game-changing pass and there's his work ethic off the ball. He's a very complete player."

Lampard added: "Some of the work was really encouraging for me to see those signs, but the season is long and I'm the first to keep my feet on the ground with

this. It was a great performance but we'll have challenge after challenge coming up. They (players) were amazing all of them. But, again, it's one performance. It's nice to see, we must continue. I enjoyed watching it but I know how football is."

Chelsea came from behind after a momentary lapse of concentration allowed the visitors to get in front. A shot by Sander Berge in the crowded penalty area was unlikely to head into the goal but was diverted by David McGoldrick past Chelsea's new goalkeeper, Edouard Mendy, who had kept a clean sheet in his previous three league games since joining the club.

Halfway through the first half, Chelsea drew level when Mateo Kovacic controlled a long pass from Ziyech and cut back a shot from the byline to Tammy Abraham who unleashed a



Chelsea's Timo Werner celebrates scoring their fourth goal with Tammy Abraham and teammates. — Reuters

lovely half volley into the net. Six minutes later Timo Werner was unlucky to see his firm drive hit the underside of the crossbar.

The first half ended with Chelsea 2-1 in the lead. Ziyech picked up the ball 25 yards out and spotted Ben Chilwell – joined Chelsea from Leicester this season – who let the dipping pass bounce

off him and into the net with the goalkeeper and defender Max Lowe failing to react quickly enough. The next two goals came within three minutes of

each other with Chelsea having been dominating the second half. Sheffield's defence was unable to deal with a well-taken free-kick by Ziyech on the right and Thiago Silva, an experienced new signing, rose to head in the third goal. Finally, Werner rounded off the scoring with the fourth and his eighth goal since joining the club in September.

Lowe's poor pass went to the German via Kante and he was quick to place his shot to the left of Aaron Ramsdale.

The Blades manager, Chris Wilder, said: "I think at times my teams are naïve. We have given away some poor goals. I think we have to look at ourselves. If you give hand-outs to world-class players, they will take their opportunities which they did." He added: "We have to fight through. Nobody is going to give us anything."

Riyad out of PSL after failing virus test

Bangladesh Twenty20 skipper Mahmudullah Riyad has been ruled out of the Pakistan Super League playoffs after testing positive for the coronavirus, he said on Sunday. Mahmudullah was set to play in Pakistan's domestic tournament, which restarts on next week after a break since March because of the virus.



Chigumbura to retire after Pakistan tour

Former Zimbabwe captain Elton Chigumbura will retire after the final T20 against Pakistan on Tuesday, the 34-year-old said. Chigumbura has played 213 ODIs for his country — only behind Andy Flower (221) and equal with Andy's brother Grant, scoring 4,340 runs at an average of 25.23.



ZVEREV STOPS NADAL AT BERCY

PARIS: Alexander Zverev overpowered Rafael Nadal in straight sets on Saturday to reach his first Paris Masters final, where he will face third seed Daniil Medvedev.

The German claimed his second successive win over Nadal in impressive fashion, easing to a 6-4, 7-5 victory after Medvedev's earlier 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) win over Milos Raonic. It ended Nadal's hopes of a first title at Bercy Arena and the 20-time Grand Slam champion remains with only one tournament win on indoor hard courts in his career.

The 34-year-old will now prepare to challenge for a maiden ATP Tour Finals

trophy in London, with the season-ending event starting on November 15.

"I was there until the end against a player who is playing great on a surface that he's winning a lot (on)," said Nadal. "So it has been a positive tournament for me."

Zverev will be confident of claiming a third successive title, after back-to-back triumphs on home soil in Cologne, when he takes on Medvedev in Sunday's final.

The fourth seed holds a 5-1 winning record over the Russian. "The head-to-head is one thing, but in a final it's always different," said Zverev, who lost to Medvedev in last year's Shanghai Masters final.

Nadal had been looking to equal Novak Djokovic's record of 36 Masters crowns this week.

Instead, Zverev is just one win from a fourth Masters success but first since the 2018 Madrid Open.

He served brilliantly in the opening set, with just a single break of Nadal's serve in the third game enough to take it in just 38 minutes.

Zverev struggled for long periods of last season with double faults, but has put that problem behind him since the return from the coronavirus-enforced suspension of professional tennis. Four big first serves helped the German clinch

the one-set lead.

"It was no secret, I was double faulting quite a lot. So it was important for me to work on that," he said.

MEDVEDEV EDGES OUT RAONIC

Medvedev battled past Raonic earlier on Saturday to reach his first final of the season. The Russian secured his third victory from as many meetings with the Canadian.

Medvedev, 24, who won both the Cincinnati and Shanghai Masters last year, is looking for his eighth career title. "The first set was great, I think he maybe only won one or two points on my serve," he said. — AFP



Pakistan thump Zimbabwe to clinch Twenty20 series



Pakistan captain Babar Azam (R) and Haider Ali run between the wickets during the second Twenty20 match against Zimbabwe in Rawalpindi. — AFP

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan proved too strong for a sloppy Zimbabwe as they won the second Twenty20 international by eight wickets in Rawalpindi on Sunday, taking an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

Riding on half centuries from skipper Babar Azam (51) and 20-year-old Haider Ali (66 not out), Pakistan made short work of a modest 135-run target, achieving victory with 29 balls to spare.

Zimbabwe, who were sent in to bat, never recovered from early strikes by paceman Haris Rauf (3-31) and spinner Usman Qadir (3-23) as they were restricted to 134-7 in 20 overs.

Haider, playing only his third international match, cracked three sixes and six boundaries in a 43-ball knock and was declared man of the match.

Azam, ranked second in the world T20 batting rankings, smashed eight fours and a six off just 28 balls, the fastest of his 16 T20 international fifties.

Haider and Azam added 100 for the second wicket, taking away the game from Zimbabwe despite losing opener Fakhar Zaman for just five in the third

SCOREBOARD

ZIMBABWE

B Taylor c Rizwan b Rauf 3
C Chibhabha c Ashraf b Rauf 15
S Williams b Ashraf 13
W Madhevere lbw Usman 24
Sikandar Raza b Usman 7
R Burl not out 32
E Chigumbura st Rizwan b Usman 18
D Tiripano c Zaman b Rauf 15
T Chisoro not out 3
Extras: (lb1, w3) 4
Total: (for seven wkts; 20 overs) -134
Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-30, 3-38, 4-65, 5-66, 6-90, 7-120
Bowling: Hasnain 4-0-28-0, Rauf 4-0-31-3, Ashraf 4-0-20-1, Riaz 4-0-31-0, Usman 4-0-23-3

PAKISTAN

F Zaman c Chigumbura b Muzarabani .. 5
B Azam c Chigumbura b Muzarabani .. 51
Haider Ali not out 66
Khushdil Shah not out 11
Extras: (lb1, w3) 4
Total: (for two wkts; 15.1 overs) -137
Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-110
Bowling: Muzarabani 4-0-33-2, Ngarava 3.1-0-28-0, Tiripano 2-0-18-0, Chisoro 3-0-26-0, Williams 1-0-11-0, Raza 2-0-20-0

over. Zimbabwe fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani took two wickets for 33 runs, including Azam.

Khushdil Shah cracked the winning boundary in his 11 not out.

The last match of the series is scheduled for Tuesday, also in Rawalpindi. — AFP

OMAN CRICKET LEAGUE

Burger bats Al Turki to another victory; Sarco, Zawawi win

MUSCAT: Gustav Burger's gutsy 45 saved the day for Al Turki as they sealed a last-over win against Renaissance in a Premier Division T20 league game at Oman Cricket's Turf 1 in Al Amerat on Friday.

Finding the going tough, Renaissance failed to post an imposing total on the board, managing only 129 for 4 in 20 overs. Pruthvikumar Machhi top-scored with a fighting 58.

Al Turki were tied in knots by Renaissance through some tight bowling but Burger's solid knock paved the way for a close finish which came in the final over when the former crossed the finish line at 130 for 6 in 19.2 overs.

Akshay Patel batted well too, scoring a vital 40. Rafiullah bowled brilliantly, taking three

wickets for 15 in his spell.
Brief scores (Premier Division T20): Renaissance 129 for 4 in 20 overs (Pruthvikumar Machhi 58 – 7x4, Abdul Rauf 24 – 1x4, Asif Khan 23 – 4x4) lost to Al Turki NMC 130 for 6 in 19.2 overs (Gustav Burger 45 – 2x4, 1x6, Akshay Patel 40 – 4x4, 3x6. Rafiullah 3-15) by 4 wickets. MoM: Gustav Burger (Al Turki NMC).

MENON SHINES IN SARCO WIN

Ajay Menon's match-winning 90 led Sarco to an exciting 33-run win over Basta CT in a 50-over A Division League match on OC Turf 2 on Saturday.

Struggling at 65 for 5 and then 94 for 8, Sarco were taken to a fighting total of 177 in the 45th over by a magnificent 90 off 111 by Menon. Nazish Mohammed was the pick of the bowlers, taking 5 for 32 in his spell.



Zawawi Powertech's Kannan Prabhakaran

Basta failed to make a match of it, folding up for 138 in the 36th over as Dileepa Srilal and Guru Kotian ran through their batting, taking five and three wickets respectively.
Brief scores (A Division 50 overs league): Sarco 177 all out in 44.5 overs (Ajay Menon 6x4, 5x6,



Al Turki's Gustav Burger (right) and Akshay Patel

Murad Khan 23- 2x4, 1x6. Nazish Mohammed 5-32, Shamsudheen Shareef 3-33, Murtaza Shah 2-41) defeated Basta CT 138 all out in 35.3 overs (Usman Haider 47 – 6x4, Nazish Mohammed 27 – 1x4, 3x6. Dileepa Srilal 5-40, Guru Kotian 3-27) by 33 runs. MoM: Ajay Menon (Sarco).

PRABHAKARAN LIFTS ZAWAWI

In another A Division match, Kannan Prabhakaran's magnificent 6 for 24 powered Zawawi Powertech to a nail-biting 7-run victory against ACT on OC

Turf 2. Zawawi were bundled out for a paltry 127 in the 33rd over, KS Nishad top-scoring with 21. Mujib Mohammed claimed 3 for 30 while Ali Qasim and Devashya Rajesh bagged two wickets each.

ACT failed to rise to the occasion despite having to chase a small total, getting dismissed for only 120 in 25.2 overs. Ahmed Ifthikhar was the main scorer with a fluent 42.

Prabhakaran was literally unplayable in his six-for effort, getting vital support from KS Nishad who took 2 for 23.

Brief scores (A Division): Zawawi Powertech 127 for 10 in 33.2 overs (KS Nishad 21 – 1x4, Suhil Kanagaraj 17 – 2x4, Mujib Mohammed 3-30, Ali Qasim 2-19, Devashya Rajesh 2-19) beat ACT 120 for 10 in 25.2 overs (Ahmed Ifthikhar 42 – 4x4, 2x6, Kannan Prabhakaran 6-24, KS Nishad 2-23) by 7 runs.



NORTH ROAD CLINCH OPENING HONOURS



Arsen Endurance, Ahli Sidab A on podium as OCA Championship begins

ANUROOP
ATHIPARAMBATH
MUSCAT, NOV 8

North Road Oman claimed the top position in the opening team time trial event of the OCA Championship 2020-21 at the weekend.

Arsen Endurance and Al Ahli Sidab A finished second and third respectively at the season-opening event for Oman Cycling Association (OCA) from Al Amerat to Al Salil and back on Friday.

North Road finished on top by clocking 1 hour 6 seconds to complete the 45km team time trial.

Arsen Endurance finished second with 1 hour 31 seconds time and Al Ahli Sidab A were third with a timing of 1:02:13.

OCA President Saif al Rashdi was the chief guest for the concluding ceremony as he honoured the top three place winners.

Saif al Rashdi said he is happy that they were able to stage the competition despite the pandemic situation.

“The OCA is happy to kick start the cycling season delayed due to the COVID-19 situation. We have ensured to implement



the medical protocol stipulated by the government authorities,” Al Rashdi said.

“In fact we have 14 teams this time, one more than last year.”

The opening race of the championship was concluded without any incidents.

“The race was incident-free and completed smoothly with the help of Royal Oman Police. We hope to continue the good

work in the upcoming races with the full cooperation of the participating teams too,” Sultan Hamed al Rawahi, OCA board member, said.

NEXT RACE ON NOV 20

The next race, individual time trial (18 km), will be held at Al Batinah Coastal Road on November 20.

A total of eight races are scheduled for this season’s

championship.

Teams will collect points from each of the races.

After the first race, North Road Oman have 250 points, while Arsen Endurance have 230 points and Al Ahli Sidab A have 210 points.

The championship, which runs for a total of 641 km, consists eight races — six road races, one individual time trial and one team time trial.

OCA Championship			
Team Time Trial Result			Date
			06/11/2020
Place	Club / Team	Time	Point
1	North Road Oman	1:00:06	250
2	Arsen Endurance	1:00:31	230
3	Al Ahli Sidab A	1:02:13	210
4	Royal Army of Oman	1:02:40	200
5	Gulf Cycle	1:03:56	190
6	Capital Team	1:04:09	180
7	Al Ahli Sidab B	1:04:55	170
8	Nizwa Club	1:07:13	160
9	Al Shabab Club	1:08:11	150
10	Sur Club	1:08:57	140
11	Izki Club	1:09:42	130
12	Brothers Team	1:10:09	120
13	Al Rustaq Club	1:19:08	110
14	Ibri Club	1:22:23	100

All the races are one-day events with separate prizes on each day.

The general classification leader in Open category will get the Omantel red jersey, general classification leader in Under-23 category will win the Bank Nizwa white jersey and general classification leader in Over 40 category will bag the Bank Sohar green jersey.

Prizes will be given in the

Open category, under-23, team and 40 plus categories apart from all podium winners on each race days.

This year’s event is being competed by Ahli Sidab A and B teams, Al Rustaq, Al Shabab, Sur, Izki, North Road Oman, Gulf Cycles, Arsen Endurance/ Diver Store, Nizwa Club, Brothers Team, Capital Team, Ibri Club and Royal Army of Oman.

Dhofar, Al Nahda players join Oman team camp

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 8

Players from Dhofar and Al Nahda joined the preparatory camp of the national football team camp in Muscat on Saturday after completion of the semifinal matches at the HM Cup. It is the first appearance for the both above mentioned teams players under supervision of head coach Branko Ivankovic.

With the joining of Salalah giants and Al Nahda players, the team is undergoing training sessions in full strength under watchful eyes and directions of Croatian coach

Ivankovic.

Three friendly local matches are set up for the ‘Red Warriors’ in the ongoing warm-up camp. The first preparatory game will take place on Wednesday against Muscat club. The rest two matches will be against the Olympic team on November 13 and 18. All the matches will be played at Seeb Stadium with kick off at 6:30 pm without attendance of the audience and media.

Twelve training sessions are completed by the players with 10 more remaining. The coaching staff have focused on different tactical scenarios during the



previous sessions.

The Croatian coach divided the players into three groups and guided them on quick passing and moving from defence to forward

lines. Also, the team trained on clinching and conversion of the scoring chances into goals at narrow areas.

The goalkeeping coach had

seperate training sessions for the goalkeepers.

The existing camp for the national team is a proper platform for the local clubs players as they are gearing up for the forthcoming season 2020-21 which will begin on December 3.

Ivankovic has called up 28 players for the domestic camp including Fayez al Rushaidi, Mohammed al Musalami, Harib al Saadi, Abdullah Fawaz, Salah al Yahyaei, Ahmed al Khamisi, Yazeed al Mashani, Moutaz Saleh, Ahmed Faraj, Eid al Farsi, Amjad al Harthi, Zahir al Aghbri, Khalid al Buraiki, Abdulaziz al Ghailani,

Omar al Fazari, Essam al Subhi, Ahmed al Kaabi, Ali al Rushaidi, Fahmi Said, Ibrahim Saleh, Mohammed al Dheeb, Arshed al Alawi, Abbas al Hashami, Mohsin Jawher, Khalid al Hajri, Omran al Hedi, Abdulaziz al Maqbali and Ali al Busaidy.

The announced team list included many new faces including Muscat’s star Abbas al Hashami, Dhofar’s Yazeed al Mashani and Ahmed al Khamisi. The national players who are playing abroad did not take part at the ongoing camp due to the restriction after travel and home quarantine procedures.



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Move to regulate marketing of baby foods



SAFEGUARDS: Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion finalises the draft standard specifications ‘Regulating the Marketing of Classified Products for Infants and Young Children’

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 8

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion has completed the preparation of the draft of an Omani standard specification for ‘Regulating the Marketing of Classified Products for Infants and Young Children’.

The draft of the Omani standard specification was prepared under the plans of the Department of Standards of the ministry’s Directorate General of Standards and Metrology, in cooperation with the Nutrition Department of the Ministry of Health.

The aim is to regulate the marketing of classified products meant for infants and young children, in line with the national policy in support, promotion and protection of breastfeeding.

The Ministry pointed out that the standard specifications were concerned with general requirements regulating the marketing of products classified for infants and young children.

The draft identified and defined products classified as food alternative to breast milk or food supplements, or any other food products marketed as suitable for children up to the age of three years, and the tools used in feeding the infant until the age of 12 months.

It also talks about the food product and the tools used in feeding the infant, such as pacifiers and soft nipples for the infant feeding bottle.

Naval bint Suwaid al Abri, Head of the Food and Agricultural Products Specifications Department at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, said the Omani standard specifications’ draft has the definition of both: manufactured substitutes for breast milk and manufactured substitutes for breast milk with special medicinal uses as well as food supplements which include their preparations, food for the growth stage, and processed foods based on grains.

The Omani standard specifications draft also included the definitions for the following terms: infant, grown-up infants, young children, information card, marketing and distributor, promotion, advertising, and tools used in infant and young child feeding.

“The Omani standard specifications draft has determined general requirements for classified products, including the classified products and raw materials used in the manufacture of the classified products should conform to their own standard specifications, and that the classified products are produced, packed and traded in accordance with the conditions and requirements mentioned in the specifications.

The classified products must be free from pig products and their derivatives, in addition to be free from rancidity, impurities and external materials, and from insects and their parts and all their types. There are also microbiological limits, those of the toxic metal elements, radioactive contaminants and mycotoxins in accordance with their own standard specifications and others,” she said.

TURN TO PAGE 14

The aim is to regulate the marketing of classified products meant for infants and young children, in line with the national policy in support, promotion and protection of breastfeeding

Shareholders pledge new funding for Oman antimony project

CASH INFUSIONS: Oman Investment Authority, the Sultanate’s sovereign wealth fund, is a key investor in this first of its kind roaster

CONRAD PRABHU
[@conradprabhu](https://twitter.com/conradprabhu)

Agreement has been reached between the three principal shareholders of Strategic and Precious Metals Processing LLC (SPMP), the company behind a first-of-its-kind antimony and gold production facility in Suhar, to help plug a significant funding shortfall that has stymied the completion and operation of the prestigious project.

According to UK-based minerals processing company Tri-Star Resources plc – a key shareholder in SPMP – the agreement reached earlier this month involves fellow investors Oman Investment Authority (the wholly government-owned sovereign wealth fund of the Sultanate of Oman) and DNR Industries (DNR), part of Dubai-based Dutco Group.

At full capacity, SPMP’s antimony roaster – the largest of its kind outside of China and the world’s first clean plant – will produce more 20,000 tonnes per annum of high-grade antimony ingots and powdered antimony trioxides (ATO), in addition to around 50,000 ounces (1,400 kg) of gold.

The project is expected to position Oman as a global producer of antimony – a strategically important metal. SPMP was formally established in June 2014 as a joint venture partnership between



Tri-Star (40 per cent), the erstwhile Oman Investment Fund now part of Oman Investment Authority (40 per cent) and DNR Industries (20 per cent).

However, a combination of technical problems, funding delays and cost overruns has hobbled the project’s successful completion and commissioning, according to Tri-Star Resources.

Despite the challenges, parts of the plant have been operating for short durations at 50 per cent of capacity, enabling the production and sale of SPMP’s first batches of antimony metal and gold dore.

“This proved that the plant was capable of producing in small quantities but efforts to ramp up production have been hampered in part by the continued lack of funding for SPMP,” said Tri-Star Resources

Non-Executive Chairman Adrian Collins in the company’s newly published strategic report for 2019.

Collins said the three shareholders have been working to resolve an “imbalance” in their respective funding contributions towards the project.

SPMP’s funding requirements climbed to around \$120 million as of January 2020, comprising \$60 million for rectification costs and a further \$60 million for working capital, he noted.

“Over the last few months, Tri-Star and its joint venture partners have been in discussions to find a resolution to the dispute. These concluded on 1 November 2020 with a settlement agreement between the parties embracing a number of constitutional and financial changes.

“In broad terms, (Oman Investment Authority) and DNR have agreed to provide sufficient further funding in order for the plant to reach completion, without further equity dilution to (Tri-Star) and that all sums invested to date are converted into equity and equity loans proportionately,” the non-executive chairman said.

“As a result of the Settlement Agreement, (Tri-Star’s) investment in SPMP will comprise equity of \$2.6m (16.3 per cent of total equity) and Equity Loans of \$0.8 million (16.3 per cent of the total Equity Loans). The balance is held by (Oman Investment Authority) and DNR. Each shareholder of SPMP owns an equal percentage of equity and equity loans,” he added.

SHALEEM ACQUISITION OF WEATHERFORD’S DRILLING RIG BUSINESS IN OMAN

“The vision to create internationally-competitive LCCs (Local Community Companies) was started by the late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos and continues today with the blessings and foresight of His Majesty Sultan Haitham”

OMAN — Shaleem Petroleum are pleased to announce Shaleem’s acquisition of the oil field drilling rigs business of Weatherford Drilling International Holdings (BVI) in Oman.

Commenting on this acquisition, His Excellency Dr Mohammed Rumhi, Minister of Energy and Mining confirmed that ‘this is real Omanisation.’

Since establishment in 1998, with the support of the Ministry and Petroleum Development Oman, Shaleem has matured into a leading Well Maintenance and Workover Contractor. This acquisition will expand the range of services to include Drilling.

All Weatherford Drilling Rigs and Hoist employees necessary to deliver the ongoing contracts will transfer to Shaleem.

With transition support provided by Weatherford Drilling, Shaleem will take

over the daily operations of the ongoing contracts immediately.

Chairman of Shaleem, Sheikh Abdulaziz Al Mahri said ‘The vision to create internationally-competitive LCCs (Local Community Companies) was started by the late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos and continues today with the blessings and foresight of His Majesty Sultan Haitham. We see the completion of this acquisition as an endorsement of the success of that vision. Today, Shaleem Petroleum is recognized as a reliable Local Community Company operating at International Standards in the Oman Oil and Gas sector. Under the strong leadership of the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, PDO – and other Operators, this strong commitment to fulfil His Majesty’s Directives for the Local Communities has created hundreds of opportunities for local Omani businesses and secured thousands of Omani jobs. Changing people’s lives and



making tomorrow better than yesterday for them and for their families. On taking this next big step in Shaleem’s development, we send our thanks and deep respect to everyone who has supported us in our enterprise.’

Shaleem’s CEO – Mark Hobbs added that ‘Weatherford is a global leader in its field and continues to make an outstanding contribution to the progress of Oman’s oil and gas sector. As Weatherford exits its drilling rigs business activities, Shaleem is very proud to continue their legacy. This acquisition means that Shaleem will double

in size and in capabilities. We are adding two more Workover Hoists and four land-based Drilling Rigs to our fast-growing fleet.

As we take on these new Drilling challenges, our focus will be to delight our customers and ensure the safety of our teams as they deliver competitive, competent, quality and efficient services.’

Shaleem’s HR Manager, Salsabil Al Mahri said ‘We welcome all of our new colleagues from Weatherford. We look forward to working together, as we continue Shaleem’s journey towards becoming the Best Team in the Field.’



Metals-led commodity rally on US dollar slump



OLE S HANSEN

LONDON: Since the US election this Tuesday, nearly all assets including most commodities have enjoyed a strong surge.

The everything up and US dollar down narrative unfolded despite the prospect of at least two years of political gridlock in Washington preventing US fiscal stimulus from flowing into a COVID-19 hit economy, while also putting the brakes on the reflation trade.

Commodities nevertheless rallied hard as it became increasingly apparent that Joe Biden was heading to the White House despite Trump's unfounded claims about foul play.

While equities surged higher in response to collapsing volatility, it was the weaker dollar that gave precious and industrial metals



as well as other commodities a boost. Following the election, the Bloomberg Commodity Index has risen by 1.4 per cent with strong gains seen in silver, platinum, gold and copper.

The agriculture sector led by soybeans, coffee and corn traded higher, thereby adding to the prospect of rising food costs.

Chicago soybeans reached a four-year high with local prices in China hitting record levels on supply shortages. Dry weather conditions in key production

regions from the Black Sea area to South America and the US Midwest together with strong demand from China and now the weaker dollar have all helped drive prices of key crops higher in recent weeks.

The UN FAO published its monthly Global Food Price index for October and it showed a continuation of the upward trend. While showing a year-on-year rise of 6 per cent, the month-on-month 3.1 per cent increase was driven by much firmer prices of

sugar, dairy, cereals and vegetable oils with only meat prices showing a small drop.

Precious and industrial metals jumped as the dollar slumped to a two-and-a-half year low with gold breaking above previous resistance at \$1930/oz and together with copper recording the biggest weekly gain since July. Silver, meanwhile, was the star performer with the price rallying close to 6 per cent since Tuesday.

With the gold-silver ratio breaking lower at the same time,

silver could potentially be in for a period of outperformance with the ratio potentially heading back towards 70 (ounces of silver to one ounce of gold).

Combined with the weaker dollar, bond yields also softened as the risk of reflation faded with the divided US Government. While the Fed kept its stimulus steady at its meeting this past week, they also said that more fiscal and monetary support may be needed.

The market is now speculating that with Biden unable to spend money given resistance from a Republican controlled Senate, the Fed may have to step up and fill the gap soon.

Hence the strong rally in precious metals, but also the stock market where TINA (There Is No Alternative) has been given renewed focus.

Gold may now take aim at our end of year target at \$2000/oz, but in order to do so the metal needs to stay above the \$1920 to \$1930 area of support.

Energy: After hitting a five-month low at the beginning of the week on COVID-19 worries and rising production from Libya, crude oil made an abrupt turnaround in response

to a big drop in US crude oil stocks together with increased speculation that OPEC+ will step in to support the price.

The rally, however, began to deflate once the attention turned from the US election and back to the coronavirus pandemic, with record high case counts being recorded in both Europe and the US. Overall, Brent crude remains stuck in a wide downtrend, currently with resistance at \$42/b and support at \$35.50/b. As we have said before, the only proper cure for crude oil at these relatively low levels are the removal of the virus threat through the discovery of a vaccine that can be rolled out globally.

Only then can and will the market start to ponder how much the lack of investment in new discoveries will help boost the price over the coming years.

For now, global demand remains challenged and by how much we should find out next week when monthly oil market reports will be published by the EIA on Tuesday, OPEC on Wednesday and the IEA on Thursday.

[The author is Head of Commodity Strategy at Saxo Bank]

Oman Shell to support ESO capacity building



BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 8

Environment Society of Oman (ESO) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Oman Shell for the energy company to become a Conservation Training Partner.

Building on a long-term partnership between the two parties, the agreement will strengthen ESO's mandate to train and hire Omani graduates in conservation strategies, community engagement and NGO management.

As Oman's only non-profit organisation dedicated to conserving the environment, ESO works hard to onboard young Omanis, while increasing public awareness about the importance of environmentally sustainable behaviour.

Walid Hadi, Country Chairman of Oman Shell, also said, "We at Oman Shell are delighted to reaffirm our partnership with ESO through this initiative, which combines two of our values — to promote environmental awareness and to help Omanis develop new skills that are innovative and that meet the needs of the society and national economy.

Through it, and our other projects, we continue to support Oman to be environmentally, socially, and economically viable now and in the future."

"Through our Capacity

As Oman's only non-profit organisation dedicated to conserving the environment, ESO works hard to onboard young Omanis, while increasing public awareness about the importance of environmentally sustainable behaviour

Building programme we aim to contribute to the development of Omanis in the field of environmentalism, an area that is vastly underserved.

At the same time, it helps us to increase our manpower capabilities so that we can expand our scope of work and do even more for conservation.

This is something we wouldn't be able to do alone, which is why we are very grateful for organisations like Oman Shell, who's unwavering support continues to help us make a difference to our community, and to our precious environment," said Suaad al Harthi, Executive Director of ESO.

ESO has a long-standing history with Oman Shell, beginning in 2012.

Among the projects the energy company has supported are the Egyptian Vulture project, Humpback Whale Acoustic Research, and Community Outreach and Education Initiatives including the Inter-College Environmental Public Speaking Competition.

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 8

As part of efforts to preserve Oman's environmental and natural resources, the Environment Authority and OQ, Oman's global integrated energy company, have signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) for strategic partnership to support environmental and natural resources conservation projects in the Sultanate.

The MoC was signed by Dr Abdullah bin Ali al Amri, Chairman of the Environment Authority, and Eng Musab bin Abdullah al Mahrouti, Group

Move to regulate marketing of baby foods

FROM PAGE 13

The Omani standard specifications draft prohibits classified products: exceeding international limits for chemical pollutants harmful to health, and writing any medical, therapeutic or preventive statement on classified products except after obtaining the approval of the Ministry of Health, provided that there is scientific evidence for this. It also talks about placing pictures of infants or mothers or any other pictures or phrases which praise the use of the classified product.

The use of supplements for infant food up to the age of six months, use of artificial flavourings for those less than a year, adding sweeteners, using phrases praising the product which suggest similarity to breast milk, and writing any medical, therapeutic or preventive statement on the classified products is prohibited, except after obtaining the approval of the Ministry of Health, provided that this is scientifically proven.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Environment Authority, OQ ink cooperation pact



CEO, OQ.

Commenting on this strategic collaboration, Dr Al Amri said, "This MoC aims to enhance the partnership between the public and private sectors to support the

Sultanate's environmental efforts and projects. It also provides a platform to share knowledge, exchange experiences and best practices between the two sides across different aspects."

"The Authority makes every effort to protect the environment and conserve its natural resources in order to have a clean sustainable nature," Dr Al Amri adds.

Eng Musab stated, "The signing of such agreements falls within the scope of the social and environmental investment programmes of OQ that are based on implementing sustainable projects. Equally important, preserving the environment and natural resources are important areas for OQ through adopting regulations, practices and policies that are aimed at achieving sustainability of natural resources in the country."

PRESS RELEASES



BANK MUSCAT TO ISSUE LIMITED EDITION CARDS FOR 50TH NATIONAL DAY

Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate, has announced that it will celebrate the momentous occasion of the 50th National Day with a special limited edition series of its Prepaid Cards and its Asalah VISA Signature Credit Cards. The look and feel of the cards will represent the achievements of this important milestone in the history of modern Oman. The exclusive cards with 'Just Tap' contactless technology are meant to be collector's items and sales will start in the first week of November and will go on till stocks last.

On this occasion, Amjad bin Iqbal al Lawati, Assistant General Manager - Cards and Electronic Banking, said: "All Bank Muscat Credit Card holders are eligible to be entered into a special raffle scheme, whereby they will receive one chance for every RO 50 spent through the card to participate in special National Day raffles that will be held over a period of 50 days. Fifty lucky winners will get RO 500 each credited to their credit cards. I invite all Bank Muscat customers try out the benefits of our Credit Cards."

The bank will also be holding special prize draws for prepaid card customers.

BUSINESS GATEWAYS TO HOST WEBINAR ON VAT LAW IN OMAN

Business Gateways in its effort to provide value-added services to the JSRS Certified Suppliers

Network (JSRS CSN) presents a webinar on the much-awaited VAT Law in Oman.

The tax lawyers of Oman's Al-Hashmi Law are presenting a 90-minute webinar, on November 11, 2020 at 11 AM GST, that will focus on the VAT Law in Oman. The Webinar will be hosted on The Stage, a promising initiative by Business Gateways, bringing together the JSRS Community on a common online knowledge sharing platform.

The speakers will address the key challenges before each of the business functions, how to problem solve and will explain the concepts behind and compliances under the VAT Law. The Webinar will be on 11 November at 11 am for a 90-minute duration on The Stage-Business Gateways allowing plenty of time for questions and the attendees will receive informative FAQs post the event.

"Amidst a lot of expectations among the public on government measures to introduce new taxes including VAT, the last thing to worry about is what should I be ready with for April 2021," says Omar al Hashmi, the managing partner of Al Hashmi Law.





Future Retail challenges Amazon

NEW DELHI: Future Retail has challenged its partner Amazon.com Inc in a New Delhi court to stop interfering in its \$3.4 billion asset sale deal. — **Reuters**



Volvo recalls 54,000 US vehicles

CALIFORNIA: Volvo Cars is recalling 54,000 US vehicles for an air bag defect after one crash death tied to the issue, according to a filing with US regulators. — **Reuters**



Southwest issues furlough notices

LOS ANGELES: Southwest Airlines said it has sent notices of potential furloughs to 42 parts inventory workers after talks with one union group stalled over pay cuts. — **Reuters**

Significant differences still remain in EU-UK trade talks



LONDON: Significant differences remain in talks over a trade deal between Britain and the European Union, both sides said on Saturday, as they promised to step up efforts to find an agreement.

After a call between British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen (**pictured**), both said talks would continue in London next week but that the main sticking points remained.

“The prime minister set out that, while some progress had been made in recent discussions, significant differences remain in a number of areas, including the so-called level playing field and fish”, a spokesman for Johnson’s office said.

There was a similar message from Von der Leyen. “Some progress has been made, but large differences remain especially on level playing field and fisheries”, she said.

Britain formally left the EU last January but has been following the bloc’s rules since then as the two sides try to agree on their future trade relationship. — **Reuters**

Dealmakers see divided US govt favouring mergers, acquisitions

While M&A activity jumped in the third quarter as executives rushed to revisit deals put on hold at the height of the coronavirus outbreak, deal volume globally is down 12 per cent year-to-date to \$2.84 trillion

NEW YORK: Joe Biden’s projected win of the US presidency and the Republican Party potentially retaining control of the US Senate could drive a pickup in mergers and acquisitions (M&A) that took a hit amid the COVID-19 pandemic, dealmakers said.

Bankers and lawyers who advise companies on M&A said the outcome, if confirmed, was the best possible for providing the stable economic and regulatory environment that dealmaking needs.

They expect that Biden, the Democratic Party candidate, would be more predictable in governing than Republican President Donald Trump, and that a Republican-controlled US Senate would restrain Biden’s most interventionist policies.

“This dynamic can be quite conducive to doing deals, because it provides stability”, said Peter Orszag, who served in the White House under president Barack Obama and now heads the financial advisory arm of investment bank Lazard Ltd.

“The only caveat is that there is less chance of another big round of stimulus, which would help the macroeconomic outlook, than if



US president-elect Joe Biden and US vice president-elect Kamala Harris greet supporters outside the Chase Center in Wilmington, Delaware. — **Reuters**

Democrats had taken the Senate”, Orszag added.

“Corporate leaders and markets like stability. Gridlock, in its own way, can be seen as a stabilizer, as we saw during the Obama administration”, said Cary Kochman, co-head of global M&A at Citigroup Inc.

While M&A activity jumped in the third quarter as executives rushed to revisit deals put on hold at the height of the coronavirus outbreak, deal volume globally is down 12 per cent year-to-date to \$2.84 trillion, according to data provider Refinitiv.

Deal volume involving US companies being acquired is down 32 per cent year-to-date to \$1.07 trillion.

Dealmakers said certainty over

financial and regulatory policy will be crucial in the coming months to keep M&A going, as a new wave of coronavirus infections spreads across the United States and most of the world.

“I would venture to say some M&A has been held up under the Trump administration, because Trump could sometimes be unpredictable with his Twitter account”, said Bill Curtin, global head of M&A at Hogan Lovells.

Had Democrats taken control of Congress, dealmakers said the most disruptive aspects of Biden’s agenda would have been tax hikes.

Biden has proposed raising the capital gains tax rate from 20 per cent to 39.6 per cent for those making over \$1 million. This would have made it more

expensive for corporate owners to cash out on their holdings.

“Deals won’t be so much tax-driven, as Biden is not expected to immediately be able to carry out huge reforms in the US corporate tax or healthcare systems”, said Patrick Sarch, a partner at law firm White & Case LLP. Scrutiny of Chinese takeovers of US companies, which intensified under Trump, is expected to continue, dealmakers said.

In the last four years, the United States blocked many Chinese acquisitions, especially of US technology firms, on national security grounds, and even ordered some Chinese firms, such as the owners of social media apps TikTok and Grindr, to divest them. — **Reuters**

Malaysia’s Petronas to pay Sabah \$303m in sales tax

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian state-owned energy giant Petronas is expected to pay the resource-rich state of Sabah 1.25 billion ringgit (\$303 million) in sales tax next year, state media said.

Sabah Deputy Chief Minister Jeffrey Kitingan said Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin had agreed for the state to collect the 5pc tax from Petronas next year, Bernama news agency said.

Sabah and neighbouring Sarawak state in Borneo island hold much of the nation’s oil and gas reserves, and have long asked for more payments from Petronas, the sole manager of the country’s energy reserves. Petronas suffered its first loss in nearly five years during the second quarter due to a coronavirus-driven slump in demand and oil prices.

The payments could further hurt its finances.

The firm had fought Sarawak state’s demand for sales tax in court, but in September paid the state 2.96 billion ringgit (\$717 million) in taxes, as part of an unexpected settlement deal.

Analysts said the payment could encourage other states to make similar demands. Sarawak is run by a close political ally of the prime minister, who sources have said is open to giving more oil money to the state. But former Petronas chief executive Wan Zulkiflee Wan Ariffin had opposed the settlement and resigned in June. — **Reuters**



Petronas logos are pictured at a fuel station in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. — **Reuters**

■ QUARTERLY RESULTS

Buffett’s Berkshire suffers in pandemic

WASHINGTON: Warren Buffett’s Berkshire Hathaway Inc reported lower quarterly operating results and said the coronavirus pandemic may cause further damage, even as gains in stocks such as Apple Inc fuelled a more than \$30 billion overall profit.

Some Berkshire operating businesses have rebounded from their spring depths, and analysts were encouraged that revenue fell just 3 per cent from a year earlier.

But COVID-19, hurricanes and low interest rates hurt profit from insurance businesses, which include the Geico auto insurer, and the Precision Castparts aircraft parts unit projected thousands of additional job losses.

Berkshire also repurchased a record \$9.3 billion of its underperforming stock in the third-quarter, as Buffett remained unable to find the huge acquisitions the 90-year-old billionaire wants to spur growth.

Buybacks totalled \$16 billion from January to September, and appeared to total at least



Berkshire Hathaway signs are displayed for sale at the shareholder shopping day in Omaha, Nebraska. — **Reuters**

\$2.3 billion in October because Berkshire’s share count dropped. “The market will be encouraged by the buybacks”, said Cathy Seifert, an analyst at CFRA Research with a “hold” rating on Berkshire.

“Many companies halted buybacks to preserve resources during the pandemic, though because Berkshire doesn’t pay a dividend the amount it is returning to shareholders pales bit.”

Third-quarter operating profit fell 32 per cent to \$5.48 billion, or about \$3,488 per Class A share, from \$8.07 billion a year earlier.

Net income rose 82 per cent to \$30.1 billion, or \$18,994 per Class A share, from \$16.5 billion or \$10,119 per share. Revenue totalled \$63 billion.

Berkshire reported \$24.8 billion of gains from investments such as Apple, whose stock rose 27 per cent in the quarter and at

“Many companies halted buybacks to preserve resources during the pandemic, though because Berkshire doesn’t pay a dividend the amount it is returning to shareholders pales bit

CATHY SEIFERT
Analyst, CFRA Research

\$111.7 billion is by far Berkshire’s biggest stock holding, comprising 46 per cent of its portfolio.

Nevertheless, it appears Berkshire may have sold some Apple stock because the stake should have been a few billion dollars higher, based on previously disclosed stakes, if none was sold.

Net results are volatile because an accounting rule requires it to report unrealized gains and losses on its stocks. — **Reuters**

Opec would miss Trump, wary of strains under Biden

LONDON: Key members of Opec are wary that strains in the Opec+ alliance could reemerge with Joe Biden as US president, sources close to the organisation said, and would miss President Donald Trump who went from criticising the group to helping bring about a record oil output cut.

Biden could modify US diplomatic relations with three members of Opec — de facto leader Saudi Arabia, and sanctioned countries Iran and Venezuela, as well as with key non-Opec producer Russia.

Venezuela has kept millions of barrels of oil per day off the market, and if Biden should relax measures on either in years to come an increase in production could make it harder for Opec to balance supply with demand.

Biden has said he would prefer multilateral diplomacy to the unilateral sanctions Trump has imposed, although that may not mean a relaxation in sanctions any time soon.



A man removes an Opec logo at its headquarters in Vienna. — **AFP**

In his campaign, Biden said he’d return to Iran’s 2015 nuclear deal if Tehran resumes compliance with the pact. Trump quit the pact in 2018, reimposing sanctions that cut Iran’s oil exports.

Some in Opec fear that a return of Iranian volumes will add to oversupply without cutbacks elsewhere and worry about Moscow’s continued participation in Opec+.

“Iran sanctions can be re-evaluated and then Iran will be back to the market, so again there would be oversupply and the current cut deal will be at risk”, an Opec source said. — **Reuters**



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ANNOUNCEMENT

HAMSAT Saham Al Mumiza Trading Company registered at the Commercial Registry Secretariat in the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion under No 1214141 announces that it is transferring its legal form from a joint liability company to a one-person company in accordance with Article No (30 of the Commercial Companies Law 18/2019 and its amendments on all. Anyone who objects to this must submit the reasons for his objection to the Commercial Registry Secretariat at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion within a period of one month from the date of the publication of this announcement.

Announcement of Capital Reduction

In accordance with the provisions of Article 150 of the Commercial Companies Law. The company **Sohar International School LLC**, which is registered with the Commercial Registration No 1192463, hereby announces that it is going to reduce its capital from Omani Rials **500,000.000** to **250,000.000**. Whoever has any objection to the foregoing shall present the reasons for such objection to the Secretariat of Commercial Registry at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion within 30 days from the date hereof.

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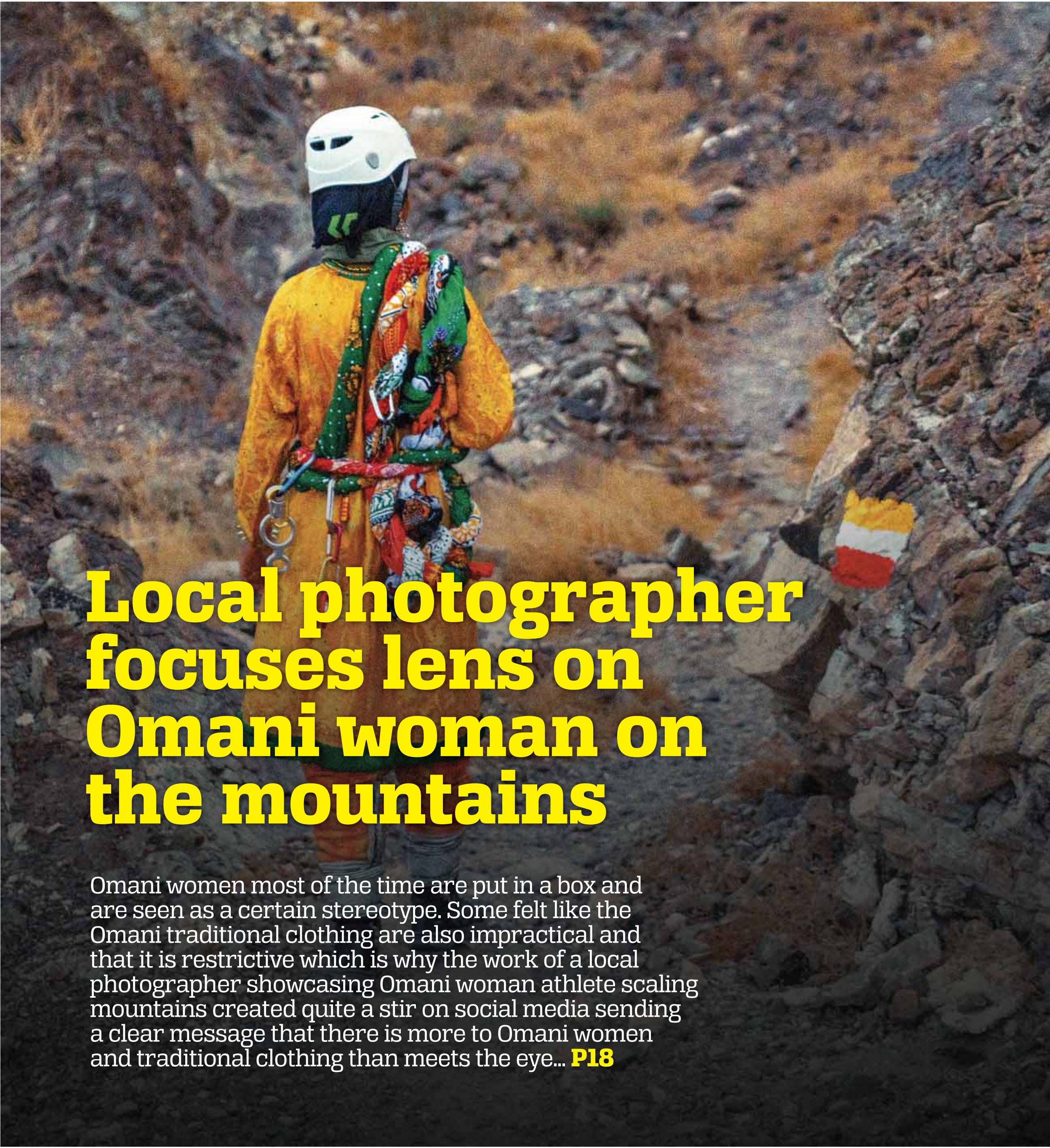
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Local photographer focuses lens on Omani woman on the mountains

Omani women most of the time are put in a box and are seen as a certain stereotype. Some felt like the Omani traditional clothing are also impractical and that it is restrictive which is why the work of a local photographer showcasing Omani woman athlete scaling mountains created quite a stir on social media sending a clear message that there is more to Omani women and traditional clothing than meets the eye... **P18**

INSIDE STORIES

HUMAN INTEREST



IRAQ'S ANCIENT 'PALM CLIMBERS' STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

Under the autumn Iraqi sun, Abbas Abbud expertly scrambles up the ragged trunk of the palm tree. His mission? Picking the juicy dates overhead, and keeping this ancient profession alive.... **Story on Page P20**

FASHION



FASHION'S PAST AND PRESENT COMMUNE AT NEW YORK'S MET

Whether by repetition, rupture or reinvention, fashion has always maintained a complex relationship to time, a link to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art is exploring in a new exhibition opening Thursday... **Story on Page 19**

READ



KINGDOM OF THE WICKED

BY KERRI MANISCALCO

Emilia di Carlo seeks vengeance for the murder of her twin sister.

DISCOVERY



FIVE-EYED FOSSIL SHRIMP IS EVOLUTION-ARY 'MISSING LINK'

The discovery of a five-eyed shrimp-like creature that lived about 520 million years ago may end a long-running debate about the evolution of Earth's most common animals... **Story on Page 19**

CELEBRATE



WORLD FREEDOM DAY

Freedom, in lots of parts of the world, is being taken for granted. From religion, to clothing, to travel, the list can go on. To celebrate world freedom day, learn more about its history particularly related to the rise and fall of the Berlin Wall and what it means for those people in that era.



Local photographer focuses lens on Omani woman on the mountains

BY TITASH CHAKRABORTY

Scrolling through social media, you not only see glimpses into peoples lives but also their latent and that's how we came upon the work of this local photographer. The image that grabbed our attention was the perfect use of juxtaposition — a local woman dressed in traditional Omani clothes prepped in modern hiking gear.

So much can be said about that single photo, but in conversation with Muna Khalfan, the photographer herself, this is

what she had to say.

WHAT GOT YOU INTERESTED IN PHOTOGRAPHY AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DOING IT?
Growing up, I was always fascinated to use the camera and whenever I would see one at home or with a friend I was keen to have my try with it. But there wasn't one easily available and I dabbled in photography a little in college with the photography club but got busy with my education to continue.
In the time that I played around with the camera, I didn't really learn much about the art behind photography but I did know that I really enjoyed picking up the camera and capturing things around me. With school, and

then work and life getting in the way, I hadn't had much time to pick up on this hobby and then it all changed in 2010. I was invited to a photography exhibition, It was a great chance for networking and I met my photographer friend Aziza al Athobi and she invited me to join the photographer club in Muscat, I welcomed the idea and I thought to give it a visit to know more about it. Since then I have become a member of the photographer club and started my professional photography journey.
WHAT IS YOUR CHOICE OF EQUIPMENT?
I started with a basic Nikon DSLR camera to start practising the different professional photography techniques. Then I

updated my camera to Nikon D7000 with 28-300 lens, 50 mm and fisheye lens. Recently I was looking for a more digitalise camera with a lightweight so I upgraded my camera to a Sony mirrorless full-frame "A7R III" with 24- 70 lens. Lightweight is critical for my photography as I'm walking for distances to capture adventure photos in the mountains. Also, I have Mavic 2 pro to capture aerial views.

WHO ARE YOUR FAVOURITE PHOTOGRAPHERS AND WHAT KIND OF STYLES DO YOU GO FOR?

I have always been a fan of portrait and abstract photography, I love travelling and every location always has its unique markers, perfect little details that I enjoyed capturing in an unconventional way. I enjoy creating art through my photography with the use of juxtaposition and changing perspectives, hoping to generate a conversation amongst my viewers. In 2019, I picked up doing aerial photography and have been experimenting with that recently.
I'm an adventurer who likes hike, climbing and camping in mountains so I used my photography skills to capture stories and details from the mountains. Recently I started to focus on stories that can tell from the mountains such as hiking, climbing, etc.

WHAT WAS THE IDEA BEHIND THE HIKING PHOTOGRAPHY AND WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO DO IT?

The idea of the theme was to represent athlete and adventurer Omani Women but with a touch of our culture. This photo specifically presents Omani

women hiker, where I showcase our traditional dress which is called "Thub", scarf "Weqaya\ Musar\ Lehaf\ Leso" and some silver accessories. The combination of the traditional touch and the sports gear gives uniqueness and beauty to the photos. In the past Omani women were working and been in the mountain wearing their traditional cloth and some of them are still till. However, presenting it this way catches the eye and attention of the audience. The audience liked the idea which presented how Omani women are strong and they can be in the mountain with their sweet beauty.

The women themselves and their different stories were the sources of inspiration. Nothing was close to representing them like their beauty, so I will say Women Beauty was inspirational. These strong women when they compete with the guys they can beat them as well.

The photoshoot is credited to "HUN'na" a platform for featuring Omani Women athletes & adventurers.

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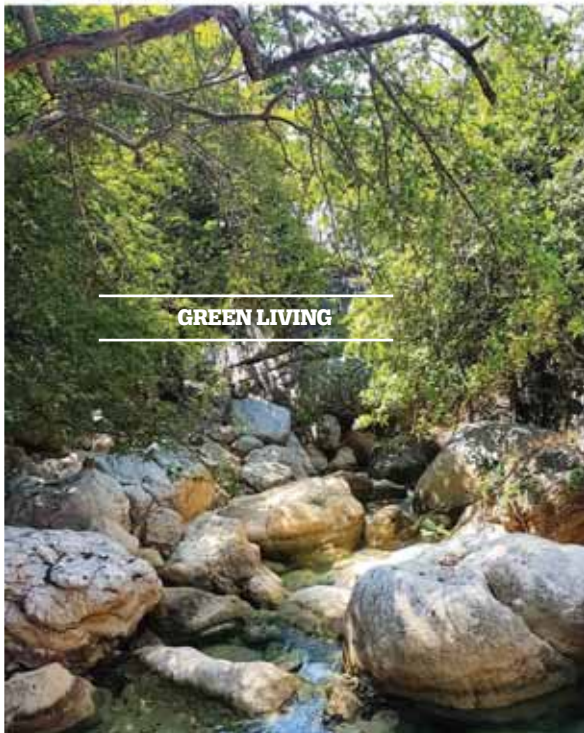


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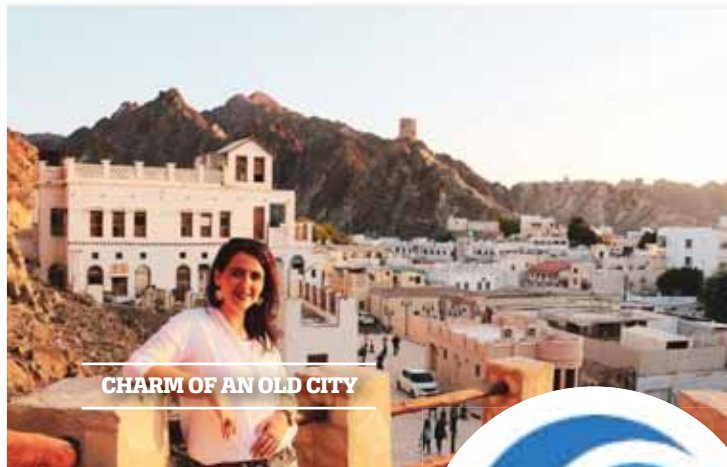


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FASHION

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Fashion's past and present commune at New York's Met

Whether by repetition, rupture or reinvention, fashion has always maintained a complex relationship to time, a link New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art is exploring in a new exhibition opening on Thursday.

The show, delayed for months by the pandemic, was also tweaked last minute to take into account the Black Lives Matter movement that galvanized the nation this summer.

Normally the city's social event of the year, 2020's Met Gala organised by *Vogue* Editor-In-Chief Anna Wintour — which usually opens the costume exhibit — was cancelled, like every major indoor gathering since mid-March.

To fete the 150th anniversary of the Met, Andrew Bolton, head curator of the Costume Institute, aimed to highlight the museum's own collection that includes 33,000 pieces of clothing and accessories.

"When I began working on the show, it started off as this sort of meditation on fashion and temporality", he told a press preview of the exhibit entitled "About Time", which will run until February 7.

But Bolton didn't want to focus on chronology, instead

presenting concepts in pairs — two pieces, two parallel time periods with similar aesthetics, for a 124-piece show featuring a single gown to close.

"By having past and present coexist together, it sort of takes you outside of the confine of chronology and makes you think about time very differently", Bolton said.

For Max Hollein, the Met's director, "fashion captures, like very few other art forms, a time and a spirit — and projects it forward."

FASHION REVISITING ITSELF

The concept creates an ongoing dialogue between older pieces that date back as far as the 1870s — when the Met was founded — and more recent items from the 1960s and beyond.

Elements common in 1870s-era wardrobes are seen again in the work of modern designers considered particularly innovative, including Alexander McQueen, Yohji Yamamoto and John Galiano. Certain cuts, buttons, sequins, embroidery or lacing — formerly signs of opulence and particular social status — are now tools of novelty with purely aesthetic significance.

"Fashion is always for the movement, always about this succession of time and notions of, novelty and ephemerality

and sometimes obsolescence and that's one aspect of time", Bolton said.

"But at the same time fashion looks back on itself often."

With shorter skirts and dresses and cuts that flow rather than restrict, modern designers give a contemporary edge to older pieces, like the iconic Chanel jacket.

A mini-skirt pairing gives the piece a facelift, thanks to the innovation of Karl Lagerfeld, a master of reinterpretation. Today's designers play with a far wider spectrum of materials than were available to their predecessors, thanks to technological progress and the evolution of use and taste. Raf Simons embellishes a 2013 black strapless bustier dress with the satin flowers of Hubert de Givenchy (1957) — but in leather, a material only in recent decades popular with womenswear.

And sometimes older styles stand the test of time: Yves Saint Laurent's tuxedo for women, for example, or his belted mini-dress of 1966.

NEW COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

Forced to postpone the show six months, Bolton decided to

modify it in light of the enormous anti-racism protests that followed the police killing of George Floyd in May.

The original version, he said, included "some designers of color... but not a huge amount."

Vogue's doyenne has faced accusations since June from some collaborators — and recently in a lengthy article in *The New York Times* — of long favoring fashion created by and for white people, and sidelining people of colour at *Conde Nast*.

Wintour, 70, attended the press preview of the exhibit but didn't say a word.

"Undoubtedly, I have made mistakes along the way, and if any mistakes were made at *Vogue* under my watch, they are mine to own and remedy and I am committed to doing the work," one of fashion's most powerful figures told the *Times* recently.

Changes at the exhibit include a contribution from Black American pioneering designer Stephen Burrows, next to a Xuly. Bet dress from the Franco-Malian designer Lamine Kouyate.

Bolton vowed the initiative would not be short-lived, saying all exhibitions will now include diversity efforts. — **AFP**



DISCOVERY

Five-eyed fossil shrimp is evolutionary 'missing link'



THE DISCOVERY of a five-eyed shrimp-like creature that lived about 520 million years ago may end a long-running debate about the evolution of Earth's most common animals.

Arthropods, ranging from lobsters and crabs to spiders and millipedes, make up around 80 per cent of all animal species alive today and are characterised by their hard exoskeleton.

But their evolution has long remained something of a mystery, because their ancient ancestors carry a variety of features that their modern counterparts do not.

Enter *Kylinxia zhangii*, a shrimp-like creature preserved in fossils found in China's Yunnan province — a discovery that researchers now say could be a key "miss-

The *Anomalocaris*.

'EVOLUTIONARY GAP'

While both have been theorised as precursors to modern arthropods, an evolutionary gap in the fossil record made that difficult to prove — until this week.

"*Kylinxia* represents a crucial transitional fossil predicted by Darwin's evolutionary theory," said Han Zeng, first author of a study published in the journal *Nature* on Wednesday.

"It bridges the evolutionary gap from *Anomalocaris* to true arthropods and forms a key 'missing link' in the origin of arthropods," added Zeng, a researcher at the Nanjing Institute of Geology and Palaeontology (NIGPAS), in a press release.

In fact, when the first of the



ing link" in arthropod evolution. Like today's arthropods, *Kylinxia* had a hard shell, a segmented body and legs with joints. But the ancient creature also had characteristics in common with even older animals, leading researchers to name it after the "Kilin", a creature in traditional Chinese mythology with attributes from a variety of animals.

First there are those eyes — three smaller ones in a row on its head, with two larger ones directly behind. It might sound bizarre, but it's a feature scientists have seen before, in an ancient creature called *Opabinia*, known informally as a "weird wonder".

And the *Kylinxia's* two spiky front appendages, researchers say, are reminiscent of another creature thought to be an arthropod ancestor:

fossils was revealed, only its front legs were visible, and researchers assumed it was another specimen of *Anomalocaris*, said Diying Huang, a professor at NIGPAS.

"It looked strange, like a frontal appendage of *Anomalocaris* attached to the body of a common arthropod", Huang, the study's corresponding author, said.

"After careful preparation... I knew it was a new and very important arthropod."

Part of the value of *Kylinxia* lies in the unusual detail preserved in the fossils.

"The *Kylinxia* fossils exhibit exquisite anatomical structures," said Fangchen Zhao, co-author of the study.

"For example, nervous tissue, eyes, and digestive system — these are soft body parts we usually cannot see in conventional fossils." — **AFP**



Iraq's ancient 'palm climbers' struggle for survival

Under the autumn Iraqi sun, Abbas Abbud expertly scrambles up the ragged trunk of the palm tree. His mission? Picking the juicy dates overhead, and keeping this ancient profession alive.

At 48, he is the last of several generations of "palm climbers," the nickname given to the community that has harvested southern Iraq's date palms for the past 6,000 years.

But decades of back-to-back wars, climate change and little support for farming communities have turned Iraq's iconic date palms and their harvesters into a rare breed.

"We spend more than ten days on one palm field, but in recent years the numbers of trees and fields have decreased, affecting our jobs," says Abbud.

Every year, from October to December, he climbs into a harness, machete in hand, to slash dates from palms up to 23 metres (75 feet) tall.

Cutting one palm earns him a mere 2,000 Iraqi dinars, or less than two US dollars.

With poverty rates expected to reach 40 per cent this year, Abbud can't afford to skip the date season in Iraq's farming heartland of Diwaniyah province.

One of his biggest clients is the Kariz family, which owns some 4,000 palms of different varieties.

"Ever since I can remember, we've had vast date fields," says Herban Kariz, 69, the family patriarch.

He strolls through rows of palms, under which workers have placed

large stretches of tarp to catch the bouquets of yellow and caramel-coloured dates cut from tree tops.

"We always held reunions for the harvest — it's been a family tradition since childhood," he tells AFP.

DATES IN DANGER

Under former dictator Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi state purchased dates from farmers at a price higher than the market rates, then packaged, marketed and exported them as far afield as the United States.

The era is remembered as the golden age of Iraq's date industry.

Today, palms number less than half of the 30 million that dotted the country just two decades ago, says Mohammed Kashash, the head of Diwaniyah's farming cooperatives.

He blames the virtually ceaseless armed conflicts in Iraq, a struggling economy and insufficient government support.

"As the state doesn't support us, production and sales are down," Kashash said.

Iraqi farmers say they can no longer compete on the world market, where mass-produced dates from the Gulf packaged as luxury items are sold for around \$3,500 per tonne.

With local production so low, Iraq is faced with a reality its farmers would have never imagined: imported dates.

Varieties from the Gulf or Iran have flooded Iraq's markets, frustrating local producers and pickers.

"We demand the state establish new processing plants and revive

the old ones to package the dates," Kashash says.

For palm climber Abbud, the important thing is being able to climb, cut and return to the ground safe and sound.

Last year, his father died after falling from a palm tree, but Abbud chose to carry on the family tradition as a cutter, even as the industry falters.

Now, sitting comfortably atop a date tree, he looks out over a golden sun setting over endless Iraqi palms — and perhaps on his inherited livelihood. — AFP

